



Mother Anna Huberta Roggendorf
Founder of the Society of Helpers of Mary

Igniting Sparks

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

NOVEMBER 2016

Movements to cheer up

When women are empowered, their families are empowered. Keeping this in mind we, the Sisters of Snehagiri Community render our service mainly for the development of tribals, especially women and children. This year we have formed a Federation of 35 Self Help Groups (SHGs). They meet every three months at the Centre to plan, evaluate and organize activities. These women earn their living through Agricultural means. This year we are focused in assisting them to march towards development through farming. The geographical and climatic conditions permit them to have seasonal crop like paddy, which is the only source of livelihood throughout the year. Otherwise these women are jobless, while the men migrate to various places to earn their livelihood. Our Centre makes constant efforts to get Government Schemes and Benefits which otherwise never reach them.

This monsoon through our constant attempt we have succeeded to get seeds of Paddy and Tur Dal from Krushi (agriculture) Department of Dhanu and Talasari Taluka. It was a moments of cheer and gladness when 100 women from the 20 SHG groups received these seeds for cultivation. Their faces were bright and hopeful while they walked group by group into our campus to collect them. The persistence and hard work of the Sisters together with these women were appreciated very much. We also assisted them to get their relevant documents for securing a Ration Card for these families. Through our regular meetings and family visits we made them aware of their Basic Rights.

.....
Sr. Aarti Landgi shm, Snehagiri, Karajgaon



Rejuvenating the evening of their lives



We owe our elderly citizens our thanks and a heartfelt salute for all they have achieved throughout life and their contribution to society. We can esteem and demonstrate our gratitude by making sure that our communities are good places in which our elders live gracefully.

Shraddha Community honored 132 senior citizens on 1st October 2016, World Senior Citizens Day by organizing a mega get together and felicitated senior citizens aged 70 years and above.

This program featured a range of informative talks from Monaji, a nun from Bhrama Kumari, Srs. Leela Sequiera and Flory D'Souza and Leena Fernandes. The elders were entertained with a cultural program performed by the Nursery Kids and Paramedical students. It concluded with distribution of snacks and ration (food stuff: rice, dal, wheat, sugar, tea leaves, oil, wheat flour, soaps, hair oil, biscuits, towels, shirts, sari etc.) It was a moment of joy for us to promote life and rejuvenate the evening and the lives of our senior citizens who are often neglected and deprived by family and society. This gathering encouraged, accepted and assured them to live life with dignity.

.....
Sr. Nisha Viegas shm,
Shraddha Community Centre, Andheri



SOCIETY OF THE HELPERS OF MARY - GENERALATE,

Shraddha Vihar, Veera Desai Road, Andheri (West), Mumbai 400 058 Tel. 026766845 E-mail : sparksgeneralate@gmail.com

JULY'S TRIPLE EVENTS IN NAKURU

This Month of July was a joyous month for the Helpers of Mary. For birth days we cut cake, for feast day, we wish with flowers and for death day we light candles, each of these events are precious in every one's life. Yes, indeed we take delight in celebrating this triple event in month of July of our beloved foundress Mother Anna Huberta. We are in the threshold of celebrating 75 years of our loving service to the poor and walking in the foot prints of our Mother Anna Huberta. It's our pride and privilege to praise God for His amazing deeds that He has done for each one's life especially in the lives of the Society of the Helpers of Mary.

We, the Community of 'Ann Maria' Nakuru, Kenya, did a survey and selected 75 deserving families to take part in the three different events of our Mother on three different days; on 4th of July the death anniversary, we called 25 members from Basic Christian communities, on 26th July, the feast day of Mother, we invited 25 women from the women's group and on the 31st July on the Birthday, 25 members from the substation of our Parish were called. On these event days we conducted prayer service and shared the life and vision of our Mother, the beginning and the growth of the Congregation, expansion of our service to Kenya. Sr. Lizzy, Sr. Abhaya, Sr. Aster & Sr. Meselech also shared about their inspirations of Mother. On these occasions food items and blankets were distributed to all the participants. On the Mother's 107th Birth Anniversary, we had a special celebration with the children of our home and the supporting staffs. We had a short get-together followed by dinner.

.....
Sr. Ujwala Fargose shm

Anna Maria, Nakuru, Kenya-Africa



Glimpses from St. Anna Convent

On the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee of the foundation of the Society of the Helpers of Mary, the Congregation initiated 'Anna Home Project' of building 75 homes for poor families. Our community identified the family of Mrs. Mary Vimla, of Eanchacode Parish. They lived in pathetic condition in a temporary shelter. Mary is a widow and a diabetic patient. She could not manage to provide a proper house for her two daughters. The local people helped to get a piece of land and we provided financial support to construct this house.



The 2nd of October 2016 was a day of great excitement for this family and for the community of Nagacode as the construction of the house was completed successfully and blessed. We were privileged to have Rt. Rev Bishop Jeromedhas of Kuzhithurai Diocese to bless this house in the presence of priests, religious and parishioners. The sisters of Nagacode & Lourdegiri were felicitated at this function for the great work done by the Helpers of Mary at Social & Pastoral level. We extend our special thanks to Sr. Stella Devassy, Superior General for initiating this housing project.

