

In Active Contemplation

WE COMMUNICATE

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Message From The Provincial



“Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.” (John 21:25)

Life writes history... history is the stories of life, its achievements, struggles and pains - some revealed and some hidden or untold. However, what is often overlooked are the untold stories--the silences, gaps and omissions that form a type of shadow story or a story that lies just below the surface of what is said or written.

Our lives are full of stories. Some are told and some are unspoken and some have important hidden lessons. Sometimes we realize the importance of untold stories both in terms of their content and also the respect and appreciation that the teller receives.

In order to listen to an experience which is too difficult to talk about and go beyond the expressed words, we need to be silent. It is necessary to create space within to be able to notice the untold. It will help us to discover different layers of a history which might have a deep learning experience.

This issue of ‘We communicate’ is a reel of such stories of our life and mission - known and anonymous, spoken and unsaid, written and unrecorded, understood and assumed, accepted and excluded. Yes, these are the stories of our accomplishments, struggles and challenges of our history of the past 50 years, which we want to pass on to next generation.

What is the purpose of listening to the untold stories? Listening to them reveals how these stories have influenced the growth process of the life and mission of the person who travelled through those stories





and of those who accompanied her. Often, we know the success stories of the persons. Do we know their failure stories? We may know their accomplishments, realizations, achievements and victories. Do we reveal our disappointments, pains, struggles, disasters and misunderstandings, when the forgiveness and mercy of Jesus was so tangible to us? We like to speak about flashing stories, what is externally good and praiseworthy.

People listen to some part of our life and some of our experiences with their ears and some with their hearts. You feel the person's emotions and pain. What has taught us the most is not our success stories but our struggles, difficulties, failures and challenges. These might not be stories we laugh about and forget; these are stories which shook us up and brought forth the harsh realities and truths that we have been through, somewhere or other, at times even unnoticed. These stories hit a raw nerve in anyone who's ever ready to listen.

Our past does influence how we are today. Whether we realize it or not, how we respond to life's opportunities and challenges, to other people and to ourselves, depends upon the stories we tell about ourselves. Too often, we tell distorted stories either drawn from painful experiences or internalized from others' critical voices. These fake stories diminish our dreams, damage our relationships and fill us with fear and self-blame. Some stories break us, some heal us and some initiate the process of healing in us.

We listen to people with various backgrounds and experiences, as they share what they do, what they went through and what struggles or moments in their lives made them more connected within. The idea is to have a soul connection space where one can feel comfortable enough and can share vulnerable stories from that heart space within. For, we must realise that we are spiritual beings first. Furthermore, it is a space where people can share each other's stories and the listeners can identify with their stories in a way that it enhances their lives.

Failure, as much as it hurts, is an important part of life. In fact, failure is necessary.

I have failed more times than I'd like to admit. And I'm not talking about small failures; I'm talking about the kind of failures that have sent me to the abyss. But it has also helped me to rise to soar. Without failure, we'd be less capable of compassion, empathy, kindness and great achievement; we would be less likely to reach for the moon and the stars.

My wish is that listening to these known and untold and successful and unsuccessful stories may help each one of us to own our history, draw from its abundant riches and be challenged to be faithful to our commitment in our present-day reality. May we grow in gratitude for all that has been and live the present to its full with a vision for the future.

I am happy and grateful to Sr. Daisy and the SMC team and each one of our sisters who has taken up the challenge to share our stories and to pass on the roots and traditions to the present and future generations. May the Lord of all history bless all of us during this Jubilee year.

