



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

# Igniting Sparks

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

JANUARY 2017

Dear Friends,

Another year has dawned for us. Many of us make promises to ourselves to mark the beginning of a New Year. We make pledge such as I'm going to save more, exercise more, spent less time on the internet, to be more kind, loving and cheerful etc. We begin the year with good intentions, but before long, old habits tempt us to take up our old ways. We slip up occasionally, then more frequently and then all the time. Finally, it's as if our resolution never existed. It is said that 55 % of Americans keep the New Year resolutions for one month, 40% for 6 months and 5% for two years.

Instead of focussing on our own self-improvement goals, a better approach would be to ask ourselves what does God desire of me? Through Prophet Micah God has revealed that, He wants us to do what is right, to be merciful and to walk humbly with him. I would like to conclude with one of the most striking messages - Franciscan blessing for the New Year that I received.

May God bless us with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships so that we may live deep within our hearts.

May God bless us with anger, at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people so that we may work for justice freedom and peace.

May God bless us with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, hunger and violence, so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and turn their pain in to joy. And may God bless us with enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in this world so that we can do what others claim cannot be done, to bring justice and kindness to those who are poor and on the margins.

Have a challenging yet satisfying New Year 2017!

.....  
**Sr. Stella Devassy shm**

Superior General, Generalate Andheri - Mumbai



'Your good deed will never be forgotten' these were the words which echoed in our hearts as we left the place. It reminded us of the compassion, which led Christ to work the great miracle of feeding the multitude. He saw the people as sheep having no shepherd. All these experiences in life of sharing make us grow prudently and become wiser in all the options of life. We thank God for the beautiful season of Christmas, which fills us with joy, love and peace and are deeply grateful to the Sisters who contributed to share joyfully.

.....  
**Sr. Joanita D'Costa**

Generalate, Andheri - Mumbai

## JOY RIPPLES IN SHARING

During the month of December the Sisters from the Generalate, Andheri - Mumbai were overwhelmed to share joy and peace of the Baby Jesus with our brethren living on the streets of Mumbai and sheltering themselves under the bridges. 580 bags were prepared with Rice, edible oil, Wheat flour, Sugar, mix grains, Soaps, Toilet articles, Biscuits and Blankets.

At the dawn of 18<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2016 filled with the spirit of sharing we loaded the truck with these ration bags and went in haste to the streets of Mumbai, to share with the poor the joy of Christmas. Within a second we were surrounded by a huge crowd of poor waiting in expectation for their share. We were happy to mingle with them and managed to give these ration bags systematically. The atmosphere was filled with happiness and gratitude as they waved us goodbye.



**SOCIETY OF THE HELPERS OF MARY - GENERALATE,**

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

## Platinum Jubilee Celebration with Children

“There are no bad children! There are only unloved children.” Mother Anna Huberta

This quote of Mother Ann Huberta is relevant and applicable in our present time. Children around the world openly and silently suffer atrocities and persecution either within their families or society. Poverty at home, pressure to earn for livelihood, caring for the sibling and the external factors such as child labour, human trafficking, sexual abuse, influence of peer group challenge the development of a growing child. Knowing all these facts we are called to show the love of Jesus Christ revealed in the Gospel. The Community of Suraksha, Jogeshwari in honour of the Platinum Jubilee of our Congregation, took the initiative to bring love to the children living in the surrounding slum at Jogeshwari.

This program was organized on 17<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2016, at the Infant Jesus Parish, Jogeshwari. Around 80 children participated. It was a fun filled event with many games, spot prizes and talent showcase. These Children prepared special and unique dances. It was tough to score off the best performance. They brought and displayed art and craftwork prepared with waste materials. Along with lots of fun the objective and highlights of these games were to inculcate teamwork, contribution, coordination and enhancing appreciation. The day was filled with awe, enthusiasm, creativity and healthy competitive nature.

Parents and guardians of children also took part in these activities. Srs. Sheetal and Rufina coordinated the event. Sr. Sheetal spoke on the qualities of Mother Anna Huberta and emphasized on the importance of perseverance. We distributed educational materials like books, stationery and served snacks. Everyone returned with cheerfulness and happy memories. It was a moment of boosting and reaching out to these children and their families.

.....  
**Sr. Anita Athaide**

Sureksha - Jogeshwari

### My Inspiration

Mother Anna Huberta articulated, “You must be a book wherein others can read, in the way you sit and pray.” These are the practical words carried out by The Communities of Helpers of Mary especially in Prem Sadan, where I had the privilege to get a two months community experience – the life of Marys. Here the Sisters are like a book which I could read and had the opportunity to learn many things. They pray, share their successes and failures together.

My desire was to be with the children and it was God given opportunity to share love with them. I could see the efforts they put in to cope with life. Everyone lives as one great family, helping and supporting each other. They came from simple background and live with great hope. I could see the smile on their faces. I was indeed happy to spend my time with them. I will always cherish the joy and happiness, which I experienced with them.

