



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

# Igniting Sparks

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

SEPTEMBER 2016

## A JOYFUL CELEBRATION OF LOVE

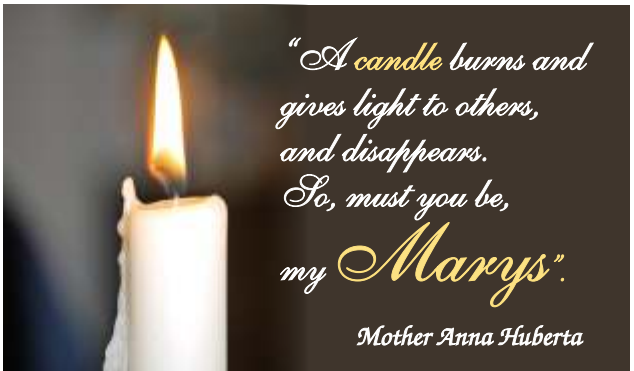
Sisters of Isha Prem - Kanjurmarg organized a fellowship program for the Senior Citizens and Widows of Kanjur Parish on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2016, to mark the Platinum Jubilee Year of our Congregation. Sr. Leela Sequeira, Vice-President of SHM was the guest of honour for this celebration. Rev. Fr. Nicholas Pereira, the Parish Priest and the Principal of St. Francis Xavier School were invited for this occasion. Sr. Martha, the Superior of the community welcomed the participants. The program opened by lighting the lamp and singing the Anthem of the Congregation. The young girls of the Parish performed a beautiful welcome dance. It was indeed a touching experience to hear the sayings of Mother Anna Huberta by the young girls.



A documentary film of the Society of the Helpers of Mary, titled 'Dare to Love' was screened and it gave a glimpse of the various humanitarian services rendered by the Sisters of the Helpers of Mary. The participants were moved and appreciated the wonderful work of the Marys carried out in different places, especially in the remote areas of India and Africa. Sr. Leela in her speech praised the young girls

for their confidence in presenting the sayings of the Mother and explained its significance to the Helpers of Mary. The Women's Cell members came forward and conducted games and they added fun to this gathering. Snacks were served and gifts were distributed as a remembrance to this day. Sr. Shereena Penha proposed a vote of thanks and concluded with the words of St Paul 'God loves a cheerful giver'. We will continue to serve cheerfully and find joy in giving and following in the footsteps of our founder Mother Anna Huberta.

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Sr. Martha D'Souza  
Isha Prem - Kanjurmarg, Mumbai



SOCIETY OF THE HELPERS OF MARY - GENERALATE,

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## Gesture Of Compassion

Bhosal Vinayak Shrikant completed his 10<sup>th</sup> class and secured 51.20%. He is considered to be 40% handicapped. He was born a normal child. Before his first birthday, when he was 11 months old, he developed a tumour on his left hand socket. His parents took him to many hospitals in Mumbai including TATA memorial hospital. He was diagnosed with Cancer. The last remedy was to amputee his hand. Hence his left hand was amputated in Wadia Hospital. Now he is without his left hand and it is difficult to fix an artificial hand.



He is from a very poor family. His father Shrikant works as a watchman and mother Vaishali goes to a readymade garment loom to cut the threads of the garments. He has two sisters. Seeing the pitiful condition of the family Sr. Seema Thomas together with the community encouraged him and extended financial assistance for his education. He has completed his school education and he has taken admission in Junior college (11<sup>th</sup> class). He is ambitious and wants to complete his higher studies to secure a better future.

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**Sr. Dominica Martis**

Snehanjali - Jerimeri, Mumbai



## Parents' Day Celebration

We grew up cocooned in your love, comforted by your hugs and motivated by your lives, these were the resonating voices of the children on Parents' day, celebrated on 31<sup>st</sup> July in the Parish of Bhuigaon. A father's goodness is higher than the mountain; the mother's goodness is deeper than the sea. Parents play vital role in the lives of every child. What we are today is the gift of our parents. A long preparation went in 14 zones of the Parish. The youths and children came out with innovative ideas and views. The day was celebrated with great zeal and enthusiasm by the youths and children. This event expressed that all parents bequeath to their children not riches, but spirit of reverence. One of the children in his speech said that "I love you Mama and Dada for your unconditional love and affection, you have always been caring, loving and standing by my side and have shown me the world". The parents were thrilled to hear the appreciating words from their children. This program served as platform to all the children to honour their parents and appreciate their hard work and role played in family and society.

