



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

Igniting **Sparks**

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

JUNE 2016

Becoming Channels of Compassion

The new academic year is at our doorstep. Together with the refreshing monsoon we look forward to infuse new energy and enthusiasm into what we will be doing. We all are engaged in some kind of ministry, be it working with children, women, senior citizens or visiting families. As we work a number of years, routine sets in and one tends to ask how to bring tremendous sense of vitality, energy and enthusiasm in our ministry? What will bring quality in our services? We may think it is basic skills, higher training, expertise, knowledge or having expensive equipment which may contribute to quality. Sometimes we think quality comes with better facilities, techniques, good infrastructure or conducive atmosphere. While all these are necessary, and adds to efficiency in our services, may not bring about the required quality. The essential virtue that make our services qualitatively different is **compassion**. All faiths insist that compassion is the test of true spirituality and that it brings us into relation with the transcendence, we call God. Compassion is a virtue that flows into us when there is deep communion with God. When we are in communion with God, His compassion flows into us and we become instruments to flow His compassion to others. For us Jesus was the epiphany and embodiment of compassion and this virtue is the central ethic of Jesus' enterprise. Compassion should be a state of virtue in all of us. To make our services and offerings qualitatively different, we need:

To surrender self-seeking projects that throw away kindness and compassion. When we are mindlessly bothered about fulfilment of all our gratifications, success and climbing the ladder up, we tend to forget the less privileged ones, and some time end up stamping the feet of the other. There compassion and love cannot thrive. We need to get rid of I, me and myself culture.

Practise non judgement: To have that ability to look at people and events without labels, prejudices and images because judgement is the nature of the egoistic mind. We need to see things as they are.

Being conscious of suffering humanity: So often we look at the beautiful and avoid bad. We don't want to look at the suffering people. A visit to slums, hospitals, orphanages, palliative care centres and homes for differently abled can give us tremendous sense of suffering around us.

Doing deeds of compassion: Feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting friends and neighbours are some of the deeds of compassion that all of us can easily perform. To do service, one need not be a doctor or a social worker. All what matters is what you do and how you do it. Let us strive to infuse our services with quality and grace.

Sr. Stella Devassy
Superior General



SOCIETY OF THE HELPERS OF MARY - GENERALATE,

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

CALLED TO REACH OUT IN MERCY

On the eve of their First Profession, five Novices recall God's abundant love and mercy on them and their desire to commit their lives to reach out in mercy.

Merline Hembram



I had within myself a deep desire to belong completely to the Lord and to spend my life in His service. I am from the village called Sorobania, Odisha, born to Mr. Chore and Mrs. Panamani, my beloved parents. I am the fourth child among six siblings. From my brother I learnt about the sisters of the Society of the Helpers of Mary, their work and life. By getting to know the Sisters and observing their witness to Christ, I was able to understand more fully my inner yearning for God as He calling me to the religious life. I wish to be like them to live a simple way of life with dedication and serve the poor and needy. I have realized that I have been called by the merciful love of the Father and not by my merits.

Sumitra Saha



God works mysteriously in and through different people and circumstances. I was born in simple village in Odisha and lovingly nurtured by my parents Mr. Muna and Mrs. Namita . My parents have always taught me that doing God's will is what will make me truly happy, and so I have always prayed to be open to God's call. I have thought of becoming a nun from a very young age. The genuine desire in me to follow Christ was strengthened as I encountered many religious in my parish. I was fortunate to know about the Congregation of the Society of the Helpers of Mary, to learn about the Sisters' beautiful way of life and to see their remarkable joy in their dedicated service. The SHM sisters inspired me and different stages of formation helped me to respond to the call of God. I wish to manifest His love to all through my religious life.

Suprava Joseph



Radical living for God given mission is something that challenges me to be a Helper of Mary. Having born to Mr. Kishore and Mrs. Sabita Joseph in village called Mitrapur in Odisha, I am the eldest in the family and I have one brother and two sisters. Without doubt I can say that from my childhood onwards I could hear God whispering in my ears "do something for my people" as I saw people having no shelter, clothing and food. I witnessed the sisters of the Helpers of Mary rendering their dedicated services in giving shelter to the homeless, clothes to the naked, food to the hungry and empowering the women and I wish to be one of them. I am really thankful to God and all the sisters who nurtured my desire all through my formation and helped me to fulfil my dream to be a Helper of Mary.

