

# **SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART**

## **PROVINCE OF INDIA**

### **NEWSLETTER**

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**15<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

#### **NEWSLETTER FROM THE KRISTHPREMALAY COMMUNITY**

##### **Tureeya Shares**

My life this year has been generally quiet, given largely to teaching our candidates various topics of Christian Scripture and Faith as indicated in the programme for candidates. Some of this had been touched on briefly last year when they were in Prerana. For me it meant returning to the books, as it has been a very long time since I did these subjects. Specifically, it meant beginning to prepare some of the subjects in the list in the latter half of my sabbatical year, in order to be ready to start teaching in the new academic year i.e. June 2022; while continuing to prepare other topics after the scheduled two hours of class each day.

I had learnt from the experience of last year, when I was asked to help our two Professed Young with their college studies that I had to tailor my teaching to the needs of our sisters, who even at this stage struggle with the English language, making their comprehension of the subjects difficult. I realised that this basic obstacle hinders their ability to make the progress they are capable of, given that they have been with us for approximately three to four years.

So, I put my energies into teaching them in ways suitable to their manner of comprehension. I feel I owe it to them who are the future of the Province and the Society. I would like them to feel that they can stand on par with others, and face the very demanding world of today; in which we are called to be persons close to the Divine and at the same time render service with efficiency and Wisdom.

This year too, I have been invited to be part of civil groups whose aim is to bring together like-minded persons of different faiths, who can sow seeds of harmony and justice in our own country. Of course, attending these meetings is often difficult, as times suitable for working people, are not always suitable for us, when they are later in the evening or clash with community commitments which must take priority.

In community, I have been charged with checking the arrangements made for food, seeing to food purchases for community, preparing items for occasions, informing the concerned persons about numbers, keeping the community food account and sending in the total expenditure on monthly food, received from the canteen, for billing to SHEWI. Time is often spent in the kitchen, besides other chores, all adding to the spice of life!

***Tureeya rscj***

## **The Divine kite flyer and me**

I see myself as a living kite, held lovingly by the Divine Kite Flyer, with a small spark of His spirit within, which He had breathed into it. Fifty one years ago He let out the string which had held the kite, in the KP community, to send it floating some distance to Pune, then further to Haregaon, then to and fro between the two, till He let the string out longer for the kite to be carried on the current of his breath far to the North – Patna, Torpa. Rishikesh. Fifty one years later, He drew it back to the hustle and bustle of Bombay and to the same KP community, very different now, from where He had first launched the kite for its outward (and inward) journey. The kite too had changed, rather battered perhaps, by the different winds which had tossed it about or the smooth currents which had carried it. However, whether smooth currents or storms, connected securely to the Divine Flyer's kite string, even the gales could not blow out the spark, but helped it to burn brighter. A very new kind of flying for the kite, now in Bombay and in KP. New kinds of winds, but hopefully they too will help the spark to grow brighter and brighter, till at last when drawn into the Divine Kite Flyer's arms, it will be a glowing kite, one with the spirit of the Flyer!



*Vimala Verghese rscj  
(Elizabeth)*

## **My first experience of a fashion show**

There was a fashion show in the Sophia Bhabha Hall. It was done by the dress design department of Sophia Polytechnic. I was very happy when I heard that Sr. Vimala wanted to take us there for our education. The show was in the evening

Sister Vimala, Victoria and I went to the Sophia Bhabha Hall. I was very happy because I was going to see a fashion show for the first time. There were many people in the hall. There was music going on. I had thought that the students would do the fashion show, but there were special models engaged for it. The stage was arranged very nicely. There was a sound system and music, which made the atmosphere very lively.

A gentleman conducted the programme. He welcomed the people very respectfully. He invited Sr. Anila for the opening speech. Sr. Anila encouraged the young girls to work hard and thanked them. The fashion show started with music. The first “models” were differently abled students. After that the gentleman introduced the students who had designed the clothes. Then came the rest of the show – dresses based on 9 themes. The students chose themes for their designs and the music played according to the theme. They showed us on a screen how they had prepared the clothes.

The models were beautiful and handsome. There were three men and 7 women. The women had figures that were nice and slim and even thin. I wondered how they walked with the very high heels. There were many dignitaries and two judges. At the end the head of the department felicitated them and gave them bouquets and gifts. The students also received prizes.

I was very happy, because it was the first time I had got an opportunity to see a fashion show. I

came to know how the fashion designers work very hard, dying the cloth, cutting them according to the design etc. They have to imagine what kind of clothes they want to make and do the work patiently. I enjoyed seeing the whole programme.

***Kumudini Tirkey (candidate)***

### **My ministry experience in Sadhana School**

Kumudini and I are going to Sadhana School for our ministry experience. On the first day Sr. Vimala took us and we met the principal. After that we went to Cashmera Madam, who is the counsellor. She gave us a very good orientation using a laptop. She explained to us that each child has a different condition. She also told us that we have to be very loving, but also firm. She said some children cannot bear too much sound; some children are hyper; some, when they are angry, can attack you. When I heard all these things, I was a little nervous. However, I found later that the children are very loving and affectionate. So my nervousness went. The teachers too were very kind and affectionate with the children, but also firm.

We go to the Sadhana School every day for one and a half hours. We go to the pre-vocational class. In the class there are two groups in the same classroom. One group has five children and another six children. We each go to the one of the groups. In the afternoon, when we go, the students generally do some activity, which the teachers teach. I was surprised when I saw that each day the teacher was teaching them different skills.

