



Mother Anna Huberta Roggendorf
Founder of the Society of Helpers of Mary

Igniting **Sparks**

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

AUGUST 2016



Celebrating 90 years

Sr. Fatima Lewis celebrated her 90th birthday on 12th July 2016. It was a day of celebration for all of us as we joined her to thank the Lord for the gift of life. This day was a right and appropriate time to thank God for the wonderful years of her service rendered to the poor, women and children through the Congregation and also for her outstanding leadership when she was nominated as the 2nd leader of the Society of Helpers of Mary.

The day began with prayer followed by Eucharistic celebration which was graced by the presence of the Superior General Sr. Stella and Provincial Superior Sr. Asha and sisters in Asha Sadan community. During the homily Fr. Lawrence emphasized on love, respect and appreciation for the person's wisdom, love and service. Sr. Fatima, we Congratulate you on your 90th birthday.

Sr. Sulochana P.

Fondly remembering Fr. Josef Neuner, SJ

Late Fr. Josef Neuner, SJ was closely associated with our Mother Anna Huberta who helped to write the Constitution of the Helpers of Mary. His birthday is on the 19th of August, so we think of him in a special way and thank him for all that he has been and done towards the growth of our Congregation from 1958 till he went to his eternal home, after he was 101 years old. Since many of our young sisters do not know him or seen him, it would be useful to read the two books he has written, one on "Mother Anna Huberta" and the other, "Memories of my life" written when he was 95 years old in 2003.

God gifted us with no ordinary person, but a great Theologian, simple and humble, full of Christ, full of God, so much so that when he walked through our compound, children used to say "he is just like Jesus". Fr. Neuner visited us now and then from Pune, De Nobili College and helped Mother Anna Huberta. He was indeed a great help in many ways, specially as a spiritual guide and confessor. While wishing him a **Happy Birthday**, let us pray to him and ask for guidance and direction as we go along this changing world of ours.

Sr. Shalini Kamath SHM



SOCIETY OF THE HELPERS OF MARY - GENERALATE,

Shraddha Vihar, Veera Desai Road, Andheri (West), Mumbai 400 058 Tel. 026766845 E-mail : sparksgeneralate@gmail.com



Blooming together towards integration and wholeness

God gives us opportunity to bloom our lives while we interact and share things in common. Living together and serving others creates ripples of love and joy all over especially in the hearts of people. On the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee we, The Young Sisters belonging to 47th to 53rd batches consisting of 42 sisters gathered in Atma Sadhana, Andheri for the Renewal Program from 4th - 12th July 2016.

The program inaugurated by Rev. Sr. Stella Devassy, Superior General by lighting the traditional lamp. The keynote from Sr. Stella Devassy was very motivating and thought provoking. She made us to understand the purpose of this renewal program. As she spoke about our Founder Mother Anna Huberta, she emphasized that the Spirit of our founder is handed over to us by our Senior Sisters and we need to imbibe her spirit and work to be a vibrant Helper of Mary.

Sr. Naveena and Sr. Priya anchored the whole program. The classes on Psycho-Sexual Integration by Fr. Loddy Pires SDB, former Director of Don Bosco Renewal centre at Bangalore enabled us to understand the various stages of life and as a religious the development of the psychosexual dimension has a big role to play in the way we live our religious vocation. It is our individual responsibility to make our life beautiful. Topic on Communication and Media was taken by Fr. Cleo Braganza SDB, where he highlighted on advantages and disadvantages in use of Social media. The session on Spiritual direction by Fr. Hari Vaz was important for our Religious Life. We realized that spiritual guide helps us to discern wisely and to live a happy Religious Life.

Every evening we were engaged with various activities like group discussions, cultural programme, debates, talk show, quiz, recreations, role play on the Year of Mercy, elocution competition etc. It helped us to be innovative and dynamic. Renewal programme boosted our spirit, encouraged us to work effectively in our centres and to handle crisis in a matured way.

We are extremely grateful to Sr. Stella Devassy, our Superior General and Councilors for organizing this program and for all the support and encouragement. We are also thankful to Formation and Spirituality team for all the efforts they have put in to make this programme a fruitful one.

Srs. Nancy Silva & Pranali Munis



Reaching out with blanket of love



On 4th July 2016, the 43rd death anniversary of Mother Anna Huberta and to mark the Platinum Jubilee of our Congregation, the Mother House community at Andheri, decided to celebrate this day with the poor and marginalized. Through visits and personal contacts, 75 poor families were selected from the vicinity. They were invited to Shradha Vihar Community Centre to partake in the celebrations which started with a short prayer followed by a brief explanation of the establishment of the Congregation and its activities of reaching out to the poor for the last 75 years. Srs. Flory and Pramodini graced the occasion.

Mattresses and blankets were distributed to the 75 families who accepted it with great appreciation. It was a special moment to see the happy and smiling faces of these families who were from all faiths. They thanked the sisters not only for the material things they received but also for sharing the blanket of love.

