



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

# Igniting Sparks

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

SEPTEMBER 2019

## Giving Wings to a Dream

Suraksha Mahila Vikas Sanstha runs a Self Help groups for women in the slums of Jogeshwari. The main objective is to enable these slum-dwelling women to attain social empowerment in achieving economic independence. The



ongoing Training programs of entrepreneurship and business skills have given wings to their dream of succeeding in micro-finance and income generation activities. Two Self Help Groups (SHGs) namely Akruti Mahila Bachat Gat and Shiv Sai Bachat Gat have put in great efforts and initiatives towards income generating activities in collaboration and with the support of the Health Promotion Trust- Diana Fernandez, Resource person of our monthly HPT training program, motivated the SHGs groups to put up a stall of Nutritious food product (Sweets like Methi Ladoos, Fengreek seeds, Moong Ladoos & Besan Ladoos etc.) at the Mount Mary, Bandra Fair from 8th to 15th September 2019. It was a golden opportunity for the women to work as a team and this collective effort helped them all to benefit in this income resources. We owe our thanks to HPT for their generous support towards the economic empowerment of women.

.....  
**Sr. Smruti Parmar shm, Jogeshwari**

## Provided a Helping hand to the victims of flood

From July 30, 2019 we in Gadhinglanj witnessed heavy rainfall that we never ever had before, it was four times more than the usual rainfall. Electricity and phone connectivity was completely down. Standing crops of sugarcane, maize and vegetables on over a lakh hectare of land has been damaged, besides loss of animals, property and valuables. People who were out of their village could not return home to their family for around ten days. It was an unforgettable experience for all of us here.

As always the Marys have been in the forefront, responding to natural calamity. The Sisters of Gadhinglanj Community ventured out to provide immediate relief and ensured immediate basic needs, reached the affected people. We are grateful for the gesture of generosity from Sr. Priya, Sr. Leela and the sisters in Andheri who took a great leap to reach out to the victims of this flood. Their immediate response to our request was a great relief to us as packed bags with various items came to Gadhinglanj by bus for each family. Thanks to the bus owners who brought all these bags from Andheri to Gadhinglanj free of cost. We distributed Food Items: Rice, Pulses, Oil, Poha, Sugar, Tea, Biscuits and Spices. Toiletries: Tooth Brush, Toothpaste, Soap, Sanitary Pads, Washing Soap, clothes, bed sheets etc to over 100 families with the help of our parish priest and parishioners. We thank all our generous friends for the tremendous outpouring of help, assistance, kindness, sacrifice that was shown to our people. God has blessed us through you!

.....  
**Sr. Jannet Aranjio, Kripalaya Gadhinglanj**



**SOCIETY OF THE HELPERS OF MARY - GENERALATE,**

Shraddha Vihar, Veera Desai Road, Andheri (West), Mumbai 400 058 Tel. 91-22-26766845 E-mail : sparksgeneralate@gmail.com

# Reach out and make a difference

Mother Anna Care which was inaugurated on January 17, 2019 has spread its wings to make a difference in our Society. The sisters with their presence provide home care, outpatient & inpatient care, conferences, training programs, detection programs, awareness sessions etc. On the day of its establishment, a long awaited proposal of chapter suggesting to have a tie up with an NGO was actualized by signing a MoU with 'Seeds' (Socio, economic, education development services). With the help of this association, we are able to carry out unique programs to reach out to the needy. On August 25, the centre hosted a national workshop "iapcayush2019" on the theme "Palliative Care and its integration into AYUSH"(Ayurveda, Yoga & naturopathy, Unani, Siddha & Homeopathy).

