



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

Igniting Sparks

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

JUNE 2019

VII General Chapter of the Helpers of Mary



It is with much joy that our VII General Chapter 2019, which was held at St. Anne's Provincialate, Waliv from May 21, 2019 to June 04, 2019, with the participation of 42 Chapter Delegates concluded successfully. The Chapter members together, looked towards the future of our Congregation in the light of the theme: "Being Marys Always" which has become the central theme all through the Chapter. The opening and the process of Chapter days were precisely planned and well executed. Each day brought its own blessings, inspiration, enlightenment and awareness. Archbishop Dr. Felix Machado, Bishop of Vasai celebrated the inaugural Eucharist. His esteemed presence inspired the Chapter Delegates and provided a great start for our Chapter.

Sr. Stella Devassy, welcomed the Chapter Delegates to celebrate this grace filled moments of the VII General Chapter. She emphasized on the Chapter as a journey of faith, reflection on the theme 'Being Marys Always', to discern how our Institute is called, to live our mission into the emerging future, which calls for creativity and commitment. She presented the Report of the Congregation from May 2013 to May 2019, in a very comprehensive way using innovative method of presentation. The members studied the report and discussed about it during the session. It gave a clear picture of the Congregation.

After prayer and reflection, the election of the new leadership team took place on May 24, 2019. The General Chapter entrusted the responsibility of leading and guiding the Congregation in the hands of a five-member team.

Sr. Priya Alappadan was elected as the new Superior General of the Congregation and the Councilors are Srs. Leela Sequeira, Naveena Antony, Jacinta Carvalho and Barbara Pallippatt. We were blessed to have the presence of His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias during the election procedures and to celebrate the Holy Mass on this day.

The deliberations began with the guidelines and inspirations from the Chapter guide, Fr. Michael Fernandes SDB. The Chapter reflected on the theme, chapter proposals and at the same time focused on updating our Constitutions and Directory. The Spirit was hovering over us and the power of prayers and blessings of the many united us with Divine power in our interaction and decision process. The Chapter reminded all the members of the personal responsibility to live its decisions and deliberations. The Chapter Delegates together with the new leadership team prepared the thrust of the Chapter.

Sr. Priya Alappadan, the Superior General, in her closing message, thanked each and everyone present and asked them to pray for them to shoulder this responsibility for next 6 years.

We thank the outgoing team – Sr. Stella Devassy, Sr. Leela, Sr. Seema, Sr. Reshmi and Sr. Indumati for their valiant efforts to keep the Society growing and for keeping pace with the changing needs of time with their breadth of vision and commitment. We are grateful for their foresightedness and great achievements and progress.



We congratulate the new team, and wish God's blessings upon them, so that the Helpers of Mary may become effective instruments in the hands of the Lord to reach the un-reached. Congratulations!

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Sr. Regina Joseph SHM, Secretary General, Generalate



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A Bouquet of Gratitude to Sr. Stella Devassy

We always felt proud and happy to introduce you our outgoing Superior General with such energetic and enthusiastic personality. Sr. Stella, you completed six years of successful and loving services for our Congregation and the Church at large. We Congratulate you for the successful completion of your term. You had a wonderful way of accomplishing your responsibility – Systematic, hard work, honesty, commitment, self-sacrifice, love, and forgiveness are personified in you. You animated the Provinces, Region, Delegation and every sister towards sincere service, love for the poor, hard work and Being Marys Always which has been your way of leading. Not only this, but possessing the quality of efficiency in the working system, perseverance, discipline, selfless service, compassion, conviction and celebration, you made that place in your heart for all the sisters and the people. In your tenure of office you enabled each one of us to bring the good news and mission of making known and loved. You presented Jesus, the Good Shepherd style of leadership, which is mission oriented, with special attention to the least, the last and the lost. May the Almighty bless you with good health and happiness and may you continue to be an inspiration to us all.