Jyothi Palluri



"Faith" makes things possible, "hope" makes things happen and "love" makes things beautiful. The seed of faith in God sown by my parents have taken root and has opened new vista in my life as I realize the call of God. I come from Andhra Pradesh and have been brought up by God fearing family. My brother who has witnessed the works of the sisters of the Society of the Helpers of Mary was an instrument in introducing me to this Congregation. I was convinced and touched by the works of the sisters. As I journeyed towards the unknown path I depend on the care and support of the sisters and the people. I want to be a disciple of Jesus my master and a messenger of peace and love.

Ambrita Sobhasunder



I have been inspired by the words in the Bible "your father and mother will forsake you but I will never forsake you". My parents who brought me up with much care and love were the first inspiration to walk in faith amidst the uncertainties of life. I am the fifth child among the nine siblings. As I discern God's call I had also realized my limitations. However I was sure that God equips the one whom He calls. This knowledge of His constancy encourages me to respond generously to His call as I step into religious life.

PROVIDENCE OF GOD



Divine Providence is the name given by Dr. Fr. Ernst Pulsfort, the first chairman of the Bartholomaeus Association e.V, Germany to our Children's Home at Kitengela, Kenya. The home was blessed on 20th of October 2015, where the sisters take care of the less privileged children. The providence of God is experienced here day by day as many people reach out to us through their generous giving and personal visits since the existence of our home. They have made a real difference in the lives of the kids we serve.

Most of the food items are brought by the local donors. Many of the Indians who are settled in Kenya are very generous to us. They often visit us, and provide fish, eggs and other items on a weekly basis. We get fresh vegetables as much as we need from the airport. Food grains are provided by a Gujarati donor regularly. We are inspired by the dedication and generosity of donors who extend their generous hand always. At present we are taking care of 42 children, all of them are happy and healthy and most of them are going to school. Every time, when we witness such generosity we whisper in our hearts, Lord, How great are your deeds!

Sr. Emilia SHM
Kitengela, Kenya, Africa

Amazing Grace

For many of us water is readily available and we seldom pause for a while to ponder what life would be on earth without water. However, this year, in many parts of India, there is water scarcity and drought in various regions. Each time when we use water let us use it carefully, keeping in mind that many of our brethren suffer from shortage of water.

During summer in the past years we in Asha Sadan-Waliv faced water scarcity severely. We used to manage the house by collecting water from the tankers. But this year we are blessed! We have found plenty of water, because of the newly drilled windbag that has become an amazing grace to our home. Thanks to all those who supported us to have this wonderful spring for all the inmates.

Sr. Sulochana P SHM,

JOY OF SHARING

To mark the Platinum Jubilee year of the Congregation, the children and sisters of Bal Bhavan, Andheri invited 75 poor students who are studying in St. Blaise parish school. The children of Bal Bhavan were very happy to share their joy with these poor children. Children organized a short program, after which they distributed school bags containing note books, tiffin box, water bottle, and other stationary items. The joy of all the children was unimaginable. They expressed their gratefulness towards the sisters. This also enhanced our children to share the little what they have with other poor kids.

Sisters & children of Balbhavan, Andheri



Training Program for Muslim Women

Ms. Qutub Jahan Kidwari from Institute of Islamic studies, Santacruz, conducted a special training programme for three days for 35 women leaders of Muslim community and 6 potential leaders of other communities of Jerimeri, Mumbai on the topic of women's status according to Quran.

The training was so interesting that the participants were not at all keen in going back home though it was two and half hour training session on each day. Jagruti Kendra had taken a special initiative to organise this training with all the facilities provided including refreshments and resource person, Ms. Qutub of Institute of Islamic studies on 4th and 5th May 2016.

