

DHM North Province
January 2019
NEWS LETTER

Extract from the Examiner Editorial



During the closing Mass of the 34th World Youth Day, which took place in the John Paul II field, some 15 miles from downtown Panama City, Pope Francis told the nearly half a million young people from around the world that Jesus is not "an interval in life, nor a passing fad," but a loving God who's concrete and close. Pope Francis then quoted his predecessor, Pope emeritus Benedict XVI:

"It is hard to accept that 'God's love can become concrete, and can almost be experienced in history with all its painful and glorious vicissitudes'." He looked out into the crowds, and told them: "You, dear young people, are not the tomorrow; you are not the 'meantime', you are the Now of God."

Pope Francis seemed at his elemental best throughout the week - the energy, faith and 'loudness' of the young people present clearly rubbing off on him. Though an international gathering with participants from more than 156 countries, this World Youth Day had been billed as the WYD of the Americas, with the host city of Panama strategically chosen as the midpoint uniting the two continents. Clearly referring to the famed Panama Canal, he described the country as a "bridge between the oceans and natural land of meetings," and hoped that it would foster "new channels of humanity" that break through division, anonymity and isolation.

His ability to connect with young people with ease was on full display, as he spoke about "apps", "influencers", "cloud" and "tutorials" in his addresses to them. Leading a prayer vigil on the penultimate day, the Pope told them that Mary wasn't an "influencer," yet she became the "most influential woman in history," because of her "yes" to God. Life, he said, is not "a salvation up 'in the cloud,' and waiting to be downloaded, a new 'app' to be discovered, or a technique of mental self-improvement."

To feel acknowledged and loved, Pope Francis said, people need more than simply being "online," needing to find spaces where they can feel part of a larger community. To be an "influencer" in the twenty-first century is to be "guardians of roots, guardians of all that prevents our life from dissipating and evaporating into nothingness. Be guardians of everything that can make us feel part of one another, to feel that we belong."

We regret for the delay in sending you this January issue as late as we also have difficulty getting the articles on time.

We are happy to circulate the first newsletter from the team and are grateful to all who cooperated in sending us news items. Of course the participation could be better. We have given scope for a variety of subjects as suits the talents of our sisters all over our Province. We hope that our next edition in April will be better patronized.

We take this opportunity to thank the following who contributed to this Newsletter:

- Our two missionaries: Gracie Fernandez and Isabelle Rodricks
- Rena Rodrick's with the youth
- Magdalene Almeida writes on the intervention of Dr. Ruth Pfau (Our intercessor in Heaven)
- Anto on the experience of the Natural calamity at Karasgaon
- Irene shares our mission; Cice Shikshan Jyot
- Cheryl on her Patna experience
- Philo Vaz on Organic Farming at Vayjapur
- Something to try your skills in cookery by Aurolina
- Answers to the Christmas issue quiz
- And to relax as a community...for your recreation....

Happy Reading!!!

.....On behalf of the Editorial Team

Aurolina



Missionary Reflection of Forty Days.....from Gracy Fernandes

Haiti is an island in the Caribbean region. Haiti has its natural beauty of the white Stone Mountain boundary, large blue water lakes, the star studded night sky is a spectacle of untold magnificence. Haiti is rich in minerals of gold, silver, copper and bauxite.

The Haitian paradox of natural wealth and human poverty is inscrutable yet it is possible to restore to the people of Haiti their right to live in human dignity and pride.

Haiti is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a high rate of illiteracy, malnourishment among children and adults and susceptibility of water borne diseases due to lack of potable water. Haiti because of its geographic location is prone to natural and climatic disasters, it is still recovering from the severe earthquake of January 2010 and more recently devastated by the cyclone Mathew. Large number of families and individuals are victims of earthquake injuries and are displaced causing an uncertainty of stability and housing. The white stone soil is infertile and unfavorable for agricultural plantation and crops.

The Society of the Daughters of the Heart of Mary arrived in Haiti in 2013 and we are living in a rented house in the region of Fonds Parisien south west of Haiti approximately fifteen kilometers from the border of the neighboring country of the Dominican Republic. We are 60 kilometers away from the capital city of Port au Prince and have to change three local vehicles to reach the city on the national highway.

Living where we are is a striking contrast to our way of life in the metropolitan city of Mumbai. Just switch on the button and you have electricity, connect your computer and it opens, click and you have the internet, turn on the tap and you have flowing water, there is a choice of transport facility just outside the gate, either call for a "kali pilli" or a cool cab, walk down the road for the BEST buses or cross the road for the Western railway train.

