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>>> NEWSLETTER <<<

# SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART

PROVINCE OF INDIA



## NEWS FROM THE TORPA COMMUNITY

The Torpa community members - Lily Kullu, Venizia Fernandes, Neelam Hemrom, Sushma Topno and Mariaelena Figueredo share their experiences of the Torpa Mission.

## ➤➤➤ For the sake of one child, I would have founded the Society~St. Madeleine Sophie Barat

I teach a class of 40 children aged 4 years, in the U.K.G., at the Bal Niketan pre-primary school. In order to ideate, create and innovate lesson plans with activity based teaching methodology - we had a training program for teachers.



We also encourage drawing and art. Wall Art using the Jharkhand art form *Sohrai*, adorns the walls of the school. Our teaching is not limited to the classroom. We want to inculcate in children essential human values.



For the academic year April 2024 to March 2025, to make teaching and learning more interesting, one interactive digital panel was recently introduced. This is a totally new experience for us. We need to learn, in order to teach the children to use technology, and thereby, enhance collaborative learning. We have also introduced conversational English. This is very challenging as the children feel comfortable to speak in their local language.

**Sr. Lily Kullu rscj**

## ➤➤➤ I have come in order that you might have life - life in all its fullness. Jn 10:10

I joined the Torpa community on 5th September 2024. I enjoy being with the children aged 3years to 5years at the Bal Niketan pre-primary school. I also help out with the Hostel for college students, in whatever way I can. This has enabled me to hone my skills and respond to the immediate need. Often there are challenges. And these challenging times have helped me, discover alternatives, to reach out.

A lot has happened in the past two months. On 14th September, I thoroughly enjoyed my memorable birthday celebration with the community and I also participated in the festive lunch served by the Holy Cross Sisters on their Feast day. On 4th October, I attended the feast day celebrations of St Francis of Assisi at the Formation House of the OFM Fathers. I was also happy to attend a youth program organized by the Piarist Fathers on 6th October at the Kamda Parish. An insightful experience and a wonderful opportunity to make known our Society.



**Sr. Venizia Fernandes rscj**

## ➤➤➤ With faith, with love, with earnestness - St. Madeleine Sophie

A quaint little church dedicated to St. Madeleine Sophie is located in Gangutoli, Simdega diocese, around 75kms away from Torpa.

Some of the community members visited the church on 25th May 2023. Even though the rscjs arrived without any prior information about their visit, they were warmly welcomed by the parish priest. In the conversations that followed, the rscjs discovered, that the parish priest and the parishioners knew very little about St. Madeleine Sophie. The parish priest asked the rscj sisters to re-visit and share the legacy of our Holy Mother in Gangutoli.

In May 2024, there was a sudden visit from the parish priest of Gangutoli to invite the rscj community for Sophie's feast day. This was great news and we were thrilled to visit Gangutoli.

When the day arrived, very early in the morning, we left for Gangutoli. We reached the church around 6 am. As we entered the church, the place was crowded and they were waiting for us. The mass was creatively prepared with song and dance. After mass, we were welcomed and given an opportunity to talk about Sophie.

The parishioners were listening attentively to know more about the life of St. Madeleine Sophie. I personally felt that Sophie was present with us, desiring that the people of Gangutoli should know her closely.

At the end of our visit, a bookmark with a picture of St. Madeleine Sophie and the novena prayer were presented to the parishioners.



The parishioners were very happy and thanked us over again. We too were very grateful to God for a wonderful opportunity to share God's unconditional love through Sophie's life.

**Sr. Neelam Hemrom rscj**

## ➤➤➤ **'Children of a New Dawn'**

When I re-visit the ministry of the Children of the New Dawn School, Torpa, it takes me down memory lane to the late Sr. Karuna Mary Braganza - her inexhaustible energy, her contagious enthusiasm, her spirited passion and her faith and hope for Torpa - Against all Odds.

After almost three decades, there has been so much progress and development. The tiny seed planted by Karuna has become a huge tree with branches spread all around filled with flowers and fruits.

The Children of the New Dawn School is one of its branches. With each year, the constant struggles, the challenges and the hard work continues, but with additional demands. The staff and the students are valiantly carrying on the mission and the vision of the Society.

In August I was very happy to attend the "Conference for Educators and Religious of the Sacred Heart" held in Tokyo, Japan. I realized that I need to know more about St. Madeleine Sophie and the Philosophy of Sacred Heart Education.

I closely observed the lay teachers at the conference. They spoke with great conviction, about the Society and about St. Madeleine Sophie. I returned convinced, that I need to introduce our staff to - Sophie's Gift, Our Call to the Future.

A recent visit, with a small group of staff, to the Sophia Campus Mumbai, Bhokar and Haregaon, has enlightened the staff. The generosity, availability and hospitality we experienced touched their hearts and minds. It has become the topic of many conversations among the staff.



The children of the school are divided into four houses named after St. Madeleine Sophie, St. Philippine Duchesne, Sister Janet Erskine Stuart and Mater Admirabilis. Every year, on their respective feast days, we pay homage to them. We have prayer services and we listen to little extracts about them.

Besides academics, there are various activities. One of them was Van Mahotsav. We celebrated the event in a very meaningful way. The students enacted small skits, composed poems and songs, presented dances, raised slogans and planted saplings.

I recall, that our Sister Karuna, transformed the rocky barren land, to the present day beautiful campus, locally known as Mahila Vikas Kendra. Her vision lives on - This is the transformation that we hope for with our 'Children of a New Dawn'.

**Sr. Sushma Topno rscj**

## ➤➤➤ Jani Samvaad: Conversations With Women

A day of celebration, Centre for Women's Development (CWD) Torpa, hosted a spectacular event to celebrate International Women's Day. Held at the CWD Campus in Torpa, the 'Jani Samvad' brought together over 2500 participants for a day filled with knowledge sharing, cultural performances, and inspiring discussions.



**Seed Padh-yatra:** A symbolic walk for empowerment carrying earthen pots filled with traditional seed varieties like rice, dal and millet, 100 women walked till the CWD campus, representing the journey towards progress and a commitment to sustainable agriculture.

**Panel discussions:** Enhancing learning levels of women for strong governance and leadership. The session focused on strategies to empower women to take on leadership roles within their communities and SHGs.

**Enhancing livelihood through micro-business and enterprise development:** The discussion explored avenues for women to achieve economic independence through micro-business and entrepreneurship.

**Showcasing the hues of our culture:** Three captivating tribal dance performances like the munda tribal folk dance by SHGs from Baghiya village and the paika naach by the Lakhna Munda group added a vibrant touch to the event. Additionally, a recipe competition showcased the culinary skills and creativity of the women in the community.

**Promoting locally-led enterprises:** Eight stalls displayed a variety of local products, including seed art, indigenous seed varieties, live demos of lac bangle making, bamboo handicrafts, recycled cloth bags, food items, food grains and traditional farm implements. This provided a platform for women entrepreneurs to showcase their talent and connect with potential customers.

**Samuday Ke Saath:** For nearly 30 years, CWD has been a champion of women's empowerment. Our women-centric programs aim to strengthen women to break down barriers hindering their growth. By promoting education and livelihood opportunities, CWD ensures that women have the necessary tools and resources they need to be the agents of change in society.

The Women's Day special event served as a powerful testament, the dedication, the strength and the resilience of the women we collaborate with, moving forward, For A Better Today!

**Sr. Mariaelena Figueredo rscj**