

# SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART PROVINCE OF INDIA NEWSLETTER



15<sup>th</sup> March 2019

## ***NEWS FROM THE HAREGAON COMMUNITY***

### **St. Theresa English Medium School Exhibition – 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

(Theme: Care of the Environment)



This year we had taken the theme of care of the environment. Each class teacher tried to sensitize the children through their teaching on their individual responsibility to care for the environment. The exhibition was the culmination of this. The teachers had chosen the topics on pollution, care of animals, forests, water and rivers etc. It was heartening to listen to the children explaining to the viewers in English each of their projects, models and display boards. They received much appreciation from the parents and a few RSCJ visitors who came to see the exhibition.

As a result, I was energized to do more for the children.

*Archana Pinto rscj*

### **Silence within and without**

At the beginning of the academic year 2018–2019 I decided to practice one of the General Chapter calls, namely the call “**To Create Silence**”. I started practicing this with my own class, namely Std. V.

Every day after the assembly after ‘SAB KA MANGALE’ is sung, before I could start my class, the children say daily a prayer which I had taught them. Through this prayer they remember each of their family members, friends, teachers and sisters. Also they ask for blessings for the whole day. Then we all remain silent for some time. Then we do the exercise of breathing in and breathing out. Again we remain quiet for a while and pray for peace for the world silently. Then the children slowly open their eyes. I, along with the students of my class, try to create silence within us and in the surroundings. This has become a habit for them. Sometimes when I am not there in the class, the students do it by themselves. By practicing this we all try to create and grow in inner silence and find the face of God in each other.

For me, doing this every day has helped me to grow in various ways. While doing it I become aware of my own consciousness. I also become aware of my interactions with the students, my way of relating and the way I speak to them. By practicing “**To Create Silence**” my faith and trust in God has deepened. Also I am able to control my anger and able to cope with situations. I understand the children and their struggles in their families. I experience a beautiful rapport among us. My aim of doing this is that I want them to have a close connection with God. I teach them to be grateful for each little thing we receive from God and from one another. This is to make them realize that they should not take things for granted.



I have asked few children to share their experiences of practicing silence. Two of them shared in Hindi and I have translated what they shared:

“Our class teacher, Sr. Divya, taught us a short morning prayer. Through this I learnt to remain in silence and to create silence around us. For me it is very important that when I close my eyes and do breathing in and breathing out, I can hear my own heart beat and feel peace within me. I like praying and I pray for everyone. After doing this I feel calm and light and I am able to concentrate in the class.” *Deepmala Thombare*

“I am a quiet person. I don’t like so much noise. Now I have got into the habit of practicing silence. I feel much difference within me and peace around me. I learnt to pray for my own needs as well as for others too. As I begin my day, I remember all my friends, teachers and sisters and pray for them. I am grateful to God for everything that I am learning in this school.” *Akshada Badakh*

*Divya Kerketta rscj*

### **B.C.C. Prayer Service**

The parish priest, Fr. Pius, and his team along with the B.C.C. (Basic Christian Community) members decided to conduct B.C.C prayer service in different zones of our parish for a week before lent. The purpose of this prayer was to foster togetherness, to bring back to the Catholic faith those who have joined other sects and to know the reasons as to why they are leaving the Catholic Church. It has been a concern for us as a community that our people are joining the other sects that are mushrooming in and around our village. So it was a good opportunity for us when Fr. Pius requested us to join them for the B.C.C prayer besides our visits to the families from time to time. Five of us, that is, Srs. Shalini, Archana, Valeria, Divya and Anita Kongari, willingly offered to go with the priests each day to three zones.

The crowd that came for the prayer mostly comprised women and children. We were disappointed with the less number of men attending the prayer service. However, some of the women who attended shared their faith experiences openly. We felt hopeful to know that there are still some of them who have strong faith in God and in our Catholic Church. However, we also learnt that some of the families are actively involved with other sects. While visiting the families we came to know that people feel attracted to the other sects because of the instant miracles being performed in their lives. Secondly, the Pastors from these sects come to their homes to pray with lot of gifts for the children. Fr. Pius shared with the people of the zones about our concern for them and also about the faith of people of different religions who come to visit the shrine of Mother Mary in our church every day and the miracles that she has worked. The purpose of his pointing this out to them was to strengthen their faith in our Catholic Church. We supported his witness of the faith of people in Mother Mary. It is a big challenge for us as a parish and a community to keep our people in our Catholic Church.

We have started to visit Neengaon Khairi. Our visit to Neengaon Khairi brought life to the older generation who recalled the visits of our sisters especially of Srs. Marie and Pratibha. They are so grateful to our sisters and our school for the education that their girls received. Now their girls are mothers of families and are trying to inculcate in their children fidelity to the Lord. However, this village is one of the villages most influenced by the Pastors. So we have started to visit this village occasionally so as to be in touch with the people and to foster their faith. Thus we had a mass for them on Ash Wednesday. It was a beautiful experience for us to see their face light up when we said we will come to visit them every month. Indeed this village is for us a “call to mission, a mission to renew and to strengthen” their faith in God.

