

# SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART

## PROVINCE OF INDIA

### NEWSLETTER



August 2019

#### NEWS FROM KRISTPREMALAYA COMMUNITY

##### **An unforgettable experience**

Three years ago when the FYBA merit list was put up on the board in the canteen extension, I witnessed a scene I could not forget.

There was a father with his daughter frantically looking through the list of names put up on the board. The moment he saw his daughter's name, he lifted her up in his arms. He was radiant and proud of his daughter. Seeing the father's reaction, I said to myself, "here is a man who loves, appreciates and accepts his girl child unlike many in our country who do not even allow a girl child to be born."

The girl was Madhura Ghosh, who came to me soon after college reopened to ask me if her mother could come and perform a concert, Bharatiya Lok Sangeet, or a folk music recital in our college. I thought of dear Vandana Mataji who would have jumped at this opportunity to promote Indian culture among our present day youth, many of whom are interested only in Western culture.

Going through the portfolio Madhura handed me to look at, I came to know that her mother was Padmashri Dr. Soma Ghosh, a graduate of literature from B.H.U. (Banaras Hindu University) who had a Master's degree in music and had completed her doctorate in Khayal. She was also the first woman who had performed in the Parliament of India. She had been felicitated by many distinguished personalities, including former Presidents, APJ Abdul Kalam and Smt. Pratibha Patil. She was awarded the Padmashri by the Government of India in 2016. She is an ambassador for Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao and Swatch Bharat Abhiyan.

Madhura told me that her mother would perform for us free of charge because she is paid by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. This was one more good reason for inviting her!!

I contacted the staff members who organize the annual event "Spic Macay" to promote Indian classical music and culture in the college. They were thrilled to have a great vocalist, Padmashri Dr. Soma Ghosh, presenting a folk music recital in our college. Though we were going through the teething problems of autonomy and admission work etc. we decided to have the concert on 6<sup>th</sup> July since Dr. Ghosh could not make it on any other day.

I had my doubts about the number of students who would turn up for the performance but to my surprise, the hall was full with staff and students in spite of the many things they were busy with. It made me realize that deep down in their hearts all Indians love and appreciate their culture.

I hope and pray that we as RSCJ take every opportunity that comes our way to promote Indian culture especially among the youth we work with.

*Rosa Makil rscj*

### **A New Ministry**

It is only two months since I started my new ministry. Yes, coming out from the school atmosphere and joining Sophia College as a college warden has been a completely new but life giving experience where I am learning many things.

The first few weeks went in knowing the place and different departments and learning the work that goes on in the college. I find myself day by day settling down. Of course, whenever I found myself lost and didn't know where to go, many helping hands reached out to give me their help. I feel grateful to God for revealing His love, care and support to me in many ways.

I also find the staff members very understanding and co-operative towards me. Some of them are so dedicated towards their teaching, and try their best to inculcate good values in the students. What does it mean to be an RSCJ educator? Every person who came to the door during the admissions was welcomed and looked after. From my personal experience I can say that this teacher not only guided the students but also helped the parents to understand the procedure for admissions and spent quality time with them.

I also enjoy Nature around the college that speaks to me about God's beautiful creation. If any event or programme is held I am well prepared beforehand.

Working with the hamals is another beautiful experience. They are respectful and honest. There is a lot of unity among them, whatever work is entrusted to them they will do it together. If somebody is sick, another person carries out the person's work quietly. I feel happy about it. There are many more things waiting for me to learn.....

*Poonam Gaikwad rscj*

### **My Experience in Sadhana School**

Sadhana School on Sophia Campus is for the special children, who are most loved by God.

I started going to the school from 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2019. Before going to school, I was afraid because I did not have experience with special children. It is my first experience with children like these. I was afraid of interacting and communicating with them. I have heard about them that when they don't like someone they beat and hate them. But I said to myself, "whatever happens, I will take it for the sake of my Lord".

I am with the children of Grades 1 and 2. I am in the school from 9.30 am to 3. 30 pm; in the morning I am with Grade 2 and in the afternoon with Grade 1. I am experiencing and getting to know that these children are very helpful, lovable, sensitive and compassionate. But I feel sorry for them because some are not able to walk, talk, and concentrate on activities. They have many

activities in the school – putting a cloth clip in the cardboard to make their fingers strong, art, hydrotherapy, play therapy, dance, brain gym to help their brain function properly, O.T, Snoozelan, sports, yoga, learning Math, meditation, learning books, joining dots, I pad, matching objects and sorting according to attributes etc – in order to make the children calm, peaceful and attentive.

On 26<sup>th</sup> of July, I went for a birthday party for Grades 1 and 2, to a place called Fun key Monkey. It is a very good place for children to play and run around. The children enjoyed the party.

I am learning a lot from the teachers, to be patient, lovable, appreciative, and sensitive and to search for the way to teach these children or keep them occupied. I am happy and enjoy being with them.

*Anita Hamsroy nscj*

### **Exams! Exams! Exams!.....My Pleasure**

I dreaded the last time I did examinations for my Masters of Arts, 20 years ago. I pledged I will never do an exam again. You don't want to be scarred for life. Do you?

