



Loreto (IBVM) reaching out...



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*'SET OUR SPIRITS FREE, THAT WE MAY WORSHIP YOU,
SET OUR SPIRITS FREE THAT WE MAY PRAISE YOUR NAME,
LET ALL BONDAGE GO AND LET DELIVERANCE FLOW,
SET OUR SPIRITS FREE TO WORSHIP YOU.'*

Lent is a time of grace. For forty days Moses talked with God on Mount Sinai. Elias walked for forty days till he reached Mount Horeb. The Hebrews wandered in the desert for forty years before entering the Promised Land. Jesus withdrew into the desert for forty days before His public ministry. 'Forty' is a symbolical number in Sacred Scripture which indicates the time needed to draw closer to God. By this closeness we are made more aware of His/Her presence, experience God's great goodness and thus enter into intimate communion with Him/Her.

Lent is meant to be enjoyed rather than to be endured. Lent offers us an opportunity to leave our past behind and to start again. Lent invites us to begin again and renew. This is the wonderful thing about the Christian life – it is a series of new beginnings. We can always start again. Lent is a growing period. We can understand the paradox of life through death when we look at nature and human growth. A seed lies smothered and submerged in the dark earth before it blooms and blossoms. By their death Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King became powerful influences in the liberation of their people. By dying to some of our old attitudes and forms of behavior we discover a new way of life.



*"ON OUR LENTEN PATH WE SEE THE DAWN OF A NEW DAY.
BE OUR VISION OF HOPE, BE THE PROMISE OF OUR LIVES."*

Mary De Souza

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PROVINCIAL'S MESSAGE

SABRINA

Mary Ward once said,

“WOMEN CAN AND MUST DO SOMETHING MORE THAN ORDINARY IN THE FACE OF COMMON NEED”.

Today we are witnessing such a situation in our world where countries with women leaders have led the way in managing the Covid-19 crisis with compassion and efficiency. This year's theme for International Women's Day is “Women in Leadership: Achieving an equal future in COVID -19 world.”

As I reflect and look around our country and the world, I see women offering “something more than ordinary in the face of common need”. We are witnessing ordinary women protesting peacefully for 101 days in Shaheen Bagh as well as in the ongoing farmer's protest. We see and hear a young girl angry with what is happening to the environment and questioning and challenging world leaders. We see networks of women across boundaries coming together to “RISE for the Earth, which is most essential to all life... to maintain a garden as an act of resistance to capitalist machinery.... RISING GARDENS is a defiant creative call for revival, restoration and transformation. (Theme for One Billion Rising 2021)

As consecrated religious and daughters of Mary Ward, chosen and called to be prophetic witness, what is something more than ordinary that we can and must do in the face of common need?



WISDOM CORNER: ALONE WITH THEE... MARILLA

Growth in the spiritual life happens as we recognize the Divine in moments of grace. I believe, one such powerful spiritual experience is the recognition, better still the acceptance of solitude. Our call is to be... 'Contemplatives in Action' ; we recognize the sacred in our midst, finding God in creation, in all situations and in all people. It is this awareness that we take to prayer and it is prayer that impels us in turn to engage with our world of beauty and despair" (Constitutions Part II 2009, Chapter II Mission pg. 294 No 2.15). Just as each of us is made for togetherness, we are all made for solitude. This is the sacred tension of a religious vocation. Much as we may earnestly desire longer moments of silent prayer and discernment to guide our daily interaction, yet in reality, solitude is not our preferred option.

The Lord invites us to grow in deeper intimacy with Him. This involves facing the reality of our life ...as it stands. Solitude is not necessarily a pleasant experience, at least not at first. We don't like to give up our business and personal agendas. Sometimes we don't feel ready to be completely alone with God. We sense that there are issues we must deal with. When alone, I'm still busy and, frankly, focused primarily on myself. Silence and solitude, allows me to re-orient my priorities, from seeking approval and acceptance outside of myself to focus on the approval of God and that of my own conscience.

The recent pandemic of the last year turned our world as we knew it topsy-turvy!! The experience of solitude was now palpable....The secular world was caught unawares in this strange situation.

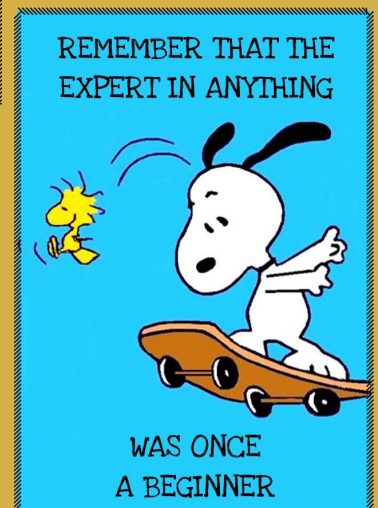
I like to share with you my learning from an 'enforced period of solitude '. From being an active, vibrant member in a position of leadership and authority in active ministry, I suddenly found myself on the flat of my back in hospital. Covid restrictions and the need for self-protection from infection prior to surgery meant VISITORS were not encouraged. Initially I was enraged...then felt numb faced with this new reality... until grace saved the day!! Somehow, my vision of perfection and appearing before others as best as I could, prevents me from accepting my fragility and that of others. I failed to see the value of Constitution 5.2 (Part II) "From the beginning to the end of life, we are in a process of growth and development; a process of discovering and learning, failing, rising and re-committing ourselves to the vocation to which we are called as we seek to discern the work of the Spirit in the unfolding story of our lives," (Constitutions Part II 2009, Chapter V Formation for Mission pg. 308, No 5.2).

All was not perfect in hospital! However , I began to COUNT MY BLESSINGS...starting with my religious training that made me comfortable with moments of prolonged silence and lack of human interaction. I began to recite countless rosaries for the health workers and those in conditions far worse than mine. In hindsight I can say I am grateful that I had limited distractions and hence experiences in prayer began to give me much spiritual consolation. Three spiritual books kept me occupied. 'Living in Faith', a daily missalette, 'The Word among us' daily reflections on the Mass readings

and the encyclical ' Fratelli Tutti'. Oh! How I missed the daily Eucharist! By this stage of the pandemic we were all used to online Masses, but somehow the network in my room was not too good.

In this prolonged solitude I was left alone with my thoughts, fears, unfulfilled hopes, resentments, wounds, and worries. What came to the surface was my half-disguised, half-ignored faults and failures. I began to see how silence and solitude both erode our own grandiosity, and provide a fertile soil for gratitude to grow. This is the opportunity for conversion. What I experienced was pure gift! Grace at work. This solitude helped me to let go of unrealistic expectations among so much more 'Letting Go' experiences and helped me to catch myself falling into moments of depression and self-pity. In some ways the experience appeared to just 'scratch the surface'.

I realize that as life proceeds for me I may not be always in active ministry as I have been up to now.... This experience of solitude has given me a sliver of a taste for Constitution 2.13 "The ministry of being is as authentic as the ministry of doing" (Constitutions Part II 2009, Chapter II Mission pg 293 No 2.13). I pray for myself and for many of us who are at the cross roads of transition and change in ministry that this stage of life may be valued by us and all of us in community. The words of our very own, Venerable Mary Ward exhorts us, "Be not content only to love God, but strive to be wholly lost in His love." I pray that I may grow in inner freedom to truly follow this maxim, " Remain steadfastly in the service of God until the end... for it matters little whether it is behind a hedge , or a ditch , or in your bed , if only you are found faithful (Mary Ward Speaks - Our relation with Almighty God).





