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From the Provincial...

An act of Mercy everyday!

A little more of forgiveness at the earliest possible!

A tender smile!

A gaze of compassion!



These are perhaps the little ways we could start living the call of Pope Francis for the extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. The Feast of Christmas reminds us of the little ways through the babe of Bethlehem. Although every year, Christmas comes to us with the message of God's love for humanity, God's compassion and Kindness revealed in the person of Jesus, during this year it touches our hearts, it affects us much more and moves us to live it in our lives – to be the merciful presence of God.

“The purpose of the incarnation is our transformation into and union with God. The Christ-child is the gift of the merciful love of the Most Holy Trinity.” (Arnold Janssen). As we celebrate Christmas, as we greet one another, as we exchange gifts, may we not miss the heart of the Feast: the experience of the merciful love of the Trinity expressed in the Child Jesus, that 'our world, which at Christmas became His world, is important and dear to him'; so too, each one of us without any exception. If we could only take this message from Christmas, and approach every moment of life, each person and relationship, each event and situation however dark and hopeless they may look, with this attitude, we can fulfill the purpose of incarnation – transformation of the world we are a part of. More so, it happens when we reach out in compassion to the poor and the less privileged brothers and sisters of ours.

I wish each of you dear readers a blessed Christmas and New Year of God's merciful love!

Sr. Gracy Antony, SSpS
Provincial Leader, India South

Editorial...



It's Christmas time again, a time of sharing and caring! Each Christmas reminds us of the birth of Jesus-the birth not just of a babe in a manger, but of a MESSAGE that set the world on fire, changing the lives of millions thereafter. Through His life Jesus assumed a mighty voice, teaching us lessons of compassion and

mercy, which is very relevant especially in the contemporary era. He ministered the poor, embraced the outcast and healed the sick. In Him the Scripture comes alive! Indeed He is the special gift wrapped in humanity that we not only received from God, but also are inspired and impelled to share with others during this holy season.

The extraordinary 'Year of Mercy' reminds us that like Jesus we all have a responsibility to ourselves and to each other to make a difference that is real and lasting. We ought to be merciful for we are the keepers of our brothers and sisters. Pope Francis, talking about the recent terrorist attack in Paris, pours out his sadness over a world that is at war, which does not recognize the path to peace and expresses the need to ask for the grace to weep for such a world.

The alarming intolerance and violent behavioural patterns that question our faith day by day do test our convictions. We need to raise the level of our convictions from mere flattering words into concrete actions and merciful deeds. The recent floods in Chennai and the consequent mayhems have engulfed the comforts of many of our brothers and sisters leaving them hungry, sick, homeless and hopeless. In the midst of all these chaos reaching out to help the needy by sacrificing our comforts, the little we can do, will be a visible sign of God's MESSAGE to them.

May this Christmas be an opportune time for us to live out the MESSAGE-to bridge our differences and lift up our communities, friends, neighbours and nature... and grow in communion with all.

Sr. Cynthia D'Souza SSps
Bangalore

Wish you all a Spirit filled Christmas!





Incarnation

A Miracle of God's Love



As I reflect on this Amazing truth, I'm caught in Surprise and wonder, webbed in amazement by miracle of God's love for human kind. Word 'Incarnation' has resounded many times expressing the reality that



God became what we are. And what are we? We are frail, inconstant creatures', tied down by the limitations of time and space. We feel the tug of the earth and powerful attraction by God. And who is God. He is the fullness, the eternal, all – powerful, all good and loving. He is our creator, our first beginning and our last end, the Alpha and the Omega.

Incarnation is a manner in which God chooses to relate to creation and to human beings. God took on human condition in order to heal and bridge chasm. The word flesh is the involvement of God in time and history. God is not bound by physical restrictions as we ought to be, the incarnation expresses God's love and desire for redemption of human race.

In our celebration of incarnation we are

called to be God like, to rediscover the incarnation of ourselves, we must enter into the concrete veracity of our existence, walk the paths in deep realities of the world. , immerse ourselves in recognizing the true face

of the human being. To incarnate is to cross the cultural borders of our individualism and pride to adaptation and accommodation, to communion by widening the physical and rational boundaries of limited ideas and Enflesh ourselves in love, humility, compassion. It's a call to be 'divinized' persons, full of divine life and in opening ourselves to his grace and seeking invitation to enter into new life.

Sr. Ligi SSps

Anugraha, Mumbai



The 3 C's of life:
CHOICES, CHANCES, CHANGES.

You must make a
choice to take a chance
or your life will never change.



Christmas Memories.....



It was in the last days of WWII. The allied forces had already come into Germany from Holland and had reached the Rhine, (Rhein) the left side of the Rhine. On the other side still few German Soldiers were shooting towards this side of the River, but they were clearly on the retreat.

My village is a suburb of Cologne and stretches along the Rhine. Shortly after the Americans had arrived, we were ordered to leave our houses and go to a suburb behind the race track of Cologne. Nobody was allowed to stay in the village. Shoot at sight was the order! We were lucky that our garden ended on the race track and from the village behind we could enter our property without having to cross a road and could start preparing the ground for sowing, as it was spring time.

One day my father went around house in front of the garden, to see whether things had been stolen, because doors were all open. The best houses were occupied by American soldiers and officers. Ours was an ordinary house, having also been damaged by the war, but not too badly.

In the attic, which could only be reached by a ladder, were 2 wooden and 1 iron box. The wooden boxes contained all

what was needed for our crib. Moos, cork, wood, light, stable etc. After the Christmas season the lids were nailed to them and everything was safe for next Christmas. The much smaller iron box which had a lock contained all the beautiful Christmas statues, each individually wrapped in a silk paper with love by my father. He himself wrapped and unwrapped them each year as long as I can remember. There were many little wax angels, innumerable sheep and dogs and shepherds, a brook, a fire for the shepherds to warm themselves, the 3 Kings with their entourage, the Camels, not to forget the donkey and the ox.

That particular day, my father told us, with tears in his eyes, everything had been scattered, but nothing had been damaged. The soldiers looked for Jesus, Mary and Josef, took the silk paper off, also took a framed photo of my 2 older sisters and brother, closed the box and put these 4 items neatly on top, as if to say "we found them, we too know them and love them". I often think of these unknown soldiers and pray for them.

Sr. Hermanelde SSpS

Anugraha, Mumbai





....And it was Christmas !



It was Sunday, the 6th of December and after quickly distributing communion to two senior parishioners, I rushed for the catechism class. My colleague and partner had a better topic for the students. Savio is a young, energetic and a Bible enthusiast. He chose a creative method of teaching our 9th standard students. After managing to convince the teachers of the other division, we had a combined class.

Just a fortnight to go before Christmas my co-teacher, spoke to the boys and girls about how he spent his past Christmases from a child of 5-6 years to reaching adulthood.

Savio shared that as a child he watched his parents and family helpers make sweets. It was a joy to eat the sweets. He was also happy to join his parents as they went for the midnight mass. Yet Christmas day came and went but something was really missing in his Christmas. He thought I am too small and may be things will be different when I grow up. In the next stage - being of age when he could help he gave the much needed assistance in preparing the Christmas sweets, went to shop for new clothes and shoes. However, that year too he felt it was not really

Christmas in spite of the excitement of shopping, etc.

As a teenager, he involved himself in making a star and a crib in his building. He did not accompany his parents to church but joined the company of his friends. There was laughter, sharing of jokes and some merry making after Mass. Christmas day came and went ... and its joy was fleeting. Something missing again!

Savio finished his engineering and joined Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd. Later, Savio met the girl of his choice, Lavina. Having a good job and a beautiful potential life partner, Savio was on the top of the world. That Christmas, Savio and Lavina, went for a Christmas ball and they danced and partied all night. Savio was very happy of how things were going on. A few months later however he was rudely brought down to earth from his seventh mansion when he received news that Lavina was suddenly admitted to hospital in the intensive care unit. The doctors gave her 50-50 chances of survival; if she came through the next 24 hours she would be out of danger. Savio's



world was in shatters when he heard this.

Savio's father was not only a god-fearing man but someone of deep faith. He asked his son to trust God and pray. Until then, Savio had never prayed to God as someone who was his only hope and dependence. He had done things he was not proud of – and sorry for the empty life he lived. Seeing the hospital chapel open, he entered, bowed his head in utter helplessness, bargaining with the Lord that he would do anything to have her back well. He stayed there a long time – with just one desire that God should save her life. He promised God that he would turn over a new leaf. Prayers were going up from the prayer group which his father was a part of and also family and friends.

