

# SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART PROVINCE OF INDIA NEWSLETTER



October 2020

## THE POLYTECHNIC COMMUNITY SHARES

### Personal reflections on Covid-19

The lockdown began on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020 just as I was coming out of my Retreat. I could not understand what it all meant but the rude shock came when transport came totally to a standstill. Can you imagine what it felt like with the railway services paralysed and no one could think of getting out of their homes? The consequences were unimaginable. Some lost their jobs, some others were deprived of salaries, some could not return to their homes. We were well aware of the sad plight of the migrants returning to their villages walking a thousand miles and more!



Where did I stand in all this? I had to begin almost a new way of life. With no staff in the SHEWI office, I almost had to get to know many intricacies of my work for which I had relied on the staff. It was indeed a good challenge to be faced with. Of course I relied totally on my God and my prayer life deepened.

The Sophia College chapel held daily Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament to pray for the Covid-19 affected people as well as those suffering from anxiety and loss. I was also inspired to begin my work in my office with the silent reading of Ps. 91 and Ps.138 and I surrendered myself to the Lord completely. The Lockdown has a very powerful message, for me: "Turn to me, I am with you always.

*Teresa Pereira rscj*

### **NORA THE OUTSIDER**

She left behind her lush green land  
Too young to feel the pain of farewell  
Though she loved her home and friends  
Destiny led her to a new life.

An invitation to a new place was a delight  
She had no great expectations in sight  
Too young to envisage where the rough road led  
Against all odds she went ahead

And so she set out one summer day  
Travelled with unknown people by night,  
Watched the beautiful scenery from the speeding train,  
Reached her destination the next bright dawn

Her enthusiasm knew no bounds  
Soon forgot the sadness for home and people left behind.  
As the flowers started blooming in the new garden  
She enjoyed the change of season for the first time  
Chill in the air in winter silence,  
Birds singing and chirping in the early hours

For Nora everything was new and fresh  
She found her friends could not speak the new language  
They often seemed as just migrants dumb and dull!  
She began to feel that all are not equal

They all ate meals together, laughed together  
Went for evening walks in the long drive  
Made fun at the new language and its accent  
Felt bad about it later, however

As days and months passed seriousness set in  
The days were filled with work and little rest  
Work she had never done nor dreamt of doing  
She thought of her maids back home and wondered  
“Did they get tired like me with little rest?”  
She was told that work is worship  
God loved those who worked hard and fast  
And that was the perfect form of worship

Daily work weighed heavily on all of them  
At the end of day body fatigued, feet dead.  
To her surprise some friends left without a word  
May be back to their lush green land  
May be better sense prevailed

Nora continued her journey against all odds as before  
She knew she was moving into the unknown  
Worked in different places, gained new experiences  
Filled gaps in the absence of others  
Deep down her she knew that her journey was alone.

Many years have gone by  
Met many people, made new friends  
Understood life a little more clearly  
Her mind at times filled with some unknown fear  
Held meaningful values to each other  
Crossed paths of trials and tribulations  
Came to a series of realizations  
At times expressions of people told her,  
“you are an outsider”

In the process understanding her identity  
She accepts her stark reality  
That she is an outsider  
That’s what she is now  
And she will remain an outsider.



MV

One evening as she watched the sunset  
Her thoughts went back to the place where she once belonged  
Memories can play on emotions  
She soon shut the window to her memories  
And she felt the mist in her eyes  
Slowly fading into the sunset.

*Mary Varghese rscj*

## **Walking with Buddha**

Buddha was walking with some of his followers. This was in the initial days. While they were traveling, they happened to pass a lake. They stopped there and Buddha told one of his disciples, “I am thirsty. Please get me some water from that lake there”.

The disciple walked up to the lake. When he reached it, he noticed that some people were washing clothes in the water and, right at that moment, a bullock cart started crossing the lake right at the edge of it. As a result, the water became very muddy, very turbid. The disciple thought, “How can I give this muddy water to Buddha to drink?!” So he came back and told the Buddha, “The water in there is very muddy. I don’t think it is fit to drink”.



So, the Buddha said, let us take a little rest here by the tree. After about half an hour, again Buddha asked the same disciple to go back to the lake and get him some water to drink. The disciple obediently went back to the lake. This time he found that the lake had absolutely clear water in it. The mud had settled down and the water above it looked fit to be had. So he collected some water in a pot and brought it to the Buddha.

The Buddha looked at the water, and then he looked up at the disciple and said, “See, You let the water be and the mud settled down on its own. You got clear water. It didn’t require any effort. Your mind is also like that. When it is disturbed, just let it be. Give it a little time. It will settle down on its own. You don’t have to put in any effort to calm it down. We can judge and take best decisions of our life when we stay calm.

*Contributed by Rosa Salve rscj*

## **THE MIGRANT**

The pandemic has cost us a lot  
Surviving it has been a Gordian knot

All we wished was to return to our lands  
And were ready to go through fire and sands

With empty pockets and barely to eat  
Trekking thousand miles under scorching heat

Even if we die on our way  
“Papa has come home”, our children would say



We wish to live with dignity just like you  
Prefer earning meals be it one or two

And now had to stand in queues for hours for food  
Our pains, few of you understood

For you, I could plunge my hands into the drain  
In this pandemic you treated me like a migraine

But it's unwise for us to be indignant  
It's our fate as we are migrant

*By Nishant Nalin, Patna*  
(A former student of Mary Varghese rscj)