We give a sigh of relief when there is electricity for an hour, you do not know what time of the day or night and your rush to charge the computer, the modem, the led lights, and try to iron. Water has to be drawn from the reservoir which is in the compound about fifteen feet away from our rooms and store it in buckets in each of our rooms for washing clothes and flushing the toilet. Water has to be filtered for bath and we buy drinking water. Every drop of water is precious.

Church of the Poor and for the poor is a reality in Haiti. You feel the painful experience of the everyday life of the simple poor people living in the villages. The Gospel comes alive when children ask for a gift of water and you give them a glass of water to drink.

It is purely the grace of God as I write and reflect being in Haiti for forty days...footsteps walking with me every step on the white stone path to the parish church a distance of six kilometers for the Eucharist very conscientiously and carefully as vehicles take precedence over pedestrians.

Travelling on taxi motor bike to go to the villages and squeeze into the local "tap tap" (mini bus) to go to the city is the only economic mode of transport available. I was grateful to the

gentleman who lifted me from the waist to enter the bigger "tap tap" as the step to enter was too high for me.

The names of the shops and restaurants are piously attractive written in French; I am writing the English translation "God is Love" is the title of a Barber's saloon; "By faith" Dentist Clinic "Gifts of the Holy Spirit" "Eat and Go" Restaurant; "Peace and Love" Hotel: the small and big vans are multi colored with verses from the Psalms and Scriptures.

Christianity is evident in Haiti, on the way from our house to the Parish, there are six Protestant Churches of different denominations with bold letters "Church of the New Generation" "Save yourself, the world is coming to an end, the Kingdom of God is close, repent and believe"

The people express their faith in a vocabulary of personal and filial relationship Father is "Papa" and Mother is "Mama" the first day I smiled when I heard the sign of the Cross "O nom de Papa..."

In brief we are a community of four dhms, Nadia from Benin is a pediatrician and works in the Archdiocesan Hospital in the capital and comes to the community for the monthly meetings. Maglene a dhme from Brazil and works with children, enrolling them in school, they are the first generation learners. Bernadette works with women's group for income generating projects. I accompany Bernadette and Magalene to the villages for study classes for children and for the women's group, besides writing a few projects for funding. I listen, observe, reflect and pray as I journey each day to deepen God's love and serve Him in the Haitian children, women and their families.

Conclusion: Having left familiar shores, I believe and feel "Footsteps walking with me

Footsteps I cannot see
But every move I make
And every step I take
I know they're there with me
They walk with me all the way
Beside me day by day
Through good and bad
Through happy and sad
Those footsteps won't go away.....
I have been blessed in so many ways
Thanks to the Lord above"



Thanks to you and your prayer for me and our mission in Haiti. Please do continue to intercede to our founders- Mother de Cice and Fr. De Cloriviere for us in Haiti.

ADVENT IS A SEASON OF

HOPE



PEACE

LOVE

JOY

Entrance to the Home for the Aged

On December 2, 2018, 15 students of class VII, one parent, co-Catechist Mr. Laval and I gathered at 3.15 p.m. at our Parish Church, Our Lady of Dolors. We left at 3.30 for the Home for which was walking distance and we took about 20 - 25 minutes to reach there.



We were welcomed by Mr. Nobert D'souza, a trustee member.



Mr. Nobert D'souza. The Home has 11 inmates, nine women and two men. It is run by the 'Society of our Lady of Piety,' Dabul. It is a charitable institution for the Relief of the Poor, established in 1869, registered under Bombay Public Trusts Act 1950, Reg. No. D-73 (Bom.) at 49, Nagindas N. Shah Marg., (Vijaywadi), Dr. J.S.S. Road, Mumbai - 400 002.

Dr. Domingo Caetano de Souza initiated the project in 1869. He felt a deep and personal desire to do something concrete for the poor and destitute. His **vision** was translated into reality with the founding of the *SOCIETY OF OUR LADY OF PIETY* which has been taking care of the elderly destitute over the years. The home celebrates its 150 years in 2019! Thanks to numerous helping hands and generous donors, more and more of those in need could be offered shelter and loving care. Today it is run by Trustees and Managing Committee Members.

The inmates don't pay any registration fee and entry is strict depending on their family and real life situation. The trust has many donors, who cater to the needs of the inmates, though it is difficult to meet medical bills as the inmates do not have to pay their medical bills. There are good doctors who take care, look after the inmates when they are sick and they are also taken to good hospitals like the Saifee hospital at Charni Road.

The Home is a two-storied building with separate floors allocated for the men and women, in residence, who receive food, clothing, Medicare and recreational facilities. Only Catholics are admitted into the home after a proper assessment of their home and family.

Life in the Home:

The Home has 20-bed capacity 10 beds for women and 10 for men and a floating population of persons in care, in varying stages of health and dependency. On the ground floor is the men's Dormitory. At the moment there are only two men. Men have recreational facilities like television which is tuned to a sports Channel.

