

## I HAVE CALLED YOU BY NAME



When I look back at my life as a Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ), I realise it is God who called me. From Std. 5 to 10, while I studied in our *St. Theresa School, Haregaon*, I was quiet and timid. I was neither attracted to any of the religious in the school nor did I think of becoming a religious. What did fascinate me, though, was that the wholesome growth of each girl in the school was important.

Every year, on the feast of the presentation of Our Lady in the Temple (November 21<sup>st</sup>), as I watched the play on our foundress, St. Madeleine Sophie, and her first companions making their first Vows, I used to wonder how this woman managed to reach out to so many girls through education. I was attracted to her life - *doing something different, something extra-ordinary!* My desire was always to *do ordinary things in an extra-ordinary way.*

After I completed school and the teachers' training (D.Ed.), I started working in our school in Haregaon. It was a great opportunity to value each child and I enjoyed my teaching. But the desire lingered on - to *do something different, something extra-ordinary* - and did not allow me to take the path which girls usually take.

I had a government job, I was getting marriage proposals, I was the much-loved only daughter, and sister of three brothers, in the family.

But I wanted to *do something different; more meaningful.* I did not really think of religious life, but in the end I felt religious life would give meaning to my life. After much prayer and reflection, I began to feel that, perhaps, I could be called to be a religious.

I had heard stories of RSCJ working in remote areas where no other religious order was present - our Society reached there first; gave dignity to people through education. I felt that, as a teacher, I, too, could contribute to this uplifting of the marginalised in society

When I decided to join the Society it was difficult to convince my brothers at first. But my family accepted my decision because they valued my happiness.

After I joined religious life, there were questions, more like temptations: *Why did I leave my secure job for this uncertain life? Have I made the right decision? What if I have to go back?*

But, as the years passed, I realised that God had called me by my name. Today I know that I am here because this is where God wants me to be. To do His will.

There's still a long way to go. Each day is a call to deepen my relationship with my God. To *live this call more meaningfully*, allowing God to mould me and use me according to His plan.

**Here I am Lord! I come to do Your Will!**

*Jyoti Gajbhiv, rscj*