MARY WARD CORNER **NIRMALA M.**

Mary Ward teaches us to listen deeply to the invitation of Jesus and feel our innermost longing to respond to Him and be wholly God's. She asks us to have a single hearted devotion to God, to surrender with love and freedom. 'First we must know this, then desire it and finally endeavour for it a little' - God our loving Mother/Father will do the rest.

This is challenging yet it is possible to live. Very often we get caught up with the lure of worldly things, which takes away the true intention of our being. The Examination of Consciousness helps us to live in right relationship with God, with ourselves and others.

Mary Ward sisters must have

"The prayerful spirit of hermits and the zeal of apostles."

The time spent in prayer both personally and with community helps us to be Contemplatives in action. This leads us to find God in all things. Every day we can practice this by doing ordinary things with great care and love and attention.

Mary Ward has set us an example to pray for our enemies, those who hurt us. This inspires us to pray for our enemies and to forgive them. Even though we struggle in this endeavour yet we desire to do it. This could be our longing that I ask God for the grace to understand the difference between the deed and the doer, so that I may be able to forgive and forget any hurt done to me.

The Freedom to refer all to God... the spirit of freedom to go to God at all times and in all situations ought to be our constant way of communing with God. This changes our understanding of God. It encourages us to make a constant, courageous and conscious effort to respond to His invitation in each moment, each situation, in nature or with people around us. Even if we forget, we must simply and gently remind ourselves to start again and be fully attentive to the task or to the person before us.

Women in time will do much... This was the deep dream of Mary Ward. It has been lived over the centuries. Women have made incredible contributions in building up society. Many women are in leadership and presidential roles around the world and have made their voices heard. They have got opportunities to express their feelings, despite their struggles. They have overcome many difficulties and focused on lifting up those in poverty and making a more equal society for all. I am confident that Mary Ward's spirit of justice, freedom and sincerity will continue to bear fruit in years to come.



IGNATIUS CORNER ARCHANA

We, the women of Mary Ward are truly blessed to embrace the spirituality of St. Ignatius as our way of living our life purposefully. Mary Ward was a farsighted woman and she knew that 'Take the same as the Society' would enable her Institute to live a life of 'Contemplation in Action' and thereby give glory to God at all times and be a Soul wholly God's consciously. The Ignatian spirituality focuses on some important aspects to assist every individual to live a life in a worthy manner. It emphasizes practicing the Spiritual Exercises, the Daily Examen and Discernment before every action. To be attuned to the Divine Spirit within, one ought to be freed from all worldly attachments and thereby attain interior freedom to respond to the Divine will.

The two great Leaders, St. Ignatius of Loyola and Venerable Mary Ward have shown us the way to attain Divine Love and to make Christ the centre of our life at all times. Being a religious for 30 years and following this way of life, has had a great impact in my own life. I have realized the importance of having a balance in active ministry and the spiritual life. A life without Self-Awareness does not help us to be attuned to the holy will of The Divine Spirit within us. Therefore, even in spite of a busy schedule; one must take some time to examine consciously one's flow of thoughts and deeds. Along with Self-Awareness we also need to practice generosity. Only being aware and not desiring to change for a good cause, does not lead us to have a fruitful life. Attachments to thoughts, things, and odd habits do not create space to let God take control of everything.

Therefore, a constant awareness of the movement of my spirit is essential to live a meaningful life. May our daily Meditations, Contemplations, Examen and Reflections nurture our spiritual life and make us whole.

Hello dear Sisters,

1 March 2021

Three months have gone by since the last letter from the Archive, and much has changed.

For one, Edwina and I are back at work in the Archive. While Covid-19 has not disappeared, we are all trying to resume normal working within the given constraints. The Archive itself is beginning to look a little different - Edwina has been busy matching the books with Sr. Irene's list and flagging them; we have moved the museum items into a college classroom kindly loaned to us temporarily by Sr. Christine; we have three more large tables in the archive, brought from the old dining hall, for the purpose of sorting through our archival collection; we have a whole lot of new cartons for segregating different categories of items; and I turned my table so as to better enjoy the daylight from the north window to my left. Below is a picture of our busy archive, with my table in the foreground.

This month I also had my first formal interaction with the IBVM sisters. The PLT very kindly gave me a one hour slot during the EPLT meetings. I made a short presentation, which was followed by discussions. The main subject of the presentation was the role to be played by IBVM members in ensuring our archive remains meaningful and keeps on growing. I am very grateful to all who listened to me so patiently, and I hope I was able to convey the idea that the Archive is yours and tells the story of your lives and your work, and how good we are able to make it depends to a large part on your active participation.

As the presentation is of relevance to all members of the community, I have taken the liberty of reproducing the main slides in the following pages, with short explanations. I welcome questions or feedback.

Edwina and I would like to wish you in advance for Easter and the Bengali New Year, coming up in April.

Nilina

Dr. Nilina Deb Lal
Loreto South Asia Province Archivist
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My work table at the Archive, and sorting of files and papers in progress in the background.

Aim of the IBVM Archives

The IBVM Archives

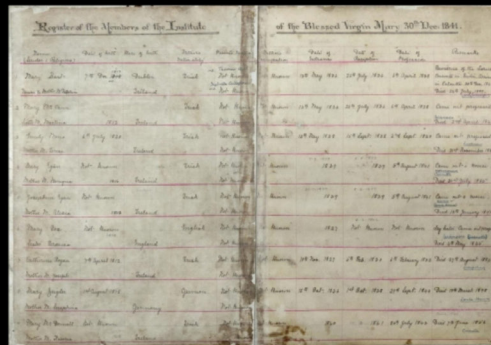
'identify, collect, protect, preserve and make available the records of enduring value of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary'

1

The Mission Statement of the IBVM Archives identifies 5 key actions with regard to the "records of enduring value":

- To identify
- Collect
- Protect
- Preserve
- Make available

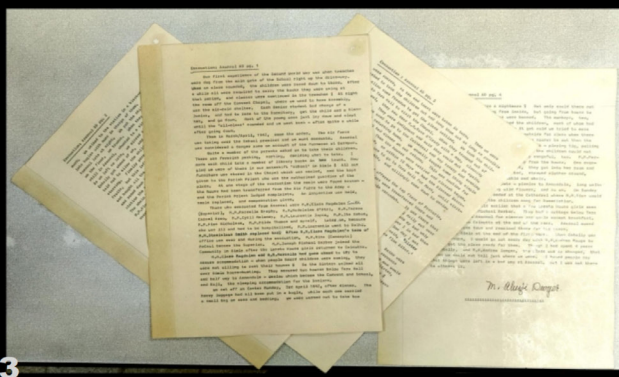
Our collection



2

Our collection already has many records of enduring value, such as the Register of IBVM members of the South Asia Province.

Our collection

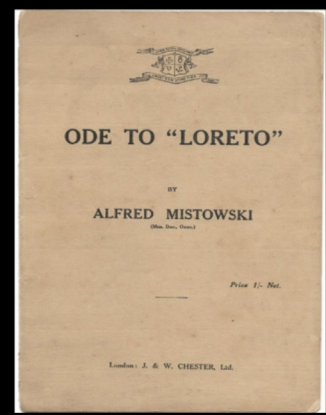


3

A more recent item is Sr. Aluigi's recollection of the evacuation of the children from Asansol during World War II.

Our collection

To East and West of that fair Isle where the first Loreto stands.....



4

And an item related to the schools, and dear to all students, staff and sisters, is the original print of the music score of the Loreto Chorus, called "Ode to Loreto" and composed by Alfred Mistowski in 1924.