Sr. Deepa Moonjely OP





Editorial



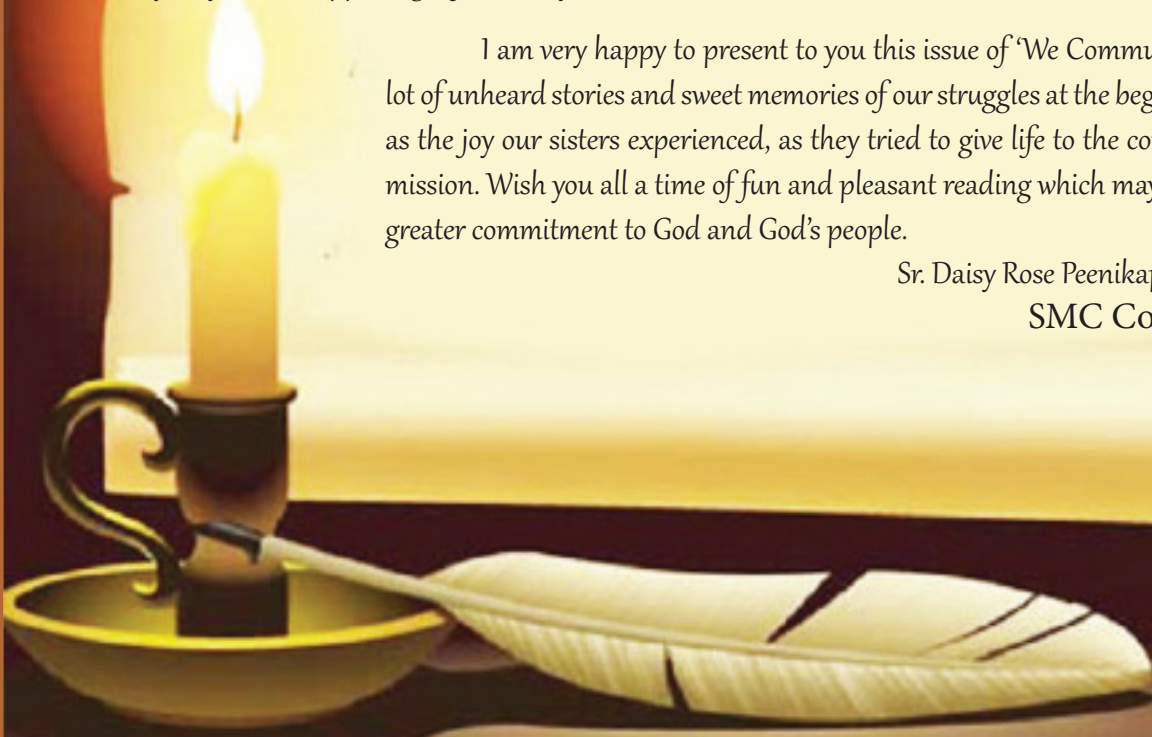
As we celebrate 50 years of our presence in India, we feel deep gratitude and love for each Dominican Sister of Charity of the Presentation, who have lived in India and for our Indian sisters who have responded to international mission in USA, Honduras, France, Rome, Burkina Faso, Mexico, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Jerusalem, Korea, Philippines and Spain. With hearts filled with love, all of us together have sown small seeds of salvation, through our option for the poor, as we continued to give life to the Charism of Blessed Marie Poussepin and St. Dominic.

Looking anew with faith and hope, we acknowledge with gratitude that we are part of this story that began with the communications between Fr. Claude Ollukaran O.F. M. Cap and Sr. Agnes Dominique in Tours, France and the journeys of our first Indian sisters to the US, our American Sisters to India and return of our Indian Sisters after their formation. The year 1971 saw the arrivals of Sr Patricia Sullivan and Sr. Marie Claire in February, Sr. Jose Mary Mookan, the first Indian sister to return in June and Sr. Dorothy Ruggiero in August and also the establishment of our first community in India, in the heart of Kuttikad village, Thrissur District, Kerala, affectionately spoken of, as God's own country. They were animated by their missionary zeal in the light of the renewal of Vatican Council II. We have grown from a single community to a Province with 18 Communities, during these 50 years. We recall each Mission with a spirit of profound gratitude, for we have experienced the presence of Gd in our lives each day, as we tried to respond to the needs of the people.

We rejoice being Dominican Sisters of Charity of the Presentation with our hearts open to the world, incarnating the Indian face of our Congregation, transforming our culture by our love for God and bringing compassion and hope to our people. We live contemplating and experiencing the Paschal Mystery in the happenings of our daily lives.

I am very happy to present to you this issue of 'We Communicate' with a lot of unheard stories and sweet memories of our struggles at the beginning as well as the joy our sisters experienced, as they tried to give life to the community and mission. Wish you all a time of fun and pleasant reading which may lead you to a greater commitment to God and God's people.