The talk show of an 'Ideal Family' was much appreciated by the audience. A family which prays together stays together and indeed parents lay foundation to emit moral values and follow their lifestyle. Children are the reflection of their parents. On this occasion the youths presented roses to their own parents and performed a mind-blowing cultural program. Srs. Arpita Macwan, Vidya and Rev. Fr. Richard encouraged and appreciated the children and youths for their thoughtful ways of honoring parents.

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**Sr. Vidya Londe**

Jalpushpa - Bhuigaon

On 7<sup>th</sup> August 2016, 40 children, whom we give Home Based Educational Support came to Snehalaya, Jafarganj with great excitement to plant trees. In memory of the Platinum Jubilee Year of the Society of the Helpers of Mary, the Sisters of Snehalaya initiated the children to plant 75 Ashoka trees, on the pathway to Snehalaya to create love for nature. There was joy and happiness on the faces of the children as they did something unique and new. They were also made aware of their responsibility to take care of the environment. We imparted motivational talk to educate the young minds on the importance of afforestation. If we care for plants, in return it gives us fresh air, rain and healthy atmosphere to live. Each child was given responsibility to adopt and take care of one plant which he/she planted.

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**Sr. Snehal Karten**

Snehalaya - Jafarganj, Uttar Pradesh



## 70<sup>th</sup> Independence Celebration

The Sisters from Premal Jyoti, Varanasi are involved in PRISON MINISTRY in collaboration with the Diocese of Varanasi and visit the inmates of Central Jail of Varanasi. There are about 1600 young, middle aged and old men living inside the prison. On 15<sup>th</sup> August 2016, India celebrated 70<sup>th</sup> Independence Day. And at this juncture with special permission, Sr. Meena Carvalho along with the Diocesan Priest took this initiative to organize a cultural program in the jail for our brothers who are away from their families and society. Children from different schools performed colourful programs to lift the inmates' spirit. It was a moving moment to be in and interact with them.

Every Saturday we visit the District Jail of Varanasi. There are 91 women and 5 children staying along with their mothers. As we interact with them and listen to their stories we learn that some are falsely accused with dowry death, harassment, robbery, murder and enmity in the family and with neighbours. Others are involved in criminal activities due to hindered circumstances and emotional imbalances. Some of them narrated their stories revealing that they were falsely accused. We give listening ear to many heart-breaking stories and pray in our heart that the God of mercy pour His blessing upon them and all of us who are involved directly and indirectly may hear the cries of the thousands innocent prisoners rejected by their families and society.

**Sr. Meena Carvalho**  
Premal Jyoti – Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

## Cancer Detection Camp

On 10<sup>th</sup> of August 2016 to mark the celebration of the Platinum Jubilee Year of the Congregation, the Sisters of Shradha Vihar Hospital organised a free Cancer Detection Camp for 100 women who were above 40 years. Today the cost of treatment has become unaffordable for the poor and needy. We organized this camp for poor women. A team of 15 doctors and staff from Tata Hospital conducted the camp in collaboration with the Helpers of Mary. Different check-ups were carried out like; General check-up, ENT, hypertensive check-up, diabetic, and the internal check-up such as breast examination and pap smear and blood tests. Many women from surrounding slums, colonies of St. Blaise Parish, inmates of Jivan Asha and Sisters of Shradha Vihar benefited from this camp. We express our sincere gratitude to Mrs. Minal and the team for giving their precious time and helping hand to take care of our people.

**Sr. Prema Miranda**  
Shradha Vihar Hospital, Andheri

## Encountering Mercy

Unless our life is linked realistically to action, it is not a genuine way of living. We just cannot live in our world with all our intellectual capacities which are framed in one's mind. Living out our life in action joins us directly to the life of Christ.

We, the Postulants were fortunate to go with Sr. Matilda Fernandes to the streets of Andheri to encounter the mission of Jesus of reaching out to the people on the streets. We distributed prepared food for them. We were touched to see their eyes filled with gratitude for



the loving gesture of feeding and being cared. It was a special moment with mixed feeling of joy and sadness for those people who are on the footpaths. We saw the face of Christ in the sick, homeless, lonely and persons affected with Hansen disease living on the streets.