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Sr. Amrita Jose, Provincial Superior, Waliv

Initial Journey of Religious Life

June 10, 2019 was a joyful day for us all, as two of our Postulants: Jovita Couthino and Neli Grace Minj joined the Novitiate. "Novitiate" where preparation for the first temporary profession takes place. During this period the novices are introduced and guided towards religious life and the mission of the Congregation. Congratulations and we continue to pray for you dear Novices that the Holy Spirit may lead and guide you on your initial journey of religious life.

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Sr. Martha Dsouza SHM, Andheri



First Profession of the Sisters

May 11, 2019 was a blissful day for the Sisters of the Helpers of Mary. Eight Novices professed to consecrate themselves to God and begin their SHM journey. The entire community gathered together along with the families of the newly professed sisters at Mukhta Jivan Chapel, Vehloli, to witness and celebrate this event. Rev. Fr. Philip OFM was the main celebrant. Sr. Stella Devassy, Superior General accepted each sister's vows. It was truly a grace-filled day for all present. Congratulations Srs. Anjali Samson, Joselina Pereira, Kiran Vadera, Kosesav Fernandes, Nancia Nigrel, Reshma Kachchhp, Sweedal Dsouza and Velansiya Koli. We assure you of our prayers as you leave for your new Missions. May you find joy and fulfillment as well as receive many blessings as you give yourselves to the service of God and His Church.

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Sr. Sonia Lowies, Novitiate, Vehloli



Being Marys and Sharing Jesus

The call to leave all worldly things and follow the Lord is a dynamic invitation to a richer and a deeper love. After an intense period of preparation and reflection, eight of our young Sisters - Rajni Barla, Sofia Tellis, Sunita Amolik, Punam Ekka, Rani Jagtap, Mary Vaijal, Nirmala Navgekar and Sharlet D'Silva decided to leave all worldly attractions and follow the Lord. They pronounced their Final Vows on April 27, 2019 at Andheri during the Eucharistic celebration which was solemnized by Rev. Bishop Dominic Savio Fernandes, Auxiliary Bishop of Archdiocese of Bombay. The theme of the ceremony was 'Being Marys and sharing Jesus'. It was a meaningful witness, filled with trust in the joy of a Consecrated Life. May this self-giving, transform them into a beacon of light and care for God's people. Congratulations and thank you for answering God's call.



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Spark-Team

Eulogy to beloved Sr. Francina Mathews

"Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in, is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven. Therefore, we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. We live by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord".

2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-8

An earthly light has gone out, but where Sr. Francina is, no earthly light is needed. The glory of God, shining brighter than the sun, is her radiance, and her face is now glistening in that glorious light! An earthly journey of Sr. Francina has ended. A heavenly residence has been established. It is with deep grief we are here to remember the sweet memories of the life of Sr. Francina who served 53 years as a Helper of Mary, transformed the lives of many, touched and healed the sick and charmed everyone with her smile and was witty till the end.

Sr. Francina turned 81 years last month and she was hale and hearty, moving around in the house. On May 19, 2019 she was unwell and had a mild fever for which she was treated. On the 22nd evening her vital signs slowly drifted, she was given the sacrament of the sick. On May 23, 2019 at 4.30 am she peacefully surrendered her soul to her Master. She was always hopeful, positive and fought with life till the end.

Sr. Francina was born to Mr. Mathew and Mrs. Sosamma on April 08, 1936, in Tiruvalla, Kerala. She was the youngest member among the five siblings (two brothers and two sisters). She made her first vows in February 02, 1969 and her Perpetual vows on Feb 02, 1974. Sr. Francina was appointed the first Superior of Dumrikhas, Utter Pradesh, which is our first community in the North Province. She served as a nurse in many communities like Jignara, Shradha Vihar hospital-Andheri, Dharavi, Assangaon, Jafarganj, Varanasi, Jogeshwari, Thane, Madh Island, Ahmadabad, Korlai and Waliv. For the last 17 years she spent her life in Asha Sadan community, providing prayerful support and doing simple tasks to serve the community. She was a reason to make Shanti Niketan, a home for elderly Sisters, where she was happy to be for the last one year.