Sr. Daisy Rose Peenikaparamban OP
SMC Co-ordinator





May His Deep Contemplative Life, Zeal for the Salvation of Souls, Predilection for the Poor and Courage in rectifying what he believed to be wrong, be an Inspiration and direction in our life as we celebrate 800th Death anniversary of St. Dominic

“Do not weep, my children, I shall be more useful to you where I am going than I have ever been in this life. I thank God who has preserved me in perfect virginity to this day. Have charity, guard humility, keep voluntary poverty.” He fell asleep in Christ on August 6, 1221, at Bologna

Contents

1. Message from the Provincial
- Sr. Deepa Moonjely OP
2. Editorial - Sr. Daisy Rose Peenikaparamban OP
3. Encounter with a Pioneer Missionary
- Sr. Godlima Kullu OP
4. Homecoming of First Indian Dominican Sister of the Presentation- Sr. Josmary Mookan
5. Memories of Jeevadharma
- Sr. Josephin Kuruthukulangara OP
6. The Footprints of the First Mission in India - Sr. Annamma John Attathichirayil OP
7. Bring God to People and people to God
- Sr. Lisa John Kadampattuparambil OP
8. Jeevadharma Girls Home Kuttikad
- Sr. Reena John Kanivayalil OP
9. Archanashram to Dominican Ashram
- Sr. Ann Padinjakkara OP
10. Dream Fulfilled through the Creche
- Sr. Annie Maliekkal OP
11. Experience of Ashirwad, Truly a Blessing
- Sr. Elizabeth Mary Chakkiyath OP
12. “You did it to Me” (Mt.25:48b)- An Interview - Sr. Daisy Rose Peenikaparamban OP
13. Learning Corner
- Sr. P. Premalatha OP
14. They Welcomed us to their Heart
- Sr. Mary Joseph Urumpunkuzhiyil OP
15. Call within a call - Sr. Celine Parakadath OP
16. Dalmadhil - Dream of a New Horizon
- Sr. Lilly Chalackal OP
17. Rich Experience in the Poor Village
- Sr. Lilly Vadakineyath OP
18. The Sight of the Sea was Fantastic
- Sr. Jussina Pulikkottil OP
19. Accompany the Families-The need of the Hour - Sr. Vinitha Pazhukkathara OP
20. Call to International Mission is a Gift of Love - Sr. Rosy Karippai OP



Pope calls on Dominicans to be at forefront of renewed proclamation of the Gospel

Christian community, gathered around the apostles and faithful to their teaching (cf. Acts 2:42). At the same time, his zeal for the salvation of souls led him to form a corps of committed preachers whose love of the sacred page and integrity of life could enlighten minds and warm hearts with the life-giving truth of the divine word.

Dominic's great call was to preach the Gospel of God's merciful love in all its saving truth and redemptive power. As a student in Palencia, he came to appreciate the inseparability of faith and charity, truth and love, integrity and compassion

In this year that marks the eight hundredth anniversary of Saint Dominic's death, I gladly join the Friars Preachers in giving thanks for the spiritual fruitfulness of that charism and mission, seen in the rich variety of the Dominican family as it has grown over the centuries. My prayerful greetings and good wishes go to all the members of that great family, which embraces the contemplative lives and apostolic works of its nuns and religious sisters, its priestly and lay fraternities, its secular institutes and its youth movements.

Dominic responded to the urgent need of his time not only for a renewed and vibrant preaching of the Gospel, but, equally important, for a convincing witness to its summons to holiness in the living communion of the Church. In the spirit of all true reform, he sought a return to the poverty and simplicity of the earliest

May the Order of Preachers, now as then, be in the forefront of a renewed proclamation of the Gospel, one that can speak to the hearts of the men and women of our time and awaken in them a thirst for the coming of Christ's kingdom of holiness, justice and peace!

May the celebration of the Jubilee Year shower an abundance of graces upon the Friars Preachers and the entire Dominican family, and usher in a new springtime of the Gospel. With great affection, I commend all taking part in the Jubilee celebrations to the loving intercession of Our Lady of the Rosary and your patriarch Saint Dominic, and cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of wisdom, joy and peace in the Lord.

