



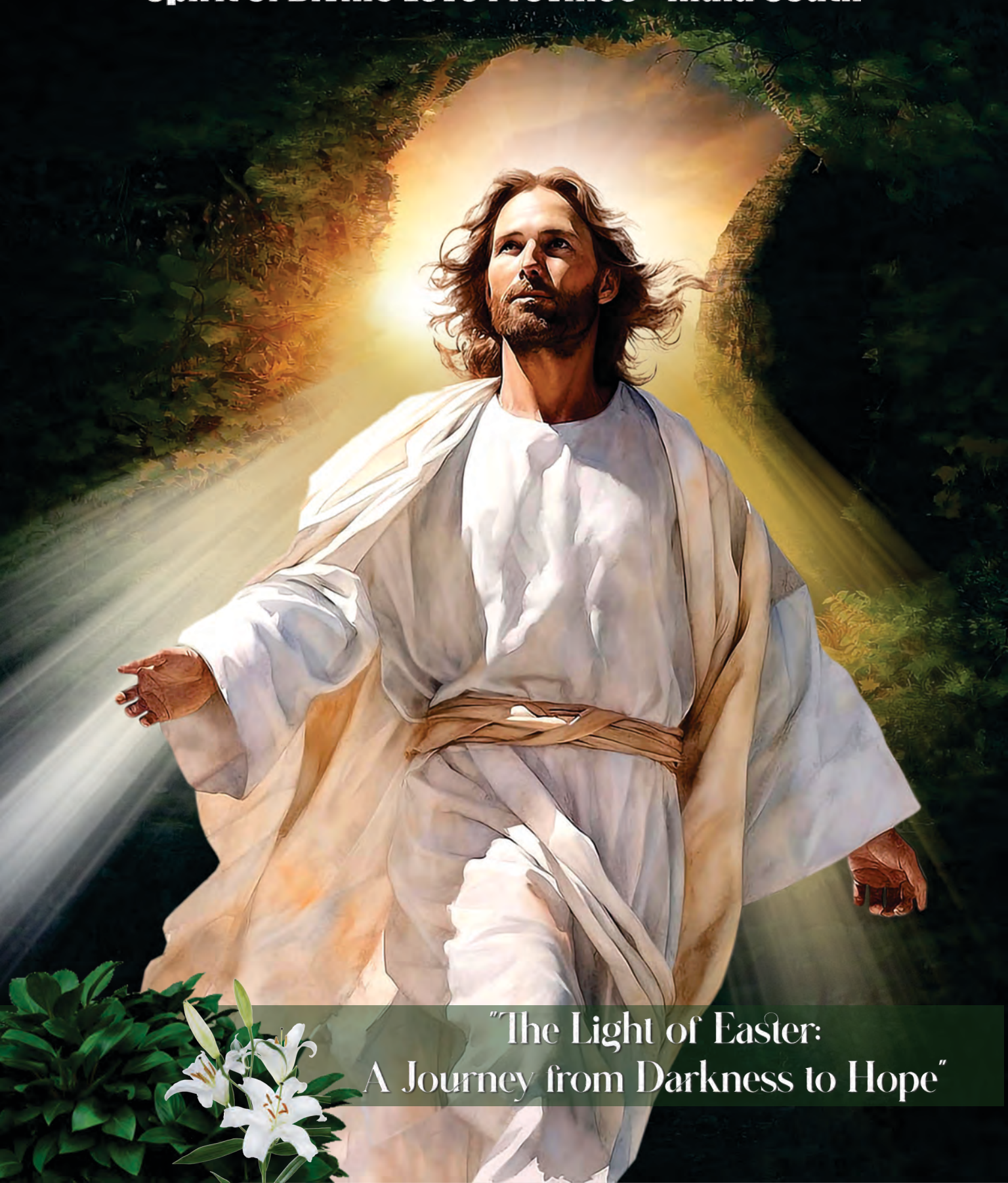
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NEWS LETTER
EASTER - 2025
For Private Circulation Only



Spirit of Divine Love Province - India South



"The Light of Easter:
A Journey from Darkness to Hope"





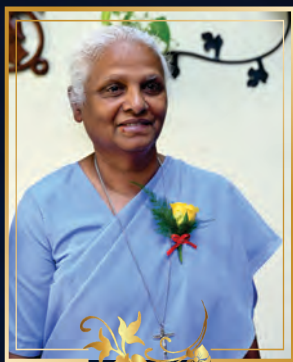
HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS

50 Years
of Golden Memories

Sisters in Faith, Sisters in Service



Sr. Shalini Mathew



Sr. Stella Alappatt



Sr. Agnes Ignatius



Sr. Preethi Thomas



Sr. Alphone Mary

Golden Threads
WEAVING 50 YEARS OF LOVE AND SERVICE



In a world clouded by uncertainty, pain, and division, Easter comes like a gentle dawn breaking through the darkness. It is not merely a historical celebration, it is a living message; a message that speaks louder than the noise of war, deeper than the wounds of injustice, and brighter than the shadows of despair.

Easter proclaims that **life triumphs over death, hope overcomes fear, and light breaks through the deepest darkness.** The resurrection of Christ is not just an event of the past; it is an invitation for us today, to rise again from all that weighs us down.

In the face of violence and hatred, Easter calls us to be instruments of **peace.** Where there is despair, we are called to sow **hope.** Where people are divided by race, religion, or ideology, we are called to build **bridges of reconciliation.** In a world where many feel unseen and unloved, we are invited to share the **joy and tenderness of the Risen Lord.**

The stone that sealed the tomb did not have the final word; neither do the stones of injustice, fear, or sorrow in our own lives and societies remain sealed. Easter is the promise that **no night is so dark that the dawn cannot break.**

Let us not keep this joy locked in our hearts. Let our lives echo the Resurrection through acts of kindness, words of encouragement, and a commitment to walk with the poor, the broken, and the forgotten. Christ is risen, and so can we, again and again.

May the light of Easter shine in every home, every heart, and every corner of the world that longs for peace, healing, and new life.

Alleluia! He is Risen. He is truly Risen.

Sr. Reena D Souza SSps
Ekamba



Provincial's Message



JESUS IS RISEN !

The resurrection of Jesus is the pledge of our own resurrection. It is the very foundation upon which our faith rests. *"This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Give praise to the Lord, for He is good. Alleluia!"*

This is the power of Easter; it transforms lives and changes destinies. This doesn't mean that life is without struggle. We are all aware of the darkness present in today's world. Yet, we believe that Jesus has conquered sin and passed through pain to the glory of the Resurrection.