On the first floor is the women's dormitory. There are nine women at the moment. There is a television here too, also a kitchen and refectory. Women and men gather round the table to peel and cut vegetables and fruit for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Able bodied persons help in buying the groceries, cooking, cleaning, taking care of those who are sick and in bed. Some of them go for daily Mass to the parish at Dabul and are actively involved in parish activities like zonal meetings, Legion of Mary and home visits. They recite the Rosary daily in the evening as a community. Food is served for all on the first floor where there is a kitchen and facility for washing.

Some inmates are old, some whose children have left them and settled abroad and others who have no one to take care of them.

To organize this visit I phoned the home and spoke to Ms. Dorris who resides there to take care of her ailing and sick mother.

Later on I phoned and spoke to Mr. Nobert D'Souza, Trustee member and office staff who welcomed my proposal to have our children visit the home.

The students put up two Konkani dances, two games - passing the parcel and housie. The winners were given prizes which the children had brought. One student carried his organ to play and they enjoyed singing carols as we were in the Advent season and soon it would be Christmas.

Each one of the student made Christmas cards for each of the inmates wishing them for Christmas and the New Year. As they interacted with the old they began to address them as Uncle, Aunt and Mai. They spent time talking with them, asking them about their families, and about their past lives. They were interested to know their experience of staying in the home.

It was a great learning experience for the children as they realized the difficulties of old people and made them think about their own parents and elders.

We descended to the ground floor where there was a chapel and we read the Word of God following which the students expressed in prayer the sentiments that were aroused during this visit. Each one was given a paper on which to write his/her personal experience which they did happily. Even the parent who accompanied us gave us her feedback.

We realized that we are here to give hope, love and joy to all the inmates and that Jesus is the reason of this season who gives us strength and courage to live our lives and calling.

A Big Thanks to Gracy Pinto, my animator for helping me to plan this project in the context of Advent and taking the trouble to visit and encourage us in the Home for the Aged and to the Home for the Aged for the permission to visit the Home. God Bless.

Singing Christmas Carols....& Dancing to Konkani songs...



Playing a game of Housie... & Prize Distribution...



Interacting with the inmates and building a rapport with them...



Wishing each of them with a handmade Christmas card...



Word of God and Expression



Dr Ruth Pfau, intercessor for Kanubhai...

It was 17th November 2018, three days after I returned from the Regional Assembly at Bharuch.



Agnes asked Karuna and myself to take Kanubhai, (affectionately called 'Kaka' by all of us), to the Civil Hospital in Ahmedabad. He has been our faithful worker in the fields for some years. He suffered from severe pain in the right leg with swelling and was unable to walk. The family had taken him to several doctors. Wherever they went, the doctors suggested that his leg had to be amputated due to blocks in the arteries and the surgery would require almost Rs.2 lakhs. The family had waited for two days outside Govt Civil hospital in Ahmadabad, but Kanubhai didn't get admission in this hospital.

We intervened and got him admitted in Seith Vadilal General hospital- Cardiology dept., Ahmedabad, in the emergency ward. The doctors were extremely good. Going through earlier reports and doing some more tests, the solution was amputation of the right leg in all probability. He was diagnosed with 'Right chronic lower limb arterial occlusion'. It was too late to save his leg as the surgery should have been done within 24 hours of the eruption of the disease. I pleaded with the Head surgeon to do his best to save his leg from amputation. After completing all the procedures in record time, they rushed him to the operation theatre immediately.

Instantly, my thought went to Dr Ruth Pfau. Viewing the documentary on her life and the sharing that followed during our Regional Assembly at Bharuch, had made a deep impression on me. I prayed to her for help asking her, to plead for Kanubhai. I was almost certain God would listen to her prayer. As Ruth Pfau had saved so many lives in Pakistan from leprosy, I felt she would be a powerful intercessor with Jesus the great healer. I told Karuna who was with me and phoned Agnes to tell her to do the same.

After the surgery the doctor came out from the operation theatre to show us the blocks they had removed from the arteries in the upper part of the knee and added that Kanubhai is doing well and may not need amputation. It was unbelievable, but true. There were tears of joy in the eyes of the relatives.

Kanubhai was in the hospital for over a month. The doctors and nurses put in their best efforts. Today, Kanubhai is on his feet walking happily and wanting to get back to work.

The hospital bill came to Rs.20,700/- (Minimum charges in the government hospital). It was cashless payment as Kanubhai was fortunate to have 'MA Card' under 'Mukhyamantri Amritam Yojanan' by Govt of Gujarat. It is a health coverage scheme introduced in 2012 by the Govt for the poor.

We rejoice with our kaka and thank God for having Ruth Pfau in heaven praying for us.