I help the children. The teacher would tell me what to do, which child to help. They have to be taught each step. For example, they learnt different kinds of painting, how to stitch, etiquette, table manners, how to introduce oneself, how we have to stand and talk, when we are talking with others etc.



After one hour of activity, Kumudini and I go down to the ground with the children. We play with them, mostly throwing and catching the ball with them. We have to pay attention to the students. They must not fight with each other on the playground. Two teachers also come in turns daily.

I am also surprised to see that some children read very well; some children can sing nicely; some are very good in activity. I have realized that if I give them love, pay attention to them, guide them, they will develop in their life, so that in their life they may not feel left out or useless, because each one's life is precious and important and God has created us out love. Looking at some of the children who have been trained I can't believe they are mentally challenge or differently abled. I am enjoying being them. I am also learning so many things being with them.

***Victoria Hapadgara (candidate)***

## Some of my experiences of traditional festivals

I joined as a seeker in Rishikesh and coming from very traditional Tamilian Christian family,

everything was very strange for me. It must have been God who took me into that situation and I accepted it with His grace. In May 2022 the seeker stage was moved to Bombay, to KP Community. I was very happy to be among many sisters and I had lots of opportunity to widen my mind.

I would like to share some of my experiences of festivals:

In Rishikesh, I was immersed in a very spiritual Hindu atmosphere, but in lockdown time and so I could not observe the celebration of any of the festivals. Here in Bombay, I had an opportunity to experience and study about some of the Hindu festivals and deities. I went to the Sophia Bhabha Hall for a Bharatanatyam “Arangethram” performance and the dancer depicted different deities in her dance. One of these was on Lord Krishna’s life. Sr. Vimala explained to me about the deities as the dancer depicted each one. I studied a little about Indian classical dance.

I went to the Balwadi for my ministry experience. There the children celebrated the Dahi Handi festival. The teacher showed us a video about this festival and I also studied it in Google. This gave me a better understanding about lord Krishna’s life. For me the way his life was threatened and he was protected by his father was similar, I felt, to the life of Child Jesus.

The next festival was “Raksha Bandhan”, which celebrates the bond between brother and sister. In the Balwadi, the teacher explained to me what this festival means. I saw the girls tying the Rakhi on the hands of their “brothers” and how they received gifts from their “brothers”.

After that there came the Ganapathi festival which is celebrated in many parts of India and especially in Maharashtra. I was excited because they have 9 days of celebration for this. Each day they do pooja as well as decorate the idol of Ganesha. In the pandals I watched people going and doing pooja and getting prasad.

After each of these experiences I studied about it and wrote a composition on it. All these experiences helped me to understand a little better about the different Hindu deities and some of the traditional festivals.

*Nithya Raj (candidate)*



### **The New York team visit – 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

A team from the Convent of the Sacred Heart New York, comprising 11 students and 3 teachers (Mr. Michael Chung, Mr. John O’Hagan and Ms Barbara Pachetti) were at the Sophia Campus for an India immersion experience (as designated by them). They were put up at Gurukul for the duration of their stay in Mumbai.

They arrived on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2022 by 5 pm, had an early supper and took rest as they were to leave for Gorai, the next morning. On 4<sup>th</sup> December we left at 7.15 a.m by special mini bus to Gorai to visit the Pagoda. The trip highlights included a guided tour of the whole place, an experience of *Anapana* meditation, a video talk by Goenkaji and a visit to the painting



museum depicting the life story of Gautam Buddha. The boat ride and *rickshaw* ride from Gorai to the Pagoda and back was a unique experience for them.



In the evening they had an informal session of Nail art and *Mehendi* application with the Junior College hostel girls, which the girls enjoyed thoroughly.

The morning of 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022 was spent visiting the four campus institutions. The team then attended a Kathak dance Lec-dem in the college and watched dance performances by Junior College students preparing for their Talent-day programme



The Sophia football team had an hour's coaching session by Mr. John O'Hagan in the basketball court. The girls were so enamoured with John that they started calling him Ronaldo!



As one of the students from the New York team was celebrating her birthday on the 5<sup>th</sup>, we had a special dinner at Copper Chimney, Worli, sponsored by her parents.



On 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022, the team, accompanied by four staff members of the Junior College, went to see the Elephanta caves. The trip also included an hour's ride by steamer. In the evening, the visitors did some shopping at Fab India and Westside followed by dinner at Golden Dragon, Taj Palace Hotel. This too was sponsored by the parents of one of the students from New York

The last and final day on the campus i.e. 7<sup>th</sup> December, was filled with special lectures arranged for them - namely on Indian Society, Indian Political system, and an interaction with our Junior college students and staff.



The afternoon was spent attending a presentation on Bollywood followed by a visit to the Museum of Indian Cinema at Peddar road.

Every day, the New York team got together in the College Chapel to reflect on their experiences. They were greatly impressed by our commitment to our students and staff, and our Sacred Heart mission activities carried out across all our institutions on the campus. They profusely thanked us for our loving hospitality and care.

It was a very enriching learning experience for both The New York team and the Sophia Junior College staff and students. My special thanks to Sr. Ananda and Dr. Anagha for their guidance and support in making this New York-India immersion experience happen. My heartfelt gratitude to the Junior College staff team who organized planned and meticulously worked out every detail of their travel, experiences and stay on the Sophia campus.



Left to Right – Nivedita, Jini, Sr. Annie, Bina, Susan and Latika (Junior College Staff)

*Annie Peter rscj*