During the time he was in the chapel he was kept informed of her condition from time to time. Towards evening the news was that there was a slight and positive change. He was overjoyed and began to hope and pray. He was awake even during the night and would pray to our beloved Mother. Intermittently, the family was informed that she was responding well in the ICU and slowly recovering. Since the crucial time had passed, she was declared to be out of danger. Savio had no words to express

his happiness. However, in his youthfulness he chose to ignore his promise to God. But later he was reminded of his promise and so both Savio and Lavina, made a retreat. The Lord had touched them. The Following Christmas Savio felt Jesus born in his heart. He knew that his life had changed.

Listening to Savio's sharing, I thought yes it is Christmas, only when we are touched by Jesus. When we meet Jesus and turn over our lives to Him. Until then, we celebrate the event of Christmas – not the joy that Jesus the Prince of Peace brings to us. I looked back in gratitude to Jesus for painful paths and mystical experiences down the years when Jesus touched me. And today like Savio I can sing, Christmas isn't Christmas till it happens in your heart, somewhere deep inside you is where Christmas really starts, so give your life to Jesus and discover when you do that Christmas becomes really Christmas to you!

Sr. Molly Rego SSps
Anugraha, Mumbai



They removed their plates....!

It doesn't need space or an instant to be inspired but just a fraction of second for the one who is open.

It was a 'U' turn in life, expressed a friend of mine when I saw them removing their plates and tumblers from the handbag on the eve of Christmas. As each one gives an added thought to celebrate Christmas in a unique way, she continued, I too was determined to invite the persons affected with leprosy to join me for an afternoon meal. I did so with much enthusiasm and joy. And on that day I waited anxiously for their arrival - cooked all the possible delicious dishes... Set the table...Purchased gifts, decorated the house... in fact all was set in the best possible manner to dine with them.

As the time approached I sat outside gazing at the gate. I could see them coming from a distance, wearing the best clothes, slowly treading towards me with cheerful smiles. I welcomed them with flowers and a piece of cake. I was of the impression that I have done a good job, and they are pleased and satisfied. Little did I anticipate what was coming next and the sight literally

melted my rude heart. THEY REMOVED THEIR PLATES! And also their tumblers, pushing aside the set plates and glasses.

All my effort in convincing them went in vain. They said, *"We are rejected and separated from the society so we carry the plates wherever we go"*. Hearing this pitiful sigh I felt the pinch, I tried putting myself in their shoes. I realized that we often come across many disturbing incidents as these and these give us a push to become more life giving individuals. This inspired me to work for the people affected with leprosy.

Though the years have rolled by, but the memories flash back at every Christmas and the goose bumps up as I relive the incident.

YES! The ultimate sense of happiness comes when we realize that we have been of some help to someone. Let's make, not only a day different in someone's life but the rest of their lives.

So let's do our utmost to make this world, a happier place to live.

Sr. Nirmala Mendonca SSps

Ekamba, Bidar



Birthday Bells!

Each experience is unique, so too celebrating 60th Birthday of our dear Provincial Sr. Gracy. We like to share with you our Experience of this special day.

On Nov.20th 2015, a blessed Friday we woke up with the music of celebration in the house. It was the 60th birthday of Sr. Gracy. The meaningful Morning Prayer and the mass gave a kick start for the day. The Liturgy was very solemn, symbolizing the life of Sr. Gracy with the umbrella with small six poles representing 6 years as a leader and one big pole representing God holding her life directing her to tend the sisters in the province.

The Diamond Jubilee bells reverberated as she was lead to the dining with songs and dance. The delicious food, surprising visits, gifts and wishes marked the significance of the person of Sr. Gracy. A short cultural evening organized by the Novices added colour and gave expression to many of our heartfelt gratitude. Sisters from nearby communities also appreciated her life as they put up skits and jokes. A grand welcome to sashtipoorthi by our senior sisters with the story of "My Grand Father and Cock" was an inspiration to enter any stage of life gracefully.

While thanking us at the end of the day she said: "I have experienced the Divine presence of God leading me and guiding me throughout my life journey especially through challenges and joyful moments". She believes firmly that all things are possible through the powerful guidance, support and sustaining presence of Divine God in life.

Indeed it was a joyful celebration. We did thank her for the dedication, commitment, love for the poor, for her generosity, hard work through which she has reached out to the sisters in the province and wished her all success in her committed life.

Our prayerful wishes for her as she continues her life from the letter of St. Paul to Colossinas 1: 9-10. "We have been praying for you unceasingly and asking that you may attain full knowledge of his will through perfect wisdom and spiritual insight. Then you will lead a life of worthy of the Lord and pleasing to him in every way. You will multiply good works of every sort and grow in the knowledge of God."

Premy and Geetanjali

Ist year Novices



Holy Spirit Associates

A Providential Experience

As one enters the Parlour of Holy Spirit Convent on Bannerghatta Road, the words "Loved By the Father; Missioned by the Son; Empowered by the Spirit", encounter the visitor. These words wake up one to the reality of one's Christian life. It makes us to ponder over the purpose, objective and the goal of our lives.

As a parishioner of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Kalena Agrhara, I came to know about the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit. My interaction with convents and nuns was very limited after 1st and 2nd standard, when they taught me to read and write Kannada Alphabets and English numerals. Until I came in contact with Holy Spirit sisters, I used think that convents are places with high walls without access to lay people. The Holy Spirit Sisters are also Animators for the St. Ignatius Ward (Hulimau), of which I am a member. The Holy Spirit Convent, in 2014 decided to have Lay Associates in order to involve the community / parish members in various activities of the Community. This Community has a school/college (1000 students), orphanage (40 girls) and an Old Age Home (100 inmates). All these activities (Lord's Work) require resources -

human, material and financial. Every individual can contribute in some or other form, prayerful supplications being one of the important one.

Thinking about these activities and participation in any form as per one's abilities would help in fulfilling our Christian Mission. We, as followers of Christ are supposed to know Him and called upon to make Him known. If evangelizing is one way of making Christ known to the world by words, we can also spread His message by our lives, especially, in the way we conduct our lives and the way we relate to others, the least of our brethren. If one takes part in the Charism of a Congregation, directly or indirectly, we are likely to touch someone else's life, especially, the needy and the forgotten, in a meaningful way.

I had an occasion to attend a programme organized by the Convent and fully conducted by the Children. Their talent and abilities were in full display. Children, otherwise rejected by the society are blooming as intelligent and socially useful young adults. All this requires hard work and dedication. God's grace (Work of the Spirit) is evident, in the blooming of each child.

Jesus was sent by our Father in heaven to

restore the Love Relationship with the Father (Broken by Adam) and to show us the way to get back on path to Father's Kingdom whenever we stray. With our human nature, we often stray and fail, therefore, intercession and handholding by the Holy Spirit is very essential. Therefore, our daily prayer could be "May the darkness of sin and night of unbelief vanish before the light of the Word and Spirit of Grace, and may the Heart of Jesus live in the heart of all people " and may a new day dawn on us.

May we try to know the Heart of Jesus. Without knowing Jesus, we may not be able to take part in His Mission. If we know Jesus, we know the Father and the Holy Spirit. A T.V. Evangelist says that Holy Spirit is : Jesus Christ, Unlimited.

Now, we are in the Christmas season and naturally, we are drawn to the manger. The message to every believer from the manger is very simple. God and His Son, Jesus is very simple, ordinary and down to earth. The beginning of the Kingdom of God is in simplicity. Life of Jesus that followed after his birth in the manger was also simple, in the Carpenter's family. His words, stories (Parables) and miracles were all simple. As Christians, now we should reflect, if we have made His message a complicated one and try to get back to simplicity, as Jesus was the personification of simplicity. This is the

first lesson I learnt as a follower of Christ.

The second lesson: Jesus was very humble. Simplicity and Humility go hand in hand. Jesus did not wear his Divine Nature on the shoulder and did not throw his weight around. Though He was the Son of God, referred to Himself as son of man. There was no resentment, anger or frustration in His vocabulary.

The third lesson: Jesus was obedient. He did all that His Father commanded Him to do and executed His Father's will up to the Cross. And therefore, He rose on the third day triumphant, in full glory and honour and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

The fourth lesson: Service. Jesus rendered service to all those who appealed to Him, curing the sick/lame/blind / leprosy, restoring the eyesight and raising the dead. All this service was rendered by Jesus to the people, without any preconditions.