*Archana Pinto rscj & Anita Kongari rscj*

### **Seven Years in Haregaon**

The seven years that I have lived in the Haregaon RSCJ Community and worked in St. Theresa Girls High School have been seven years of abundant blessings for me. My heart is filled with gratitude and admiration to God for his graciousness and goodness – for He has looked upon his lowly handmaid. The Almighty has done great things for me. Holy be His Name.

Haregaon means ‘God’s village’. God indeed dwells in and takes care of our village. The bells of the Angelus call us to pause and to pray to God in the spirit of Mother Mary. We are privileged to have the shrine of Mount Mary at Haregaon – which attracts numerous pilgrims including our ex-students, priests and religious from the surrounding districts. The Bishop of Nashik diocese comes to meet and pray with the pilgrims during the solemn feast of the Birthday of Mother Mary in September each year.

St. Theresa’s Girls High School has proved to be God’s special blessing for me for it has formed me during these seven years to make me the confident, capable person I am today. Sr. Jyoti has been a loving and caring sister to all the staff and is much concerned about their welfare and the welfare of their families. The teaching and non-teaching staff members are warm and cordial and ever willing to help anyone in need – as members of one large family. One of our staff members, Mrs. Abeda Shaikh, was in uncontrollable tears as the school family bade her farewell on her retirement in December 2018.

Through proper guidance, I have gradually mastered the teaching methods and I enjoy teaching English to my students – who have started to interact with me in English. To develop English fluency and communication skills, the Maharashtra Government, in collaboration with the British Council, organized several training sessions for the teachers of Marathi Medium Schools



during these last five years. I was fortunate to be part of these training sessions, for I was able to develop my speaking skills and overcome any problems that may arise during teaching. My interactions with the English subject teachers of other schools in the district were very enriching and fruitful. I was privileged to have been chosen to present a teaching aid to all the participants at the English Subject Symposium at Sangamner on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and my presentation was much appreciated at the district level. Besides becoming a good teacher, I had the

opportunity to become a Girl Guide Instructor to assist in the character formation of our girls.

Besides receiving a good education, our students feel proud of their school when they see the regular improvements in the infrastructure and the increased facilities made available to them. The renovation and painting of the school and community buildings, which were completed under the supervision of Sr. Jyoti, have given a new joyful look to the entire campus. Provision is made to provide pure, clean drinking water to the staff and students through the installation of two Aqua Water Filters – one in the school and the other in the hostel. All are very happy to see their school growing and flourishing in every way. We see God’s hand at work in God’s village. I feel happy and privileged to be part of this educational and pastoral Mission of our Society and of the Church.

*Anita Nazareth rscj*

### **Athletic Programme**

You have heard about athletic games for grown up people. But in Haregaon’s English medium primary school the small children of Std. I to Std. III have been practicing athletic games every day. These games were introduced and conducted by Miss Rajeshri from Sadhana School, Mumbai, at a camp held for two consecutive days, which we teachers and students enjoyed very much. Even the children of Stds. I to IV of our neighbouring primary parish school, St. Theresa Boys School, joined us for the camp and benefited from this training.



In these two days, we have learnt many games which are very helpful for daily activity. In these games there are five points – warming up, balancing, eye-hand coordination, track running and sequencing. Under these points there are many games such as commando crawl, zigzag walk, throwing the ball with the right hand and partner catching the ball with the left hand, relay, picking up numbers and placing it in the right sequence etc.

These games are very good for children, for their physical growth, body balance, concentration for studies and entertainment. Also these games helped us prepare for sports day. Once again thanks to Miss Rajeshri and Sr. Pratibha for collaborating with us.

*Valeria Kerketta rscj*

### **International Women's Day in the Nashik Diocese**

I was fortunate to attend the celebration of the International Women's Day at Rahata on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019 from 9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. A group of women accompanied by a sister and the parish priest from each parish was present for the function. Each group was informed earlier to present a dance and to prepare for the quiz competition on St. John's gospel. The programme began sharp at 9.00 a.m. and almost all were present by then. From the last two years onwards, the Bishop of Nashik, His Lordship Lourdes Daniel, makes it point to be present at the function and to celebrate the Eucharist. This time, in his sermon, he illustrated the importance of women's role in society and their huge contribution in the progress of the family especially in Nashik diocese. Even then, women are not treated well in the family. Our Bishop encouraged the women to be strong; he valued their capacity to love and nurture; he told them not to be discouraged or disheartened, but to continue their valuable service to society. After the mass, the Bishop felicitated all the sisters who were present there with a shawl and a bouquet of flowers. After the lunch, the groups presented their dances, which were very beautiful and graceful, on the stage. This was followed by the quiz competition on St. John's gospel. Each group was presented with a trophy and a certificate was given to every participant. It was memorable day for every woman who participated in the programme.

*Shalini Salve rscj*