

SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART
PROVINCE OF INDIA
NEWSLETTER



January 16, 2019

NEWS FROM THE PRERANA COMMUNITY

Inter-novitiate classes

I would like to share my experiences in the Inter-novitiate classes. Novices from different congregations come together, to know more about Jesus' life, His attitudes and values, His suffering, death and resurrection and how to apply His life to our lives, how to grow in our spiritual life, how to respond to the call of Jesus, how to pray, how to build our relationship with Jesus and others, how to control our painful emotions and feelings, how to interact with others and help others.

I had classes on Motivation, Emotional Maturity, Church History, Call for Mission today, Gospel of Mark, Letters of St. Paul, Sexuality and Gospel of John. From these classes, I have learnt a lot – to express myself, to have confidence and to interact with others, to face challenges, to believe more deeply in God and in myself.

Especially from the Emotional Maturity classes, I have learnt to accept all my emotions and feelings. Some emotions and feelings are painful, but healthy. All these are created by God in order to make us strong and help us become good children of God, to experience His presence every day of our lives, to face all the challenges, which come our way and also not to give up, but to believe, accept and move ahead with the grace of God.

Whatever, I have learnt from these classes, I want to practice and apply in my life. I enjoyed my Inter-novitiate classes. My companions identified me as “the Sacred Heart Novice” and not by my name.

One more opportunity I got was to meet our Mother General and her team. I was so happy to meet them and to talk to them. Also, I met Mother General personally; I could express to her all my joys in the Novitiate and all my struggles as well.

I thank God for all the opportunities which he has given and is giving me to learn and grow. Also I thank all my sisters who are supporting me through their prayers.

Anita Hamsoy nscj

Learning as I teach.....

One of my responsibilities in this Formation Community is to take classes with our one precious novice, Anita. We began the year with the condensed life of Madeleine Sophie by Kylie Swanson and Mary Cavanagh RSCJ. I wanted Anita to know some aspects of the life of the 'real' Sophie and not the 'glorified Sophie' we, the older generation had grown up on till 2000. So I supplemented the matter in the booklet every now and again with matter from Phil Kilroy's book on the life of Sophie – e.g. Louis' frequent harsh ways with Sophie, Fr. Varin's lack of trust in Sophie's leadership capacities etc. In November, we began on the life of Josephine Goetz. I had practically no knowledge of the life of our second Mother General. In preparing classes for Anita, I am learning much about her and growing in admiration of the 'right about turn in her life' that began during her school days in Besancon after a series of talks by eminent and holy Jesuit priests and a retreat preached by the ageing Fr. Varin – her transformation from a self-willed, proud, rebellious child to one who wanted to give her hundred per cent to Christ and to others. Her big handicap was poor health throughout her life. Despite this, because she was so gifted intellectually, artistically and spiritually she was called on to shoulder many big and important responsibilities one after the other from her earliest years as an rscj. Anita's willingness to learn inspires me to do my best.

From mid-August to mid-October 2018 I went once a week to the LKG and UKG classes of Prerana Nursery School for half an hour in each class. Since most of the children come from non-English speaking homes, I decided with the guidance of the teachers to focus on getting them to speak short, simple sentences in English using 'action words' such as "I eat vegetables, dal, chapatis. I become strong. I drink milk. I become healthy." "I play, sing, laugh. I feel happy" etc. They also need to learn prepositions so I think of ways of helping them understand the different uses of in, on, under, above, up, down. Some children respond well, a few are in their own world and I have to find ways and means of engaging them in the learning. The teachers will now be busy preparing the children for their Annual Day.

Phila Gomes rscj

My experience from January 2018 to January 2019

I cherish the blessings I received during this year. There were many ups and downs, of adapting and adjusting to take over as Novice Mistress and as Coordinator of the community. I gained many insights as I tried new ways of organising myself with regard to having one novice. I placed my hands into God's hands in moulding the formee, according to the motto of my 1st Profession Jer: 18:6: "Just as a clay is in the potter's hands so I am in Yours". Each day is different, when I see the growth in the formee and myself, I feel confirmed.