The other IBVM archives

- Institute and Ireland
- Australia & South East Asia
- Canada
- Eastern Africa
- England
- Mauritius
- Spain
- USA
- Peru

5

There are nine other Archives in the IBVM network, all of them engaged in upholding the IBVM Mission Statement, and together contributing to preserving the IBVM world wide story for posterity.

What is an archive

Typical archive series

- Province Leader
- ↳ Sr. Anita Braganza
- ↳ Letters sent by Sr. Anita
- ↳ Letters to all IBVM members
- ↳ Letters regarding Province Assembly
- ↳ Letter dated 17 Jan 2015



6

Archives are generally a collection of "records created by organisations and individuals in the course of going about their business". The items within a particular category in the collection usually bear a relationship to each other and together tell a story. For example the letter shown here from Sr. Anita to all sisters of the Province is a single item related to numerous other items within the overall category of papers related to the Province Leader.

How will we know what to do....

The Retention Schedule

provides the necessary guide for deciding –

- a) What to retain
- b) In what format
- c) When to transfer to the Archive

7

The Retention Schedule, a formal document, informs us of what to retain, in what format, and when the items should be transferred to the Archive. The Retention Schedule for every Archive will be different, dictated by the needs of the organisation it serves, but the essential functions are universal. Similarly, the Retention Schedule for the South Asia Province will be different from those for the other IBVM Provinces, but all will have the same purpose.

The role of IBVM members



8

In partnership with your Archivist and with each other, make our collection grow and continue to be meaningful

The role of the IBVM members is to work in partnership with each other and with your Archivist, in the implementation of the Retention Schedule, which addresses the first two actions of the Mission Statement - to identify and to collect.

Your role as Community Leaders / Sisters-In-Charge

Function 3 of the Retention Schedule refers to

- Community Matters
- Members' Records and Effects

REFER DRAFT RETENTION SCHEDULE CIRCULATED FOR DISCUSSION

9

While the entire Retention Schedule relates to various aspects of the functioning of the IBVM in South Asia, Function 3 is particularly relevant to Community Leaders and individual members. The categories covered in Function 3 are:

- Community Matters
- Members' Records and Effects

Community Matters

- Community Council
 - Minutes of meetings
 - Action taken reports
- Official Correspondence with -
 - The Bishop
 - Other church organizations
 - Secular organizations
 - The Province Office
 - Donors
- Community Life - key events
- Community Annals and Newsletters

10

Community Matters include four main sub-categories, as shown above. The details are contained in the Retention Schedule document which is currently in draft stage and will be circulated when ready.

Members' Records and Effects



11

Members' Records and Effects tell your personal story. For every member of the IBVM there will be a box, a place, for your memories, your personal documents, diaries, journals, letters, photographs, writings, publications.... Please retain whatever you feel contributes to your story and the times in which you lived and worked. Even letters sent by you to your families may be retrieved and kept for posterity. Some day, some time, somebody will want to know about your contribution to the IBVM story.

Access to records

- Open Access Records
 - Available to all without restriction**
 - Published materials, widely circulated materials
- Closed or Restricted Records
 - Closed for anything between 30 to 100 years**
 - Province papers
 - Personal papers
 - Confidential papers

12

Last, but not the least, all records deposited with the Archive are confidential, other than those items which are already publicly available. Confidential items are closed for a minimum of 30 years, and sometimes up to 100 years, and may be accessed only by the creator of the document or with special permission from the Province Leader.

MY EXPERIENCE BAIADA

Ever since I became a member of the IBVM, I had always had a desire to work with those on the margins of our world and society. I had an attraction to missions and ministries that would help me live on the edge. I guess that is why the times that I spent in LH Rainbow Home and in Loreto Sadam are still so dear to my heart. But there was always in me the longing for more.

When I signed up for Rumbek, South Sudan, I was not really sure what to expect. I had only read and saw clips of Rumbek in some videos showing the different missions of our Institute. I heard about South Sudan from Patricia Murray IBVM, when she addressed us as B.Ed. students at Loreto College. The picture she painted of South Sudan through her presentation spoke directly to my already longing heart. The seed of my call to Rumbek was sown then. I managed to suppress this desire in my heart for five years until I could no longer hold it in, and when an opportunity came my way, I felt inspired to represent my longing. I am thankful to Noelle Corscadden IBVM our General Leader, Anita Braganza IBVM the Province Leader at the time, Ita Moynihan IBVM Province Leader of Ireland for making it possible for me to join Loreto Rumbek and to Orla Treacy who willingly accepted me to be part of the mission in Loreto Rumbek.



I remember that when the flight took off for Nairobi, I had mixed feelings of fear and excitement. I confess I was afraid of the unfamiliar that I was about to encounter. I was excited too about the new that was to be unfolded.

I was lucky I had a month in Nairobi to get documents ready for South Sudan. Mary Kamotho IBVM (whom I had met in Rome the year before) was there to meet me at Nairobi airport with a very big warm smile and a bigger hug. It was really lovely to find a known and friendly face amidst the vast ocean of strangers.

I stayed in two communities while in Nairobi. Jane Frances IBVM, the Province Leader at the time, and all the sisters were so welcoming and I felt at home right away. I arrived during the Mary Ward Week, so I got the chance to attend the Mary Ward Mass in two of our schools and also had an opportunity to witness the reception of new candidates to the Institute. I was amazed by the African cultural dances and music. I witnessed a people full of life. Being in Loreto communities eased the experience of being a total foreigner in a foreign country/continent.

Penina Odhiambo IBVM a member of the Rumbek community was my local guide and companion on the flight from Nairobi to South Sudan. A small aircraft 540 was our 'horse' to Juba, the capital city of South Sudan. I looked out through the small window; the magnificent columns of floating cotton shaped clouds seemed to beckon me and assured me that all will be well. Juba is a small city, a quarter of Shillong in size, with very few people. I was actually missing the crowd. (hahahaha...) We had to spend a night in Juba and connect the next day to Rumbek in an UNHAS flight in a tiny little aircraft of about 16 seats.



My first flight to Rumbek was unforgettable. Summer was setting in South Sudan, so the temperatures were hovering around 40 degree celcius. The wait for the flight in a crowded and noisy tent seemed never-ending. There was so much life around in spite of the sultry summer heat. Eventually, a person wearing a WEP jacket called out

on the top of his voice for our boarding.

The aircraft was small, so we sailed at a low height and the temperature in the plane was still high. I had the first passenger seat in the flight. I could clearly see the pilots switching buttons now and then, trying to keep the aircraft balanced as it was swaying to left and right. Every passenger was quiet, sucking in sudden breaths now and again when the aircraft swayed unexpectedly. It was about an hour and 20 minutes flight.



Everyone clapped for the pilots on touchdown, even though the landing on the rough (kachcha) airstrip was bumpy. As the door opened, we were greeted with hot dry air and red dust. I was shocked at how dry the whole place was. A land cruiser with the name Loreto on it was there to bring us home. A 15 minutes drive from the airport brought me to the Loreto Compound. On my arrival in the compound cheerful and warm faces welcomed me to Rumbek. Inside the compound, it's like a village inside the newly built wall with so much life and activity.

Loreto Mission Compound comprises of a Boarding school for Secondary level (classes 9 to 12), and a Day School for Primary level (K.G to 8). The Mary Ward Primary Health Care Centre is the major project in the compound. In fields of the compound, locals (about 100+ people) are also being taught how to cultivate and plough the land for food.