(excerpt gathered from Pope Francis Letter to Dominicans on the occasion of 800th death anniversary of St. Dominic)



St. Dominic formed an order of preachers. "It is not what we do. It is who we are. Mission is not what we do. It is who we are. And if that is clear, everything will just follow. We are preachers even when we are not preaching. We are preachers even if in our old age, we can no longer speak. We are preachers even if we are not ordained. We are preachers even if we are sick. We are preachers even if we are doing serious research alone in our rooms. We are preachers when we are helping the less privileged. We are preachers. That is our identity."

Br. Gerard Francisco Timoner III OP - Master General



Encounter with a Pioneer Missionary



Sr. Godlima : - You are one of the pioneers in the province to join the congregation, how did you feel when you were preparing yourself to go to an unknown place, people, language and culture?

Sr. Rose Mary: I always considered my vocation to our congregation as a “work of Providence.” It was not at all in my plan to join a congregation which had no branches in India. At the time when I was finishing the high school, many girls were going to Europe, mainly to Italy and Spain to join the congregations there. Some of my friends also were among those who went abroad. As they were getting ready to go, they asked me also to join them. But going abroad was not in my plans at all. I had been following the missionary works of the Sisters of Mary Immaculate (Krishnanagar Sisters, as they were known) with keen interest and I had planned to join them when I finished the 10th class. But when my brother told me about Fr. Claude and that he was searching for girls who wanted to be religious in a congregation in USA, I felt that God had a plan for me other than what I had in mind.

The Lord said to Abram “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land I will show you.” (Genesis 12: 1) The call of Abraham was followed by a promise of blessing. At the time I was only aware of the call but the blessing aspect was surely to follow. It was certainly a call to leave the country, my kindred and my father’s house to go to an unknown place, people, language and culture. I was a very shy person. So, it was not only unimaginable to take a step to go to an unknown land and people, but also against my nature. But the Lord called and I said ‘yes’ without really thinking what it will involve. It was a leap into the unknown. I must say that if the Lord calls you for something, he will give you the grace to fulfill it.

Sr. Godlima: Were your parents happy to send you to a distant land, when you had many local congregations around your place?

Sr. Rose Mary: The happiness of their children was what my parents wished. They were people very close to the Lord and there were a few religious in the family. So allowing me to become a religious was not very difficult for them. But when my mother asked Fr. Claude, when we will be able to come back, he told her, “You send her as if she will never come back.” For my mother, to think that she may not see me again was too much, and she started to cry, but did not prevent me from going. My father was more adventurous and stronger and accepted my leaving with serenity.

Sr. Godlima: What inspired you to take this daring step, to answer to God’s call?

Sr. Rose Mary: The desire to become a religious grew in me from young age. I wanted to be a missionary in the north of India to bring many to Jesus. It was instilled in me through my reading of the magazines like “Prekshithakeralam” (Missionary Kerala) which reported the work of the missionaries from Kerala. My brother Fr. Sebastian encouraged me to read the lives of the saints and missionary magazines. He provided me with a lot of reading materials. I believe that the Lord used all these means to help me to take the daring step. As to where, what, how and when were all His, to plan out.

Sr. Godlima: You did not have any connection / contact with your family while in USA. ?

Sr. Rose Mary: I was in USA from 1966 to 1973; 3 years for Postulancy and Novitiate and 4 years of professional study. Our contact with the family was through letters. We were allowed to write to the family once a month. There was no possibility for phone calls. My brother Antony was



very good at letter writing. He used to give me the detailed news of the family, of the village, of the farm and property etc. I used to wait for his letters. When Sr. Marie Ascension and Sr. Mary Patricia came to India in 1967, to study the possibility for starting a community In India, they visited our families and brought us a lot of news from Home.

Sr. Godlima: What was your first mission? How did you feel when you were sent for mission for the first time after profession?

Sr. Rose Mary: My first assignment after Profession was to St. Anne's Hospital Community. And my mission was to study to prepare myself as a Medical Technologist to work in the future dispensary in Kuttikad. St. Anne's was a community of many sisters, both young and old. A few sisters were in the infirmary, many sisters worked in the hospital and others were students. I enjoyed the community. I tried my best to be of service to the sisters. I went to Bristol Community College for the first 2 years and continued in SMU (South-eastern Massachusetts University) to finish my course in Medical Technology. I was not a very hard working student. I was happier to do chores in the community than to apply myself for study. While studying, every day some time was spent in the hospital to collect blood from the patients or from donors as part of my mission. Cleaning the autopsy room every day after the postmortem also was part of my mission which was not very pleasant but done with love as an act of obedience.