All those who entered this campus, truly loved her sweet smile and jovial dialogue and were edified by the holy life that shined all throughout her life. She was always generous and kind towards the patients, she lived an exemplary and virtuous life. Above all, she was a woman of prayer and offered her life totally in the service of the poor and the needy. With deepest sympathy we remember your peaceful, prayerful presence, your graciousness and good humour, with a beautiful loving smile will be remembered always. You will be ever a part of our lives, and from our hearts we say *thank you!* *May your soul rest in peace.*

(Introduction given for the funeral Mass on 25th May, 2019 at Gokhivare Church, Waliv by Sr. Priya Alappadan, Superior General)



Tribute to Dear Sr. Shobha Menezes

St. Paul assures us in Romans 3:38 that even death cannot separate us from the Love of Jesus Christ. But it is still something we would choose to avoid if we could. And yet, death is a part of life - our lives and the lives of those we love.

Dear sisters, fathers, relatives, friends and children. We are gathered here to bid our last farewell to our beloved Sr. Shobha Menezes who lived amongst us as a loving and dedicated Helper of Mary for the last 44 years. The life of the dead, is placed in the memory of the living. While you thought that you were learning how to live, actually you have been learning how to die. As a well-spent day brings happy sleep, so too a well spent life brings happy death. When a person becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure.

The journey of this earthly life of our Sr. Shobha Menezes who was in Shraddha was cheerful and spoke to all those who visited her. Yesterday, May 31, 2019 in the morning, at 11 am her breathing became rather faint and her body began to go cold, but she was very peaceful and surrendered her beautiful soul and served dearly all through to the Lord whom she loved and devotion to our blessed Mother. The last hour her life, the outstretched hands of Our Lady of the Visitation, carried her on her way to heaven.

Sr. Shobha was born to Mr. John Menezes and Mrs. Mary on March 12, 1950, in Gorai. She was number 3 among the 10 siblings. She made her first profession in 1975 and made her final commitment in 1982. She served in different communities like Kanjurmarg, Waliv, Ma-Niketan and for the last years she lived and helped in the day House community. Often she had to struggle with her health, she survived repeated heart surgeries and lived a hale and hearty life. Since last year she lived a peaceful life in the Little Paradise her last home.



dear Sr. Shobha has come to an end. She was number 3 among the 10 siblings. She made her first profession in 1975 and made her final commitment in 1982. She served in different communities like Kanjurmarg, Waliv, Ma-Niketan and for the last years she lived and helped in the day House community. Often she had to struggle with her health, she survived repeated heart surgeries and lived a hale and hearty life. Since last year she lived a peaceful life in the Little Paradise her last home.

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Sr. Shobha was special to all of us. She had very beautiful and sparkling eyes. Her face radiated God's loving presence and we felt blessed to be with her, sharing the depth of her joy and happiness reflected in her smile, which was always on her face. She lived a simple life doing all things with great love. She possessed an extraordinary beauty, aesthetic personality and affectionate smile that attracted the attention of children, sisters, people and all those who came in contact with her. She lived the hallmark of the Helpers of Mary, the hospitality. She would welcome everyone who entered the parlour with great smile. She was a cheerful giver, which she expressed in her giving and self-giving without expecting any reward. She was deeply in love with Jesus and remained faithful to the very end.

Nothing is harder than saying good-bye to someone you love. Dear family members of Sr. Shobha, may our Lord bless and comfort you in this time of grief and loss.

We thank God for giving us the wonderful gift of Sr. Shobha to our Congregation, to her family, to the Church and to all her near and dear ones. We pray that God reward her for all that she has done in this world, to each one of us and to the poor. May God grant her eternal bliss in Paradise.

(Introduction given for the funeral Mass on 1st June, 2019 at Andheri by Sr. Leela Sequeira, Assistant Superior General)

CONDOLENCE

Our heartfelt sympathy to

Srs. Joana Crasto, Shewta Dabre, Smita & Meena Carvalho who lost their mother

Sr. Smruti Parmar lost her father

Srs. Kumudini Rasquinha & Anuradha Manikam who lost their sister

Srs. Priamwada Sequeira & Grace Vellapani lost their brother

May their souls rest in peace