Generally speaking, life in Rumbek is difficult. There is an immeasurable amount of poverty and illiteracy in Rumbek and in the whole state. This is mainly caused by insecurity. South Sudan is a young country; our people are slowly recovering from war. There is still a lot of inter-clan conflicts; our people are not able to move around freely as they could be targets of revenge killings.

The bright side is that we are growing one step at a time. Our people are learning to value education and have started sending their children to school. Many of our young and courageous girls have fought early enforced marriages, faced and overcome unbelievable struggles and opposition from parents and relatives to continue with schooling. We believe that 'Education' is the biggest agent of change in the life of any society.

Where am I in all of this? Well, this is my third year in Loreto Compound. I've worked and am still working mainly in the Primary School. The first two years I was teaching English in the Upper Primary section (which would be Middle School for us in India). This year I am more engaged with helping teachers and giving them basic teaching skills like preparing schemes of work, lesson plans and making aids. I enjoy what I do here with the people I work with. In this compound, we are like one big family (about 400 residents): helping and supporting each other, just like any family we also have struggles, we share joys deeply and we stand by each other.



Our convent community here has had a fluctuating number of sisters from the time I arrived. We were two first, then four, then three. Every day we come face to face with the raw, harsh reality of the place: whether it's revenge killings, sounds of gunshots, early enforced marriages, sicknesses, traditional beliefs that influence the daily life of our people, hunger, illiteracy, and so on. All this leaves us feeling helpless as missionaries. Our trust in God is literally tested from time to time. All the same our trust and faith in God's plans is deepened. What Loreto is offering to our people here is incredible! This compound is like an oasis in the deepest desert. There is plenty of work, the people's basic needs are huge, but we can't do

everything. We are doing what is humanly possible at a snail's pace.

The most challenging image that is still so fresh in my memory, till today, is what I saw two years ago: a sight of mothers with their malnourished babies and young children. The reality of that scene hit me so hard, I literally ran away from there. It left me upset for a long time. Pictures and images that I had seen only in books and television were now in reality before my eyes. It took me about a month to regain my strength and visit these mothers and babies at the Nutrition clinic. By then, the babies looked more like humans, after having fed on nutritious food for a month. This experience clearly showed me the immense value of the Loreto presence to the people around here.



Every day I gain strength and energy when I see the faces of the little boys and girls running around in the school compound full of energy. Entering the school compound for our children is like entering Disneyland, even if it means studying under the trees. The happy (many toothless) smiles of the men and women in the garden, trying to greet me and teach me some Dinka words are a source of joy. I am not great at learning new languages, but the few words that I have learned are enough to make these women and men happy. But as we all know very well, the language of love is important, and many times this doesn't need words.

The Dinka people are generally tall and slender. I am very short in height compared to them. So, they sometimes address me as 'the little one' or 'the short one'. Whatever they may call me; they do so, with a good intention. The fact that they address me by my local name 'Nyibol Maker' shows that they have totally accepted me as one of their own.

Having said quite a lot, let me tell you that I do miss India and all that I left behind, especially family members, Sisters, friends, the hills, its greenery and fresh dustless air, and all that I've known so well before. Thankfully, the advancement of technology gives me a chance to be connected with family and friends and also to treat myself sometimes to some good Bollywood and Tollywood movies or songs. I am so grateful to those sisters in the Province who have kept in touch over the last two years. You know who you are, your care and support are not wasted.

Before I close this sharing, if I have to advise anyone of our sisters young and not so young wishing for an international mission, I would say this: First-ly, take the brave step to share and speak to the right persons what's deep in your heart. You might get what you've prayed for or you might not (if it is not yet time) but at least you have tried. Second-ly, have an open mind to be able to start learning things from scratch, letting your mind be a blank page, so you can fill it with new wonders that are unfolding to you. Lastly, keep in touch with your roots, you will realize the treasure of support you need is just a phone call away.



This is my third year in Rumbek, and how long I will be here, I don't know. Therefore, I strive to continue to give myself completely as long as I have this opportunity to serve.



TRICHY COMMUNITY EDELIN

Happenings in December: *The month of December is a season of carols, sharing of gifts and making cookies. Thus the Trichy community consisting of two members only, Powlin and Vimla involved themselves with the parishioners going around singing carols, and sharing their joy by visiting homes.*

January happenings: *The New Year began with the new arrivals in the community and visiting members. The sisters were welcomed warmly by the community. Edelin Kujur arrived in Trichy (5th) from Entally community as sister in-charge and to follow up the mission of helping in the Norbertine school, accompanied by Nithya who came along for her home visit and thereafter to Bangalore for her Final vows preparation.*

Pongal Celebration (17th): *The community was invited by the neighbouring Fathers of the Norbertine formation house to add joy to their Pongal celebration in their Social Centre for the mentally challenged. It was a great joy for Edelin to witness the celebration for the first time in a traditional way and interact with the inmates and see their animal husbandry.*

Community Pilgrimage to

Velankani (18th): *The community along with Sr.Powlin's family went for a pilgrimage to Velankani and spent a day of fun in the sea collecting shells, and offering prayers for all those who need prayers. We visited all the sacred places in the shrine.*

Visit to Oorikottai (26th): *The community, Srs. Powlin, Vimla and Edelin visited Sudha's house to meet her ailing mother suffering from a serious urinary bladder infection. It seemed that her mother, after returning from the hospital was back to life the day the sisters visited her. She was overjoyed with the time we spent interacting with her. But towards the end she got tired and rested as we left the house wishing her good health and our prayers for her speedy recovery.*



Mary Ward Celebration:



The feast day of Venerable Mary Ward was celebrated with great gusto in the community with the involvement of the neighbours for cooking, the parishioners for choir, the priests for the arrangement of the logistics and the invited guests from different religious houses with their presence at the Eucharistic celebration along with the eight concelebrants.

It was a moment of great joy meeting each one after the months of lockdown and fear. All enjoyed the fellowship meal and felt at home in the community of welcoming sisters.

February happenings: On completion of her CA exams Powlin was prepared to leave for Kolkata. She was a great asset in the community and the people loved her presence here. Her parents and sister came to the community to be with her and bid goodbye. Though it's sad for us to let her go but on the other side, 52C is waiting eagerly for her arrival.

Arrival: The community was happy to receive one more member in the community Sr. Jency, as she will continue her online classes from here till St. Joseph's College, Bangalore re-opens.

Visit of the CJ sisters:

The community was gripped with a feeling of great joy and a feeling of reunion when the CJ sisters visited the community (12th) for the first time.



Srs. Smitha and Jaba, was in the town to attend the funeral Mass of Sr. Smitha's mother who passed away on the 11th. They had come all the way to invite the sisters to be a part of the family Mass for the repose of her mother's soul.

We extended our deep condolences to Sr. Smitha and her family by accepting to visit the house.





SHILLONG COMMUNITY ROSITA

On 7th December Srs. Mary and Baiadamary went to visit Jyntru, where the Christian Brothers have a community where they are experimenting a new way of living out their religious lives. On the 8th February Srs. Soria and Mary visited them again. On both occasions they shared a lot of how things are moving for them.

On 12 December, Srs. Mary and Euphemia went to drop Sr. Baiadamary to her house in Weilo and also reached Umnongrim, where Sr. Euphemia has started her new ministry.



On 21st December, the community, support staff and office staff had a lovely picnic on the school basketball ground. They enjoyed cooking, dancing and playing games.

On the occasion of Christmas, we invited our cook and his family for lunch.

On 31st December, the Community went for a picnic to Laitlum. It was a sudden plan. We enjoyed the place and had lunch which we carried with us. In the evening we had a thanksgiving prayer service in our Chapel.