Dr. Sunil Dhiliwal, Chairman, Scientific Committee, iapcayush2019 introduced the concept before the audience comprising of Doctors and Students from AYUSH and the modern stream of medicine. 200 delegates attended the workshop. *The following experts rendered sessions in their respective disciplines. Dr. Sunil Dhiliwal (Palliative Care & Ayurveda), Dr. M B Rabindranath (Yoga), Dr. Sugin Herbert (Naturopathy), Dr. Anees Rahman (Unani), Dr. P Sathiya Rajeswaran (Siddha) and Dr. K L Babu (Homoeopathy). This was followed by an interactive*

*session for documenting the deliberations of the workshop on how to take this project forward. The valedictory function was addressed by Mr. Vasanth Kumar MP. It was a pioneering effort by the Indian Association of Palliative Care.*

**Training program for volunteers:** Sixty-six volunteers at the Panchayat level attended this training Program at our centre. It is a program of Indian Association of Palliative Care (IAPC) under the guidelines of WHO. The sessions were given by Ms. Alice Stella, Jose Pulimootil, Advocate Praveen and Mr. Zenthil Kumar. Each volunteer is assigned to identify at least one patient in their respective Panchayat and collect the details as per the form. The follow up meeting is arranged after 15 days. It is a first and unique initiative taken by Mr. Mano Thankaraj, MLA. Through this program many unnoticed cases too will be identified and the sisters will be able to give residential as well as home care to many. The centre will also plunge in to detection and awareness program at the Panchayat level. We thank all our friends and benefactors who support us to reach out and extend our compassionate care to the needy.

.....  
**Sr. Leelavati & Sisters, St. Anna Convent, Nagacode**



## Reuniting the Family

On March 23, 2019 Rekha Devi was arrested for robbery and was put in prison. Our sisters who visited the District Jail of Varanasi came in contact with Rekha Devi. As she is a deaf and dumb and she could only communicate to the sisters by action. Her husband is a blind man, she has two sons and they are staying under the bridge.

By our intervention she would write her name as Rekha Devi. We tried to find out the locality of her family with the help of a jail authority and worked to get her charge sheet and other papers from the police station and court. Through one of the under trial prisoner we got the location of their stay. Sr. Meena went with her photo and address and found the place. Her photo was shown to her child who is six years old and he said to his father "papa mummy mil gaya." The Child's joy was double to see and know that his mother was alive. When we reached Rekha Devi's place the blind father was cooking food with help of the child. That day onwards Premal Jyoti adopted Rekha Devi's family. Sr. Meena took the boy, Kabir and his father Ramashankar to visit Rekha Devi in jail and this family bond was restored. The sisters took keen interest in providing food and other necessities of life to the family. Meanwhile her case was put up in Jail Lok Adalat and she was convicted for six month with a fine of Rs. 500.00. On September 09, 2019 Rekha Devi was released from the jail. The nightmare is finally over, it was hard and it was very tiring, especially to get through the system. Now we are happy that the family is reunited.

.....  
**Sisters of Premal Jyoti, Varanasi**



## Empowering girls for a Brighter Tomorrow

Suraksha Samaj Vikas Kendra of the Society of the Helpers of Mary in Jogeshwari had organized a girl child day program on September 19, 2019, at the Infant Jesus School Hall, between 02:30 to 05:00 pm. More than 100 girls studying in class fifth to class tenth participated in this Program. The celebration began with the lighting of the lamp. The Chief Guest Rev. Fr. Lancy Pinto - Director of Justice and Peace and Guests of Honor Fr. Xavier Pinto - Manager of Infant Jesus School, Dr. Pratima and Sr Smruti Parmar SHM, while addressing on the occasion threw light on the importance of this day and the need of empowering the girl child by ensuring her equal opportunities of growth and development for a better tomorrow.

In collaboration with the Hingiri Global Gurukul, the training session on Self-defense Karate was organized by Dr. Pratima and her associate Mrs. Sony Panjabi who is a two time black belt karate gold medalist. She taught basic karate techniques which gave a sense of empowerment and courage to the girls. It also focused on their dignity and safety. It was truly a remarkable day for the Girls, because it provided values and new skills to the girls. Short entertainment, games and interactive session was conducted. All the participants enjoyed to the fullest. We are thankful to Sr. Smruti and the Organizers for this wonderful event.

.....  
**Br. Richard Fernandes, Infant Jesus Church, Jogeshwari**



## Parents Day



St. Teresa BCC group of Lahartara -Varanasi celebrated Parents day on July 22, 2019 at Premal Jyoti. It was a vibrant and wonderful evening, thirty-five Parents took active part in this celebration. The Youth with the help of the Sisters conducted a beautiful prayer service for the Parents and Families. Thereafter there was a lively Cultural Program where the Youth honored their Parents with garlands. This Cultural Program and Games brought warmth, laughter and joy to all the Parents. It was a memorable and surprising evening for the Parents.