.....
Sisters of St. Anna Convent

Nagacode,
Tamil Nadu



Widows' Gathering

We are all called upon to treat our fellow beings with compassion and Mercy. Every human is a manifestation of God. Hence all activities of love and compassion are done with the intention of serving God through human being. We see Christ in our selfless service to the poorest of the poor, homeless, widows, orphans, sick etc. In this Jubilee Year of Mercy and the Platinum Jubilee Year of our Congregation, Sr. Regina and the Community planned to give joy and encouragement to the widows of Madh Island as the Community strives to honor its commitment to care for widows. 16th October 2016 was a memorable day as 75 widows from 6 zones gathered in Prem Sadan. All of them came with great joy, as it was a first gathering for them. The program began with the anthem of the Congregation followed by a welcome speech by Sr. Shobina Dabre. The children of Prem Sadan organized a beautiful cultural program which created a joyful atmosphere and lifted their spirit. Sr. Regina explained the purpose of this gathering, which was attributed to Mother Anna Huberta who had a special place in her heart for widows. Sr. Anita Athade shm, the resource person boosted them with her mind-blowing speech, which motivated them and gave them a ray of hope. They were also very eager to know the wonderful work that the Sisters are rendering to the poor and needy for the last 75 years.



The speech of Sr. Anita Athade shm, elicited them to come forward and express their struggles and challenges that they face as widows in the society, families and at work place. Traditions, customs, and culture also add problems to their lives. They expressed that they would want to break the chain of injustice inflicted on them and want to be treated justly, and the idea of looking down upon them as bad luck need to be eradicated in this fast progressing world. The audiences were convinced that each individual has to contribute towards this change.

They expressed gratitude towards the Sisters for inviting them and giving them such a wonderful time and joy in their hearts. They are deeply grateful to the Sisters for the tremendous support received in the past and present. A token of love was given to all the participants and they received it with great joy and appreciation.

.....
Sr. Shobina Dabre
Prem Sadan, Madh Island

Celebration of Gandhi Jayanti



On the 2nd of October on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, the Diocese of Varanasi had organized a program for the 97 women and 10 children in the District Jail of Varanasi. Rev. Bishop Eugene Joseph, two Priests from the diocese, 10 Sisters from Premal Jyoti Convent and other Congregations working in the diocese and Jail Authorities joined this program.



The Children and teachers of Premal Jyoti School performed beautiful cultural program. Everyone marveled and highly appreciated the children's talents and ability. These Women were emotionally moved seeing the performance of the children which brought back memories of their own children and grandchildren. The resource person of the day spoke on non-violence and truth.

After the program the children, received a token of appreciation from the Jail Superintendent and Bishop Eugene Joseph. It was an opportunity for us and the children to give joy and happiness to the prisoners in this Jubilee Year of Mercy.

.....
Sisters of Premal Jyoti
Varanasi



Live with Hope

'Know that there is always another way out, and although things seem absolutely hopeless, that there is always hope' – Domestic Violence Survivor.

An awareness program on domestic violence for women living in the surrounding slums at Andheri was held on the 30th August, 2016 in Kripa Academy Centre for Skills. The resource persons were Lawyers and Social workers from Majlis Centre for Women Domestic Violence. They explained on topic of domestic violence which is a burning issue of the present time. Legal awareness will affirm women to claim for their rights.



239 women benefited from these awareness sessions. Most of them were unaware of laws on violence against women and how to exercise these legal rights. The program was made interesting with multi-media presentations which included a documentary Film on Domestic Violence Act, the right to education and free Legal Aid etc.

This program has definitely been an eye-opener and has encouraged and motivated women to stand up for their Rights. Inspired by this talk women came forward to get guidance from the advocates for their problems faced in their families and at workplaces. As there were many cases to deal with, we decided to begin free legal counseling at Shradha Community Centre –Andheri. The advocates of Majlis Centre agreed to collaborate with us to provide service twice in a month and give free legal counseling to the affected victims.

.....
Sr. Nisha Viegas
Shradha Community
Centre, Andheri



For Private Circulation Only

National Symposium



The Universal Church has in the recent past refocused on the family. Pope Francis will be always remembered for his concerns to rebuild the needy and broken families. He called the ordinary and extra-ordinary synods on the theme of Family and brought in every family to reflect on the present day challenges of the family. At last, he wrote a beautiful apostolic exhortation *Amoris laetiae* to summarize all the teachings of the church on the family. We, the Society of Helpers of Mary are not different from the currents of the present times. The 6th General Chapter emphasised to go back to the first ministry i.e. FAMILY APOSTOLATE. In the light of these directives, Sr. Stella, the Superior General, Sr. Smita, Vice Provincial of Central Province, Srs. Maryann, Martha and Flory participated in the National Symposium 2016 held at Goregaon, Mumbai. The Theme of the symposium was "A call to freedom and Justice in the family and society; Ethical concerns and pastoral approaches". All the speakers dealt on different aspect of family life and highlighted the present status of the family life in the modern world and its challenges that every family faces in this modern tech-world. They also invited the participants to respond to the challenges and reassured everyone that the Church is concerned and stands firm as a faithful companion in our difficulties. Although it does not have all the answers to our difficulties but it shoulders our burden and leads us back to Jesus, our Lord.

.....
Sr. Flory D'Souza, Shradha Vihar, Andheri

Our Sympathy

We extend our heartfelt
condolence to our dear sister
who has lost her loved one

Sr. Helen Albert lost her mother
May her soul rest in peace.