On 1st January One of the Holy Cross Fathers invited us for Mass followed by lunch in Brookdene.

The Community celebrated Sr. Miri's birthday. Her mother came to meet her and that added to her joy.

On 31 January, our secretary, Biconia drove the community to Orchid Lake Resort, in Umiam. We went for boating and had a lovely lunch.



On the 7th January, Biconia took us for a picnic to Jiva Resort (Sohra), where we had a sumptuous lunch and enjoyed the surroundings.

On 10th January, Sr. Soria and her sister invited the community to her house in Nongthymai. It was lovely visiting them.



Srs. Mary and Miri began visiting the houses of the hostel girls which they have planned to do every Saturday. They went to Rupabahun's house in Mawkyrwat. The family was very happy that they came and took them around to the various tourist attractions.





BOWBAZAR COMMUNITY RANJITA

St. John Berchman's feast: We, the Bowbazar community celebrated St. John Berchman's feast day on 26th November along with Sr. Malti as she celebrated Junior's day. We had a short prayer service for her which was prepared by Sr. Anita Nayak. Sr. Malti shared what inspires her from St. John Berchman's life. After prayer we wished her with a song followed by a fellowship meal.

On the 24th December we as a Community got together and had prayers on the O Antiphons, sang Christmas Carols and exchanged gifts with our secret friends. We went for mass at 7.00pm in the Church.



On the 30th December we went to 52 C to sing carols for our old and sick sisters. All our sisters were eager to meet us. They were thrilled with our melodious singing.

The 27th January was a memorable day for Sr. Priyanka as she celebrated her birthday. We as a community joined her in thanking the Lord for the gift of her life with a short prayer which was followed by dinner.



MARY WARD FEAST: We began Mary Ward Week on 23rd January by reflecting on her life. On the same day we had Mass in the evening presided by Fr. Jayraj the Rector of St. Xavier's College and Sr. Malti renewed her vows. It was a great day for her as she stepped into another year of her religious life.

On 30th January we celebrated our feast. On this day we had a small get together along with other religious from nearby Communities, our School Principals from three schools, and the Rainbow staff. It was a joyful experience coming together and sharing our joy after the post lockdown. We ended the day with a Eucharistic Celebration.





DHARAN COMMUNITY INITHA

After ten months we had our first meeting with the self-help groups [women leaders] to evaluate how our life had been during Covid-19 and how helpful they had found the self-help groups during that time. They shared a lot of positive points in response and also the struggles they had to go through. We also awarded some women who, in spite of their struggle, have been helpful to other people.



On the 23rd January 2021 the CJs and Loreto sisters together celebrated our foundress, Mother Mary Ward's birthday on a small scale in Sirsia, East Nepal. On the 30th January 2021 in Dharan we celebrated our feast day with the Holy Eucharist followed by a small program by our hostel children and ended with lunch.



Thanksgiving mass for Sr. Ganga at Damak, Rev. Bishop Paul Simick of Nepal, Fr. Pius the chancellor, Fr. Boniface, Dean of Purvanchal, and fathers, sisters, parishioners of Damak and Dharan were present, to make this occasion a memorable one. This was organized by her parish and family members.



LOLAY COMMUNITY VALERIA

Celebrations: This year because of Covid-19 we did not celebrate Christmas in a grand way but it was memorable because Sisters Madhu and Binita came to celebrate Christmas with us.



Community activities: After opening of lock down our activities began. We went for house visiting on different occasions like sick visits, birthday celebrations, marriages and funeral Masses. We had many sick people who have gone through operations. They believe in our prayers and they are very thankful to God that they are still alive and that God is so kind to them that they have people to look after them.

Visitors: In spite of the difficult situation many people came to visit us. Besides the Christmas visit of Srs. Madhu and Binita, in the beginning of the New Year Sr. Shusanta, a Cluny sister from Kalimpong along with her mother came to see her father so she visited us also. In February Father Vincent SJ. from Delhi came to visit. Frs. Samuel and Fredrick came to see us.

Outings: Sisters Madhu and Binita came to celebrate Christmas with us so we went for an outing to a lake in Nokdara. It is a very nice place to refresh our minds. When sister Shusanta came Fr. Rocky took us to Kalimpong. Father Vincent was our guest so we took him around Lolay to see some beautiful places.





PANIGHATTA COMMUNITY AMIA

The World is vulnerable due to the pandemic known as the Corona virus. The busy minds are less busy and physical movement is limited. Here in Panighatta the new normal has started.

Therefore, we have been involved in the parish, taking Sunday classes and visiting families. We had a beautiful night vigil on 24th December in our parish church. Sr. Subhashini had joined the choir in the parish. Here I feel the community had taken a step to create oneness that moves us across boundaries from the month of December. We shared our Christmas fellowship with people from the parish and a few support staff who had duty on the 25th December.

Sr. Greta, who was with us, has gone for her final vow preparation. She left Panighatta on 31st December 2020. We had a Thanksgiving Mass for her and a special blessing was given to her for her preparation for her final commitment.

It was a great joy and honour to celebrate our foundress, Mary Ward's feast on 30th January with four priests, among them two Jesuits- Fr. Cherrian sj, Fr. Lawrence sj and two diocesan priests from our parish together with our dear sisters from Champasari, our parish council, our teachers and Sr. Sushila Kerketta who had come for her home visit. We began with the Holy Eucharist, the Earth dance followed by a delicious lunch.

At present Sr. Subhashini and Amia are in Panighatta. We are engaged in Sunday Catechism classes for the children and adults. Sr. Subhashini prepared couples in the parish for marriage. We also joined for Requiem Masses in the different Tea gardens.

We had been visiting our families during this pandemic and all are in good health.



UPDATES FROM BANGLADESH LINDA

As we welcome the spring season we wish all a happy spring time. We are five sisters here between the three houses. Sr. Archana and Sr. Makhelina at Loreto Residence, Mohakhali, Dhaka. Sr. Regina lives alone in Barishal working as the Director of the 'Maria Sick Shelter' which is a project of the Diocese of Barishal. Sr. Yvonne and Sr. Linda are living in Padrishibpur, where there are three Pre Candidates, Monisha Khoksi from the Diocese of Mymensing, Shimu Lindour from the Diocese of Rajshahi and Maria Toma Quiah from the Diocese of Chittagong and seven students of Classes XI & XII in the hostel. They study in St. Alfred's School and College.

On 10 November Monisha, Shimu and Toma were received as Pre-candidates. We had an evening Mass followed by a dinner.

On 31 December 2020, there was a Christmas gathering of Priests and religious of the parish, where Cardinal Patrick D Rozario csc was present. We had a short prayer service around the crib followed by lunch.



On 30 January, 21 we had invited the students of IX – XII and college. Altogether we were 30 of us. We had a prayer service before the picture of Mary Ward which was decorated very beautifully by Sr. Linda. After that the Pre-candidates shared the life of Mary Ward with the girls in Bengali by choosing some of the pictures of the painted life which were displayed on all four sides of the wall. There was a short cultural programme by the Pre-candidates and the students of the parish. The girls were very happy. Then they joined us for tea and snacks after which they left for home.



The new students of Class XI were welcomed into the hostel on 8 February 2021, by the seniors through a cultural programme and a delicious dinner.



On 11 February we had an orientation session for the girls introducing them to our Hostel rules and regulations.

Regina went to conduct many health camps in the far away interior villages and conducted relief camps in many villages – Bethkatapara, Potuakhali, Razapur, Satla, Wazirpur, Barishal, Nayaripara, Mohipur, Karanipara, Nameshy para, Taltoly Borguna.