Knowing Jesus intimately is the purpose of Christian life. Following Him in His footsteps - simplicity, humility, obedience to the word of God and rendering service to the neighbor, is the objective. Thus, we achieve the goal and become worthy of Father's Love with a share in His Kingdom.

Gilbert D'Souza

Member - Holy Spirit Association



Glimpses of our life in Ekamba Mission – Bidar.

“A small body of determined spirits, fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history” – Mahatma Gandhi.

Dear Sisters, it is five months since we are in Ekamba mission. Whenever I visit our communities, the sisters show a lot of interest and eagerness to know about our new mission land. For those who have no chance to meet us directly but are interested to know about our mission work I thought of sharing about the same through our newsletter Vani under the following heads.

Background:

Ekamba mission belongs to Gulbarga Diocese of which we, a team of three sisters, a priest and a catechist are the pioneers. Ekamba is a small village in Aurad Taluk in Bidar, the northernmost district of Karnataka. Since Aurad Taluk is the border of Karnataka, Maharashtra and Telangana we hear people speak Marati in general, and Telugu and Kannada sparsely. All the literate people are able to understand Hindi and this makes it possible for us communicate with most of the people of our area. We live in Ekamba in a rented house and reach out to six villages around it. The place itself is bereft of water and electricity. Therefore our people are deprived of the joy of their basic needs being met.

Culture:

Our people belong mainly to three religions i.e. Hindu, Muslim and Christians. The Catholic population in Ekamba Mission is five at present i.e. three SSPS sisters, Fr. Harry D' Souza of Mangalore Diocese working for Gulbarga Diocese and the Catechist Mr. Maruti Mark. The people here are very simple, not very much influenced by modernization, friendly, welcoming and generous though poor. Rural innocence is reflected in their dealing with us and with one another. Faith in various gods is very strong and hence we hear singing of Bhajans in temples almost every night over the sound system by one or the other group. Celebration of various festivals is also almost a daily feature of peoples' life here. Caste system is very much prevalent here and no resistance is expressed by any group in this regard. People of different castes coexist without any dissension or quarrel. Ekamba has three major groups castewise: Maratas, Lambanies (Banjaras – a tribe) and people of Scheduled Caste. Families share with one another the special dishes made on their special festival days. We are the

beneficiaries of all the three groups. Certain customs are very unfamiliar to us like funeral service given to a monkey which is similar to the one given to a human being, marriage between a cow and a bull on the feast of animals called Pola celebrated in the month of September, marriage of Tulsi plant and sugarcane celebrated in November etc. The funeral ceremony of human beings is also baffling sometimes. The dead body in sitting position is taken in procession to their field for cremation.

Mission:

We have categorized our involvement in people's lives into - Education, Social Work and Faith Formation.

Education: We were introduced to the people in a well organized cultural programme by the Gulbarga Diocese as teachers who would give tuitions to children and right from the beginning we engaged ourselves in tuitions and this gave us an entry into the families of those children. The people of Ekamba especially the children are blessed with good school buildings in the same campus: one for girls of primary school, one for boys of primary school with Anganwadi in it, one for co-education of high school children and one for the children of Urdu medium and a spacious

play ground for all. The students get all the facilities like free books, uniform, shoes, cycle, midday meal, milk etc. except good education. The brightest student of my tuition class belonging to this school didn't know the meaning of come, go, brother, sister etc. leaving aside the spelling of words. The thinking capacity of children it seems is not at all developed. Quite a few children are seen walking up and down the school throughout the day. Just imagine, if this is the state of the children in a village which is supposedly forward compared to other villages what will it be like in villages around Ekamba which are in more remote areas. Though we volunteered to render our services in this school in teaching English to the students we were not invited where as we have got involved into teaching in other private and government institutions a little away from Ekamba at their request. Children too are not in the habit of being either regular to school or studying their lessons or do their homework daily. Parents too though most of them are literate have no time for their children. They go to their fields early morning and come home tired late in the evening. Cases of children being taken out of their own place for various reasons and returning after a week or a

month are quite common. We need to really worry and take steps for the improvement and progress of these children of the present generation who will be the future leaders of our country.

Social Work: Though there is a lot of awareness in our people of various government schemes they fail to realize them because they are not organized. Sr. Nirmala, with a background of Social Work studies and experience of working in different places has in collaboration with an animator won the confidence of women of six villages and working in the diocesan organization Orbit has organized the women in SHGs. We were also instrumental in enabling the elderly BPL card holders take part in a free eye camp conducted in Aurad by a private hospital in Bidar. 'Harvest is plenty but the labourers are few' is what haunts us.

Faith Formation: When the Catechists and the Pastors of other Denominations of neighbouring areas hear that we are accepted by people of Ekamba and the surrounding villages they raise their eyebrows in dismay. They say that there has been a strong objection and resentment towards anyone who has gone in the name of Christ. No doubt the credit for this goes to Fr. Harry D'

Souza and his associate Mr. Maruti Mark who with their burning zeal for mission have gone to villages to contact people over the past three years without counting the cost. We need to be patient and prudent in speaking to people about the One who means all to us. Sr. Rosaline being the coordinator for Faith Formation, frequent visits are made to different villages building up rapport, singing bhajans and praying for the various needs of people especially the sick.

Apart from this we also visit the prison regularly and listen and speak to the prisoners and celebrate national and cultural festivals and exchange joy and peace. The prison authorities are very happy with our involvement in the common mission. Finally all what we want to say is we are happy here being with people and doing the best we can. Thank you for your prayer for us and your sisterly support.

Sr. Theresa Rebello

Holy Spirit Convent, Ekamba.



There are two great days in a person's life - the day we are born and the day we discover why.

William Barclay



National Eucharistic Congress 2015 - Mumbai

For many, it may be a surprise to know what took place in Mumbai from 12th to 15th of November 2015. It was The National Eucharistic Congress held in Pius X Seminary in Goregaon, Mumbai, to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the 38th International Eucharistic Congress in Mumbai (Dec 2-5, 1964), the first one to be presided over by a Pope (Pope Paul VI). Here, this year, its theme was: "Nourished by the Eucharist, to nourish others", a very relevant and inspiring one. According to video message of Pope Francis, "The Eucharistic Congress is God's gift not just for Christians of India but for the entire population of the country which is culturally so diverse yet spiritually so rich. Over thousands of years, India has been permeated by the desire for truth, the search for the divine, the effort at goodness and kindness." It has been no doubt colored by the world religions living side by side for centuries.

Delegates had come from all the Dioceses of India, pledging themselves to nourish others having themselves been nourished first by the Eucharist. Pope Francis has taken "an affectionate interest in the National Eucharistic Congress by sending us a special

delegate in the person of His Eminence Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith of Sri Lanka and also a personal video message!" Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Mumbai thanked them and the Apostolic Nuncio who too was personally present at the important event. The delegates came from all over India, representing around 164 dioceses, to affirm their faith in the real presence of God in the Eucharist as their Bread of Eternal life.

The celebration of the Inaugural Holy Mass was preceded by a solemn procession of the delegates in their regional attire, carrying their diocesan flags. The procession included the four Indian cardinals as well as bishops and priests from the different dioceses in India. His Eminence, Oswald solemnly welcomed the Papal Legate and His Eminence Baselios Cardinal Cleemis declared the National Eucharistic Congress open.

Cardinal Oswald Gracias highlighted the theme of the Congress by expounding the Emmaus experience of Christ's disciples who recognized the stranger who accompanied them on their way as Jesus Himself, in the breaking of the Bread and wished for all present at the function an "Emmaus experience"

which they could go back and share with others as Christ's disciples did.

The lighting of the 'Samai' by the papal Legate Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, Basileos Cardinal Cleemis, Oswald Cardinal Gracias, H.G. Geevarghese Mar Coorilos and Telesphore Cardinal Toppo, the official anthem of the National Eucharistic Congress was sung by Dominique Cerejo.

NEC (National Eucharistic Congress) Special cover was released by Mr. Hameed Patel, Senior Superintendent of Posts, Mumbai South.

Inspiring homilies were given by eminent speakers: Video-Message by Pope Francis, address by The Papal Legate, Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Telesphor Cardinal Toppo, Bishop Raphael Thattil and, Fr. Francis Gonsalves S.J on the occasion. Masses were celebrated in all the three Rites existing in India: Latin, Syro- Malabar and Syro-Malankara. Testimonies on "How the Eucharist changed my life" were given by both lay and religious persons. The exhibition "Panis Angelicus" was opened by the Papal Legate on the first day. The display of many artifacts in it from the 38th International Eucharistic Congress was nostalgic for those who had attended it in 1964.