Sr. Nisha Viegas



Empowered through Skill Training

I am Jency, born and belong to a middle class family in Saude Ernakulam, Kerala. 7 years ago I got married to Mr. Shibu a carpenter. God gave us two little daughters. My husband Shibu is the only earning member of the family. With his earnings we were struggling to look after our family and his aging parents. I came to know about the tailoring classes that is being conducted in Our Lady of Health Convent at Saude Kochi. I got enrolled there. After learning stitching I got a tailoring machine from the sisters on a subsidized rate. Now I am able to stitch churidar, saree blouses and many other items. This skill training not only helped me to engage in a meaningful work, together with taking care of my two children, but

Water - Precious gift to our life



Monsoon showers in Latur district have raised hopes of a good rainy season, but I remember the struggles of last summer. Latur is a drought-prone region in Marathwada, was severely affected this summer, scourging heat, dry, scarcity of water and we experienced most testing time. Ashadeep Mahila Vikas Sanstha (Women's Group), in Collaboration with Western Region Social Service forum, Mumbai voluntarily distributed water in Nadi-Hattarga Village on 18th May 2016. Water-starved families of Nadi-Hattarga village flocked in front of the truck to collect bottles of water that were brought in cartoons. We distributed water to 570 families from nearby villages. Ashadeep Staff, Grihini girls, Village Sarpanch, Vice-Sarpanch, Members of Panchayat, Gram Sevak, Primary Head Master were Present and assisted to distribute the water. We took this opportunity to make people aware of the importance of saving water. We chanted the slogans, "When you save water, it saves you back. Don't waste water. Water is life so don't hit your life. Don't let the water run in the sink, our life's on the brink! Put a full stop to every drop of water. When you conserve water, you conserve life".

I thank Western Region Social Service forum, Mumbai for their bounteous heart, and I must say and acknowledge that I experienced happiness and joy of the people. I implore the blessings of God upon the people of Latur.

Sr. Vimal Sojwal, Ashadeep, Latur

helps me to supplement the family income. I feel proud that I can join hands with my husband to support the family. I encouraged my younger sister to learn Tailoring. Thanks to our sisters in Saude, they have trained hundreds of women and empowered them to supplement the family income. I am proud to be one of them.

Blessings of Operation Theatre cum labour room



On 18th July 2016 was a great and joyful day for the sisters, staff and patients of Shraddha Vihar hospital at Andheri. For the past years the hospital team was finding it difficult to conduct complicated deliveries, as the labour room was located on ground floor and operation theatre was on first floor. In emergency or in complicated cases, it was difficult to shift the patient to first floor. We had no other option, than make the patients climb the stairs with labour pain.

Now we have renovated the labour room into a fully equipped Operation Theatre cum labour room and the maternity. We extend our sincere thanks to Rev. Sr. Stella, our Superior General and the Councillors for giving the permission to do the necessary renovation. We are now equipped with better facilities, providing better care for the mother and the baby. We extend our thanks to Fr. Blaise D'Mello of St. Blaise Parish for blessing the new maternity ward and all the sisters of Shraddha Vihar complex who were present for the blessings.

Sr. Leena Nazareth

Our Sympathy

We extend our heartfelt condolence to our dear sister who has lost her loved one

Sr. Deepa Tharakan who lost her mother
May her soul rest in peace.



Thank you

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Inspiring Memories



4th of July, on this day we specially remember our Mother Anna Huberta. So quickly 43 years has passed by since she joined the heavenly family!

Her presence brought happiness to us and she made every day new and vibrant. Her love towards humankind and in a special way towards the down trodden, neglected slum dwellers, those suffering from Hansen's disease, was immensely remarkable. Ever since she came to know the pathetic conditions of the people in slums, without proper medical care, unhygienic surroundings, without educational facilities and essential needs to meet daily living Mother determined to uplift the poor. She made up her mind to gain entry into the slums to befriend them and they too accepted and welcomed her. Not knowing the local language of the people was not a barrier, as she could communicate her love through her luminous eyes. Besides serving the people Mother had unshakable faith in prayer. For her service to the poor and praying to Lord Jesus and Virgin Mary were one and the same.

The Helpers of Mary have assumed the spirit of our Mother and taken up the challenge to carry on vision and mission of the Congregation. Her ambitions were limitless and sky-high, to reach out to where few dare to step in and to restore human dignity to those on the edge of the society through their charity, welfare, medical, educational, social, awareness programs, women's empowerment projects, adult literacy classes, saving schemes, self-help groups, credit societies, Dispensaries, Maternity homes, hospitals, rehabilitation centres for Hansen's Disease and HIV/AIDS patients, Homes for orphan girls and Senior citizens etc. I firmly believe that these acts of love transform the lives of thousands and all by Mother's kindest grace and motherly blessings from above.

Though she is not with us today, we can feel her presence and hear her whisper in the silence of our heart.

Mr. R. A. Dass