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Magdalene Almeida,
Koth-Gujarat

Cice Shikshan Jyot

Some of us at Premankur are visited once every two months by a lively group of children accompanied by their parent.

They are here in the mid noon when after a full morning our eyelids are almost drooping and are bodies sagging, but NO! NEVER....their very presence, their sprightliness, their light footedness and above all the joy to be with us usually expressed by a warm hug or a broad smile, or a handshake, breathes a new life within us and we are all up and about to welcome them, listen to them, and play with them.

The 10th of December was one such day. Seventeen children (HIV +) accompanied by one of their parents were present for this get-together.

Evelyn welcomed them in, with a few words.

We began with a beautiful song, followed by a live show (by the children within half hour of practice and dressed in the typical costumes of the Jewish people) - of the Annunciation, followed by the Angel's message to Joseph, the census, the move towards Bethlehem, the search for a place to lay Mary and the newborn, the "no room in the inn" and finally the birth of Jesus in the stable. (A creative presentation produced by our dear Juniors Rose Mary, Vanita and Vinarasi)

Our distinguished guests were Mr. Anthony Dias, Secretary of the Catholic Sabha and his wife Iris Dias from Vishweshwar Nagar, Goregoan €. Mr. Dias explained the significance of Christmas with meaningful placards depicting HOPE, JOY, PEACE and LOVE. He then drew their attention to a big picture of a crib and spoke about the birth of Jesus in dire poverty.

The couple conducted 2 games, "passing of the hat" and the hula-hoop' and gave away prizes.

Monetary help was given for medical and education. A generous donor presented them with bags in which were a stationery kit, oil, toothpaste, toothbrush, crayons, and a writing pad.

Snacks comprising of a nutritious meal of sprouted grains mixed with onion, chilies, tomatoes, and seasoned with a few spices, jelabis, cake (Christmas season) , with a hot cup of tea was served.

The children thanked the organizers; the actors/actresses for making their evening an enjoyable one and some were even happier that they were given a chance to come on stage.

..... Irene Abreu

News from Vaijapur...

Organic Farming: Vaijapur being a draught stricken area, and the monsoons being unpredictable yet we eagerly awaited some showers sufficient enough to cultivate our land and to meet our daily needs and that of our boarders. Even though it rained for a few moments, it brought us great joy and we made the most of each moment to fill all the buckets and utensils available in the house. The girls ran for their baths and washed their clothes Oh what a scene it was! At times it would rain at midnight or in the early hours of the morning, and our dear Nancy and Tarika, were so attentive to the patter of the rain, that they would wake up and fill up the water, so that all of us could use it the next day.



We appreciate the blessings of nature for taking care of our every need. The little rain that we received was sufficient for cultivating various vegetables, fruits, flowers and herbal plants. People visiting our campus appreciated the greenery around. There was never a day when the 52 girls were deprived of water to meet their daily needs. This was indeed a blessing and a wonder. What needs to be appreciated is that there was always an attitude of gratitude and satisfaction even though it rained for a few moments at times.

The benefits of the Water Harvesting has been one of the resources that kept us going till the month of December 2018.

It is only in the month of January 2019 that we started experiencing water shortage, so much so that we had to curb our enthusiasm of cultivating new crops, and had to water the existing crops and provide them nourishment. The water had to be rationed out to the girls so that they were not deprived of their daily needs

Lots of trouble and care was taken to give the crops the right fertilizers. It is encouraging to see the girls go enthusiastically to render their services in the fields - they are as faithful as their models Nancy and Tarika.

Below we have given the fruit of their hard work:

Vegetables: Brinjals, white pumpkin, lady fingers, radish, cabbages, cauliflower, leafy vegetables, carrots, toor, beans, moog, potatoes, tomatoes, green chillies, coriander, garlic sweet potatoes, papdi, corn and onions.

Fruits: Papayas, custard apples, and guavas.

The Vegetables were utilized for the girls for their meals and the fruits as snacks.

Flowers: Roses of different colours, marie gold and office flowers.

Herbal Plants: Aloe vera and lemon grass, adulsa, pattarchatta etc

"Count your Blessings, name them one by one and you will see what God has done"

Anecdotes to ponder...

Bear ye One another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Once Sadhu Sundar Singh was walking with a monk through a valley of the Himalayas. The monk wanted Sadhu Sundar Singh to walk fast as snow was falling and they had to reach their destination before dark. As they were hurrying along they heard a pathetic cry. It was a poor man who had fallen down and injured himself.

Sundar Singh wanted to go and help him but the monk said that if they tried to help him, they would not be able to cross the snow before darkness set in. The Sadhu could not bear to leave the man there to die. "May be the Lord has brought me this way just to help that brother" he thought and went over to the man.