I had a happy golden birthday celebration in the community on 14th September 2018. Soon after on 6th October I met with a minor accident. The Lord was slowing me down. Relying and trusting in God's Providence, allowing Him to take over my life, I am experiencing His strong presence and guidance.

In the community working together especially on special occasions, watching good films, were bonding and energising times.

Getting in touch with the 'Jesus Youth' revived my passion for accompanying youth. I thank God for this year of learning.

Venizia Fernandes rscj

Life in Prerana

Here once again I am sharing with you something about my life in Prerana Community. You all know that with little children we have lots of joy, dance, fun and some serious learning of matters from the syllabus, as well as some challenging moments. This is my third year in the UKG class. So definitely I feel I have grown in systematic teaching. I have 24 children in my class. We emphasise understanding, learning, as well as writing skills because after K.G. they have to go to another school with higher standards – schools under ICSE, CBSE boards, where they find it difficult to cope with studies. So, we work to give them a strong foundation.

I am also studying for MSW through IGNOU. On Saturdays for my practicals, I go to Santulan (an NGO). It is run by Mr. & Mrs. Rege. They have committed and dedicated their lives to the marginalized and outcast people of Wagholi. I came to know them through Sr. Marie. She visited our SCC area in Apleghar, shared about them in our community. I was inspired and had a desire to work with them. I would like to share with you something about their NGO and their beginning:

SANTULAN (a balance between rich and poor) was started in 1997 by Mr. Bastav & Mrs. Pallavi Rege. Mrs. Rege was working as Principal at Para-Social Workers training centre at Kasturba Gandhi Memorial Trust. One day while returning home, in front of her auto, a dumper crushed to death a widow's only son and ran away. She followed the dumper and reached a stone quarry area near the village of Wagholi. She saw hundreds of stone quarries and crushers, thousands of families with children, elders, women & men working at the stone quarries. They lived just next to the quarries. She couldn't find the dumper that killed the dalit widow's only son, but she found there a life of utter misery, deprivation, isolated from the so called developed world. The social matrix consisted of the homeless migrants affected by indebtedness, famines, earthquakes, uprooted from traditional livelihood and working unorganized workers from across the states. Their condition was pathetic – without basic facilities, scanty wages. Child labour is practiced, denying educational opportunities to children. Seeing and learning the need to work for those children Mr. and Mrs. Rege began a residential school at their premises, and 'Pashan Shala' at the stone quarry site. Later their work expanded to many other districts of Maharashtra & UP. The residential school is only one of their many activities such as vocational training, women's empowerment, street dwellers organization, legal aid & counselling etc. I have attended some of the legal aid & counselling sessions. The Reges summon both the parties and give their legal advice to them, (free of cost) and try to solve the matters. Most of the cases are solved by their interventions outside the court. Really it is a blessing to those poor families.

I also spend my time listening and counselling the residential school children. I feel, whatever skills I have, with the heart of an educator, I am able to combine teaching and social justice in Santulan. It is a privilege for me to reach out to those “on the peripheries.”

Agnes Guria rscj

Called to be a woman with a compassionate heart

As I look back at our life here in Prerana for the last 5 years, we have built a relationship with people – not only with the parents of the children who come to our school but also with our neighbours, SSC families and parishioners. We have about 25 families in our SCC group spread out in and around 5 kilometres. It has been difficult for me to keep in regular contact with them as I have other commitments. But I have been in touch with them off and on.

This year I felt a call as a Religious of the Sacred Heart to be with the people who are in pain. To be a woman with a compassionate heart to the people who are suffering. I visited families in our parish community whose family members were either sick or had died, to be with them at a time of great pain and to be able to comfort them or to pray for them by visiting the hospital or home. This gave me an opportunity to spread the love of Jesus when their faith in God was low because of pain. Sometimes I just had to sit there with the family in silence to show my support to them which was much appreciated. There were times where I had to listen to the pain and problems of our staff members. I am not a counsellor to be able counsel but I feel a call to pray for them daily. This made me aware of my own vulnerability, my woundedness and through all this I thank God for the many blessings that He has showered on me.

I am happy to be here to be able to make known the Love of Jesus to these wounded people just by praying and being present to them.

Fatima Azavedo rscj