When we greet one another with Happy Easter, it is more than a joyful wish. It is an invitation, a call to rise above indifference, to awaken to the needs of our world, and to commit ourselves to making others experience the joy we celebrate.

"We are an Easter people, and Alleluia is our song," said Pope John Paul II. This joy springs from faith, and it grows through unselfish love. It is a happiness that is born of loving the other, confronting hatred, and putting an end to the wars, both within and around us.

"Peace be with you!" (Jn 20:19-20). This was the first greeting of the Risen Lord to His disciples, a greeting that still echoes across the world today. It is a message long awaited, deeply desired: the hope of true peace, founded on the pillars of love and justice, of truth and freedom.

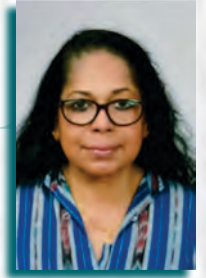
Dear Sisters, Happy Easter to all!

Sr. Ida Lobo SSpS

Provincial Leader, INS



Christ is Risen: A Celebration of Life and Light



Easter commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ, marking a triumph of light over darkness and life over death. It symbolizes the shedding of sin from the world and the dawning of new hope. Through His resurrection, Jesus brought light back into the world, offering us the promise of eternal life. We celebrate Easter with deep piety and joyful hearts, signifying the ultimate victory over death.

My childhood memories of Easter are filled with joy and excitement. The celebration would begin with Palm Sunday-going to church, receiving palm leaves, and reverently placing them on our home altar. Easter morning was always special-waking up early, running to the kitchen to see the delicious treats lovingly prepared by Mom. Attending the Easter Sunday service was a cherished tradition, dressed in new clothes and surrounded by the warmth of family.

One of my fondest memories was decorating Easter eggs. Even with limited resources, it was a fun and heartwarming experience that brought us together. These simple yet beautiful moments are deeply cherished and continue to nurture a strong sense of tradition and family bonding.

Easter serves as a powerful reminder that Jesus continues to love and care for the world. He overcame death with life, and conquered fear and uncertainty with hope. The tomb is empty - Christ is Risen!

Girija Joseph Xalxo
HSMA, Mumbai



A Symphony of Praise for God's faithful Love!

Golden Jubilee Celebration at CHS

Convent of the Holy Spirit, Bangalore - a home to many sisters in the earlier years of formation - hosted the Jubilee celebration on 23rd February 2025 for the First Profession Batch of 1975. The Golden Jubilarians - Sr. Alphonse Mary, Sr. Preethi Thomas, Sr. Stella Alappat, Sr. Agnes Ignatius and Sr. Shalini Mathew, arriving from different directions were all smiles on entering the CHS portals. The Convent bustled with activity days before the Jubilee.

On 23rd February at 5 pm we had a solemn celebration of the Eucharist with senior priest, Fr. William Sequeira SJ, as the main celebrant, along with 9 other concelebrating priests at the altar. The jubilarians, comprising of artists and musicians aptly chose the words, "A Symphony of Praise for God's faithful Love," as their jubilee theme. Fr. Willie, understanding the calibre of the Jubilarians gave a fitting message supplemented with anecdotes during his homily.

The celebrating sisters – who were once provincials & regional in their 50-year journey - made a simple & meaningful offering of themselves during the Eucharistic celebration with their offertory items, renewal prayers and solemn singing of the Antiphon: "*I will pay my vows....*" The choir with Srs. Ajita, Gracy, Theresa and the formees were melodious in their singing. The official photographers and Sr. Katharina with her camera had a busy time during the whole event.

The felicitation event took place in the beautifully decorated and lit up portals of the CHS. After the initial tea and snacks, welcome words, and a prayer dance by formees – Red Roses were presented to the Jubilarians. Next, Srs. Theresa & Anisha, who set the tone for the evening, invited jubilarians to the stage; five sisters commended in brief life and mission of the celebrating sisters. Each was garlanded and honoured with a shawl, following which the jubilarians cut the delicious jubilee cake, as formees sang the jubilee song. The felicitation ended with a sumptuous meal after a skit by formees. All in all, we were a total of 120 including sisters, formees & support staff.

Sr. Molly Rego SSps
CHS

What A Journey It Has Been....!



Time and again, in our communities we keep singing this song, “*Life is a journey; we travel together*”. Yes, it is in the light of this song, that we the students of Pernal would like to share the stories of our unique journey.

At the end of May 2023, we, a bunch of 17 students were assigned to Pamboor and Pernal Communities to do our +2 studies at St. Mary's PU College, Shirva. Truly, it was a mixed group. Eight of us had completed our aspirancy and 9 of us candidacy. Once we arrived, here our formators re-shuffled us again. The six who completed aspirancy and had taken arts subjects were assigned to Pamboor. The 9 candidates and the other 2 aspirants were assigned to Pernal Community. Not to forget that there were already 7 second year students in Pernal. We the first years came from three communities of Guwahati, Jharsuguda and Bangalore with our unique experiences. First year, we were simply lost. It was an experience of the *Tower of Babel* among us as we spoke in 7 different mother tongues. Temptation was for the “***birds of the same feather, to flock together***”. Continual challenges from the formators helped us to open our eyes.

We were hardly two days in Pernal, and then our college re-opened! We were least prepared. We then began our ***travelling together, hand in hand***. Travelling in the crowded bus was another unique experience including hanging on the bus door/steps as previously many of us had stayed in the hostel and studied. But the conductors were very kind; they signalled us when to expand and when to shrink. They always accommodated. There was always place for us in their bus. Imagine our fate in rainy season! Fortunately it is just four kilometres journey.

Another issue was of language. Back in the community there was heavy pressure on us to speak in English as we needed to improve; to add to that some of us had to learn the second language Hindi in the college; some lecturers were bi-lingual in their teaching: Kannada and English. In the church, the Mass was in Konkani. But we are grateful to Fr. Jerome Monteiro our parish priest when he invited us to sing twice a week, hymns in Hindi/ English at Mass. For our sake he would give some times reflection in English at daily Mass. Truly a ***multi-cultural experience***!