The monk didn't wait, he walked on by himself. The Sadhu found that the man could not walk. So he made a sling with his blanket and carried the man on his back. Carrying the burden of a helpless man and walking up the hill was extremely difficult. However Sunder Singh continued trudging along. Finally he could see the light of a monastery a short distance away. As he continued to walk on carrying the man, suddenly he spied a huge bundle covered with snow lying on the way. On inspection he found to his horror the body of the monk who accompanied him.

How true it is that sharing the burdens of others gives both of us and others new life.

A dialogue between a Man and God.

Man: God, hope you will not get annoyed if I ask you a question?

God: Don't you worry, please ask me.

Man: God you have spoilt my entire day.

God: Please tell me what is the matter?

Man: Today the alarm did not ring, and so I woke up late.

God: And so what?

Man: My 2 wheeler was not getting started, and then somehow I managed to get a rickshaw.

God: Then, continue.

Man: Today the Canteen too was closed, so I had to fetch a sandwich. That too was too bad.

God: (Laughs)

Man: I received an important phone, but as I was talking to the person, the phone got disconnected.

God: Continue.

Man: In the evening, when I went home, there was no electricity. I was so exhausted, that I wanted to put on the A.C. and go to bed. God why did you behave this way with me?

God: Now listen attentively. Today you would have died. But I sent my angels and saved you, I was busy doing this, that's why the alarm did not ring.

I did not permit your 2 wheeler to start, if it did, you would have met with an accident,

You would have been poisoned in the canteen, so I saved you with a sandwich.

I disconnected your phone, if not the person on the other line, would have got you in trouble.

In the evening there would have been a short circuit, resulting in a fire, from which I saved you.

Man: God pardon me!

God: Don't ask to be pardoned, only believe and keep trusting in me.

..... Contributed by Philo Vaz

BREAKING NEWS- KHARAZGAON

We, sisters, students, hostelites, staff and people residing in Karasgaon and nearby villages have been experiencing tremors since the past 4 months.

These tremors have developed cracks in our building, and some houses nearby too have very deep cracks and we are told some have fallen down.

These have been occasional and at times severe at 4.5 Richter scale...???

People are so frightened that they are sleeping outside notwithstanding the very cold temperature.

On 1st February there were 11 tremors with high frequency that shook the roof, the building and we were all very scared. These happened from 7 am to 5 pm...

We were at the nearby Kharazgaon Church at 4.30 pm on 1st February and school children and sisters and Fathers were present for the first Friday Mass. During Mass there were at least 4 tremors and one was so strong that the roof shook and all the children ran out very frightened. In the nearby schools too all the children were out of the school building nearly the whole day for safety.

In the night our hostelites slept on the ground floor in the veranda near the gate of the college building, keeping it unlocked to run out into the garden if needed. However with all our prayers and the continuous prayers of all our sisters in the Province the night was peaceful.

There tremors have been keeping us very anxious and we are very concerned for the safety of our students.

We have addressed a letter to the Tahsildar of Talasari informing her of the alarming situation and asking for an explanation as to the reason of this occurrence. The CRI unit of Talasari too ventured out to meet the Tahsildar to ask for further enlightenment on this situation and demand for tents for protection.

No one is able to tell us the exact reason of these tremors. Only rumors abound.

We were also strengthened by the life of our Founder Fr Peter Joseph de Cloriviere as we are in Triduum and he braved many a storm during the French Revolution.

Thanks to Magy, Our Provincial and all our DHM for being with us in prayerful support and enquiring daily about our safety.

We continue to pray for God's protection and for more enlightenment on the situation.

Sisters at Kharazgaon

Greetings to All!

It is over a month that I am in Karen, Nairobi, where the house of formation is located. I am just getting a feel of the place and its people. There are many good things to speak about Kenya. People are very lively and friendly. There is a beautiful communitarian spirit in the Church. Just yesterday we had a very enriching gathering of religious men and women together with the Bishop and the Cardinal Archbishop to celebrate the Consecrated Day. We had three hours of a lively, joyful Mass. At the end the Cardinal himself sang a song leading the congregation to sing. He encouraged the religious to learn from the foreign missionaries and work with the spirit of Christ to reach the peripheries of the country and not remain just in the cities. The celebration ended with the agape meal.

I also went to Ewuaso for a week. It was wonderful being with the Masai children and people. The Lord has also blessed us with 4 novices; 2 from Rwanda, 1 from the Congo, and one from Kenya. I find this group very responsible and committed. We also have 3 new aspirants. I am happy to work with Eliza the present formator. She also works in a school where drug addicts from the slum come and need a lot of counselling. She commits herself to this work with much dedication.

