

SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART PROVINCE OF INDIA NEWSLETTER



9th March 2019

NEWS FROM THE POLYTECHNIC COMMUNITY

Celebrations in community

Spring is the time for new life. The big tree close to our community quarters is a home for many birds. Before dawn we hear them celebrating the season of spring with songs which grow daily in volume and diversity.

In community we have enjoyed simple celebrations like birthdays, feast days, and planned community outings at times. We were happy to join in the Sophia campus celebrations on big feast days. Of course, we never forgot an ice-cream treat for ourselves at the end of our celebrations. We were fortunate to have a Eucharistic celebration in community this year.

Visitors to the community

We had a good number of rscjs visiting our community for various reasons. We greatly appreciated their presence though their visits were very brief. Hospitality is so important in life. Welcoming rscjs and other visitors from distant areas and providing an environment that is relaxing for them, even if it is only for a night, is important we believe.

We had the joy of having **Barbara and the Central Team** in our community during their visit to India. They spent an hour with us exchanging ideas and answering questions. Indeed we were happy to have them in our midst.

The **Central Team** also made a quick visit to Sophia Polytechnic. A staff-meeting was arranged so that they they could interact with the staff. Each of the departments shared about their work, especially how they are trying to empower the students from the underprivileged sections of society. Our helpers also met the Central Team members.



The Annual Polytechnic Exhibition of Sophia Polytechnic

This year the chief guest for the annual Prize Distribution function and the inauguration of the Annual Exhibition on 21st February 2019 was Prof. Anna Dallapiccola, a well-known scholar of

Indian art, who, through a foundation named after her parents, has sponsored educational projects of Sophia College and Sophia Polytechnic.



Anna in her short speech to the students laid stress on the importance of perseverance till the end in spite of the struggles they would experience together with many difficulties they would face in order to achieve their goals.

Approximately 1500 people, especially from the art world, visited the Polytechnic Exhibition

this year. They invariably appreciated the display of the creative works done by students of Applied Art, Textile Designing, Fashion Designing and Bakery, especially the delicacies prepared by the bakery students that were available on display and sale during the days of the exhibition.



Visitors also enjoyed the deeply moving documentaries produced by the students of the Social Communications Media (SCM) department. These were mostly based on real life situations of people. This year the very attractive and creative designs done by the department of Fashion Designing were greatly appreciated by the visitors resulting in purchase orders being placed and enquiries being made. This was indeed encouraging for our students and staff.

News from Sophia Nursery School and Balwadi

Sr. Rosa Salve teaches in the Balwadi section of Sophia Nursery School. The Balwadi children and staff enjoyed their various celebrations during the year. These provide great excitement both for the parents and their little ones. These events and celebrations reflect what we value and who we are. They also teach the children different ways of celebrating and enjoying together with their class.



An unexpected tragic event

On 14th of February 2019 there was the tragic death of 40 of our soldiers in a terrorist attack. It was said that the 19 year old boy who carried out the terrible act was known to be a “shy and quiet” person. The perpetrators exploited his zeal and motivation to turn him into a ‘martyr’ based on misplaced anger. The polytechnic institution held one minute’s silence in memory of these precious lives of the soldiers. Let us keep the bereaved families in our thoughts and prayers and let us pray for peace.

A JPIC initiative in Sophia Polytechnic

In January 2018 a composter had been installed for dealing with the wet garbage of Sophia Polytechnic. Our dry garbage is collected daily by a rag-picker. This year we went one step further in our efforts at creating a green environment by installing solar panels for electricity.

Sr. Anila Verghese, Director of the Polytechnic, got a sponsorship of Rs. 39 lakhs for the solar panels. As part of our efforts to be ‘one body’, Anila suggested that this sponsorship could be shared. Since the Sophia Bhabha Hall consumes the maximum electricity, a large part of the sponsorship has gone towards solar panels on the terrace of the hall which will cut down to a large extent the electricity required from the public system by the hall in future. The remaining solar panels were installed on the sloping roof of the Polytechnic building and it will provide electricity for our hospitality department that consumes the most electricity among all the departments of our institute.

The work on the solar panels began at the end of November 2018 when the actual panels arrived from Germany and had to be stored on the terrace. During the following weeks, other parts were delivered one by one. The actual work of installation began in January 2019. Sr. Joanna coordinated the work with the company doing the installation, namely Avesta Solar, under the over-all guidance of Anila. This work is in progress and will be completed soon once the net-meters are installed. We hope that the net-metering will go into effect from the beginning of April 2019. After that we expect that not only will our electricity bills come down but also that we will rely more on solar energy that is renewable and which causes no pollution.

Of course, in addition to installing solar panels, which is a new initiative this year, in Sophia Polytechnic we continue our other efforts at JPIC such as providing scholarships to our very many needy students and of giving skills training to marginalized women and youth through our five rural community polytechnic centres.

Dream Catchers

For the last one month we have tried to follow the dream catcher process. What are we supposed to dream? We paid attention to the questions and reflections given to us, followed the beaten paths of our life and experiences, together with visioning for the future. Considering our situations now, we shared some of our dreams, fears and uncertainties in community. We reflected on:

How can we become mentors for the young? Will we have to give up our comfort zones to some extent? Will we be open to change? Will we have to face new challenges, how do we cope with a new style of life, etc?

Whatever the future holds our spirit of faith and commitment must continue to bear a prophetic witness to the world around us. Then the rest will follow – **que sera sera**, what will be will be.