Sr. Godlima: Can you share with me some outstanding experiences in your prayer life?

Sr. Rose Mary: I do not have any outstanding experience of prayer to share. I do not consider myself a very spiritual person. Over the years I believe I have become closer to the Lord. I am convinced that God loves me though I am imperfect. Many small conversions have transformed me in many areas of my life, and still much more to be transformed to become what the Lord wants me to become. Even though I do not believe that "Work is my prayer," I do believe "work also is my prayer". I have a strong faith in the Holy Spirit. I always prayed to the Holy Spirit for guidance and strength. He has helped me to make the right decisions in my life. In moments of confusion and

uncertainties I always turned to him and I have experienced his tangible presence and His light.

Sr. Godlima: You were appointed as superior and regional superior in your younger age. What gave you courage to be a committed sister, to accept and do this service at that age?

Sr. Rose Mary: The fact that I was appointed as superior and Regional superior in my younger age, was part of the package that I was one of the pioneers. I remember that it was the day after our Perpetual Profession that Mother Marie St. Therese, then superior general, told me that Sr. Patricia needed to be freer to do other responsibilities and so she was asking me to take up the responsibility of animating the community. I felt very much unprepared. I went to Sr. Marina and asked her how I can prepare myself to be a good superior. She told me, "You do not prepare yourself now to be a 'good superior'; ever since you joined the congregation, you were learning to be a good sister of the Presentation. That is the preparation you need to be a good superior." Whether as Superior of the community or as Regional superior, I always tried to remember Sr. Marina's words of wisdom. I do not believe that I was able to do justice to what was asked of me; but I tried to do my best. During the moments of failures, my Lord used even my crooked lines to write straight. As I mentioned earlier, the courage came from the Holy Spirit to whom I turned at all moments.

When Sr. Ines Mercedes Mejia asked me to take up the responsibility as Regional Superior, my Aphthavakyam (Motto) was "Unless the Lord builds the house, we labor in vain". I was convinced of it. In the letter to the Region, Sr. Ines had reminded us that it was our responsibility to make of the congregation in India truly Presentation and truly Indian. This was a real concern for me during those beginning years. I hope that we have succeeded in this effort to a certain extent.

Sr. Godlima: What are the challenges you have faced in the different stages of your religious life?

Sr. Rose Mary: The challenges I faced in my life is mainly the ordinary, everyday demands of living faithfully the commitment I have made to the Lord. One main challenge that I faced was before my first renewal. I had to really decide wheth-



er I want to continue my religious life or not. It was a time of 'Exodus' from religious life. In the aftermath of Vatican Council, many religious were leaving the congregations. Many of our young sisters in the US, with whom I lived, left the congregation one by one. Reading all kinds of books and watching movies also had distracted me from my focus of living my religious life faithfully. So when the time for renewal came, it was a big question mark for me: "Do I really want to continue as religious?" I took time to pray and reflect and received some wise counsel from my superiors and I was able to make a firm decision. I learned, then, how important it is to make the right choices in the material I read or watch and how they affect my life. I continued to read a lot; but made sure they were constructive, not destructive. I have never questioned my vocation ever since and I am grateful to my superiors who helped me through those uncertain moments. God has been very gracious and compassionate to me all through my life. He never placed before me challenges which he knew I would not be able to handle and for those everyday issues He was there with me. I never felt left alone.

Sr. Godlima: When you look at your past 50 years, which ministry did you enjoy the most?

Sr. Rose Mary: Actually, I have enjoyed all the missions that was entrusted to me. A very big part of my life I have been at the service of the sisters. I was very happy to be involved in community services. Building happy communities was my priority. I may not have succeeded always; my idiosyncrasies have often come in the way but I have tried. My life in Varadium and Dalmadih and the ministry in Jeevadhara Family Renewal Centre in Kuttikad are ever etched in my memory.

Sr. Godlima: Being a pioneer with a lot of life experiences, what message would you like to give to the young sisters?