In the first year we were simply lost, adjusting and re-adjusting. In the community we were ***young and aged, different colour skin***; with *different thinking pattern* and *cultural biases*. Among us we quarrelled, argued, there was unwillingness to assume responsibility and help one another. Sometimes we took refuge in our seniors. There were times when our formation team was frustrated with us; but continued to encourage us towards positivity. Growth and transformation slowly began to surface during and after the summer program. We took time to get to know one another; sessions on interpersonal skills and group building helped us. Through reading the Word of God, prayer and reflection we began to care for one another and reach out. Yes, ***our lives though different, were slowly beginning to interweave, creating a beautiful weaving of love.***

We were involved in various parish activities especially preparing for Mass, decoration in the church and cultural programs. It helped us to get to know the parishioners. We experienced their love, care and interest in our growth. Sometimes, the entire group was invited for meals at marriage functions, ward gathering, feasts, death anniversary masses etc. From our end we also did family visits, visits to the SVD senior citizens Home etc. We listened to their struggles. Our very joyful presence lifted up their drooping spirits. On some occasions, our parishioners would supply the community with fruits, vegetables, soft drinks and of course ice-cream saying it is for *children(students)*. They were sowing in our hearts the seeds of generosity, love and open heartedness. We in turn filled their hearts with gratitude, joy and hope. It is in these gestures, we experienced what it means to ***take a moment to be present to someone in need; show that you care reach out and plant a seed.***

Another challenge faced by us was how to cope up with multi-tasking with proper time management. Sometimes, many activities came around the same time. One set consisted of general visitation, exams, Monthi Fest and sports events in the college. In the last 3 months of 2024, it was visits from formation coordinators, college golden jubilee, annual day, exams, church inauguration and Christmas. Thanks to our formators who guided us to give priority to the most important tasks; to postpone what can wait. Amazing result with the good will and cooperation of one and all we made it without too much stress. ***In solidarity, we stood together united from within.*** None of us got sick from multi-tasking! Ha...Ha...Thanks to Auntie Annet, we are well fed.

As the year, 2025 dawned it was time to make an important decision. From the orientation time to now, Sr. Pauline has been brain washing us with the thought that all the experiences provided here are for us to arrive at a greater clarity of our calling. So it was...we were prayerfully guided. So with the grace of God we have made our decisions and have expressed it in our application. We await the decision from Sr. Ida and her team.



At present we are at the last phase of our journey in Pernal before moving on. We are on study leave, in preparation for the final exams. We are given enough time to study. It is in these moments we recall with gratitude the journey we have covered. There were many challenges and struggles no doubt, but there were also stars guiding us step by step and accompanying us all along the journey. To mention a few: our formators, teachers, companions, parishioners, our parents and friends. We are indebted to all.

Now as we review the journey of the past two years, we take the help of another song to bring to a closure our story. ***What a journey it has been; and the end is not in sight but the stars are out tonight; they are bound to guide our way...***

Yagum, Roshni, Yallam, Martina and Sagarika
Pernal

**Witnessing to the Light from Everywhere for Everyone:
150 Sesquicentennial SVD 1879-2025**



**National Biblical Conference organized by SVD Missionaries:
At Divine Word Centre, Vadipatti, Madurai.**

In a world filled with darkness, uncertainty, and moral confusion, the concept of witnessing to the light carries profound spiritual significance. The light represents truth, holiness, and divine guidance. As believers, we are called to be witnesses to the light. This theme explores the meaning of witnessing to the light, its biblical foundation, and practical ways to live as bearers of the light in today's world.

Many SVD biblical scholars were invited to present on the biblical foundation of the light. The topics covered included: Jesus and Jewish feasts in John, the symbolism of light, the call to be a light to the nations as part of Israel's universal mission, and case studies on Ruth and Jonah. Other discussions included creatively and faithfully witnessing to the light in a wounded world, viewed through the lens of *Gaudium et Spes*; AJS Ministry as a witness to the light; Jesus as the True Light; John the Baptist as a witness to the light; and believers as the light of the world. Additionally, the lives and mission of our founder, St. Arnold Janssen, and our co-foundresses, Mother Maria and Mother Josepha, were highlighted as exemplary witnesses to the light. Practical ways of witnessing to the light were also discussed. The presentations were well-articulated and insightful.

Witnessing to the light is more than just preaching; it is a way of life. Just as John the Baptist pointed others to Jesus, we too are called to reflect Christ's light through our words, actions, and love. In a world searching for hope, let us boldly shine the light of Christ so that others may be drawn to Him and experience His saving grace.

Sr. Antony Mary SSps
Kalayarkoil



Renewal in Faith: Embracing God's Grace Together



Our Renewal Programme began on 30th January 2025 at CHS, organized by Sr. Theresa Rebello SSpS, who skillfully animated the entire process to deepen our experience of God.

A total of 17 participants, from the batches of 1987 to 1995, embarked on this journey of discovery. The sessions were enriched by insightful inputs from resource persons like Sr. Gracy SSpS and Fr. Juventius CSsR. Sharing our experiences in groups and personal discussions with Sr. Ida SSpS enabled us to recognize the seeds of God's presence within each of us.



Socrates once said, "An unexamined life is not worth living." This programme provided us with the opportunity to reflect on our lives and acknowledge God's kindness through the ups and downs we have encountered. It was a golden moment to appreciate our call to the SSpS family and to recognize the grace of God working in each one of us. Meditation in various forms, along with Fr. Juventius' expertise in guiding us through the parables, helped us foster an intimate relationship with Jesus, which in turn energized and strengthened us.

On the fourth day, we embarked on a pilgrimage to Our Lady's Shrine at Shivaji Nagar, followed by an outing to a resort on Bannerghatta Road. These experiences further enriched our journey of renewal and fellowship.



We express our sincere gratitude to the PLT and to Sr. Theresa Rebello for this marvelous opportunity to encounter God in a profound way.

With gratitude,
Srs. Beena Varghese and Gracy Simon

Igniting Curiosity: Science Exhibition at St. Paul School, Ekamba



The Science Exhibition held at St. Paul School, Ekamba on 22nd February 2025 was a vibrant display of creativity, innovation, and scientific curiosity. The event served as an excellent opportunity for students to apply scientific concepts and bring their ideas to life through models and experiments.

This initiative was thoughtfully planned and executed by our School Manager Fr. Robin, Headmistress Sr. Sangeeta, and the dedicated teaching staff. Their collective effort brought together a remarkable platform for students to express their talents.

The exhibition was inaugurated with the symbolic launch of a Chandrayaan-3 model, setting the tone for a day filled with excitement and learning. Distinguished guests who honored the event included: Fr. David from Kamalnagar; Fr. Clivan and Fr. Francis from Santhpur; Retired government teacher Sir Sharavan Ghagre from Ekamba; A valued parent and supporter, and well wisher Mrs. Ashwini Uppase from Ekamba.