But this time it was my choice. I wanted to enjoy the course of studies on my own terms and conditions. No pressure, no deadlines, no expectations, plenty of time to complete the course in two years' duration to complete the one year programme. How generous and thoughtful of IGNOU (Indira Gandhi Open University) to provide such liberty and possibility!

So I prepared myself from day one, when the academic year began, to register myself online for the POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT COURSE. After patiently waiting for two months, I finally got admitted. Soon I began to feel like a student trying to discover the syllabus content, the course papers, assignment requirements, old question papers, etc.

However, there was no sign of any books or notes arriving for six months even after the registration. Fortunately, somebody who had already done the course passed on his books to me. Incidentally he had also been the motivating force inspiring me to undertake this study. Equipped with all the books, I began and completed 5 assignments (15 questions) in two months' time. Eventually I filled the exam form online and prepared rigorously for the great day. I managed to solve 4 question papers of previous years for each subject. But as I wanted to do my best, I decided to do only three subjects in June 2019 and the remaining two in December 2019.

So I spent my whole vacation studying for the exam. Fortunately there was a one-day gap between the papers so I could revise and relax. The day of my first exam I found myself so cool and calm; I reached the exam centre one hour early but did not look at the books at all. I was one among three elders doing the exam in a classroom of 60 students, mostly young boys doing various exams such as M.S.W, M.A, B.Ed., etc. I leisurely wrote the paper, enjoying every moment of it. I knew more than what was asked, so had the pleasure to choose the best questions to answer. I finished the paper before time and went over it again and again as some of my students do. The next two papers were equally enjoyable and I was greatly pleased by my efforts

What I noticed most was the way I handled this exam – so relaxed, confident, thoroughly prepared and well delivered. I kept wondering the secret of my success and guess what? Old age.....? Maturity and wisdom? Now I believe that there is no age limit to learning, truly!!!

*Annie Peter rscj*

### **A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land**

*I have set my eyes on the hills, Jerusalem my destiny*

*Though I do not see the end for me, I cannot turn away*

*We have set our hearts on the way, this journey is our destiny*

*Let no one walk alone, the journey makes us one.*



These were the thoughts and feelings in my heart as we walked the paths that Jesus trod.



My three sisters, my brother-in-law and I joined a group of 45 others on this pilgrimage to the Holy Land that was spread over three countries – Jordan, Israel & Egypt – for twelve days.

After the 1994 Chapter when we sang the hymn ‘I have set my eyes on the hills’ or when we read the words “Mary went over the hill country to her cousin Elizabeth” I had no idea that the Holy Land was full of hills. The hills fascinated me. The hills in Jordan (like sand dunes) were different from those in Israel and the mountains on the way to Egypt were again so very different. One began to realize that when Jesus walked from one town to another he had to cross the hills and when he went up the hill to a lonely place it may not have been very far. That is why the crowds could follow him there. When Mary went in a hurry to help her cousin Elizabeth – a journey of 144 kilometres – she had to go on foot over the hills!! Mary and Joseph had to make the journey of 150 kilometres from Nazareth to Bethlehem, just a few days before the birth of Jesus! Travelling on foot with a donkey!!

The most precious experience was the visit to Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee. Every group hires a big boat for the boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. As we waited in single file to go on to the boat, we sang with great joy the songs of our youth “Oh I love that man of Galilee, Galilee, for he has done so very much for me” and “Called to walk in the way of the man who stilled the waters.....called to walk in the way of the man from Galilee.” The group of Europeans coming out of the boat was so moved by this singing that they nodded with great joy and appreciation. I felt very deeply the reality of being one Church – one big family who were happy to visit the land of the Lord. It was the same feeling when the group coming out of the Shepherd’s field joined us as we sang “Gloria in Excelsis Deo”.

Our visit to Mt. Tabor was another precious experience. Mt. Tabor is very high compared to the others “Mounts”. We had to change from the big bus to mini buses as the mountain was so steep. I wondered why and how the Lord decided to go up such a high mountain on foot with his favourite disciples. Something within him must have wanted to be as close as possible to his



Father – perhaps deep inside Him he must have felt the need of some reassurance?? And the poor disciples had no idea where they were going and why they had to make this journey ....

The visit to the Church of the Nativity and the Holy Sepulchere, which anyone who visits the Holy Land waits for, was not the most moving experience for me. One has to cope with the crowds and the long hours of waiting, only to have a minute or even less at the holy spot!! My disappointment was taken care of by the Lord when we were given some free time on our last day in Bethlehem – I decided to spend the time in the Church of the Nativity in quiet prayer – putting into the Lord’s hands the needs of the world, our country , the Society and the Province and my family. That was a precious time.



The devotion of people often moved me to tears. During our visit to the Garden of Olives and in the Church of the Agony it was truly moving to see and experience people touching the Rock of Agony and, I suppose, placing at the Lord’s feet all the anxiety and agony each one surely experiences. The guide told us that there are eight trees that are still standing today that were silent witnesses to His agony! Difficult to believe, of course – but the “silent witness” part moved me. I was touched to see hundreds of people from every part of the world visiting the different shrines in silent devotion. There were crowds at the River Jordan – belonging to different sects – some having a prayer service, others a ritual of baptism by immersion.

This is a pilgrimage that will stay on in my heart. We as family are grateful for this privilege.

*Pratibha Pinto rscj*