The resource person has been to most of the Muslim countries and knows the real situation of the women in each country. She dealt with shariat Law in detail and empowered the women with knowledge which is useful for their family and marital life. Since the sessions were very much pertaining to their life situation and the issues confronting them, there was a great participation from the women. They were very much at home with the trainer who made personal contact with each one. As a follow up of this training a group of 15 potential leaders were selected for a Training of Trainers (TOT) who will impart the same knowledge to rest of the women of the Muslim Community.

Sisters of Snehajali, Jerimeri

SHM Kripa Academy for Skills (KAS)

The goal of Kripa Academy for skills training centre at Shraddha Vihar- Andheri is to equip drop out girls and young women with various skills in the process of empowerment and self-reliance. During past six years the centre has trained 250 young girls who have successfully completed the program which enabled them to earn a decent living. Many of the students noted that through the course they gained a sense of self-worth and independence. They also felt that the skills and confidence they gained would enable them to earn a living and support their families. In the past years the Para Medical exams were conducted under modular employable skills, through Central Government testing centre.



We are glad to announce that after a long process we have obtained the Government Recognition under Maharashtra State Board of Vocational Education. We are extremely grateful to Mrs. Seema Dhamdhare, Additional Director of Missions, Urban Development Department of Government of Maharashtra, who guided us in the process of registration and also the sisters who worked for it.

Sr. Meena Jose

The Para-medical admissions for the year 2016 -2017 are opened.

More details contact

Sr. Cecelia – 8108202941 / 022-26772969

E-mail: kripaacademyforskills@gmail.com

Basic skills in Counselling

I was privileged to be part of an intensive course which was conducted at Atma Darshan, centre for Spirituality and Counselling at Andheri East, for 15 days. It has changed my entire perspective on counselling. Counselling is not for people who are complicated or troublesome, but for better living and understanding. It says that our thinking, doing and feeling are inter connected, our past/childhood has great impact on us, but we can make a great change. We have learned in details different theories, REBT (Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy) and CHOICE Theory and also had many practical sessions. The major goal of therapy is to reduce or eliminate distressing consequences, minimize anxiety and anger. We were 13 participants. I am very grateful to Sr. Stella and her team for giving me this opportunity to attend the course. It has changed my outlook towards persons.

Sr. Daisy Mulakkal

PLACE OF COMPASSION & HOPE

I am Rio, at the age of 17, I left my home, a broken family and lived in temporary shelters where I worked. For a span of nearly 25 years I faced a drug problem which kept me hopelessly addicted and living on the streets of Mumbai.



Abandoned, rejected and isolated, I would often pray to God, attend Church whenever I could, sitting one corner, feeling like a stranger. As I grew in age with lots of attempts and struggles I finally manage to get out of my addiction. But still had to cope with rough life on the streets. Things got worse, five years later after coming across with an accident which resulted in the amputation of my left leg and I was walking on an prosthetic leg. The pain and depression on this incident almost took me back to my addiction. And only the grace of God helped me not to take the escape route again. I only silently prayed with no blaming or complaining. Receiving gratefully whatever financial help I got from a few good friends, I had made along the way. Finally it was through one of these friends I was brought to Jivan Asha, Andheri in the care of the Helpers of Mary, a home for the aged and destitute like me. I have no words to explain the experience of God's tremendous love for me through the care and concern of these sisters whom God has entrusted me to. I sincerely ask God to bless all those who are and who will come here to devotedly serve the poor and needy. I conclude saying that I who felt so unworthy and undeserving when I was brought to this home at last in the year 2016, the year of mercy became very special and personal in my life where I am experiencing the compassionate love of Father through the sisters in Jivan Asha. Now at the age of 60 I hope to continue to live in the healing love of God.

Rio Pinto

Inmate of Jivan Asha

Congratulations

To all the Junior Sisters who renewed their Vows on 29th May 2016. As we thank God for them, let us also continue to accompany them through our prayers and best wishes

Thank you

This issue is sponsored by



R. K. KARANTH & CO.
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

DEEPAK S. KARANTH, F.C.A.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude for his generosity.