Thus on the 15th November this celebration of faith was concluded with a display of colourful and enthusiastic cultural items presented by the people coming from different parts of India.

The people who were privileged to attend the NEC were indeed touched by the event in different ways and like the disciples going to Emmaus, were enthused to share their experience of how the Lord touched them with people way back home.

Reported by Sr. Marion SSps

Source: "The Examiner Nov 21-27, 2015"





His Love endures forever

Golden Jubilee.....a time to look back and a time to look ahead to what Love holds for us. This is what I am doing before my Golden Jubilee on Jan 6th 2016. I am glad to have been granted two months extra home leave for treatment.

As I look back, naturally my thoughts go back to the cradle of my Religious Life - St. Raphael's where I made my first profession on Jan 6th 1966. I remember with gratitude and joy all those who shared and touched my life. My second home is Bangalore where I made my Final profession on May 31st 1972. My experiences there prepared me for the future Mission in Africa. I began this journey in 1987. My appointment was merely for 3 years to Botswana. But my love for the people of Botswana forced me to stay on. I was transferred to South Africa in 2005. Working with African people I learnt many valuable lessons like simplicity, hospitality, patience and spirit of sharing. Sad to see that these values are slowly diminishing with the desire for money and power.

It is my joy to share about Blessed Benedict Daswa who was beatified 13th Sept 2015. This was a memorable day not only for South Africa but the entire African continent. The beatification

ceremony was so touching that there were tears of joy on all those 40,000 people who attended it. The ceremony was conducted in his home village which is a bush area. No one expected such a crowd and we experienced God's Love in how things went very peacefully despite of many obstacles like possibility of rain, overcrowding, lack of many necessities etc.

The eldest of five children, Benedict was born on 16th June 1946, in a village of Mbabe near Thohoyandou. Thohoyandou is the parish where we work. So this event was very important to us Holy Spirit Sisters.

After his Baptism on 21st April 1963, Benedict realized that as a Christian he could no longer accept certain cultural beliefs and practices which were opposed to his faith. Benedict saw clearly that he had to follow his Christian Conscience and take a principled stand against Muti, and anything to do with the aspect of witchcraft and ritual murder. Benedict never wavered in giving Christian witness concerning these cultural issues in his own life, in his family, as well as in public life. As an intelligent and reflective man, Benedict realized that this could get him into serious

trouble and even endanger his life. In late 80's there was an increase in witchcraft related crimes, and many people were killed in the Venda "Homeland". Eventually, Benedict himself was targeted and killed because of his opposition to witchcraft.

As we rejoice on this occasion we want to remember the victims of witchcraft and pray for the courage to stand against this crime.

We in our ministry try to encourage our people to learn more about this holy and courageous man and to be inspired by his example in standing up for the faith. For Benedict, human life was sacred and should always be respected and protected. As an apostle of life, he is very relevant for promoting a true culture of life in today's world.

Below is excerpt from the speech given by Deputy President of S/A on this occasion.

"The Roman Catholic family and all South Africans are witnessing history today with the Beatification of the Servant of God Tshimangadzo Samuel Benedict Daswa.

On behalf of the Government and people of South Africa, I extend our warmest regards and congratulations on this historic occasion. This is an occasion which the millions of South

Africans will share with deep faith and affection. This is the first time in the history of the Catholic Church of Southern Africa that a South African man is being recognized as a Blessed Martyr of Christ.

This is, therefore, a special honour for the Church in this region. It is also an extraordinary honour for the Daswa Family, who tragically lost a 43-year-old son and father on the second of February 1990. Benedict Daswa died after being ambushed by people opposed to his outspoken rejection of witchcraft and witch-hunts. He paid the ultimate price for his beliefs on the same day that the then President FW de Klerk announced the unbanning of our liberation movements and the release of our beloved Nelson Mandela.

Such is the often dramatic confluence of events in our beloved country.

Today we remember TS Benedict Daswa as a man who led a holy life, not in isolation of the social realities around him, but rather deeply engaged with these realities.

He was a good family man, a hard worker and active member of his community, inspired by his faith. His fearless ministry cost him his life, but has caused the Church – 25 years after his death – to accord him the status of

being part of “The great cloud of witnesses surrounding us”, as it is described in the Letter to the Hebrews.

This is a day of mixed emotions and thoughts.

It is a day of profound faith, and a day of remembrance, sadness and pride.

And may this also be a day when we renew our commitment to building a society free of ignorance, intolerance and violence.

This should be a day on which we set out to replicate the mission and passion of

Benedict Daswa in the lives of millions of people in our country and on our Continent.

In so doing, we will hopefully rid our society of the evils that led to the untimely and horrific death of this youthful patriot and community builder. Let us commit ourselves anew to a better life for all South Africans and for all the people of this world.”

Sr. Bernard Mary SSps

South Africa



Holy Spirit Missionary Association

Holy Spirit Missionary Association at Mumbai is in its infancy stage. Though HSMA is not new to Mumbai community it was in need of a revival. Keeping this objective in mind Srs.Jaya, Pushapa and I started some ground work to form the association. Initially we met together and discussed on the various requirements to form the group. To identify people who would imbibe our spirituality and will be willing to work with us was a task in itself.

This hard work showed its fruition on 6th September when we first held a meeting together with the proposed members. Subsequently we have had meetings and at present we have a group of 15 members, who pledged their consecration to Holy Spirit on 8th December.

The group is active and spiritually oriented. We wish that the association grows in spirit of our founding generation as well as in numbers, rooted in our spirituality and energized in the power of the spirit.

Sr. Natalia SSps

Anugraha, Mumbai

"I am the Resurrection and the Life"



Exhumation and transfer of the mortal remains of our deceased sisters : Sr. Mary Florence, Sr. Aliciann and Sr. Mary Vivian from the Cemetery of Sacred Heart Parish, Andheri East, Mumbai.

Exhumation is one of the rare events that we get to witness. It was around 3 years ago that we witnessed the sad demise of three of our sisters in a short span of 6 months. As we wanted their remains to be transferred to the cemetery of our Provincial House at Bangalore, on 25th of September 2015 exhumation was carried out in the presence of Sr. Gracy and large number of sisters who had come to Mumbai for the retreat.

The Parish priest Fr. Lawrence Korea and some other priests were also present on the occasion. At first, a prayer service in honour of our sisters was held followed by a brief sharing of life experiences with the sisters.

Sr. Marion spoke about Sr. Mary Florence and prayed for her, while Sr. Philo James shared her experience of Sr. Aliciann and Sr. Sheela Joseph recalled the memories of Sr. Mary Vivian. The Rony undertakers did a

commendable job by opening the graves and collecting the remains separately in three wooden boxes and getting all the documents needed for the transfer.

The remains were then brought to Anugraha, respectfully placing them close to the main altar in our chapel. The sisters took turns to pray for them. Later, the remains were well packed and transported to Bangalore along with sisters who went to Bangalore. Now they have found their resting place in our own cemetery in CHS where the sisters and others can visit them, pray for them and to them. May their souls rest in peace. May they continue to inspire us and also intercede for us. RIP

Dear Sisters although we miss your physical presence in our midst, we are sure that "You have fought the fight, you have run and won the race". We are proud of you and grateful to you for all that you have been, to each one of us personally, our Provinces in India and for the entire Congregation, the Church and the world at large. May you rest forever in the bosom of our heavenly Father. Amen! Alleluia!

Sr. Marion Chemmanoor SSps
Anugraha, Mumbai



IN GRATITUDE.....

“There is nothing more beautiful than people who go out of their way to make life beautiful for others” Yes this thought lingered on as I welcomed a group of Benefactors and well-wishers for the first gathering of Holy Spirit Children's Day on 29th November for a cultural eve as a sign of our gratitude.

“God answers every prayer:

When the idea is not right; God says; No

When the time has not arrived; God says; Slow

We have good plans for ourselves But God has better plan for us.”

With a heart filled with gratitude children began the cultural event with a prayer dance followed by welcome speech. They entertained the audience with creative items like Punjabi dance, Tribal dance, Rajasthan dance and skit on 'Educate a girl and she will change the world'. It was an inspiration for all who continually partner with us in our effort to promote girl children in the society. It was a pleasant experience to see children growing in confidence and self-respect.