.....  
**Bijeswhari Raita Novice - Vehloli**

## Blessing of the Foundation - Dapada



On 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2017 Sr. Stella Devassy Superior General Blessed the Foundation of the Sisters' Residence, Maria Seva Sadan at Dapada. After much efforts we were very glad to get our plan approved for the construction. Sisters from Generalate, Dapada and Children from Dapada thanked the Lord for granting us His blessings and accomplishing the procedures. We thank Sr. Amrita, Sr. Sarita, Sisters and Pilar Father for working to accomplish the headed task. Let us intercede for the success and support towards this valuable undertaking.

## Sparks of Mercy

Every occasion comes to us as an opportunity to explore; this year of mercy brought a wonderful experience for all of us. We had ample of opportunities to reach out and render our services to the poor and the marginalized victims.

In expression of joy and gratitude to our Pope Francis who initiated and brought alive the traditions of the early church, and involved the entire faithful in resembling the mercies of God. We the Postulants of the Society of the Helpers of Mary concluded this great year of mercy by conducting a small get together for the slum children at Kripa Academy Skills.

Closing of the Year of Mercy reminded us of our responsibility of serving and caring for the people. We were all filled with passion to make this day an enjoyable moment for all the kids who were eagerly waiting to participate in the games. It was truly amazing to see Joy on the faces of all the kids who were gathered there.

This small event of giving joy to others helped us to be in solidarity with the Universal Church and its mission at large. May this Spark of mercy continue to kindle our lives as we proceed and live with the theme **Mercy with the Misery**.

.....  
**Anjali & Postulants, Andheri**



## Rejoice with grateful hearts

“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (Mt 19:14)

On the occasion of Platinum Jubilee year of our Congregation, we the Sisters of Premankur, Madarihat organised a cultural event on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2016 for 400 children and 75 widows. As we had formed various committees, each committee took the responsibilities. The program began at 2.30pm with a prayer dance by the Premankur children, followed by the lighting of Lamp by the Chief Guest Mr. Rajiv (BDO), Mr. Bowal - Manager of Tea garden and other dignitaries. President Mrs. Saswatiji, Senior Police Officer Mr. Sunil, Fr. Joseph, Fr. Hermon, Br. John, Br. Immanuel, Sisters, representatives from widows and children were welcomed with a thunder of applause. Being the Platinum Jubilee Mother Anna Huberta was honoured with Aarti.



With grateful hearts we rejoice and thank God for all those who helped us to achieve these joyous moments for the poor living at the periphery. Sr. Reena former Provincial of North Province briefed the history, vision, mission and the objectives of the Congregation. Children from the nearby tea garden performed beautiful cultural program and children from our home staged street plays on different topics like Nature cure, Environment protection, Moral values, and Model family. Various competitions brought much awareness and joy to the participants.

The Chief Guest in his speech appreciated our dedication and the colourful event. The second day began with yoga and prayer service followed by the Eucharistic celebration. The sports committee organised sports and awarded the winners. On this special occasion a small memento was given at the end and meal was served to all. On this occasion of the Platinum Year, Premankur Community took the initiative to conscioustize people and encouraged to avail government schemes such as widows and senior citizens' pension, construction of roads and toilets, facilitate water and ration facilities etc. for the people living in the tea gardens. The marvellous deeds of the Lord prevail forever.

.....  
**Sr. Pinky Saha**  
Jalpaiguri- West Bengal

## Joy of Christmas

Birth and death are two mysteries of life and between them there is this process to pull our life to live, to search and to reach to this goal, to search the life giver who was born to us to die. This story of Jesus is the story of our life.



Joys of Christmas was shared with our school children and their parents on 21<sup>st</sup> Dec. 2016 at Premal Jyoti School, Varanasi. On this day Fr. Paul D'Souza the Rector of Minor Seminary of Varanasi Diocese and Sr. Daisy shm – Provincial, Sr. Maria - Vice Provincial, Sr. Mercy and Sr. Puspika were invited as special guest for this occasion. Sr. Meena welcomed the invited guest. Fr. Paul and Sr. Daisy enlightened the crowd with Christmas message. Our Children enacted a Christmas musical dance devotionally. As a token of love, gifts and sweets were distributed. Sr. Merline proposed a vote of thanks to all.

Christmas invites us to share the joy of our Saviour who was born in a manger. 25<sup>th</sup> Dec. was an opportune time to share our joys with differently abled children and our supporters. Twelve participants were delighted to have such an inspirational experience of being and sharing a meal with us. It was an awesome moment to add a smile on their faces.