The presence of parents and well-wishers added warmth to the event, and their interest in the students' work was deeply appreciated. Their support encouraged the children and made the occasion even more special.

Class-wise Models and Topics:

L.K.G: Healthy and Junk Food; Animals; Days of the Week; Fruits; Body Parts

U.K.G: Plant Parts; Life Cycle of a Fish; 3D Shapes; Traffic Lights; Places of Worship; National Symbols; Addition and Currency

1st Standard: Sense Organs; Basic Human Needs; Guardian Angels; Different Seasons; Domestic and Wild Animals

2nd & 3rd Standard: Animal Homes; Public Properties; Butterfly Life Cycle; Volcano; Layers of the Earth; Air has Weight (Experiment); Hydraulic Bridge; Photosynthesis

4th & 5th Standard: Wind Energy; Solar Panels; The Water Cycle; Air Pollution

6th Standard: Rocket Model; Weight Measurement; Solar System; Water Purification; ATM Functioning; Human Respiratory System; Pythagorean Theorem

From the earliest classes to the seniors, every student showed tremendous enthusiasm and commitment. They confidently explained their models, supported one another, and demonstrated genuine joy in sharing their knowledge. The event was filled with team spirit, cooperation, and mutual encouragement. In conclusion, the Science Exhibition was a grand success. It not only showcased the talents of our students but also fostered scientific thinking, teamwork, and self-confidence. It was truly a proud moment for the school and a wonderful experience for everyone involved.

Ms. Santhoshi

Educator, St. Paul School, Ekamba

Bringing Vision and Health to Tribal Communities: Indapur Holy Spirit Diagnostic Centre's Impact



Holy Spirit Diagnostic Centre remains steadfast in its mission to provide quality healthcare services to both tribal and non-tribal communities, with a special focus on addressing the health needs of marginalized populations.

To extend our reach, we have successfully organized 10 health camps across various villages and collaborated with Primary Health Centres (PHCs) for two additional camps. These initiatives have been instrumental in delivering essential medical services to underserved communities.

A key highlight of our work has been our ophthalmology camps, made possible through the generous support of **Laxmi Charitable Trust, Panvel**, and **JSW Cement**. Their funding has allowed us to offer crucial eye care services to those who would otherwise struggle to access them.



Through these efforts, we have conducted two major ophthalmology camps, providing consultations and treatment to nearly **200 patients**. As a result:

- **25 successful cataract surgeries** have restored vision and transformed lives.
- **20 spectacles** have been distributed to individuals in need, enhancing their ability to work, study, and lead better lives.

These achievements reflect our unwavering commitment to ensuring accessible and quality healthcare for tribal and underprivileged communities. Looking ahead, we aim to expand our reach, conduct more specialized health camps, and continue making a tangible difference in the lives of those who need it the most.

Together, we can build a healthier, brighter future for all.

Sr. Natalia D Souza SSps
Indapur

Empowering Tribal Communities: Successful Completion of Tailoring Training



With the support of **HSMA**, we have successfully completed two batches of **tailoring training** designed exclusively for tribal communities. Each batch spanned three months, with dedicated instructors traveling to villages to conduct hands on training sessions.

Training participants from tribal backgrounds came with its challenges many faced difficulties in maintaining commitment, and withdrawals were common. However, through continuous motivation and perseverance, we ensured the successful completion of both batches, equipping participants with valuable skills.



Encouragingly, many trained individuals have now applied for sewing machines through their respective panchayats, marking a significant step toward self-sufficiency and skill-based employment. This initiative has not only enhanced their livelihoods but also fostered economic empowerment within tribal communities.

We remain committed to providing sustainable skill development opportunities and look forward to further expanding our reach.

Skills are the new currency and women are exchanging them for success

Sr. Nirmala Mendonca SSps
Indapur



From Field to Community Power of Team Work



We were pleasantly surprised when the Football Coach of St. Mary's PU College selected 6 of us students from Pernal Community to join the 11 member Football Team of the College. We were very excited. We had played earlier during our schooldays; but now had to learn anew all the rules of the game. Our coach was rather strict and demanding.

To begin with, a theory class was given on all the **rules** of the game. Then the attention was given to **physical fitness**. We had to do daily hard and tiresome exercises to keep our body flexible and healthy. We became active and strong. **Concentration** was another skill we had to master. To focus our **attention on the ball** and be **alert** to its movement was the next command. **Fear** came in the way while practicing to kick the ball; however, slowly we overcame our fear and gained **confidence**. Our coach motivated us by saying that we must run for the ball like a hungry dog runs for food.

While playing at the district level, we were about to lose the game. The coach warned us by saying that we are almost losing the game and there is only 10% left in our hands. Call on Mary our college Patroness and play. First part of his statement sounded very discouraging but then the second part filled us with hope. Imagine the practices, time and energy we invested in learning. We took it in right spirit. A new energy of the Spirit began to flow within us challenging and affirming us. We did not give up. Seema our goal keeper was strong and confident. She was very alert and followed the direction of the coming ball and caught every single ball; opponents were not able to make a single goal. We communicated to each other with gestures and played with **determination**, and **won** the match.

Playing thus with coordination, we reached up to state level. Yes, football is not an individual game but a team game. It highlights the power of **collaboration** and **teamwork**. Each one has to put in hard work and make a commitment. We learnt the importance of collaboration to achieve a **common goal**. We learnt to **value individual strengths**, while acknowledging the significance of **collective effort**.



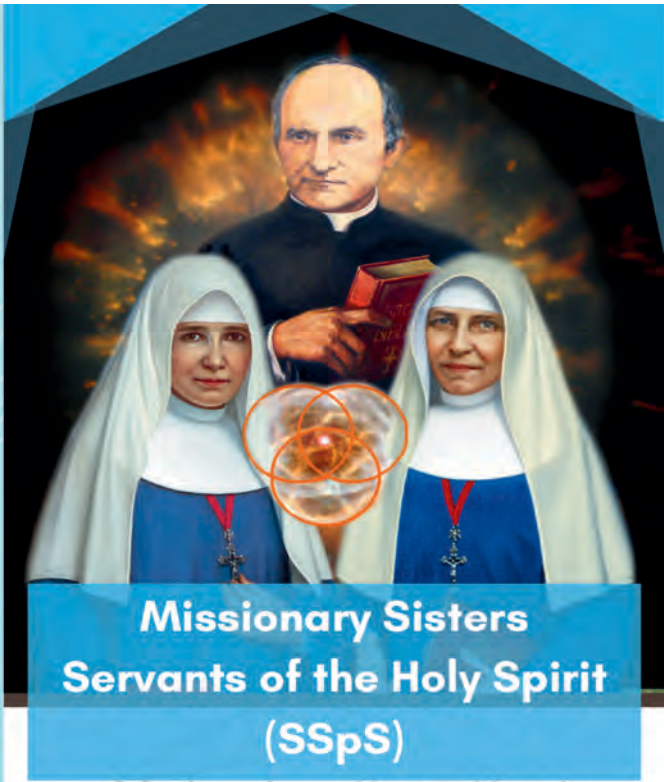
During one of our growth sessions, Sr. Pauline invited six of us to reflect on the theme “**From Field to Community –Power of Team Work**” and share with the entire group our experience. This article is the result of this reflection and sharing. We came up with the following points:

- Like in the Football Field in our **Community** we need:
- Clear Common Goal and guidelines (rules)
 - A coach to guide us; motivate us positively
 - Focus on our goal – keep our eyes fixed on our common goal
 - Determination and commitment – willingness to dedicate time and energy, share gifts
 - Disciplined life
 - Personal work: overcome fears and anxieties and gain confidence
 - Spiritual Strength: Spirit's energy; help of Mary our mother
 - Communication: Verbal and non-verbal
 - Value individual's strength – recognize and appreciate the contribution the other makes
 - Team-work – build good relationship with one another, collaboration and collective efforts

These and many things did the Foot Ball Game teach us and now we share with you! Happy reading and reflection!

Emilia, Asmita, Jasmani, Seema, Sonalika & Emrica
Pernal





Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS)

An International Congregation in the Universal Mission of Jesus

Welcome to the vibrant world of the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS), a sacred sisterhood founded by the visionary St. Arnold Janssen on 8th December, 1889, in Netherlands, Steyl to joyfully partake in the universal mission of Jesus and embrace all people, transcending cultures and faith traditions. We live as a community and respond to the need of the humanity especially in frontier situations to reveal the human face of God in our world today.



We Walk in the Footsteps of Our Founding Generation

Pastoral Care



Youth Animation, Catechesis, House Visits, BCC/SCC

Our Activities

We respond to the needs of the humanity especially in frontier situations involving in ministries of Education, Health care, Formation, Media and Socio pastoral which include Integral Development of Girl Children, Caring for the Elderly, Services to people living with HIV/AIDS, Specially Abled Children, Migrants, Prison inmates, Services towards Women Empowerment – Domestic workers and Legal assistance to the needy.

Heath Care



Education



Educating through Schools, Colleges, Kindergarten, Hostels and Boardings

Meetings, Prayer Ministry, Women Cell Animation

Social Action



Catering for

- Girl Children, Youth and Women
- Specially abled, PLHIV & PAHIV
- Senior Citizens

Strategic interventions through personal care, Family Counselling and Legal Aid



Formation



Candidacy, Aspirancy, Pre - Novitiate, Novitiate, Juniorate and ongoing Formation

Integration of Creation



Use of Solar energy, Bio gas, Waste segregation, Planting trees, No Plastic policy, Rain water harvesting



Precious is the life given for Mission

From the heart of Europe to the shores of distant continents, we have spread our wings to 52 countries, establishing our international community on five continents. Since our arrival in India in 1933, we have been responding to the evolving needs of the Indian society from 60 vibrant communities across 19 states.



Discover the calling to SSPS

Join Us

Our life on earth is an extension of God's Existence. Our presence is therefore the extension of God's presence. Therefore you and I have a unique task to bring 'God Alive'. In responding to the frontiers of human need, we reveal the compassionate face of God to all.

Dear kindred spirit, do you hear the gentle whisper of God calling you?

If your heart resonates with the divine invitation, hesitate no more! Become an ambassador of God's boundless love.

Reach out to us



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www.sspsindia.com
www.worldssps.org



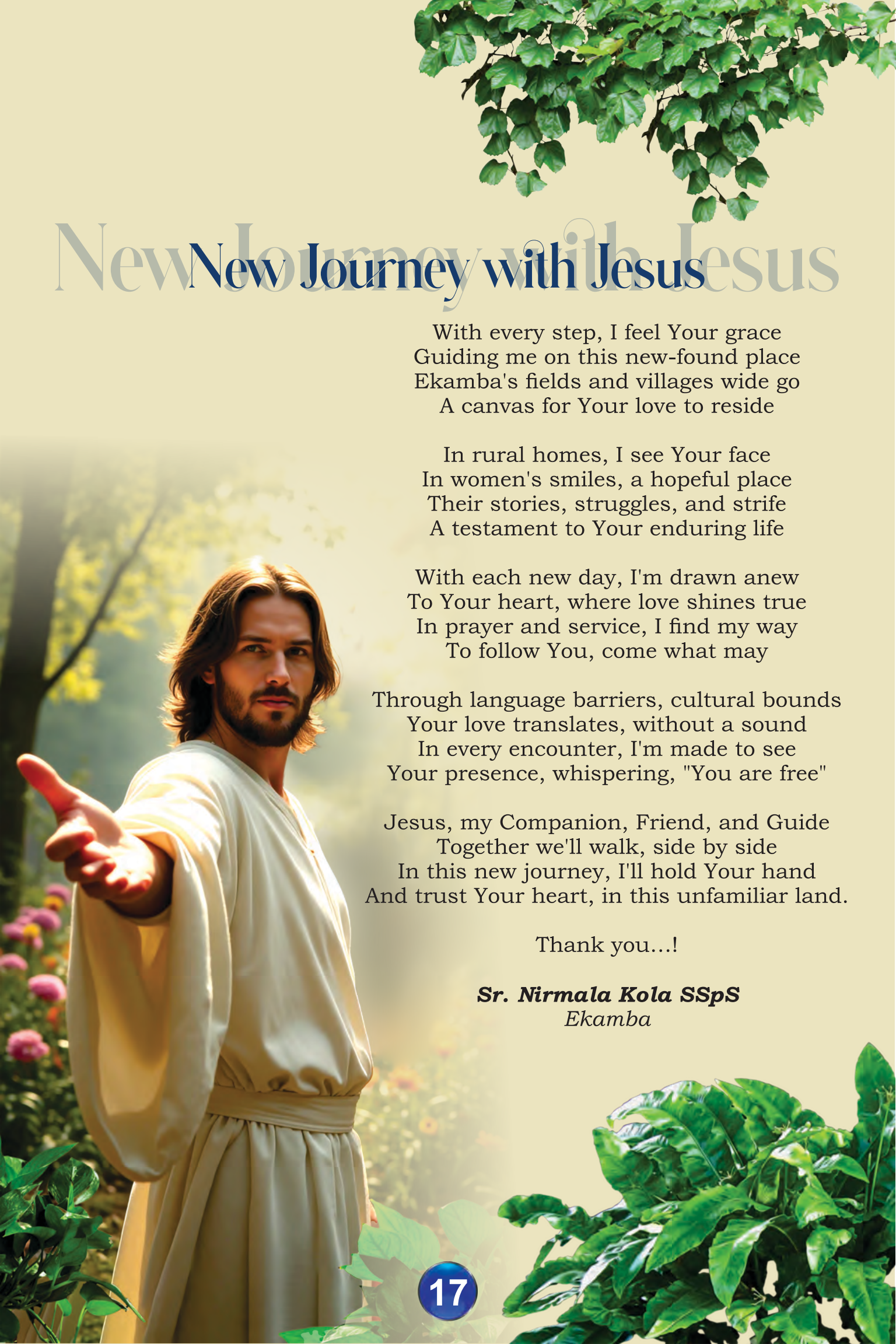
Sr Nirmala Mendonca, Convent of the Holy Spirit, S.O.S Post Office, Bannerghatta Road, Bangalore - 560076, Karnataka.