Sr. Gracy the provincial superior appreciated the efforts put in by the children as well as the staff to make the evening a colourful one. She also thanked the benefactors and the well-wishers who support the program and brought to their knowledge the need to reach out the poor and neglected in the society. Sr. Mary Paul thanked the gathering for their joyful presence. The programme ended with the refreshments.

To be spiritually conscious, socially responsible and morally upright is the core dimension of Holy Spirit Children's Home vision and mission. Dedicating to the cause of uplifting the under privileged girl children, our journey began in May 2006 with few children. It has sailed through twelve fruitful years with various milestones. At present there are thirty five children residing with us.

Sr. Saranya SSps
Bangalore



Advanced Locality Management (Mahakali Caves Road Unit, Mumbai)

Advanced Locality Management - a legal body registered under the Mumbai Municipal Corporation, is steadily achieving its purpose – namely, protecting the people (especially children and senior citizens), from traffic congestion, due to unauthorized parking, stalls, and hawkers sprawling all over the place on Mahakali Caves road, to the extent of a running poultry, much to the irritation (and amusement?) of wearied pedestrians.

To address our grievances to the BMC, the ALM sought appointment with the Assistant Municipal Commissioner. An appointment with the AMC in his chamber was given on 10.11.2015 at 8.30 a.m.

On the given date, a group of 34, comprising of committee members and leaders of Housing Societies along MC Road met at the Municipal building. The Asst. Commissioner kept his word and was there at 8 am, really edifying, considering experiences to the contrary. Since our item was on his agenda, we were able to meet and explain the woes experienced by the people on Mahakali Road (especially at the School, Hospital and Sacred Heart church intersections.) The AMC was all

ears to hear the petitions. Their meeting was a blessing to us since he could question/inquire from the concerned persons and delegate immediate orders to do the needful. On our part, our immediate action (for which we were given a week), was to pool together 2,00,000 pots (big ones for plants). Each pot @ Rs.1000/-. The ASM assured that the BMC would supply the necessary mud, manure and plants. Though it was a considerable amount it was readily agreed upon. After an exchange of a few good words, we made our exit from his chamber, with a happy feeling that it was worth the visit.

The ALM group discussed details outside the BMC building on how it could achieve the target of Rs. 200,000. Spontaneous suggestions came forth which could be pooled together from different quarters.

We dispersed around 10 a.m. to our respective destinations happy that an important meeting was not only successful, but ended early so we could get on with our other responsibilities.

Sr. Molly Rego SSps
Anugraha



International Symposium for the pastoral care of migrants and itinerant people



I was one of the participants of the symposium organized by the Pontifical Council for the pastoral care of migrants and itinerant people in Rome. The symposium was an offshoot of the key missionary vision of Pope Francis towards the least in our society and it was dedicated particularly to the reality of street children and street women as these two categories are continually and increasingly becoming the most vulnerable in our society.

The programme of the Symposium was divided into 3 main areas of reflection and discussion. The first one was the phenomenon of street children, street women and their families falling under the consideration of the Church and her mission, which is also one of the main areas of our Congregation's mission. The second point of consideration was the phenomenon of street children and

street women at Continental level. The third point of reflection was the increasingly dramatic situation of human trafficking which is sadly facilitated by extreme poverty, National and Regional conflicts, family and social violence, and largely orchestrated by criminal organizations, at the expense of the dignity and rights of poor children and women.

Conferences and workshops were planned out in order to draw a plan of action, based on the sessions during the conferences and then articulated on our personal and competent experience, as an immediate response to the urgent need to liberate our children and women falling prey to this exploitation in street life. As Monsignor Robinson, Director of office, PCPCMIP put it "This conference is yours, because you have the first-hand knowledge of the reality of street children and street women as you are some of the most competent agents in the field. This Meeting is yours, because you are among the best agents to articulate the most adequate Plan of Action for the Church as a proposal to curtail and eliminate the sad reality".

The highlight of the symposium was the audience with the Holy Father, Pope Francis. Pope Francis in his short speech to us emphasized that “No child chooses to live on the streets. Sadly, even in our modern, globalized world, any number of children continues to be robbed of their childhood, their rights and their future. The Church cannot remain silent, nor can her institutions turn a blind eye to the reality of street children and women”.

PLAN OF ACTION

Excerpt from the plan of action, which can also be applied in our mission are as follows:

In response to the phenomenon of children, women earning a living or living on roads and streets, and their families **in the light of Teachings of POPE FRANCIS** and the conclusions of 8 meetings, which should be made known to all that:

WE MORALLY REJECT AND OPPOSE TO:

1. All forms of human trafficking and physical, psychological and sexual violence and abuse, inflicted upon children and women, forcing them to lead a life not worthy of human dignity, which generate devastating negative impact on the person concerned and on the life of his/her family as well as on society at large.

WE STRONGLY URGE THE EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES, BISHOPS AND MAJOR RELIGIOUS SUPERIORS:

2. To write a special pastoral letter at National, Diocesan or Congregation level, in the context of the forthcoming XIV Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on Family, proposing conferences, discussions, moments of prayers [Catholic, Ecumenical/Inter-religious] on the life of the family of children and women earning a living or living on roads and streets, reassuring to them the promotion of social justice and considering them not as strangers or simply as beneficiaries of charity but as ordinary parishioners and citizens with every right and dignity.

3. To guarantee the establishment of a special-task desk / force at national / local levels in order to promote, coordinate and implement all that is necessary to reduce the risk and incidences of abuse and exploitation of children and women, and to liberate and reintegrate them, as well as to take every necessary step to collaborate with legal and civil authorities to bring to justice all perpetrators and offenders implicated in all forms of violence and exploitation against children and women.

4. To include compulsive study-material

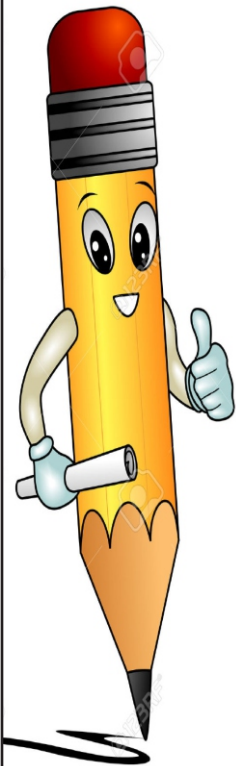
on the phenomenon of human trafficking in all its forms, in particular sexual and labour exploitation, especially related to children and women earning a living or living on roads and streets, in the curriculum of seminary and religious formation, in the catechesis and in all Catholic education institutions such as schools, colleges and universities, and in the formation of staff of charity and development organizations.

5.To promote national and international advocacy and lobbying against all forms of sexual and labour exploitation, violence against children and women, prostitution, and infavour of human rights and social benefits of such victimized and marginalized, through the participation of qualified laity and people of good will.

Sr.Julie George SSPs
Streevani, Pune



PENCIL AND ERASER TALK



When I bought a Pencil, I asked myself "What is the attitude of Pencil"?

"Sacrifice myself for others" said the pencil.

When I started sharpening, Pencil said "Bear the pain and face the challenges".

When it was sharpened pencil said, "Start building your potential".

When I started writing I heard pencil saying, "Work hard".

When I made mistake Pencil said, "Failure is not permanent", every problem has its own solution and it gave me an Eraser.

And the eraser said "hold tightly and trust".

When I was rubbing, eraser said "Accept yourself to be corrected and be a beautiful person".

Manisha Kullu(Student)
Patancheru

UPASANA-II Aksharadhama Outreach

Improving the quality of life through strengthening education in
Rural Government schools - a wider approach

What a team accomplishes through networking, converging our strength and pooling our energies bringing in results, is certainly far greater than what one alone would, within one's limits. My entry into the Upasana projects initiated by MCBS Missionaries was no merit of my own but God's. I came to Shimoga Mission, a rural mission a bit blank only with a change over in mind after being almost 20 years in the commercial capital of India (Mumbai) sharing both its blessings and its inevitable polluting fumes. I am grateful for all the happy experiences, achievements, successes, learnings and above all the poor and sick who intersected my life, giving meaning to my life and ministry. I am grateful for the synergy of the team that worked tirelessly, the unity of purpose that bonded us to one focus, the freedom of expression that brought out multi-dimensional views and ideas, helping our efforts by a substantial contribution. I must also admit here the inevitable, growth provoking hurts and wounds in the hustle and bustle of living together for a cause, an important dimension of a religious missionary community which was both inter-

cultural and international in its nature.