Sr. Rose Mary: I remember reading a post in whatsapp; "the river before you, can be touched only once". The water moves on, every drop mixes with others; it will be never the same. Faithfulness to the moment is very important. The same opportunities will never come again in our way. We should not miss those precious opportunities. It means we have to be radically committed to the

Lord at every moment. We should never miss any occasion to do good, to be truthful, transparent, selfless and self-giving. Our response to the call we have received, does not depend on others' responses. The call you and I have received is unique and the Lord gifts us with the graces we need. When we fall, He gives us the grace to get up again. He never gives up on us. Constitutions tells us, "Everyday choose Christ anew".

Sr. Godlima: What drastic changes do you see in Religious-life from 20th century to present era?

Sr. Rose Mary: We made our profession in the congregation in the post- conciliar era. The years of my religious life is coincided with the great changes in the church and in religious life after Vatican II. Surely there have been drastic changes from before the Vatican II to our times. It has affected every sphere of our life; life style, community life, prayer life, ministry... But what is essential continues to be the same; only the accidentals have changed. For our congregation, the challenge has been to stay open to the new realities of the world, without diluting the charism and the values of the gospel.

Sr. Godlima: What contribution would you like to give for your future generation?

Sr. Rose Mary: Let us make a gift of our life to the Lord who has called us to be His own. He deserves our best. He deserves a total and radical gift of our being. It is worth the trouble.

Godlima: Thank you very much dear Sr Rose Mary for sharing your vocation journey, it is really prophetic experience. I am really inspired by your sharing. I appreciate you your hard work and daring to go to U S A specially to help in the hospital and withstanding the challenges in life. You are still energetic and enthusiastic to do things at this age too. I thank you for your profound sharing and giving us a message that continues to resound in my ears to **say "yes" to the Lord and choose Christ anew everyday of our life.**

**Sr. Godlima Kullu OP
Indiranagar, Bangalore**



Home coming of First Indian Dominican Sister of the Presentation



In 1971, month of May, I was in the 'Heights' in the new provincial house. One fine morning, Sr. Marie Ascension, the Provincial, called me to give me some good news. She told me "I have good news for you; you are going back to India."

I was extremely happy; it was more than good news. On May 26th I left for France to know the Mother house. I had a long visit with Mother General, Mother Therese Des Anges, who talked to me like a loving mother. Then I met Mother Agnes Dominique, the first Dominican Sister of the Presentation whom Fr. Claude met. She took me to visit many places. On June 8th I left for India and reached Kuttikad at night with Sr. Patricia and Sr. Mary Claire who met me at the airport. A small, old house, with one small bedroom, having one bed in each corner. Sr. Patricia showed me a black looking kitchen. There was a kerosene stove with a black wick, on a stool. Next to the bedroom was a tiny room with a sewing machine, with three old chairs. There was a small window there, which opened to the cowshed. The window was always kept closed because of the mosquitoes. Then I was told that I can go to bed. Sr. Patricia showed me my bed, on the left side corner, Sr. Marie Claire on the right corner and Sr. Mary Patricia on the left corner. I was so tired and slept immediately.

Next morning we got up. Sr. Marie Claire began to boil water on the kerosene stove. Sr. Patricia set a small table near the kitchen door, with corn serial, bread, and butter. Water took a long time to boil.

Every day we said our morning office in the small room, next to the cow shed. After that we walked to the church for the morning mass. On the left small wing of the church, they had put two big pews and a small pew in the middle. Some people used to say we looked like the

Holy family. Many people called me 'Malayalee sister' and used to express their joy to speak with me in Malayalam. In the evening, around 5 pm we used to go to the church to make visit to the Blessed Sacrament. Since it was monsoon season, we used to put black raincoats and boots. Some children used to say when they see us, 'the Soldiers are coming.'

After the breakfast, Sr. Mary Claire's duty was to clean the stove. Daily we had to cut and clean the wick, which was very black. It only burns like a candle flame. Our next job was giving bath to two cute looking puppies, Kim, and Kem, in a big basin. There were many water filled buckets in the kitchen, which, one Devessy chat-ten had collected from the neighbor's house. We had a small bathroom outside the house. We had no worries about cooking the food for lunch, since we had bread, butter, canned meat or fish for the lunch daily. Once in a while we boiled some potatoes.