LORETO RESIDENCE CLAIRE

It's an ill wind that blows no good. During the pandemic our staff opted to be resident and in return for facilities clean up and cultivate our garden with the result that we enjoyed fresh vegetables, pumpkin, brinjal, ladies fingers, karela, chillies, as well as flowers and seeing mango, guava and papaya trees on their way to fruition. The spirit of the staff and their readiness for extra work was praiseworthy at this time. Sr. Beatrice specialises in flower arrangement for the chapel and gives great pleasure with a variety of colourful floral arrangements.

As a community we have been blessed with daily Mass since August. Fr. Franklin, our celebrant comes and goes wearing a mask, no person to person communication away from the altar! Our 8 days Retreat in November directed by Fr. Pat Walsh S.J was appreciated by all. Sr. Celine joined us for the retreat. In November we also bade a sad farewell to Sr. Tina who helped us during many a crisis in the early days. Later on we warmly welcomed Sr. Flora wishing her God's special blessing on her mission during these difficult times.

Recently our community was increased with the presence of Srs. Maloti, Stephanie and Marilla. Maloti was first to arrive. She had surgery for goitre on 4th of November. Sr. Stephanie had a key hole operation in December and Marilla came for post-surgery care and recuperation. Having 3 younger members contributed to the life and joy of the community. Noting the change in singing our priest suggested we make a CD in Usha Uthup's studio!



The Christmas atmosphere was ushered on Christmas Eve with familiar carols played over the microphone above the Quadrangle. A Christmas crib prepared with the support staff looked like an Indian cow shelter. Holy mass was celebrated at 11.30am with the residents and staff sitting on verandas keeping social distance. The Celebrant spoke and prayed in Bengali and English. This was followed by a sumptuous fellowship meal in the dining room.



After it each staff member received a gift. The quadrangle remained our centre during the Christmas season. From here carols were sung by various groups who came to visit us – Loreto House on Christmas day, Loreto Entally the following day and on 28th BowBazar, reaching rooms of Srs. Cyril, Joan and anyone else unable to come to the dining room.

On 30th December, Loreto Elliot Road also visited us. Our own community brought this time to a closure with carol singing after the Epiphany. Sr. Sabrina and community visited us on New Year's Day bringing hope of a better year ahead.

On Mary Ward's two feasts 23rd and 30th of January we sang the special Mary Ward Mass, freshly typed as on original blue papers. Most of us had been present for the 1985 centenary Mass. Fr. Joe Xavier SJ celebrant at our Mass on 30th, is the director of all India social centre. Imbued with the spirit of Mary Ward and Ignatius he spoke with passion and enthusiasm.



Later on he joined us in the dining room for a cup of coffee. The room was decorated with an attractive display of Mary Ward maxims based on the Just Soul. One could spend a fruitful time absorbing it. Our celebration spilled over to the 31st when our community came together with community singing, a beetle drive and bingo. We had lots of fun and laughter with gifts to follow. This ended our Mary Ward celebration.

Beginning with Mass on Valentine's Day 14th February, we celebrated God as Lover. In the evening we had a community meeting, Powlin our youngest member having just returned. This was followed by a moving prayer service, depicting through brief Scriptural readings and hymns the theme, love and friendship. Then as companions on a journey we enjoyed snacks and chat.





MUKULIKA COMMUNITY ANTOINETTE

Graduation Day for the

Candidates: After completing two years in Mukulika, the Candidates were ready to leave their fledgling home and graduate to the Novitiate, on 27th December, 2020. Amidst much sadness and also much hopes and wishes for the future, fond goodbyes were said to Genevieve, Janifa, Pushpa and Teresa, as they left for Abhilasha.



Corona Virus in Mukulika: During the pandemic the Candidates and Community were confined to the house, which everyone bore with much cheer and goodwill. But just when we started talking about going on a picnic, Sr. Antoinette and the domestic helper, Mary, came down with Corona Virus. What a frightful time that was, but the miracle is that all are now safe and sound and back to life as normal.

St. Vincent's School, Thakurpukur, which the Parish Priest calls 'The University', was busy throughout, not only with online classes, but also with all the scheduled co-curricular programmes – online! What a feat for these children, whom we saw against the background of village ponds, trees, fields... School was no more a building, but the whole town and villages round about!



The Trinitarian Community: At present we are a Trinitarian Community ~ Srs. Josephine, Sarita and Antoinette. But our joy and pride is the one Candidate with us – Sharon Rai, from Lolay. She is mostly busy with online classes for College, Education Honours, at Loreto College, Kolkata. She is a bright star which illumines Mukulika. We hope the light will attract many more to Loreto!!



LORETO HOUSE COMMUNITY MANJULA & LILY

Visitors: When visitors come into our house we always feel happy and we welcome them heartily. In the month of November we had the opportunity to meet Sister Marion's brother, Mr. Christianand Vase. He gave her a surprise visit during the time of her illness. He spent about two weeks with us.

"A little bit of light pushes away a lot of darkness."

The community celebrated Diwali festival with the Eucharist celebrated by Fr. Lucas, our parish priest. Before the Mass Sr. Manjula gave a meaningful introduction about Deepawali and how important it is for us especially as Jesus is the constant Light of our lives. During the recessional hymn we all proceeded with Diyas in our hands to light the other Diyas around the house celebrating Jesus' light which dispels the darkness. Our compound looked very beautiful.

Christmas celebrations

On 21st December like every year during Christmas, there was Christmas Carols in Allen Park; organized by Kolkata Police. We, the Loreto House community and Provincialate sisters took part in carol singing. Sr Molly worked tirelessly to train us all for weeks.



Sr. Sabrina gave the introduction about Jesus' birth and how His presence is related and relevant during this pandemic. It was our second time that we got the invitation to sing carols for the opening day of Kolkata Christmas festival. Miss Mamta Banerjee, the Chief Minister of West Bengal was the chief guest of the delightful evening. It was nice meeting her. She too was happy to meet us. During her speech she sang a song in Bengali, Bishwa Pita Tumi Hey Prabhu. There were other religious leaders who were present for the opening day. We were all glad to attend this programme.

“I am the Lord who heals you”. Exodus 15: 26

As we entered into New Year 2021 some of our community members were hospitalized since they were tested COVID positive and some were home quarantined. It was a tough and challenging time for all of us to face this situation. As a community we intensified our prayer and we asked our sisters to pray for them. We felt the power of prayer and within two weeks our sisters returned home from hospital.

Feast day: On 21st of January, we celebrated Sr. Agnes' feast and birthday together. We began our programme with a short prayer service prepared by Sr. Molly followed by the cutting of a homemade cake, which was followed by a short cultural programme. At the end Sr. Sabrina, her companion spoke about their journey from the time they had joined religious life. The day ended with a delicious meal.



Mary Ward Feast- We were privileged to celebrate Mary Ward's Feast day on 30th January with the Eucharistic celebration offered by Fr. Jerome S.J. Due to various reasons we kept the celebrations within the community. We were happy to have the Provincialate and the Elliot Road communities join us.



Community Picnic: On the 14th of February, a community picnic was organized for birthday celebrations, thanksgiving for recovery of Covid warriors and good results of our student sisters. We went to Serampore – where our previous novitiate was. At present the Daughters of Charity sisters are running an old aged home. They gave us a very warm welcome. We went by boat to visit Gandhi Museum which was very informative. Our visit to St. Joseph's Church, during this Year of St. Joseph was a pilgrimage for us. We thank God for this outing together; it was a blessing for all of us. We all felt refreshed and relaxed.