Before the transfer, in a counseling prayer by a sister, I was revealed that my change was not just a human decision; it is a divine plan to rejuvenate me and to lead me to greener pastures including spiritual heights. So the transition fell so smoothly since I knew for sure God has laid out His plan and I need to simply move on trustingly. I reached Shikaripura with a ministry identified as family apostolate unlike my familiar ministry of financial administration. At the start I was given a very official welcome along with the newly ordained Asst. Parish Priest placing us formally before the parish community. I felt so unworthy as I knew my family apostolate was impossible without learning the local language Kannada. I didn't resist the opportunities as God had his plans in place. As the days moved on, this became more and more evident. One day accidentally I met Fr. Joseph P.V. MCBS, a 74 yr old, known as 'Sadhu father' clad in the saffron of a sadhu, conducting a training program at Upasana Centre for the 33 Youth Animators who were appointed to strengthen the education of the

government school- going children of 15 villages. Presently he is the President of the “Shanthi Nikethan Charitable Society” and the Regional Superior of MCBS, Shimoga Region. A highly qualified person with a rich grass-root mission experience.

In my interaction with Fr. Joseph P. V., he perceived that I could be part of his team for his dream project-Upasana –II which would cover about 1200 Government-school-going students in the surrounding villages of Shimoga city for improving their education and thus opening them to national and global opportunities. He was convinced of his mission; though uncertain I felt the pride of the colt that heard “The Lord needs it” (Lk 19.31). Being a path finder of the project Fr. Joseph initiated the project placing total trust in God, without any financial backing. He trusted if the mission is valid, the necessary money will come in time of need. Incidentally I was given the responsibility of the project co-ordinator with Sr. Simona as a trainer in the programs. For me being part of the project and of the MCBS family at Shimoga were truly enriching and inspiring; the daily mass and prayers so devotionally led by the team expressing their inner prayerful life and the joyful

family environment sustained by their commitment to religious community life, the team spirit and the supportive role they play in the ministries including the present project are remarkable in spite of the human limitations ingrained.

For me, the whole experience of going around villages was simply a divine experience. Their hospitality, warmth, and simplicity bonded us quickly in the 22 villages we were interacting with. The lush green field spoke of the fertile land with bountiful crops against the poverty of the isolated villages, glaring at our paradoxical existence. While organizing the villagers for the introduction of the Upasana II - Aksharadhama outreach program initiated by Fr. Joseph, along with Suresh, now internally promoted as our Supervisor and Mr. Lewis, the driver, I realized what and how grace could work through feeble hands. Suresh who is a matriculate, managing English, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, and communicating at their level, organizing the villagers, getting the co-operation of Government teachers, Local panchayat, SDMC and parents of the children, clearing their doubts etc. were simply amazing. He became a true testimony to the villagers specially

communal sensitive areas as he would boldly say, “I am a Hindu, a BJP activist,if you have any doubts on our intention, I will spend any number of hours to clarify; what we need is your whole hearted support”. We had to make it late evenings often, to get the villagers for meetings and the co-operation we received was very encouraging.

Upasana-II-Aksharadham Outreach speaks out by its name. Seeing the impact of Upasana-I which is a successful project of Upasana Centre at Shikaripura Taluk, running for 1200 children from Government schools through 33 centres in 15 villages, the Upasana- II was born. With the same objective, Upasana-II has been initiated as an outreach program of Aksharadhama Educational complex at Gadikoppa, Shimoga, extending its services to another 1200 children of government schools of 22 villages through 35 learning centres.

Besides learning School subjects and regular support in home work, the project envisages to give a special emphasis on English and Hindi for National Integration, Maths, extra-curricular activities, talent development such as sports, classical dance and music, Computer Basics and

other learning exposures.

The “Shanthi Nikethan Charitable Society (SNCS), a registered Charitable Organization, formed by MCBS missionaries has been championing rural development and community organization since 1980 through various ministries. Upasana-I and II are its pilot projects as part of its non-formal support to education and are appreciated very much. May many such UPASANA clusters be formed so that the 70% of our population sidelined in the villages and outskirts of our progressing cities may find their children privileged to share the benefit of the progress the world makes opening them to national and global opportunities leading to economical progress.

Human dignity can be realized and protected only in community. How we organize our society-in education, economics and politics, in law and policy-directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community equally. Every decision, approach must be judged in light of whether it protects or undermines the dignity of the human person. Human dignity comes from God, not from nationality, race, gender, economic status, or any human accomplishment. We need to judge our economic system

by what it does for and to people and by how it permits all to participate in it. The economy should serve the people, not the other way around. Otherwise, we will have many smart cities growing in the outskirts but our rural children remain behind, disqualified to take the

benefits, leaving them to their fate. UPASANA stands out as one of the remedial paths for bringing economic and social justice to the rural poor.

Sr. Sheetal SSps
Shikaripura



VALUE OF TIME / PUNCTUALITY



God created everyone for a purpose. Time has a prime place on the ladder of success.

Every morning God gifts us a fresh 24 hours in which we have lots to do; to pray, sing, play, work, inspire, encourage others, of course study and learn as well. Time is precious. Those who want to be successful should not waste their time.

A person who is punctual does everything on time. She/he is never late for what she/he has to do. She/he is always prepared for the coming events. Sometimes we are disappointed in our

works because we do not plan well our time. Failure to observe punctuality can invite trouble. If we are punctual in our daily work we will do better in our undertakings and it will help us to be successful in our life. Let us cultivate punctuality wherever we are.

Be on time. Try to arrive a few minutes early. You will be much more relaxed and work better.

Cecilia and Deepika
1st year Novices



**If you want
things in
your life
to change,
you have to
change things
in your life.**

Mission Sunday Celebration

Every mission Sunday brings me such a nostalgic feeling of my childhood experiences of going to each family of the parish to collect contributions for the

mission Sunday, to send them for the mission work, a day to acknowledge the missionaries of their selfless services and hard life. It was on a mission Sunday I received the initial taste to become a missionary through the poignant sermon of my parish priest of my younger days.

Unlike other years of mission Sunday practices, this year's mission Sunday plan in our parish was something unique which had a blend of the current year's theme 'The year of consecrated life'.

The Sacred Heart Parish is blessed with thousands of families. Living in the heart of Mumbai city, people seem to be busy. It is said that the people in Mumbai have no time to waste. Attending any church activities, the people stand on pins and thorns. Two golden words that we hear often are 'hai' and 'bye'. So in a context like this



nine Congregations may matter them nothing. The parish on mission Sunday gave all the religious Congregations a chance to make

known their vision, mission and charism to the parishners.

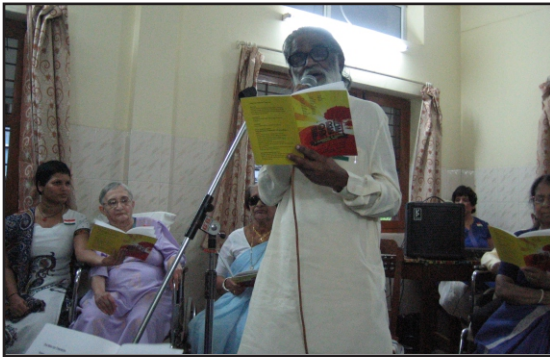
Srs. Molly, Shruti, Jaya prepared the charts, banners, leaflets, Congregational prayers, history of the founding generations needed for display. Many people showed interest to enquire about the Congregations, to appreciate the ministries done, also to acknowledge the dedicated and consecrated lives of the sisters. This event went on from morning 7 to evening 7. We took turns to be at the desk with the banners and congregational articles.

Going around each Congregation's desk, it was an eye opener for me to get to know the unique charism of each who bear witness to the love and compassion of Christ.

Sr. Rose Thomas SSps

Anugraha, Mumbai

Born Free - To Live Free



"Dreams are renewable

No matter what our age or condition

There are still untapped possibilities within us

And new beauty waiting to be born".

The residents at Holy Spirit Home say that these were the four lines, that inspired them to free themselves from self-imposed limitations of age and infirmity. The Loaves and Fish is the name of the choir which brings the residents together since three years and from then on it has set them off on a journey that brought them to their seventh concert, aptly titled, 'BORN FREE!'