Annual Day Celebration at Holy Spirit School Kalalyarkoil



The event began with a welcome speech by the principal highlighting the importance of cultural exchange and respect. This was followed by the lighting of the lamp. Tamil Nadu has a rich cultural heritage and its traditional dances reflect its deep rooted tradition and history.

Thus our annual day mainly focused on preserving traditional heritage and promoting social cohesion through performance of various traditional dances, Music, and dramas which impressed the parents. Our children also brought out awareness on protection of the environment through a beautiful action song.



New Journey with Jesus

With every step, I feel Your grace
Guiding me on this new-found place
Ekamba's fields and villages wide go
A canvas for Your love to reside

In rural homes, I see Your face
In women's smiles, a hopeful place
Their stories, struggles, and strife
A testament to Your enduring life

With each new day, I'm drawn anew
To Your heart, where love shines true
In prayer and service, I find my way
To follow You, come what may

Through language barriers, cultural bounds
Your love translates, without a sound
In every encounter, I'm made to see
Your presence, whispering, "You are free"

Jesus, my Companion, Friend, and Guide
Together we'll walk, side by side
In this new journey, I'll hold Your hand
And trust Your heart, in this unfamiliar land.

Thank you...!

Sr. Nirmala Kola SSps
Ekamba

Women: The Heart of Life



International women day
Women we celebrate your day,
Your memories are here to stay,
Women we celebrate you every day,
In your responsibilities, you don't delay.

You take the Role of a mother,
You become sister to a brother,
You vow to be a wife to my father,
You model as Godmother and grandmother.

Women to us you are a sweetheart,
Without you a family we can't start,
You are so thoughtful and smart,
A visionary that moves with lion-heart

You often hide your inner pain,
Holiness in the family you attain,
Work to bring us sufficient grain,
You prove your worth again and again.

Women, show us how to pray,
Women, show us the gentle way,
Women, show us in joy to stay,
Women, in equality we work and play,
Women, your services we cannot pay
Women, your respect and dignity we will never slay.

Sr. Vasanthi Varghese SSps
Mumbai



Streevani's Women's Day Celebration at Papal Seminary, Pune

On 8th March 2025, Streevani celebrated International Women's Day at Papal Seminary Hall, Ramwadi, Pune. There were 1240 participants for the celebration. Chief guests of the day were warmly welcomed by the women and led to the stage. They were Ms. Chhaya Ajay Kondhe -Post Master, Ms. Ashwini Patil - API (Chandan Nagar) Ms. Smruti Dimble – project consultant. The program began with prayer, lighting the lamp and introduction to the chief guest and honouring them with flowers after the chief guest was invited to speak to the women.

Ms. Chhaya Ajay Kondhe - the Post Master, spoke to women about becoming self-reliant. She introduced to women the various government schemes are available to women. Like the Senior Citizens Saving Scheme, Sarvajanik Bhavishyanidhi Fund, Sukanya Samruthi Scheme and various recurring Deposits in the post office etc.

Ms. Ashwini Patil - API (Chandan Nagar) was extremely happy to see the big crowd of women gathered for the celebration. She spoke about women's safety and encouraged women to speak against violence and assault and to be aware of the violence happening to women. She highlighted the recent incident of the rape case of a 26-year-old woman at Swargate bus depot and many other recent incidents. She discussed with women how to be strong, courageous and be conscious of online frauds, like messages, emails and phone calls about how women are trapped, and asked women to use the helpline numbers 100 and 112 in an emergency.

Ms. Shruti Dimble, the project consultant for Streevani, was very happy to see the large number of women gathered for the celebration and appreciated them for being a part of the celebration. She talked about the Azim Premji Project, a community-based project to obtain justice. She explained the process of reaching out to women at the grassroots level through legal clinics and legal camps so that they may not hesitate but come forward to stand for their rights and stand against the violence happening in their families and at their workplace.



Sr. Helen Saldanha, the Director of Streevani, explained to the women the importance of the Women's Day celebration. She talked to the Gathering about the works of Streevani, especially working for the empowerment of women, helping them with their legal issues, fighting for justice, etc. She asked the women to work as a team and support each other for the cause. She appreciated the staff and the women leaders for their cooperation and hard work for humanity.

Appreciating oneself as a woman, all the speakers of the day focused on the empowerment of women, standing against violence and assaults at home and at work, making aware of the present situation, being vigilant of online frauds, safely and guarding one self.



Women from different groups presented dances and a skit based on the Legal Clinics and Legal Camps conducted in the areas and some of the women came up spontaneously to present dance and song. Indeed, women were very happy and enjoyed the day.

Over all, the International Women's Day Celebration was well organized and executed. Streevani thanked the staff, all the collaborators, the Union leaders and the Para-legal workers, for their tireless efforts in bringing the women for the programme in large numbers.

Sr. Shanti Soreng SSps
Streevani, Pune

For For All women and Girls: Rights, Equality, Empowerment International Women's Day Celebration, Ekamba

"There is no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish." – Michelle Obama

On March 8, 2025, we celebrated International Women's Day with great enthusiasm. It was a wonderful occasion for women to come together and commemorate this special day. The event was organized at the function hall in Ekamba by Streevani Skill Centre.