Besides all these good things, some scary things also happen, like last month 21 people were victims of a terrorist bomb attack in Nairobi. There are ethnic conflicts between tribes, robberies here and there. We trust our gracious Lord for His protection and safety. All other hardships of life become small when I experience great love for God and his people. It is the Lord who is at work in generating so much love in my heart for these people. I thank God for this gift. While I am here I want to put my whole self in this mission and help Eliza in all I can. Ilona is well.

I was happy about the NN Newsletter. I am grateful for all the news. I read them with much interest. Just now this is our life here. Do keep us in your prayer. Our three novices from Kenya will make their first vows on 9th Feb. in Rwanda. They did their formation in West Africa with Pascaline.

Thanks for all the love and care you have for us.

Cor Unum,

Isabelle

On 11th October '2018, morning I embarked on the journey of self-awareness and peace to a far off place in Bihar, Patna, Atma Darshan.

The train journey was exciting and had great fellowship with co-passengers on the culture, Bihar heritage and food habits of Bihar people.

After a warm welcome from the fathers, we settled to begin the 40 days renewal programme.

We were eleven of us from 9 different states (Gujarat, Maharashtra, Haryana, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and 3 countries (Mexico, Indonesia and Sri Lanka)

The first day began with the orientation of the course and knowing each other. We were given plenty of time for group sharing and fellowship. We were encouraged to go for walks together and share our apostolic life, religious life and our concerns.

The session on Awareness, Meditation and relaxation helped us to unwind and ease our body of all the stress accumulated during our busy apostolic works. These session made us to experience and heal our childhood memories.

The Gospel of Luke made me to relish the person of Jesus and his ministry. We studied the gospel word by word and even saw the movie of Jesus.

The Psycho-spiritual integration was a strong session taken by Fr. Matthew, which enabled me to identify my self-concept and my self-image that I had created in my mind.

Leadership and management classes helped to be a good leader and be much focused and have a listening attitude.

Mother Nature was a deep source of inspiration to me during the Eco-Spirituality classes. We were asked to hold the trees and talk to them. At the end of that meditation, I felt spiritually stronger and connected to mother earth. We celebrated the Eucharist in the forest of Taru Mitra and remembered the early Christians way of celebrating the Passover.

The classes on Justice Peace and Commission, enabled me to see the church' stand on social issues and how we need to respond in the current situation. The consumerism culture has created a huge gap between the rich and the poor and as religious even we fall into the trap of this culture e.g. latest gadgets, vehicles and our buildings. We are getting into the institution culture and hence touch with the people and the real needy ones is lost.

Life Transition was an eye opener session to understand how women respond to hormonal changes and happenings within the body. We were made to realize that as women we have the capacity to nurture and foster life and so being a religious needs us to channelize our sexual energy for the love of people. Agape love will help us to transcend our feelings of loneliness and make us feel satisfied and content with our religious vocation.

The retreat experience was simply wonderful, basking in the love of Jesus and being grateful for all the blessings in my life. The natural surroundings helped me to learn many things from nature and practice it in my daily life.

Patna Darshan- We visited a number of places like the Padrikehaveli, Patna Zoo, the Bishops house, the Patna Womens college, Kumhrar, Golghar, the electric cremation centre, Patna Planetarium and so we got a glimpse of the rich heritage of Bihar

The most memorable encounter was the visit to Bodha Gaya. We experienced spiritual bliss meditating under the pipal tree and felt very peaceful. The entire place vibrated the blissful presence of Buddha.

At Atma Darshan community, we shared our lives, laughed, cried and comforted one another. The journey of 40 days was a life time journey of friendship, sisterhood and gaining inner freedom.

I am deeply grateful to my Provincial and the Councilors for giving me this wonderful opportunity of nurturing my religious vocation.

I end with these words of Fr. De Cloriviere "I prefer to die a thousand deaths, than to abandon my holy vocation."

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Ms. Cheryl Machado

Nirmala Niketan

According To THY WILL

I heard YOUR still Voice
say "GO"
and with all that lives
within me...I cried yes! (Luke1:38)

For I knew YOU would not beg (Luke 18:18-24)
I know YOU well enough to know
that where YOU lead me...
will be good, acceptable, and perfect (Romans12:2)
for sure i believe that only
IN YOUR WILL I am completed.

I will look ahead with
great expectations to my future
knowing because YOUR in it,
there awaits plans
for good and not evil (Jer. 29:11)

I know that You will always be my "EVER-PRESENT HELP" (Psalm 46:1)
and beneath YOUR wings I will trust and find safety (Psalm 91:4)

With all my heart
I believe that as long
as I abide "IN YOU"
and trust that YOU are Sovereign...
and that ALL my trials- All my failures
every up and every down..
will work together for MY GOOD! (Rom 8:28-29)
To equip me to do what YOU have called me to do!