That wonderful day, every nerve of our residents, every corner of our beautiful home, every leaf and branch of our garden echoed saying "Come, join in our celebration". Indeed August 15th was a day that gave us opportunity to witness the very moments of the first independent day of our country, expressed by our elderly with a feeling of born free while we live free. They sang

the songs of yesteryears that roused a nation to wage a unique non-violent struggle for independence, expressed their hopes for the kind of India they wished for their children and themselves, and compelled those present to free themselves for a joy-filled life.

The invited guests mused at the performance of our well trained choir. The Choir members proved that age and infirmity are only physical but determined minds achieve more. Thundering applause resounded all through the show as the performers recalled the stories of great men and women who sacrificed their lives to see India free and those continue to do so.

Here are few thoughts from our residents in their own words: Defending Our Freedom

Mr. Suresh (Air force pilot): "From age of six whenever I saw a plane I dreamt of flying. That dream came true when I joined the Indian Air Force in 1970. I am very grateful to God for giving me the opportunity to serve my country for thirty years, starting with the Bangladesh war, I served the Indian forces in Sri



Lanka, during the Kargil war and through many national calamities”.

Here is a personal letter of recommendation that Mr. Suresh received from late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi;

“We have had three exhausting weeks together. I want to thank you personally for having put up with the long hours, inconvenient timings and sudden changes in program. Through these trying days you have remained cheerful, disciplined and alert as befits your membership of the elite squadron to which you belong. Thank you for your cooperation and dedication to your duty”.

Mr. Benedict: “ I served in the Indian Air Force since 1949. It was my singular honor to be present at India's first

Republic Day parade in 1950”.

Mr. Lindsay Rego: “I served in various capacities in the Government of India. I served under Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and retired as secretary of forests and environment”.

Aren't we privileged that they are part of our lives?

As the celebration came to an end, we remembered the millions for whom true freedom is still a distant dream and where the weight of oppression, the desperation of poverty and injustice is still a nightmare. We dispersed hoping one day we shall overcome, deep in our hearts we do believe that we would overcome some day.

Sr. Vasantha SSps,

Holy Spirit Home, Bangalore.

OLD IS ALWAYS GOLD

My tribute to the “ Ever-loving Residents” at Holy Spirit Home

Although.....

Old in age, yet young at heart.

Frail in body, yet strong in thought.

Weak hands and legs,

Yet power in mind and strength in fest.

The elderly are the pride of any nation,

For in them are solemn memories and promises to the new generation.

The best classroom in the world is not what we build or mould,

It is indeed at the feet of men and women of old.

You and I are called to respect them,

Love, care and let smiles surround them.



Betsy Joseph, Teacher

Holy Spirit School, Bangalore

Care for Common Home

'Cleanliness is next to Godliness' we have heard this over and over again. On the 23rd of November the students of Pavitratma School took up the cleanliness campaign to the streets of the local village Nagaram. The political leaders of the village joined the



staff and students in this mission. What was special about this campaign, was the idea that a clean mind is a prerequisite for a happy life. Through dance and skits the students were able to bring the awareness about keeping the mind clean and pure by cultivating the habit of good thoughts, positive thinking. They not only made effort to bring awareness in maintaining the surroundings clean and green but also on bringing godliness in our daily living, thinking and doing. The students marched the streets of the village shouting slogans to care for mother Earth and spread the message about our responsibility towards natural and human environment. After the rally the students gathered at the local VRO office to present skits and dances

highlighting the value of discipline and cleanliness. The skit brought the message that creation came to birth because of God's love for us as God desires to make our life happy and enjoyable on earth by providing us for our needs and we need to

seriously make effort to protect the Earth. The villagers participated in this program and appreciated the students for their efforts.

Sr. Philo James SSps
Valigonda



The tragedy of life
is not death
but what we let
die inside of us
while we live.

~ Norman Cousins

Silver bells are ringing Jubilate Deo.....

The moment I received the invitation for the Silver Jubilee Celebration of Angul Community, I felt very happy and was eager to be present for this special occasion. The time seemed to fly so fast and I could hardly believe that it was already 25 years since its beginning. I am grateful to the Provincial Leader Sr. Regina George and her team and also the community Leader Sr. Sharmila and her community for arranging everything so meticulously to make my journey and my stay in Odisha pleasant and comfortable.

The celebration began with a thanksgiving Mass celebrated by Rt. Rev. Bishop Niranjan, Bishop of Sambalpur, concelebrated by the Rev Bishop Emeritus Lukas Kerketta SVD, Thalchir parish priest and his assistant. The choir made the occasion very solemn by their melodious singing. The celebrants were led with a prayer dance performed by our sisters. The Holy Mass was followed by felicitation during which the Bishops and other guests were honoured with bouquets of flowers and a shawl. A short cultural programme, speeches by the guests etc. were then followed by a sumptuous meal for everyone present.

We have often heard it said "It is better

to light a candle than to curse the darkness". Good education does just that.

Education in English medium or to have a good working knowledge of English is a must and a need of the hour especially for the less privileged, living in remote areas of our country. For this we have ample opportunities in India especially in rural areas. In 1990, Angul was only a small town and hence we realized the need to begin a school there for the purpose.

As you all know we had a very small beginning in a family quarters in Similipada, used as Convent and school where we began classes for Nursery, K.G I and K.G.II in English medium. The people of the locality too felt the need to educate their children with emphasis on English as they had realized its importance for a better future of their children and so they were very cooperative and wanted to admit their children in our school. Meanwhile we began to find out about its feasibility in that place to carry out our education ministry. As I was transferred after two years, our sisters continued their search. The place at Similipada was too small for a growing school. So the administration found and bought a new

place with a larger area and built a new school at Thurang, not far from Similipada where we are running the school now.

I am indeed grateful to His Excellency Bishop Emeritus Lukas Kerketta of Sambalpur Diocese who allowed us to use the building at Similipada for the purpose of starting it. He also helped us to add one more floor to it so that we could continue there for some more years till we got an appropriate place for the purpose. The SVD Fathers at St. Lawrence school in Tenteloi especially Late Fr. Felix Padanilath, Fr. Joseph Daniel, Fr. Ranjit Kerketta (then a Regent) were extremely helpful in various ways and were available for our spiritual needs as well. So according to the desire of our Founder St. Arnold, the SVDs and SSpS worked together in this mission from its very beginning.

I was extremely happy to see the progress made in Angul as it has been raised to be a District and this had brought in a lot of changes. Now we have even a railway station near by and so travel too has become easier, cheaper and more comfortable. Roads are better and auto-rickshaws have replaced the cycle rickshaws etc.

Today my wish and prayer for the people of Angul and also for our Sisters' community and its activities here is that

with God's blessing and guidance many children and their families may benefit from the education and values imparted to various categories of people without distinction of caste, language, religion or colour.

Many thanks to the Administration, management and the institution, Sisters, staff and students for giving me this opportunity to participate in the function and to speak a few words. I enjoyed being with all of you. May God bless you.

After visiting a few communities on the way, I went to Bondamunda community, our first community in Odisha and stayed there for a few days so that I could give some classes to the 16 candidates. Then I returned to Jharsuguda just in time so that I could also meet our Congregational Leader Rev. Sr. Maria Theresia who left early next morning for visiting the different communities of INE, accompanied by Sr. Regina George, Province Leader of INE.

I am grateful to the entire Province for the opportunity of being with them in INE. And for their love, care and concern. Congratulations once again!

Sr. Marion Chemmanoor SSpS

Anugraha, Mumbai



Remembering the campaign “Orange your Neighbourhood... Orange the World”

International campaign for the Elimination of Violence Against Women,
25th November to 10th December 2015



The United Nations General Assembly has designated 25 November as the International day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The UN Secretary-General's UNITE to End Violence against Women campaign starts from 25 November through 10 December which is the Human Rights Day. The 16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence aims to raise public awareness and mobilize people everywhere to bring about change and invites us to “Orange the world,” using the orange colour to symbolize a brighter future without violence.

Historically, the date is based on the assassination of the three Mirabal sisters, in the Dominican Republic. On 25 November 1960, three sisters namely, Patria Mercedes Mirabal, María Argentina Minerva Mirabal and Antonia María Teresa Mirabal, who were

assassinated in the Dominican Republic on the orders of the Dominican ruler Rafael Trujillo, because the Mirabel sisters fought hard to end Trujillo's dictatorship. In 1981, activists marked 25 November as a day to combat and raise awareness of violence against women more broadly. On 17 December 1999, the date received its official United Nations (UN) resolution and November 25 was designated as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women by the UN General Assembly.

On this occasion Streevani organised various events among different groups of people to create awareness and to promote a violence free future for women and girls making a promise “never commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women and children”.