Every morning we went to the construction site where the Doctor's quarters was in progress where we were about to move in. The construction of the convent also was going on. We stayed there a while looking at everything. Then Sr. Patricia and Sr. Marie Claire went back to the house. Sister would ask me to stay there some more time, in case the workers had something to ask. Daily, the Supervisor and his assistant came. Often our Engineer, Mr. Lonappen came to check the construction.

Life was not very easy. We had a hard time to get cement. All three of us went to Coimbatore with Mr. Thomas Pengiparamben to order for cement. Another time Mr. Thomas took us to meet A.C George one of the ministers, to request him for steel. It worked out. And trucks of cement and steel began to come. Sometimes it reached during the midnight. Before it got to the construction point, usually it got stuck in the mud or before the hill when it comes through Thumbacode. Often they came to callus and get in to a big fight saying that they did not



know that they had to go up such a hill with their heavy load. We used to have hard times. In times of misunderstandings difficulties I used to say 'God sees everything.'

Fr. Claude often came to meet us. Once when he came with my brother, we went to see the digging of the well at the end of our property, where we have the government hospital now. They were making a big pond like pit, but could not find water. So many workers were digging there. Sr. Patricia asked "Which company is digging the well?" My brother very seriously said "Koren & Co". We laughed, but Sr. Patricia thought it was a famous company.

Every Monday, we went to either to Thrissur or to Cochin by Taxi for shopping. Sr. Marie Claire took care of the house. When we went to Thrissur, we met Fr. Claude and then went to meet the Theresian Carmalites sisters in the Latin convent. They were very dear to us because before going to the States it was with them that we stayed while attending Classes in Calvary Ashram. When Sr. Marie Ascension and Sr. Patricia came to India in their first visit and also when Sr. Patricia and Sr. Marie Claire arrived on February 25, 1971 the sisters were very helpful and gracious and accommodated them in their community until they moved to Kuttikad to this small house. When we went to Cochin, after the shopping we met the sisters at St. Theresa's College run by the same Carmelites sisters and after lunch and after a small nap we went back to Kuttikad.

Those days we bought one and half cent land from Karippai Jacob Master to dig a well. There was a small pit with so much water which was cleaned by the workers. There was a lot of fish in it. Sr. Patricia wanted me to stay and supervise the work. They made a good well with walls around it. It was full of water at that time. One day when I was going to Kuttikad church, a priest was looking for our Dominican convent. That was our Fr. C. J Sebastian. I brought him to our old small house. Thus I met the first Indian Dominican Priest.

Life was not very easy. The work of the Doctors quarters was almost finishing. On Au-

gust 2nd we invited Fr. Claude, Mr. Lonappen our Engineer, Mr. Menon our Supervisor, Mr. Thomas, for a lunch. You can imagine what all things I can make on our kerosene stove!!! I cooked some rice which took about two hours, and tried to fry some coconut to make sambar. But did not work out. So I took it to Lilly's (now Sr. Ann) house which was close by, to fry the coconut, and made sambar. Lilly helped me a lot. We also fried Papadam there. That is my first cooking in the first community. Fr. Claude asked while they were having lunch in the kitchen, who made this dry sambar? He doesn't know how much I suffered to make that! That day we were giving sent off for Sr. Mary Claire because she was to return to the United States on August 5th. The same day we moved everything to the Doctor's quarters. In the morning of August 3rd, the Community moved to the new house. The rooms were full of paint. We started to clean and rub the paint off from the floor. By 10.30 we were fully exhausted, had not eaten anything. The three of us sat on the front door step, very tired. I went to the small tea shop which was in the front, and bought three glasses of tea and appam which we ate happily and started the cleaning again. Then came our Kochannie (now Sr. Annie Maliekal) to help us. Thanks be to God! August 4th was the feast of St. Dominic those days. August 5th we accompanied Sr. Mary Claire to the Cochin airport. Fr. Claude also came with us. And Marie Claire left us... I was so grateful to her for her companionship. May God reward her for her silent and humble sacrifice. Then it was a community of just Sr. Patricia and me.

We had bought an electric stove and began to boil potatoes, rice and tomatoes for our lunch and supper. Every morning I used to go to teach the children from Canal side under a tree. Most of my children were naked; a few had trousers. During the class some of them used to jump in to the canal water. I taught the alphabets and so many songs and to count till 50. That was my first teaching experience. For the graduation ceremony, I distributed so many old clothes from the United States which Sr. Patricia had given me.