The celebration commenced with a vibrant rangoli competition, where women showcased their artistic talents. Following this, a rally was organized, with participants marching through the town, raising slogans such as *"Every woman deserves respect."* The rally started from the function hall, preceded to Shivaji Circle, and returned to the venue.

After the rally, the main program began with a warm welcome to all attendees and greetings extended to the guests. Thirteen distinguished guests graced the occasion, each honored with a shawl and a sapling as a token of respect.

The inauguration ceremony featured a symbolic planting process, where women leaders sequentially placed a pot, soil, water, and a sapling, representing the nurturing role of women in societal development. The guests then watered the plant, accompanied by a meaningful commentary explaining the significance of each step and the invaluable contributions of women to society.

The Chief Guest, Mrs. Renuka, PSI from Aurad Taluk, delivered an insightful speech on women's rights and duties in a respectful society, highlighting the importance of helpline in times of difficulty. Her words were truly inspiring for all present. This was followed by Ms. Anuradha Shinde's presentation of the annual report, detailing the activities and achievements of Streevani Skill Centre. Women participants also delivered inspiring speeches emphasizing the significance of Women's Day, while lively and graceful dance performances added to the joy of the occasion.

A highlight of the event was the certificate distribution ceremony, where Sr. Vinisha announced the names of students who successfully completed the Tailoring, Computer, and Beautician courses at Streevani Skill Centre. The students received their certificates with great pride and joy. Sr. Reena then honored the staff of Streevani and the Self-Help Group (SHG) leaders with shawls and saplings, recognizing their dedicated contributions to women's empowerment.

The program concluded with the state anthem, followed by a fellowship meal, bringing the celebration to a joyful and meaningful close.

"Do not wait for someone else to come and speak for you. It's you who can change the world." – Malala Yousafzai

Sr. Vinisha Mal SSsS
Ekamba



Empowering Domestic Workers:

International Women's Day Celebration 2025

On March 8, 2025, the International Women's Day celebration was held at Adharsh Colony, Vijayawada. The registration process began at 2:00pm, led by Sr. Anjana and Ms. Jyothsna Rani, with 52 domestic workers participating in the event.

Ms. Lakshmi Priya welcomed the guests to the dais and greeted all participants. She also served as the master of ceremonies, conducting the program efficiently. Sr. Lolita and her team sang a beautiful song on the occasion, highlighting the potential and greatness of women. Following this, Sr. Lolita organized a few interactive games and later engaged the participants in a discussion about the lessons learned. The women responded spontaneously, emphasizing the values of teamwork, unity, cooperation, and togetherness. The domestic workers also sang a song and thoroughly enjoyed the celebration.

Ms. Lakshmi Priya then invited the guests to share their messages with the domestic workers on the significance of International Women's Day. She spoke about MSI, Vijayawada, and its work in two key areas: Domestic Workers and Children's Parliament. She introduced Sr. Lolita as the City Coordinator overseeing both initiatives, Ms. E. Annapurna as the Field Coordinator of DWFAP, and Mrs. P. Lakshmi Priya as the Assistant Field Coordinator. Additionally, Sr. Anjana and Ms. Jyothsna Rani were introduced as the Field Coordinators for the Children's Parliament. She emphasized the team's collaborative efforts in advocating for domestic workers' rights, including the demand for a minimum wage, a paid weekly holiday, ESI, and PF benefits. She highlighted the need to organize domestic workers into a structured sector and ensure their recognition in society, enabling them to live with dignity within their families and communities.



Ms. Suez, Executive Director of Domestic Workers, addressed the gathering on the POCSO Act. She acknowledged the essential role of women in families and communities but pointed out the persistent challenges they face, especially workplace harassment. She emphasized that no woman should feel unsafe at work and reassured them that they are not alone—the law is on their side. She explained the *Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act*, which ensures strict punishment for sexual abuse against children. She urged the attendees to report any incidents of child abuse, as their voices could help protect children's futures. Additionally, she stressed that workplace harassment is a crime and that every woman, including domestic workers, has the right to a safe and respectful work environment. She encouraged those facing harassment to speak up and seek support from legal protections, support systems, and organizations.

Ms. Annapurna Darla, an advocate, emphasized the importance of workplace safety and gender equality. She urged women not to fear reporting misconduct, harassment, or discrimination. She reinforced that every profession holds equal dignity in society and that no job is inferior or superior. Her speech aimed to empower women to stand up for their rights and work with confidence and dignity. She also expressed deep appreciation for domestic workers, acknowledging that their contribution enables many others to manage their professional responsibilities effectively. She commended MSI's efforts in empowering and motivating domestic workers.



Mr. Srinivas from Labour Line spoke about various government schemes designed for workers. He stressed the significance of having essential documents such as the Labour Card, E-Shram Card, and Health Card. He explained how these documents provide financial security, medical benefits, and access to welfare schemes, including insurance coverage, pension benefits, and job security. He encouraged domestic workers to register for these schemes and emphasized that awareness and proper documentation are key to availing the full benefits offered by the government.

Following the speeches, a rally was conducted to raise awareness. The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Ms. E. Annapurna, DWFAP Field Coordinator, expressing gratitude to the resource persons and participants. The celebration ended with the serving of high tea and snacks, marking a memorable and meaningful Women's Day.

Srs. Lolita Toppo & Anjana Tirkey
Vijayawada



Empowering Women Through Leadership and Unity

International Women's Day Celebration at Pavitratma Sadan, Patancheru



International Women's Day was celebrated with 85 domestic workers at Pavitratma Sadan, Patancheru. The event aimed to empower and educate women on leadership and safety in today's world.

Sr. Vasantha, an advocate, served as the resource person, addressing the women on the five types of leadership. She also provided valuable insights on cyber crime safety measures, ensuring that the participants were aware of how to protect themselves in the digital space.

Sr. Jessie Mary emphasized the importance of unity and journeying together as union members to empower oneself and become a voice for others. Her message inspired the women to stand together for their rights and collective progress.

The program concluded with engaging games and refreshments, bringing joy and relaxation to all present. More than 85 women actively participated, making the event a memorable and impactful gathering.

"Empowered women empower the world."

Sr. Jessie Mary SSpS
Patancheru

International Women's Day Celebration

Holy Spirit Hospital, Community Health Centre

The International Women's Day celebration at Holy Spirit Hospital, Community Health Centre, on 11th March 2025, was a grand and inspiring event attended by 180 women from the surrounding areas. The Chief Guest was Sr. Meena Godad and guest of honor was Sr. Ida Lobo and other dignitaries were: Sr. Lissy, the Executive Director; Sr. Pushpa Mary, the Pharmacy In-Charge; Sr. Felcy, Assistant Executive Director; and Sr. Jessy Antony SSpS.