ASANSOL COMMUNITY MABLE

“Let us be grateful to people who make us happy. They are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.” – Marcel Proust

In our ministry and life we are blessed with many people who make us happy and help us in our ministry. They are really like the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom. Yes, I am talking about our support staff. They make our life easy and comfortable.

2020 was the year of uncertainty and fear for all of us. In spite of the fear of Covid our support staff was there with us helping us with our daily activities. Due to Covid safety measures we were not able to invite people to take part in our community celebrations as in previous years. We, the Asansol Community took this as a blessing in disguise. We decided to make our charming gardeners feel special by celebrating our feast days with them.



23rd December was the last working day for the support staff. As a gesture of gratitude we, the sisters in community organized a small surprise get-together for them. We started with a short prayer then cakes, homemade snacks and tea were served to them. They were surprised and happy to receive gifts as a gesture of our gratitude for all the work they do for us. They all went home joyfully after singing and dancing together.

On the 30th January 2021, we celebrated our feast with a beautiful Mass together with the support staff and members of Friends of Mary Ward. We shared snacks after the Mass with the ones who were present and a very special, simple lunch prepared by the staff.



ENTALLY COMMUNITY AROCKIA MARY

The month of November was as usual with the online classes which were taken by the sisters. The priest coming over to the community for the liturgy was life giving and made us feel one with those people who were not able to attend mass as we could.

Though it was a year which was in the hand of the covid virus, the month of December is marked as a season of celebration. On 5th December 2020 the sisters from the community joined in preparing for the on-line Advent mass.

On the 7th of the month we had a Christmas celebration with the Group D staff of the school. The atmosphere was filled with music, dance and delicious biryani. The school closed for the Christmas break on 18th of December. We enjoyed the sharing of gifts with the secret friends among the teachers. The long awaited Christmas Eve Liturgy was celebrated in the evening as everything had to end by 9:00 p.m. Those neighbours who normally attend the service at Nitika also attended the Service. After mass all were served coffee and cakes around the crib just outside the Chapel.

The month of January began with the feast of the Mother of Our God. The beautiful Liturgy was organised by our Junior sisters who melodiously.

On 23rd January the birthday of Mary Ward was a reason for celebration because on that day four temporary professed sisters from Gyanalaya (Juniorate) and community renewed their vows - Srs. Mann, Reshma, Isilda and Biviya.

On the 30th January Mary Ward's death Anniversary, the Institute feast day, was celebrated by the Mary Ward Associates. The Sisters had the liturgy in the community room while the Mary Ward Associates organised the liturgy for themselves and the School. The sisters helped in preparing for this online. The sisters organized a small Party in the evening in the community room. The Salesian Priests and priests from the Auxilium Parish were present with us. It was an enjoyable evening with music and dance.



ABHILASHA COMMUNITY BERNADETTE

There was a reception ceremony on 23rd January, 2021, where four of our candidates Genevieve Nogntdu, Janifa Kerketta, Puspaa Rai and Teresa Rai were received as novices. In the presence of three council members and sisters from Mukulika, the Provincial received them.

There was a small prayer service where the four candidates enacted the reading of Jeremiah's call which had encouraged them to respond to their call.



To celebrate our Founder Mary Ward's week we had creative and inspiring prayer services each day on different themes depicting her life and her experience. The culmination of the celebration ended with a grand Eucharist, at which our adjoining community, Mukulika was also present.



After savoring a delicious lunch we were invited to a theater of Abhilasha Novitiate for a short play on Mary Ward's life. Our novices had prepared a few scenes from the plays written by our honourable Sr. Eithne. We were all moved by the spirit of Mary Ward which was enacted very well by the novices.

We express our gratitude to each one of you for supporting us with your prayer which encourages us in the work of Formation.



RANCHI COMMUNITY RAJNI

December and January have been months of peace and celebration for us in Ranchi. These have been times for celebrating the birth and life of Jesus, the life of Mary Ward and the life of our sisters. These were times too of opportunities of a closer coming together with our CJ Sisters.

In December we prepared for Christmas and enjoyed the Christmas season. In keeping with the many who are suffering we decided to celebrate simply yet happily.

On 13th of December we celebrated Jiwanti's birthday. The day began with the Holy Eucharist. We had lunch under the garden umbrella in the sun. In the evening we had a prayer service for Jiwanti prepared by Nirmala.

On 21st of December the C.J sisters from Lohardaga came to visit us. It was a great joy to have them with us. We had dinner together and they spent the night here. During dinner they told us about their mission in Lohardaga and we were happy to be together. The next morning we took them around our campus. They left for Lohardaga after lunch and Punitha, Sangeeta and Rajni accompanied them.

The Christmas Eve prayer was led by Sr.Maeve. Then we happily greeted each other and also gave our gifts to our Christmas friends. We had no Mass in our Chapel, so except for Srs Maeve and Tina, the rest of us went at 8.15 p.m. for "Midnight Mass" to Nirmala College.

On Christmas morning we had Mass in our chapel. We had invited some of our support staff to join us for lunch again under the garden umbrella and we enjoyed each other's company.

On the 27th of December we bade farewell to Swati who was leaving for Kolkata. We thanked her for her service to Gumla as well as to the Ranchi community. We wish her all the best for her preparation for her Final Vows.

On the 31st of December we all we went to Murhu for the wedding of Marcel - one of our support staff. It was a great joy for us to know their wedding traditions, to meet his family and especially his bride. We loved meeting the people in his village. They provided us with a delicious lunch which was there for all who attended the wedding. There was no limit to the numbers who came! The meal was provided by the people themselves. It was such a beautiful experience of belonging and togetherness. Before returning we visited the families and homes of our other staff that lived in the vicinity.



On 1st of January we thanked God for another year and attended Mass in Nirmala College. Srs Maeve and Tina attended an online Mass. After our breakfast Punitha, Gloria, Jiwanti and Rajni planted an Avocado tree in our garden to celebrate nature!

We as a community are grateful to God for the gift of life. We were privileged to celebrate Sr.Maeve's 92nd birthday on the 15th of January. That evening the priests living nearby came to wish Sr.Maeve. If we were not in a time of pandemic the day would have been busy with visitors, Sr Maeve has lived in and loved Ranchi for 32 years and knows everybody!





We had a special prayer service for her prepared by Jiwanti. She enjoyed her day and we were happy to be part of this great sister's joy.

On the 23rd of January we celebrated the birthday of Mary Ward with the C.J sisters in their place in Lohardaga. We also celebrated Sangeeta's birthday and Nir-mala renewed her vows in the CJ Chapel. We had a beautiful Mass at 11.00a.m followed by lunch. The Sisters had invited the priests and sisters living in the same compound. It was a great experience to be able to celebrate Mary Ward's birthday together. After tea we left Lohardaga rich with the kindness shown to us by our CJ sisters.

On the 30th of January we celebrated Mary Ward feast in our community. This time the C.J Sisters- Saroj, Reena and Nidhi joined us for the celebration. We had a lovely Mass offered by Fr. Aurel Brys SJ. During Mass 8 of our school teachers took the oath to become Friends of Mary Ward. After the Holy Eucharist the cake was cut by the Friends of Mary Ward. This was followed by a sumptuous lunch. After lunch the C.J sisters left for Lohardaga. In the evening we invited all the priests, the sisters and friends from our parish and locality. We also invited the members of our Managing Committee who have been such a support to the school.



We cannot end without a description of Nature in Ranchi - our beautiful garden, resplendent with so many flowers, the organic vegetables that we are able to enjoy and last but not least the birth of three little kittens who are fast finding homes - no problem for their mother because she is already in the family way again!



