

29th October 2025

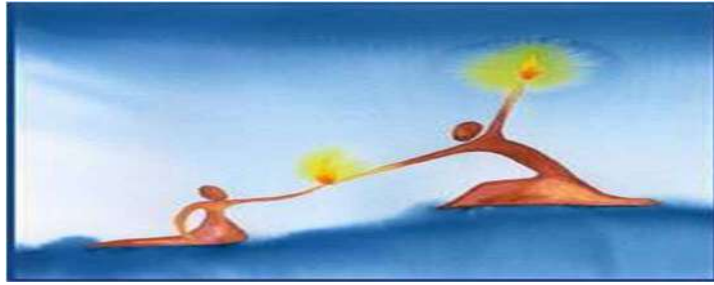
>>> NEWSLETTER <<<

SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART

PROVINCE OF INDIA



**NEWS FROM THE COLLEGE
COMMUNITY**



'HOMEGOING' OF OUR SOPHIA NURSERY STAFF MEMBER, EUGENE (NESTER) HENRIQUES

"Those who live in our memories are never truly gone"

In mid-July 2025 I was deeply saddened by the news that Nester was seriously ill. One evening, when Nester called me and gave me the shocking news that he was diagnosed with cancer, his words, *"but I am not afraid to die Sister, just pray for me"*, were painful to hear. I realised I was not prepared to lose someone who had become such an important part of our lives in the Sophia Nursery school. Nester was dearly loved by all who knew him. He often reminded me that he was like a brother to me. At the professional level, *Chota Lal and Sons*, especially *Bimal*, had complete faith in his work for the Nursery school.

Some people, whether workers, colleagues or friends, leave a void in our hearts when they are called by God!

Nester's sense of humour and generosity had endeared him to us. Losing someone of his calibre is a painful experience, but death cannot take away the precious memories we hold of a deeply appreciated collaborator, who energized everyone with his wit and charm.

Rest in peace, Nester. You will never be forgotten!

Charlotte Bastion rscj

As a member of the College community, I have the joy of spending more than half a day, daily, in the SHEWI (TRUST) Office. If there is any requirement later, the office has the facility of being able to contact me easily.

Property matters and financial complications are my responsibilities. These matters are not settled easily as contacting lawyers is a million-dollar question, requiring much patience and personal visits to their offices. It was a great relief, for example, when we were finally able to settle the *Uttan* property last year.

In community, I spend much time in prayer; daily Mass is a must for me. This is possible as the Society generously provides us with the car to go to the parish, on those days when Mass is not celebrated in our chapel. In the afternoons, after going through the newspaper, I try to solve *Sudoku* which is a good brain teaser. I keep a novel with me which I try to read in my free time. When possible, my brother gives

me a lift to Vasai so I have the joy of visiting my older brother and younger sister who is suffering from Parkinson's. Because of my contact with the family, I am able to include them in my prayer.

May the Lord bless them with many graces, & peace!

Teresa Pereira rscj

BODY- TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Physical pain is a blessing. It serves as a vital protective mechanism, alerting the body to harm, preventing further injury. The body, is the Temple of the Holy Spirit. St Benedict advocated the motto '**Ora et Labora**'- Pray and Work. Body, mind and soul have to be cared for and nurtured appropriately. We religious take good care of our soul and mind, faithful to daily meditation, prayer, the Eucharist, etc. As transformative educators, we grab every opportunity to learn something new, and share it.

However, we often tend to neglect our body, giving into gluttony, putting on weight, burning the candle on both ends; while putting exercise, good nutritious food and the like on the backburner. When I was transferred to Patna and was teaching at St Xavier's College of Management and Technology, I further tilted the equilibrium by cutting into was my time for sleep, exercise and health. The result was Total Knee Replacements in both knees, double cancer, fractures etc.

Today I know, that caring for the body is prayer, eating the right type and quantity of food is also prayer. Exercising, massaging my numb feet and hands daily, is my bounden duty to the Holy Spirit who resides in my Body. This awareness shook me out of my complacency. Abusing my fragile body relentlessly is a sin, amounting to slow suicide. After surviving double cancer, I decided not to cut down on sleep, not to accept more work than I can manage, and care more lovingly for my body. I often fail in body, mind and soul balance, but pick myself up each time, with greater determination.

Religious women and men, usually do not prioritize the need to care for the body. Prayer and ministry tend to over shadow all else. We do not realize, that we are human beings first. Health is wealth which will enable us to serve the Lord better and longer in His vineyard, not becoming a burden to others.

Pain is indeed a big blessing! It promotes personal growth, fosters resilience, wisdom and self-discovery; challenging and prompting one to introspect. It also helps to cultivate empathy, strengthen connections with others and deepen one's appreciation for life. May a holistic approach to health, recognizing the balance of physical vitality, mental clarity and spiritual contentment, be the gift and grace of the Holy Spirit to each of us.

Mudita Menona Sodder rscj

POVERTY – GOD ALONE

As I reflect on the place of poverty in my life, I sometimes wonder if I have lost sight of what poverty really means. Poverty isn't about depriving ourselves of essential needs, but about simplicity and detachment. Am I so focused on meeting my needs that I am losing touch with what truly matters – human connection and spiritual growth? Who and what is at the center of my life?

As a candidate, I recall being inspired by Philippine Duchesne's selfless life, her joy in making sacrifices, even mixing bitter herbs in her food. I was deeply fascinated with her understanding of a *sacrificial life*. And I ask myself: Have I truly lived even a little of her poverty? I've come to realise that, while my mind

isn't drawn to worldly possessions, my heart sometimes yearns for them. I catch myself thinking how useful it would be to have this thing or that. But true poverty isn't just about external actions; rather, it goes deeper, to focus on internal detachment.

My Society has provided me with many things which I lacked at home. Am I content with what the Society gives me? Do I appreciate what I have received, or rather focus on what I do not have? This reflection helps me to see God's providence in my life through my congregation.

“Your example, even more than your words, will be an eloquent lesson to the world.” These words of St. Madeleine Sophie challenge me to look into my life. I have learned over the years that poverty can't be taught through theory; one needs to live it and exemplify it rather than simply following a syllabus. People today look for authentic role models who embody the values of simplicity and humility. It is through witnessing lived experiences that we can truly learn and be inspired.

What example am I setting for the next generation? Is my life teaching the value of sacrifice and simplicity, or do my younger sisters see me grumbling over petty things or just focusing on my needs, in a selfish manner? This inner tension is a challenge I face in living poverty.

I'm striving to cultivate a mindset that says, **'If I have God, I have everything'**. I admire our first missionary sisters who came to India from England; I did not meet them personally, but I've heard about them and feel very inspired. They happily embraced local customs and lived with simplicity without any fear of hardship. Their focus was God and service of others; not what they wanted or needed to survive in a foreign land. They have set a wonderful example of poverty for us.

I'd like to recapture that spirit and prioritise:

“What truly matters is God alone and connecting with Him through humanity”.

Josephine Pereira rscj