On 2nd December, around 200 women domestic workers came together, with orange ribbons on their wrists and raising their voices by shouting slogans for a safe India for women and children.

On the 5th December, we had a meaningful liturgy during Holy Eucharist at Atmadhara to remember our three sisters and many others and to carry their

legacy forward by remembering them alive in the struggle of women and girl children today.

On 5th December, the Indian Christian women's movement of Pune region came together at Steevani in solidarity and sisterhood to mark the occasion and reflect on the theme.

As we walk with love, respect, beauty, honour and dignity, let us connect with all women because we are one of them and

listen to the crucified and resurrected sisters of ours speak "her story". We all have a role to play in preventing and ending violence against women and children, hence let us promise ourselves "I will never commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women and children."

Sr. Reena D'Souza SSps
Pune



BOSCO MINISTRY

"Child without education is like a bird without wings."

The childhood is the most precious stage of life. This is the time we enjoy much with our families and friends. It's the place we forget our pains. Yes, family plays a great role in shaping child's personality.

"Bosco" a child caring Center comes to rescue of children who do not enjoy their childhood and child rights. It's our privilege to be a part of this mission where we help out in rescuing the boys and girls who run away from their homes for various reasons. Some of the reasons are, unhappy family condition, Broken marriage, Lack of education, Poverty, unemployment etc.

As we came across several children and youth we realized that each person desires to be good and independent in life. Wrong means to attain happiness do

make them victims of bad habits and bad company.

As we meet them regularly we get an opportunity to get to know the people's misery and their struggle to live everyday life. We are forced to reflect upon our own behaviours inspite of the goodness we experience and respond in a better to our own personal problems.

As we cannot eat banana without removing its skin from it, we also meet many challenges and obstacles like lack of language, which makes our communication less effective. But then, Language of love always works. We are able to communicate the God the mercy incarnate through our little deeds. We thank God for giving us this chance to be a part of Jesus' mission.

Anjelina and Priyanka
Bangalore



Personality Enhancement for Children

Children during the academic year look forward for the Dussehara holidays, Deepavali holidays etc... they do plan for outdoor programs to ascertain their talents



I really marveled at the enormous talents, capacities of the children today. I wonder if tapped in time what would they make of their future. At the same time, the

and skills. Holy Spirit Hospital took the initiative to gather the children of the staff aged between 6-12 years. Program was set for 4 days and the theme "Personality enhancement" was quiet appropriate. Children gathered were from different religion, cultural and regional background. 32 children grabbed this rare opportunity to experience a unique holiday package under the guidance of Sr. Jaya, with the help of different expertise.

During 4 days of program, children learned the golden mantras like

- ♦ Laugh and let go
- ♦ Respect others as you respect yourself
- ♦ Winning or losing, life is a celebration

The above golden mantras were explained through stories, games, breathing exercises, action songs, enacting role plays etc...

impact of nuclear family, working parents, long gap between siblings etc somehow are visible in the attitude and behaviors of the children.

Fast moving cities ultimately offer stress, anxiety and competition. Consequently it affects the mindset of the children too. These four days were like stress busters for the children. The impact was such that the day one behavior of the children and day four behavior of the children had a visible difference. Within four days children learned to be quiet, calm and at least to sit for half an hour without any distraction. The drawing session was on the last day. It was amazing to see that almost 99% of the children drew a house, sky, mountain and with spacious environment. I am sure the children do enjoy and look for such an environment to grow up rather than overcrowded Mumbai city.

Sr. Rose Thomas SSps
Anugraha

Yes...! Am alive

*Today seem to be sad
Tomorrow may not be mine*

*Today someone is happy
because I am alive*

*Today someone is hopeful
Because am alive*

*Today someone feels proud
Because am alive*

*Today someone smiles
Because am alive*

*Today someone gifted me
Because am alive*

*Today someone greeted me
Because am alive*

*Today someone corrected me
Because am alive*

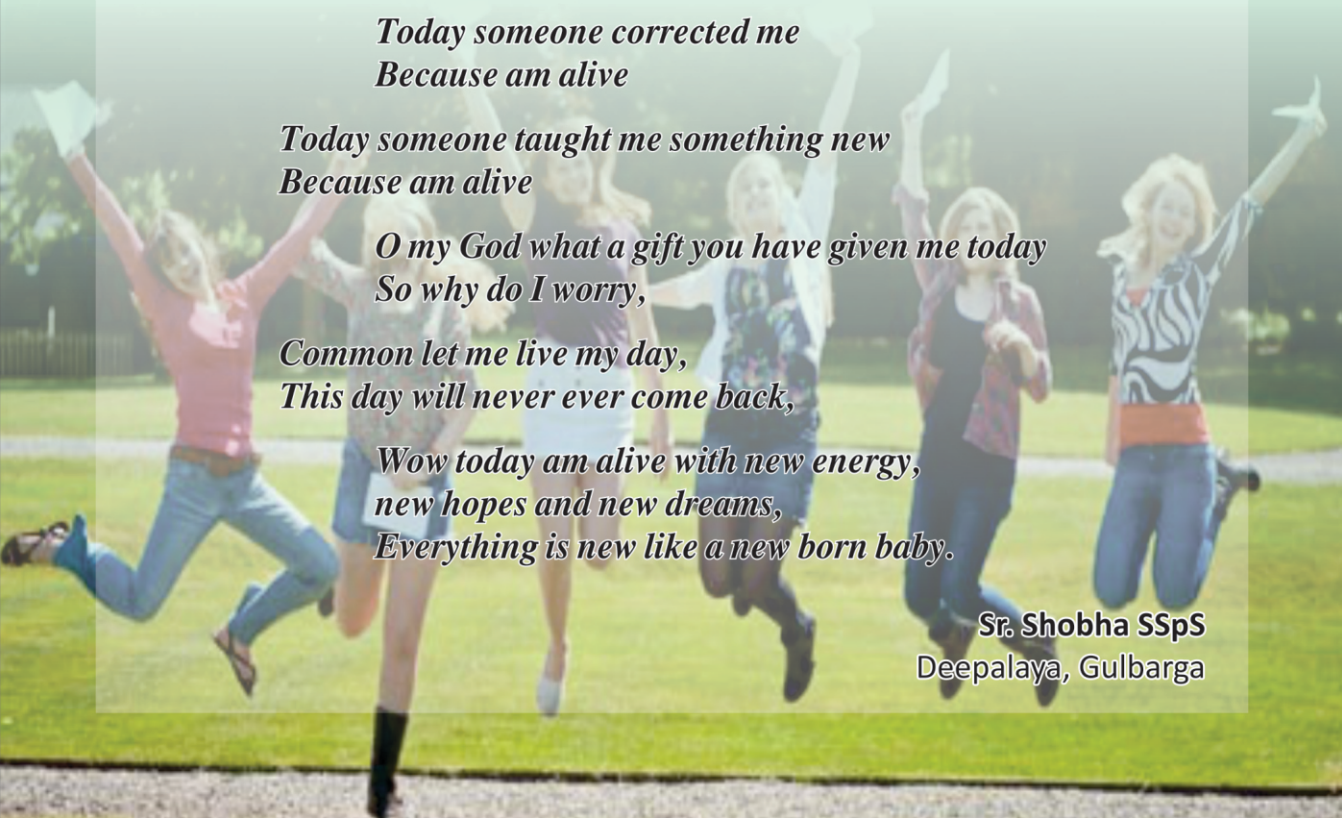
*Today someone taught me something new
Because am alive*

*O my God what a gift you have given me today
So why do I worry,*

*Common let me live my day,
This day will never ever come back,*

*Wow today am alive with new energy,
new hopes and new dreams,
Everything is new like a new born baby.*

Sr. Shobha SSps
Deepalaya, Gulbarga





FAMILY LOVE **HAPPY** PEACE
FUTURE **NEW** YEAR **FUN**
CHRISTMAS FRIENDSHIP WISHES CHAMPAGNE FORTUNE
HEALTH JOB **2016** SUCCESS
FITNESS CHANGE PARTNERSHIP
MIDNIGHT PARTY PROSPERITY X-MAS HOLIDAY
LIFE CHANCE FREEDOM FESTIVE
BEST **GOOD LUCK** 2014
WEALTH ADVANCE HOPE 2016 HAPPINESS PROFIT
MONEY PROMOTION

2016

H O L Y Y E A R O F M E R C Y

December 8, 2015 - November 20, 2016

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