Program Highlights: The event was skillfully compeered by Dr. Anu Aurora. The program commenced with a solo prayer dance performed by a Community Health Volunteer, setting a reflective and uplifting tone. This was followed by the ceremonial lamp lighting by the dignitaries.

Two young women from the local community courageously shared their life struggles and achievements, inspiring the audience. One of them presented her journey through a **short video**, adding a touching visual element to her story.



The Chief Guest, Sr. Meena Godad, engaged the participants with an interactive talk, where the women actively participated by answering thought-provoking questions. A skit by Nursing College students was both motivational and well-received. Throughout the program, spot prizes kept the energy lively.

Sr. Ida Lobo shared her insightful thoughts, followed by Sr. Lissy, who further motivated and encouraged the women. The event also witnessed impromptu dance performances by participants, which added to the joyful atmosphere. A special highlight was a woman performing Chakrasana (a yoga posture) with remarkable ease, earning much admiration from the audience.

The program concluded with photo sessions, capturing the cherished moments of the day. Snacks were generously sponsored by Robinhood NGO, and gifts for all the women were provided by the Community Health Centre, with additional spot prize gifts from Mr. Shibu Mathew.

Gratitude: The women remain grateful to Sister in-Charge of the Community Health Centre, for the invaluable guidance and support throughout the planning and execution of this program. Our sincere appreciation also goes to our dedicated staff, whose unwavering assistance made this celebration a resounding success.

Sr. Merlyn SSpS
Anugraha, Mumbai

Empowering Women, Enriching Lives:

A Celebration of Strength and Wellness at St. Mary's, Periyapatna



On the 16th of March, St. Mary's, Periyapatna, in collaboration with the Don Bosco Sisters, Mariduyar, organized a grand Women's Day celebration at Kushal Nagar. The event brought together approximately 200 participants, including women from various communities, local leaders, and distinguished guests.

The celebration aimed to empower women by addressing crucial aspects of their lives, particularly health and hygiene. The program commenced with a warm welcome, followed by an inspiring awareness session conducted by Staff Nurse Sr. Ramya, Sr. Mary's Hospital who enlightened the audience on **"Women's Health and Hygiene."** Her session emphasized the importance of self-care, preventive health measures, and the well-being of women across all stages of life.



The event was graced by esteemed guests, including Sr. Dayana Rodriguez, Manager of Auxilium School, Maradiyur, and Mrs. Shashikala, President of Avarthi Panchayat, who addressed the gathering and highlighted the role of women in building a healthier and stronger society. Several Panchayat members from three different Panchayats were also present, showing their support and commitment toward women's empowerment.

The celebration served as a platform to acknowledge the contributions of women and encourage their active participation in social and health-related initiatives. The interactive discussions and expert guidance provided valuable insights, leaving the participants motivated and informed.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to all the organizers, resource persons, and attendees for making the Women's Day celebration a meaningful and impactful occasion.

Sr. Adrin Menezes SSps
Periyapatna



Be Grateful for the Gift of Womanhood

Every Year March 8th we commemorate the achievements, struggles, and ongoing fight for gender equality. The day serves as a reminder to recognize and uplift women's contributions in all aspects of society, from politics and economics to culture and science. It also calls for collective action to address systemic barriers, promote women's rights, and create opportunities for empowerment and advancement. International Women's Day inspires solidarity, advocacy, and the pursuit of gender justice worldwide.

Expressing gratitude towards the women in our life is a powerful acknowledgment of our contributions, support, and presence. Whether it's a simple thank you or a heartfelt gesture, showing appreciation fosters stronger bonds and deepens connections. Recognizing the unique qualities and strengths of women cultivates a culture of respect, empathy, and mutual support. By expressing gratitude, we honour the invaluable role that women play in shaping our lives and communities. Here are five powerful phrases to convey our appreciation for all the incredible women who have touched our life.

Women often exhibit remarkable strength and resilience in facing life's challenges, whether it's in our personal or professional lives. Expressing gratitude for our resilience acknowledges our ability to persevere through adversity, inspiring others with our determination and courage.

The compassion and kindness of women often create a nurturing and supportive environment for those around us. Recognizing and thanking them for our empathy and generosity fosters a culture of empathy and understanding, enriching relationships and communities.

Women often offer invaluable wisdom and guidance gleaned from our experiences and insights. Expressing gratitude for our mentorship and advice acknowledges the profound impact we have had on shaping our perspectives, decisions, and personal growth.

Whether in our careers, families, or passions, women demonstrate unwavering dedication and hard work in pursuing our goals and aspirations. Acknowledging our efforts and commitment recognizes the sacrifices we make and the achievements we attain, inspiring admiration and respect.

The love and support of women form the foundation of countless relationships and endeavours. Expressing gratitude for our unconditional love and unwavering support reaffirms the bond and connection shared, fostering deeper understanding and appreciation.

Srs. Lolita Toppo & Anjana Tirkey
Pavitratama Niketan, Vijayawada



I take this opportunity to Thank my team
Srs. Lalitha, Rose Thomas, Vasantha Prathipati and Vasanthi Varghese
for your contribution to VANI during the past years.
I humbly request all sisters for your continual support to VANI
in the coming years through your reflective writings,
creative ideas and meaningful suggestions.

We welcome **Sr. Anisha Joseph**
as the next Editor of VANI and the team
Sr. Rashmi Manavalan and Sr. Molly Rego.

Sr. Reena D Souza SSpS



CELEBRATING

50 Years

GOLDEN JUBILEE

SSpS

Sisters in Faith,
Sisters in Service

Hearty Congratulations



Easter *Morning*



**The stone is rolled, the tomb is bare,
A whisper stirs the morning air.
From death has bloomed the gift of grace,
Light has kissed the darkest place.**

**Where thorns once crowned, now lilies grow,
And rivers of mercy gently flow.
The cross once stained with pain and loss,
Now shines with love-our risen cross.**

**O broken world, so full of cries,
Lift up your gaze, dry tearful eyes.
For every wound, a healing starts,
The Risen Lord revives our hearts.**

**Where war and worry fill the land,
He reaches out a wounded hand.
“Peace be with you,” is His song,
To lift the weak, to right the wrong.**

**No stone too heavy, no grave too deep,
For Christ has woken love from sleep.
So rise, O soul, and start anew,
The Son has risen - for me, for you.**



Happy
Easter !

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