.....  
**Sr. Merline Hembram** Premal Jyoti - Varanasi

## Helpers of Mary, angels in disguise

From the time Demonetization was announced all the poor were suffering due to shortage of cash. People could not make any purchase as they were standing in long queues at the ATMs or Banks from early dawn to late nights and would return home empty hands. The times were hard. The Sisters of The Society of the Helpers of Mary have been real angels in disguise. They helped countless families with rice, dal, sugar, tea leaves, clothes, blankets, edible oil, soaps etc. and relieved the poor from getting into despair. This valuable gift from Helpers of Mary has been a great help. We could share this with others who were also in need. We are so grateful and thankful to Sr. Stella Devassy – Superior General of the Helpers of Mary for her assistance and kind gesture. May God Bless all the Sisters with joy, good health and happiness. Wishing you success and abundant blessings for the years to come.

.....  
**Lourdes Gomes**, St. Blaise Parish, Andheri



## Christmas tree with less privileged children



It was indeed a joyful moment when the Sisters of Arunoday, Ahmedabad - Gujarat celebrated Christmas, with a Christmas tree party for the less privileged children. This year we collected children from construction sites. Sr. Vinayalata had requested the construction supervisors to bring the children on 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec. to our home. The fixed time for the program had passed by and nobody was present for the celebration. Without much ado Sr. Sureka went in search and found them unprepared. She took the initiative to clean, comb their hair, dress and brought them for the program. These Children were very excited to see the colourful decoration and the love they received from the Sisters. Gifts, sweets came to them as a big surprise. They enjoyed to their hearts content. To our Community it was a golden opportunity to add vibration of love in the lives of the less privileged.

.....  
**Sr. Benigna Chungath shm** Arunoday - Ahmedabad

## Radiating kindness and enkindled Joy

20<sup>th</sup> October 2016 was a memorable day for the Community of Asha Deep, Latur. To commemorate the Platinum Jubilee we invited 75 girls from the Zilla Parishad (government) school, teachers, village leaders and staff. The Girls were welcomed with flowers. The Grihini girls went in procession with lamps and placed them before the portrait of Mother Anna Huberta who had began this wonderful work.

Sr. Vimal Sojwal, Superior of the Community welcomed the participants and spoke in short about our Congregation. Sr. Jyotsna highlighted the work of the Helpers of Mary. Sr. Isabel described the incident, which was a turning point in Mother Anna Huberta's life. A woman came with a baby in her arms. She was pregnant, two more children trailed behind her. They pleaded would there not be a corner, perhaps under a tree, and just a little bit to eat for the hungry children. **Mother tried to explain that it really was not possible, no place, not enough to eat even for those who were in the home as the home had already accommodated beyond its capacity. And the woman stopped asking. She did understand. The children swallowed the food that was given to them and licked the plate to lose nothing and then left. Anna Huberta followed**

## Platinum Jubilee Essence chimes in our hearts



"Let the beauty we love become the good we do" Rumi The joyous bells of Platinum Jubilee Essence chime in our hearts and in the complex of Nirmalalaya Convent, Agra. With one voice we sang Praises of God for providing us with this good fortune to serve the poor and the downtrodden.

The highlight of the day was the stage performance of the children held on 28<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2016. The children of shoemaker's, rag pickers, school dropout and poor families displayed their stupendous talents, through songs, dances, skits, rhymes and quotes. Rev. Stella Devassy our Superior General was the Guest of Honour and was delighted to watch their performance and confidence. It was marvellous to see them. She appreciated, encouraged and wished the children a bright future. Tiffins and sweets were distributed to mark this great event of our Platinum Jubilee. This evening was a wonderful event for the children as one could see their glowing faces with joy and happiness.

.....  
**Sr. Valsa & Sr. Marina**, Nirmalaya - Agra

**them with anguished eyes. They reached the crowded Versova Road and the woman threw herself with her children before the speeding lorry. The alert driver braked. There were only minor injuries, and then he asked the woman why she had done this. Her reply became the basis of Anna Huberta's policy in the future: "If there is no place in St. Catherine's Home, there will be no place anywhere in the world."** (Page 31 Mother Anna Huberta) From that incident onwards the Mother stopped counting children.

The young girls staged beautiful cultural program and enacted a skit on the Mother's life. The Chief Guest Mr. Patel appreciated our commitment in the mission and said that in 1993 when the earthquake hit Latur many people came and went away but the Sisters of Asha Deep, remained and played a vital role in Latur. Snacks were served and gifts were distributed as a remembrance of this day. Sr. Vimal gave vote of thanks and ended by quoting Mother Anna Huberta "Spend every moment in your life serving Him in the poor!" Our actions radiated kindness and enkindled Joy.

.....  
**Sr. Isabel Dabre**, Asha Deep – Latur

## Our Sympathy

We extend our heartfelt condolence to :

**Sr. Manisha who lost her mother &  
 Sr. Pritibala who lost her Sister**  
 May their souls rest in peace.



*This issue is Sponsored by :*

**Excellent Construction**

Mr. Shoyeb Baroudger, Excellent Construction,  
 White Tower, Jogeshwari (West), Mumbai

*We extend our heartfelt gratitude for his generosity.*

*Thank you*