(copied from Google author unknown)

THE WAGON WHEEL



This is an article on aging. We all age and so fulfill the cycle of our lives. This is what the wagon wheel teaches us. No one of its spokes is more important than the others, but together they make the full circle and reveal the hub and core of its strength. The more we look at it, the more we come to realize that we have only one life cycle to live, and that living it is the source of our greatest joy.

The restful accomplishment of the old wheel tells us the story of life. Entering into the world we are what we are given, and for many years thereafter parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, friends keep giving to us- some more, some less, some hesitantly, some generously. When we can finally stand on our own feet, speak our own words and express our own unique self in work and love, we realize how much is given to us. But while reaching the height of our cycle, and saying with a great sense of confidence, "I really am", we sense that to fulfill our life we are now called to give to others, so that when we leave this world, we can be what we have given.

The wagon wheel reminds us that the pains of growing old are worthwhile. The wheel moves forward. Although we have only one life cycle to live, although it is only a small part of human history which we will cover, to do this gracefully and carefully is our greatest vocation. Aging is the turning of the wheel the gradual fulfillment of the life cycle in which receiving matures in giving and living makes dying worthwhile. Aging does not need to be hidden or denied, but can be understood, affirmed and experienced as a process of growth by which the mystery of life is slowly revealed to us.

It is this sense of hope that we want to strengthen. When aging can be experienced as a growing by giving, not only of mind and heart, but of life itself, then it can become a movement towards the hour when we can say with the author of the second Letter of Timothy: "As for me, my life is already being poured away as libation, and the time has come for me to be gone. I have fought the good fight to the end. I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith."

But still without the presence of old people we might forget that we are aging. The elderly are our prophets, they remind us that what we see so clearly in them is a process in which we all share. Their lives are full of warning but also of hopes.

We want to speak, therefore, first of all, about the elderly as our teachers, as the one who tells us about the dangers as well as the possibilities in becoming old. They will be able to show us that aging is not only a way to darkness but also a way to light. Secondly, we want to speak about aging and care in order to show not just how we can take care of elderly people, but more, how we can allow the elderly to cure us of our separatist tendencies and bring us into closer and more intimate contact with our own aging.

We believe that aging is the common human experience which overreaches the human community as a rainbow of promises. It is an experience so profoundly human that it breaks through the artificial boundaries between childhood and adulthood and between adulthood and old age. It is so filled with promises that it can lead us to discover more and more of life's treasures. We believe that aging is not a reason for despair but a basis for hope, not a slow decaying but a gradual maturing, not a fate to be undergone but a chance to be embraced.

We therefore hope that those who are old, as well as those who care, will find each other in the common experience of aging, out of which healing and new life can come forth.

- Adapted from Henri Nouwen's book "Aging".

A Golden Prayer

Blessed are they who bring back
memories of yesterday.
Blessed are they who understand my
faltering steps and shaky hand.
Blessed are they who know that my
ears today must strain to catch the
things they say.
Blessed are they who seem to know that
my eyes are dim and wits are slow.
Blessed are they who looked away when
the cup spilled at my table today.
Blessed are they with a cheery smile
who stop to chat for a little while
Blessed are they who never say
"You've told that story twice today".
Blessed are they who make it known that
I am loved, respected and not alone.
Blessed are they who know I am at a loss
to find the strength to carry my cross.
Blessed are they who in loving ways
ease the days on my journey home.

Answers to the Christmas issue Quiz!

1. What's the name of the period leading up to Christmas? (Advent)
2. How many Wise Men brought gifts to Jesus? (Three)
3. What was the name of John the Baptist's parents? (Elizabeth & Zechariah)
4. In what town was Jesus born? (Bethlehem)
5. To what country did the family escape? (Egypt)
6. How many of Rudolph's eight companions names start with 'D' (3 Dancer, Dasher, Denver)
7. Why did the Reindeer laugh and call Rudolph names? (Because he had red shiny nose)
8. What country did Christmas Trees originate from? (Norway)
9. Who was the 'King of the Jews' who ordered the babies killed? (Herod)
10. What's the second line of "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas?"
(Just like the ones I used to know)
11. What was Joseph's job? (Carpenter)
12. What were the names of the three Kings? (Caspar, Balthazar, Melchior)
13. What Angel visited Mary? (Gabriel)
14. Where did the baby Jesus sleep? (Manger)
15. Who were the first visitors of Jesus? (Shepherds)
16. In which carol do we sing "All is calm all is bright"? (Silent Night)
17. What song did the angel's sing at Christ's birth? (Gloria in Excelsis Deo)
18. What kind of Christmas will you have if you are missing your best friend? (Blue Christmas)
19. How many dreams did Joseph have? (four mt1:20; mt 2:13; mt2:19; mt 2:22)
20. Who started the first Christmas crib? (St. Francis of Assisi).