This experience has transformed us and we have realized that associating and working with the poor brings tremendous satisfaction in one's life. May the Lord who has called us to follow Him, lead us to different spheres of life and make us proclaimers of love and seekers of Mercy.

**Postulants**  
Shradha Vihar, Andheri

## Empowering Women To Bring Change



Young women encounter challenges every day. Apart from sharing their communities' struggles over limited resources like water, land or jobs, many systematically face discrimination simply by virtue of being female. This includes physical and sexual violence, being kept out of school, lack of access to property and other rights etc. To Empower Women to bring a change Sr. Nisha organized a two days Capacity Building Workshop for the Schedule Caste (SC) and Schedule Tribes (ST) women of the surrounding slum. She contacted the Regional Education Officer, Mrs. Vandana Shreevastav and arranged a Training Programme which was held on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> August 2016. It covered topics on Leadership, Government Schemes, Health and Hygiene, Banking System and Facilities, Right to Information, Rights of SC/ST and Entrepreneurship. The first batch of 40 women that attended the program were enriched with this input sessions and gained insights on various relevant issues and built confidence to deal with problems in more appropriate way. Women who attended the program were given an incentive of Rs. 200/- .

This same workshop will be conducted in September, October & November 2016), for SC/ST and minority women living in the slums.

The Shraddha Community Centre extends its gratitude to the Resource Persons namely Mrs. Vandana S., Ms. Michelle D., Mr. Om Prakash, Mr. Anil Gupta, Sr. Annie Fernandes, and Sr. Leena Fernandes who gave valuable and informative sessions on various topics.

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**Sr. Nisha Viegas**

Shraddha Community Centre, Andheri

## Our Sympathy

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

**Sr. Kamla who lost her mother**

May her soul rest in peace.



## Act of Compassion

In November 2010 Mr. Surender, 44 years of age had gone to his relative's house for a function. On his way home late at night he was on his bicycle crossing the railway line, he fell on the tracks and was unconscious. To his bad luck no one was around. Around midnight a train passed through that crossing and ran over Surender's legs. When he came to his senses he was shocked to see both his legs cut from his body and lying in a pool of blood. He cried loudly, people heard his cry and carried him to the hospital. After two months he returned home without limbs. He was at the mercy of others. Sisters of Premal Jyoti while visiting came across Mr. Surender sitting alone in a small house in despair.



Sr. Meena took the initiative to take Surender to 'Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti' Varansi to get artificial legs. On 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016, he received his artificial legs free of cost and also a bicycle from Prime Minister's Fund and came back home riding the bicycle. A great number of people gathered to see him with his new legs and bicycle. After 5 years he began to move out of his house and was thrilled to get back to normal life. The joy in his eyes gave a new meaning to my acts of love and compassion. I began to ask, **What does love look like?** To me it has hands to help others. It has feet to hasten to assist the weak, poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and wants of others. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows. That is what love looks like.

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**Sr. Meena Carvalho**

Premal Jyoti – Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh



## Flood Relief Work

The torrential rain in Uttar Pradesh in the last few days of August 2016 has caused havoc disrupting the normal life of people. Many rivers across the State were overflowing and leading to floods in the low lying areas. Varanasi the Holy City for our Hindu brethren was one of the most affected areas. Water level of the river Ganga had increased and the houses and belongings of the people staying in the vicinity were underwater. Thousands of people have lost their belongings.

The Society of the Helpers of Mary having our two centres in Varanasi had plunged out to carry on the immediate relief work for those affected by flood. The sisters of both communities; Premal Jyoti and Sneha Deep along with the Aspirants rendered help and support in collaboration with Diocese - Vishwa Jyoti Communication Centre. We visited Paigambar, Khidki, Nakkhi Ghat, Rajghat and Nagwa and distributed essential things to the affected families. Many houses were submerged. We went by boat and surveyed situation. Many families were taking shelter on the roof of the houses. We continue our efforts in helping them in this most tragic moment of their lives.

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**Sisters of Premal Jyoti & Sneha Deep, Varanasi**