

SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART

PROVINCE OF INDIA

NEWSLETTER



January 10, 2019

NEWS FROM THE MALVAN COMMUNITY

The General Council's visit to Malvan Community

For many of us the Visit of General Council has been one of the big events of the year. Like everybody else, we too made major preparations for this event. One of the things that we felt was that our house needed renovation before they come and it was done. I felt it was God's gift to us which came in a hidden way. The General Council members, Marie-Jeanne and Daphne, came to us on 9th of December 2018 and stayed with us till 11th morning. We were lucky to have them for so long a time. On the 9th afternoon they met us individually for half an hour and later we went to the rock garden where we had some silent relaxation followed by community prayer. On 10th they were given a special welcome both in the parish church and in the Rosary School during their Assembly. Then came visit to the Ashadeep Nursery. It was a very big day for our children and they were very excited to meet the General Council members. We welcomed them with the traditional 'arathi' and sang a welcome song and gave a small bouquet each to both of them. The children also sang some of their favourite nursery rhymes. Daphne and Marie-Jeanne had some interaction with the children by asking them their names, and while some were able to answer them others were frightened of them. There was one little girl who spoke to them very freely. Daphne spoke to them in Marathi and they were delighted to hear her. It made their day special. After that Daphne and Marie-Jeanne went to Devbag for a boat ride. That made their visit special for them. In the evening we had a thanksgiving prayer for them. They went back to Mumbai via Goa and thus visited St. Francis Xavier's shrine too. On the whole it was an enriching experience for all of us.

Lily Kullu rscj

Nurturing Health through Physical Fitness

Recently, the Rosary English School, Malvan, had a programme of PT Display which was a colourful event for all those who were part of it. The programme was considered to be a big credit for Rosary English Medium School. It was held on 15th and 16th of December 2018. It was well organized by the teachers and students. The theme of the programme was 'Nurturing Health through Physical Fitness.' Various drills were performed by students of Standards 1 to 9. The programme began with an attractive Welcome Dance and ended with energetic closing ceremony. The students followed specific colour combinations which made the atmosphere colourful. The air was filled with joy, energy and colours that the students of the school promised to spread all around the world.

Lastly, the Principal of School, Fr. Richard Saldanha, conveyed the words of gratitude saying the programme was successful due to the co-operation of parents, teachers, students, PTA members and School Cabinet members. Thus the Programme ended on a cheerful note.

Poonam Gaikwad rscj

“Faith in God can move the mountains...”

The above title has been my lived experience in Malvan during this community year. When I look back over the past months in Malvan, I see many unfamiliar tasks been done with God’s grace. This experience led me to cling to my God for taking over my various tasks. Thus my dependence on God was becoming my inner strength which proved fruitful, not just occasionally but regularly. Some of these are the following:

- Coping with unfamiliar languages: People here speak a mixture of three languages – Malvani, Konkani and Marathi – I started revising my knowledge of Marathi. Once I plucked up courage to write down a beautiful prayer in Hindi which I got translated into Konkani. I needed it badly when I went to distribute communion in the villages. However, people prefer me speaking in Hindi rather than Konkani. Being a people’s person, I keep trying... and I just believe that the Lord will take care of the rest...
- My next challenge was to take up the renovation work of our house despite being totally ignorant about such work. Sr. Jokina, our provincial treasurer, did try to educate me about many things and this was a big help. What made this more difficult were my frequent trips to different places for vocation promotion related work and the JPIC Meeting in the Philippines. I left the renovation work to be monitored by others in the community who were busy in their own ministry areas. No doubt the workers took full advantage of this! I was afraid that we may not be ready for the Central Team’s visit. Believe it or not, the work was over on the day prior to the Central Team’s arrival.
- Preparing for the Central Team’s visit was also like climbing a hill due to last minute things to be done. The new mattresses arrived by 9 p.m. on the previous evening and the carpentry work on the new bed too went on till the previous evening till rather very late...
- Last but not the least is my vocation promotion work! God alone knows how I cope with certain rscjs who do not want vocations unless they are of certain calibre. It reflects our past priorities and approaches towards vocation promotion. Today, the province is in a difficult situation (to put it mildly) without adequate numbers to care for the various communities – leave alone ministries – There are too many challenges in our communities and ministries due to lack of rscj personnel. This is not because there are no vocations in India. The generation gap which is very obvious in the province is affecting all the age groups. I am learning to cross these frontiers by deepening my **dependence on God!** I mean it... “for with God everything is possible”. I try hard not to blame the past. For this, I need to do something about it before we heave a sigh and say “alas, it is too late”.

How do I deepen this conviction of “with God everything is possible”? I say this like a mantra several times a day. It has strength and power which will surprise you...Psalm 91 is also another powerful tool for me. Every sentence is filled with God’s assurance. Our community begins our community prayer with rosary for various needs of the province. Hence, instead of half hour we take 45 minutes for our community prayer. Thus, despite many struggles, I have been experiencing God’s special accompaniment in all the details of my life. Challenges continue.... They never cease....With His help I face these...It is hard for me not to cling on to my own ideas while clinging on to God. Both cannot go hand in hand. Only through surrender can one experience the miracle of God taking over the task...This knowledge is not at all easy for anyone who is task oriented and result oriented. I happen to be one of them. This, too, is a frontier for me which I try to cross step by step...the fear of

failure is part of that step... Yet the inner voice echoes loudly...let go...let God act “for with God everything is possible”...That is the TRUTH! And the statement that challenges every Christian is the following: “Faith in God can move the mountains!”

N.I. Sophie rscj