.....  
**Sisters of Premal Jyoti, Varanasi**

# Tribute to Sr. Bridget Vadakkumchery

Psalms 31:15 "My times are in Your hand..." Everything is appointed and arranged by our Lord who loves us and redeemed us – you cannot die away from Jesus. Whether your spirit wings its flight at home or abroad, amid strangers or friends, by a lingering process or by a sudden stroke, Jesus is there, to uphold by His grace and cheered by His presence. On this day Sr. Bridget triumphantly exclaimed, "Though I walked through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for you are with me, your rod and your staff they comfort me," the faithfulness of God and the preciousness of his promises till the end of time.

Life is a journey, a journey from birth to death. The greatest journey in the Old Testament was the journey from Egypt to the promised land of Canaan. The journey to the Promised Land is that each of us makes to God as we go through this life. Sr. Bridget has completed her temporary journey on this earth and took the journey to God.

In August 2018, due to some uneasiness, Sr. Bridget decided to go for a health check-up. This was when she was diagnosed with lung cancer. The news broke her lively personality but gradually she came to terms with the fact. With a positive mindset, she went back to her community Assangaon and started her beloved mission of caring for the children and leading the community. The last 11 months were extremely challenging, not only physically but emotionally as well. However she did her best uplifting her willpower to arise fit and healthy. She valued every day and cherished every moment of her life with her beloved children, community sisters and family.

After her chemotherapy, on September 10, 2019, she had difficulty in breathing and was admitted to the Holy Spirit Hospital but she was not responding well to the medication and had to move her to ICCU. She was put on life support system. But all attempts to revive her failed and she breathed her last at 01:10 pm on September 18, 2019. She joined her parents and our community in heaven while the Sisters and Family were surrounded with prayers lifting her soul to the Lord our master.

Sr. Bridget was born to a devout parents, Mr. Chummar and Mrs. Ittianam on October 02, 1955 in a beautiful village called Kallur in Kerala. Her maiden name was Rita, she grew up with her seven sisters and two brothers and imbibed the beauty of music and dance. At the age of twenty she left her home to join the Helpers of Mary and to dedicate her life to God through the poor and needy. She made her first profession in 1978 and made her final commitment in 1986 and lived that great giving to Jesus for the past forty-one years.

As a young Mary she nurtured and cared for the children in Ma-Niketan. After completing her bachelor of social work degree and LLB, she served the community centres working with empowerment of women and children in the slums at Vakola, Jerimeri, Cotton Green, Varanasi, Malad, Jabalpur.



Sr. Bridget's intellectual gifts and talents became evident as she continued to nurture the children at Balbhavan and Assangaon. She was a strong woman, always very focused and determined. She was a great trainer of children, full of life. She never spared herself but always rejuvenated her enthusiasm and always remained committed to God and to His people specially children.

The Lord gifted Sr. Bridget with many gifts and qualities. She had a sweet and beautiful voice. We feel deeply moved remembering her singing, dancing and art. She had the soul of an artist. Dance was the song of her life. She could choreograph any dance, and she did this until the end. On the May 05, 2019 she choreographed a harvest dance on the occasions our former General, Sr. Stella's birthday and thereafter she staged a beautiful cultural event during our recent General Chapter which was heart touching. Her amazing spirit and unshakeable faith have inspired all of us. Music was something that she valued. Music was her praise to the Lord, her thanksgiving and worship.

She had immense perseverance in her work with the children, she shared all her God given talents. She was a fearless and just woman who demonstrated remarkable leadership. The sisters, her family members and her beloved friends mourn the loss of a Sister who was full of love, energy, vision, courage and confidence. Sr. Bridget's passing away is a personal loss for the Congregation, family, friends and all the children and people she loved and cared.

Dear Sr. Bridget, from Heaven you smile at us, enjoy the presence of God and intercede for all.

***(Introduction given for the funeral Mass on September 19, 2019 by Sr. Pusphy (Priya) Alappadan, Superior General)***