Through it all we are conscious of those who still suffer from illness and loss of jobs and scarcity of food because of the pandemic. May God protect and keep us all safe.





SHIMLA COMMUNITY MADHURI

CHRISTMAS: During Christmas 2020, we came together as community and celebrated it with exchanging gifts with our Christmas friends at the crib. We were privileged that we had Mass for Christmas in the church as we were aware that many people were deprived of this celebration because of Covid. We invited the office and support staff the day after Christmas for a party with singing and dancing.

ing and dancing.

Mary Ward Week: We celebrated the birthday of Mary Ward on January 23, 2021 with Mass celebrated by Frs. Edward and T. Raj followed by dinner. Br. Sukhwinder Mattu was also present for the occasion.

We celebrated the Institute feast on 30th January with Mass followed by dinner. Earlier in the day we had a party for the support staff as they were present for this Institute feast though usually they are on annual holidays.



Thatapani: We had gone for our community outing to Thatapani. We saw the change in the area as the river had joined the hot springs and the water from the hot springs are usually pumped into tanks where the people can enjoy a warm bath. So we had to be satisfied with boating but we really enjoyed it. We had good fun and experienced a freshness of our minds after a long lockdown due to the pandemic.

Holy Childhood Day:

We celebrated Holy Childhood Day in the church on January 14, 2021. The children came in with lighted candles during the entrance procession for the mass and they saw to the reading and singing. After the mass there was a short program with dances and the children acted out scenes from the Gospel. They were very happy to participate and both the children and their parents were happy with the celebration. This was followed by refreshments for all. Everyone appreciated the effort of our young sisters and catechism teachers as they brought joy to all.





CHAMPASARI COMMUNITY DIPIKA

On the 12th of January we had the birthday celebration of Sr. Preety. In the morning the community joined Preety in cutting the cake and made the day a very special one for her. In the evening we had a special Eucharistic celebration for her offered by Fr. Julius S.J. which was followed by a delicious dinner.



On the 23rd of January we celebrated the birth anniversary of Venerable Mary Ward. Rev. Bishop Vincent Aind was the main celebrant for the Eucharistic celebration. We had invited priests, sisters, families from our locality, Darjeeling Mary Ward Social Center staff and our sisters from different communities to join us in thanking God for the gift of Mary Ward and her life. After the Mass we had a tasty and delicious lunch followed by Adivasi dance in which everyone participated to add to the joy of the celebration.

On the 30th of January we joined our sisters in Panighatta to celebrate our feast day. The Mary Ward week was very special to each one of us in the community because we experienced the presence of God by sharing our joy with others.



TRUE STORY Claire

On a cold winter's day, in Shimla, an elderly sister Gabriel sat on a sunny verandah. Of a sudden, the wooden floor began to vibrate with what sounded like quick footsteps.

Lo and behold, a huge monkey turned the corner, chased by a huge dog. A little baby monkey with fear-filled eyes, clung to its mother. Without pausing, and still running very fast, the mother threw the baby into Mother Gabriel's lap and ran on, to draw the dog away. Mother Gabriel shared her shawl with the baby, cuddled it and sang till its shivering stopped.

When she had escaped the dog, the mother monkey returned, to find her baby sharing Mother Gabriel's shawl and being rocked to sleep with soft singing. She gently unwrapped her baby and went off, leaving Mother Gabriel forlorn.





Alan: Why are you late?
 Balan: There was a man who lost a hundred dollar bill.
 Alan: That's nice, were you helping him to look for it?
 Balan: No. I was standing on it.

Santa: Oye ! What are you doing?
 Banta: Recording this baby's voice.
 Santa: Why?
 Banta: When he grows up I shall ask him what he meant by this...



A Sardar learning English introduced his family at a party,
 'Hi, I am a Sardar.
 This is my Sardarni.
 He is my Kid and she is my Kidney'.

A man was walking near a bush. Suddenly, he saw a lion in front of him. He knelt down to pray asking God to deliver him.
 When he opened his eyes, he saw the lion kneeling down also in prayer.
 He asked "Mr.Lion are you also a Christian?"
 The lion replied "Shut up! Don't you pray before u eat your food?"





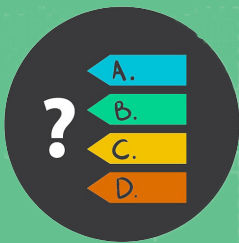
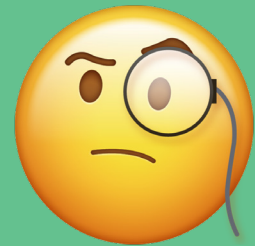
1. On a Violin how many strings do we have?

- A. Four
- B. Three
- C. Two
- D. Five



2. What is a zero line?
a. The imaginary line which connects all the first habitations from the International Boundary
b. An imaginary line separating India and Pakistan
c. The imaginary boundary between all countries
d. None of the above

3. Which of the following can opt-out of sharing their Whatsapp data with Facebook until now?
a. USA
b. EU
c. Australia
d. Germany



4. When and Where was Sr. Eithne born?

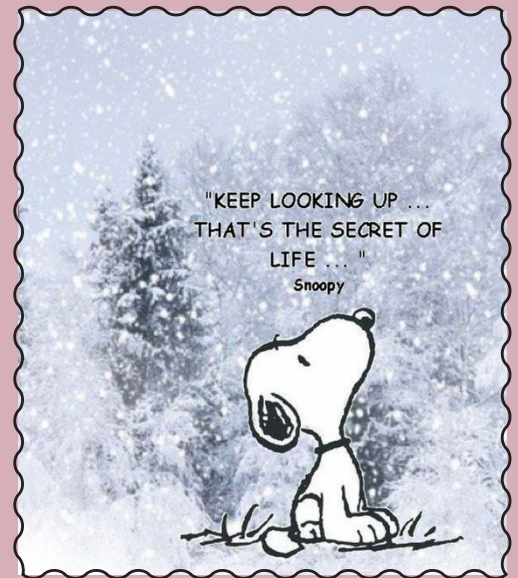
*Please send your answers to southnewsletter@gmail.com
Inbox the correct answer and win an exciting prize*



BIRTHDAYS AND FEASTDAYS

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Sr. Euphemia Fernandes	10th
Sr. Christine Coutinho	10th
Sr. Balika Pal	12th
Sr. Claire McFarland	22nd
Sr. Geraldine Moktan	26th
Sr. Valeria Mundu	27th



APRIL FEASTDAYS

Sr. Consuelo Murphy 26th

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Sr. Priyanka Soreng	4th
Sr. Marilla D'Souza	5th
Sr. Binista Kerketta	13th
Sr. Baishakhi Mondal	21st
Sr. Baiadamary Lyngkhoi	25th
Sr. Eithne McDonald	26th
Sr. Mable Pramila Rudum	29th

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Sr. Elizabeth D'Souza	2nd
Sr. Monica Rozario	4th
Sr. Anita Maria Braganza	7th
Sr. Binita Surin	10th
Sr. Gloria Lakra	13th
Sr. Nirmala Toppo	15th
Sr. Nirmala Minj	16th
Sr. Biviyana Lepcha	17th
Sr. Teresa McGlinchey	18th
Sr. Bernadette Lepcha	20th
Sr. Mini Priyanka Dungdung	20th
Sr. Sarita Horo	26th



MAY FEASTDAYS

Sr. Joan Smyth	30th
Sr. Celine Pinto	30th
Sr. Elizabeth D'Souza	31st

