

9th DECEMBER 2023

>>> NEWSLETTER <<<
SOCIETY OF THE SACRED
HEART
PROVINCE OF INDIA



NEWS FROM THE MALWANI
COMMUNITY

>>> “I have come that you may have life and have it in abundance.”

I would like to narrate a few life-giving events of this new community year. This is the first time I am living in a community of just two members. It’s a different experience. The two of us are as different as that of 2 different nationalities. Our first attempt was to have a chapel with more space. It was a dream for both of us so that any time during the day we can spend some time to be alone with Him.



NEW CHAPEL



BULLETIN BOARD INSIDE THE CHAPEL

We inaugurated the chapel on the day of Sacred Heart Feast. Fr. Denis Lemos an MSFS priest came to offer the mass and we renewed our Vows. He blessed our house and inaugurated the chapel. We had invited a few immediate neighbours and thus we were around 10 of us. It was indeed a memorable day for us.

On September 10th our Legion of Mary members along with a few of their family members went to Logos Retreat Centre, Bangalore, for four days' retreat. Deeptikrishnan, a Hindu man from Malvan who became blind at the age of 18 due to surgery error, was also taken along with us. "Lord let me see again" has been his prayer for a long time. Though I am no more in Malvan, I was in touch with this family and especially Deeptikrishnan. He had a care taker during the retreat. Though he is from an upper-class Hindu background, all his friends have been priests and nuns. He took all the sessions seriously. On the very first day, there was an announcement saying healing process of eye problem connected with blindness is taking place in one person. It gladdened my heart beyond explanation. Since then, the whole group was praying for him. He experienced partial healing. Before the retreat he was 100% blind. Now he has got around 50% of sight. It is a progressive healing. Within four months the optic nerve which was cut off by mistake will come back to its normal functioning. This is what is promised to him. He can now move around. He will be going back to the Retreat Centre for getting his 100% sight back.

>>> Welcoming the statue of our Lady to our Community



In the month of October, the community had another get together. We brought Our Lady's statue to our community. This time, we invited many more to be with us. Around 50 of them came for the Rosary. It was an occasion to come together as Catholics from Nazarene Apartments and pray for all the families of the campus. I made a conscious effort to make this get together a meaningful one for all. A few came from the next housing colony "Natwardham". We had kept a petition box for all to put in and we kept those petitions for the next three days and earnestly prayed for all of them during our adoration and community prayer. Since the statue remained with us for three days, a few came during the day to be with Mother Mary and to say the Rosary. At the end of it I really felt that we received a lot of blessings from Mother Mary through her presence in the community.

>>> Parish Family Day

On 18th and 19th November, we celebrated Parish Family Day. The whole atmosphere was filled with fun, music, sports, food stall of all types etc. It was an initiative to strengthen our family spirit. Thus, there were a lot of activities going on all around. Every month there are planned activities. There is a lot of focus given to the youth through these activities. May they truly experience the truth of Jesus's own words: **"I have come that you may have life and have it in abundance."**

Sophie rscj

>>> Grace-Filled Pastoral Encounters

I thank God Almighty for giving me the opportunity to work in His vineyard.

Along with the teaching ministry in the parish school, I am also involved in the parish pastoral ministry in St. Anthony's Parish, Malwani. I have been appointed to be their spiritual director of two SCC communities, one is Divine Mercy Community, where there are around 30 families, and the other is the Holy Cross community which has 124 families. I do enjoy my Pastoral ministry. I have finished visiting families of one of the communities. I begin visiting the families after I return from the school and the visits are from 7:30 pm to 9:45 pm.

Visiting families is an enriching experience for me. I become aware that I am meeting different faces of Jesus. Jesus keeps on revealing Himself to me in many different ways, where I experience personal encounters with Him. This builds up my faith, and my relationship with God becomes stronger. I find that people are very simple, humble and God-fearing. Initially, I was thinking I would not manage, but once I was given the responsibility, I was able to do it. That has built my inner confidence too.

I am also in charge of the 'Hope and Life' group for widows. We meet once a month, have the sharing of the Gospel, in Marathi and English. We plan for the month's activities. This group is also actively involved at the Deanery and Diocesan levels. The latter offers monthly recollections, either in Konkani, English or Marathi, and members are free to attend them in whatever language they feel comfortable in. They also have an outreach program, where once a month, they take it in turn to visit the children in the Ashram [orphanage], give them food and spend some time with them. Some of them also visit the homebound widows and pray with them.

Besides these, of course, I can't forget my little ones in the school classroom! To be with them is just a joy!

Somewhere deep within me I feel very happy and satisfied in my ministry. I meet Jesus in and through my ministry. It enriches, energises, and brings me closer to God.

Poonam Gaikwad rscj