SPINACH SOUP

Ingredients

1 bunch of Spinach;	water.
2 medium sized potatoes;	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk;
1 medium onion;	1 tbsp butter;
a small piece of ginger;	salt & pepper powder to taste.



Method:

Wash and clean the Spinach leaves. Roughly chop the leaves and tender part of the stem. Discard the thicker part of the stem. Wash, peel and chop the potatoes. Clean the ginger and cut the onion into quarters. Put all in a pan with 4 cups of water and cook till soft and tender and the potatoes are well cooked. Cool and pass through the blender using up all the water.

In another vessel put the pureed spinach and if necessary add another $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 cup water. Boil adding salt & pepper. Next add the milk and the butter just before serving.

ALOO MUTTER

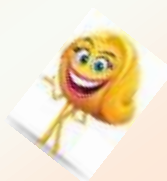
Ingredients

$\frac{1}{4}$ Kg Potatoes;	$1\frac{1}{2}$ "piece Ginger;
1 cup Shelled peas;	6 flakes Garlic;
2 Onions;	1 tsp Coriander;
3 Tomatoes;	$\frac{1}{4}$ bunch (7-8 stems) Coriander leaves;
1 tsp. Turmeric powder;	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp Cumin;
$1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp Garam masala;	3 tbsp Oil;
$1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp Chili powder;	salt to taste

Method: Chop the onions and grind it with ginger and garlic. Blanch the tomatoes and mash it.

Pressure cook the potatoes (cut into cubes) and peas.

Heat oil in a pan and season with cumin/jeera, add the ginger/garlic/onion paste and fry till the raw smell goes off. Add the coriander, chili, and turmeric powder. Add garam masala, fry for some time, next add the mashed tomatoes/puree. Fry till oil separates. Add the potatoes and peas and a little water. Cook till the gravy/sauce thickens. Serve hot garnished with coriander leaves.



For your Recreation --- Riddles from the Bible

1. Who was the fastest runner in the world?
2. Who introduced the first walking stick?
3. What did Adam do when he wanted sugar?
4. How do we know they used arithmetic in early Biblical times?
5. How do we know that Noah had a pig in the Ark?
6. Who was the best financier in the Bible?
7. Was there any money on Noah's Ark?
8. Where medicine is first mentioned in the Bible?
9. Why did Moses cross the Red Sea?
10. What do you think the "Land flowing with milk and Honey" would be like?
11. Who was the straightest man in the Bible?
12. Where is tennis first mentioned in the bible?
13. Why was Goliath very much astonished when David hit him with a stone?
14. How many animals of each species did Moses take aboard the ark?
15. Who was the most successful physician in the Bible?
16. How did the fish that swallowed Jonah obey the divine Law?
17. What man in the Bible had no parents?
18. Who was the most popular actor in the Bible?
19. What day is strongest in the Bible?
20. Where was Solomon's temple?
21. What are the two smallest things mentioned in the Bible?
22. What is Adam and Eve's phone number?



Answers in the next page

Contributed by Aurolina



Teacher: Do you know what coincidence is? Give me an example.

Student: My father and mother were married on the same day.

Peter: I got a scolding when I showed my report card at home. Did you show yours to your dad?

Paul: No I didn't. I showed it to him when he was fast asleep.

Answers to the Riddles from the Bible

1. Adam. Because he was the first in the human race.
2. Eve, when she presented Adam with Cain.
3. He raised Cain.
4. Because the Lord said to multiply on the face of the earth.
5. He had Ham.
6. Noah, he floated his stock while the whole world was in liquidation.
7. Yes. The duck took a bill, one frog took a green back and the skunk took a scent.
8. When the Lord gives Moses two tablets.
9. To avoid Egyptian Traffic.
10. Sticky
11. Joseph: Pharaoh made a ruler out of him.
12. When Joseph served in Pharaoh's court.
13. Because such a thing never entered his head before.
14. None; Noah took them on the ark.
15. Job. He had most patience. (patients)
16. Jonah was a stranger, and the fish took him in.
17. Joshua, the son of Nun.
18. Samson, he brought the house down.
19. Sunday, the rest are weekdays.
20. On the side of his head.
21. The widow's mite and the wicked flea.
22. 281 (Two ate One).



Three friends were having a chat...

First friend: I eat meat every day, that's why I am so strong.

Second Friend: I eat fish every day, that's why I can swim so well.

Third friend: I eat eggs every day, but till now I've not been able to lay even one!



Old man: Doctor, my right leg has been giving me a lot of trouble.

Doctor: That's nothing. The pain is just because of old age.

Old man: But my left leg is as old as my right leg, it doesn't give any trouble at all.