One afternoon we got a bad news that one of our workers got bitten by a snake. They took him to the government hospital in Chalakudy.



Thanks be to God, he got better. In the Doctors quarters we made the front small room a visitor's room. Later on we made it a chapel. The assistant parish priest celebrated mass for us twice a week. We had bought some pots and pans. One lady Thressia from Kuttikad was called to cook for us daily, till 4, o' clock. One day she boiled potatoes in the new hot case. When I came to the kitchen the hot case was melting. She thought it was a cooking pot.

One day Sr. Patricia, told me Sr. John of the Cross (Sr. Dorothy) will be coming on August 27th. We were so happy. On 27th we went to the airport with Fr. Claude. Then the community became three again. We had good times and a lot of fun. A teacher began to come to teach Sr. John Malayalam. Few days after Sr. John had to go to the mission hospital in Thrissur to practice her Midwifery. She used to come on weekends. After two months she came for good. In the evening, we used to fool around in the property. We used to climb on the wall and run around and jump down from the wall. We had great fun. Sometimes Sr. Patricia had hard time with us, with the silly things we did. Sr. John went to work in Little Flower Hospital, Angamali, for some time. For weekends she used to come home. We had a nice Christmas celebrations. I decorated the dining room wall and made a small crib, with my humble art. Carmelite sisters came to wish us for Christmas.

On June 6, 1972, I renewed my vows for 26 months, in our small chapel in the Doctor's quarters since I was going to study in Pastoral Orientation Center at the end of the month, for two years. Rev. Fr. Athanasius OFM cap came to celebrate the mass. I am grateful to the Lord for giving me the strength and courage to accept His call. In every challenge and difficulties of that year, I often said 'everything will pass away, only God is changeless.' Yes, 50 years went by; and many, many sisters came and went serving the Lord. Now we are in the Golden Jubilee year 2021

**Sr. Jos Mary Mookan OP
Indiranagar, Bangalore**

Memories of Jeevadhara



My memories of Jeevadhara began in October 1975, when I returned from Dighton, U S A after my 7 years of life with our sisters there after a short time in France, at the La Breteche, Tours.

I remember with gratitude the life and mission with Sr. Mary Patricia and Sr. John, in the early years of my mission in India in Jeevadhara, Kuttikad. Before I went home I was told that I will be responsible for the social centre so I told those who asked me what I will be doing I said social work....while I was home I had the surprise to meet Sr. Patricia in the bus, while travelling with my mother. The joy and excitement Sr. Patricia had to meet a Dominican Sister in the bus first time was beyond imagination for my mother. Sr. Patricia is very expressive of her emotions. When I returned from home my mission had a U turn since there were some issues in the community. I was told to take care of the nursery in the parish which we were responsible. Since there were major issues regarding the person in charge, it was not functioning. So I began this challenge of educating the young which is the beginning of my education ministry for the past many years in different places. Thanks to Sr. Patricia for her far vision in our Indian mission, one of the Charism of Blessed Marie Poussepin.

Missionary zeal was not easy in the beginning mission. We began a new community in St. Dominic Sadan to work in Carmel School, Chalakudy and to have accommodation for few working women with us. I can never forget the days with Sr. Patricia cleaning that house scrubbing the floor on our knees and how the sisters from the neighboring convent came to see us etc...I got a teaching post in one of the aided schools which is far from Kuttikad. So, Monday



I would leave from Kuttikad to school, spent the week in Chalakudy community come back Friday evening to the community. Saturday classes for the Aspirants, Sunday catechism in the substation of the parish "Moithirakkanny" and after noon Catholic Relief Services programme, distribution of food for the poor. Monday will go back to school. There was energy and enthusiasm to do that with the grace of God. This was the chance to live the motto "Love through service" to the full.

Recreation in the community is a weekly observance. Sr. Mary Patricia loves to sing Ave Maria solo and in high pitch. Since our house is on the top of the hill the echo will be heard in the whole village of Kuttikad. So when she begins Sr. John will be the first one to run to close the windows of the community room. The laughter which followed will be a real recreation. The good old days of sharing of life with joy can never be forgotten.

Sr. John is a nurse cum mid wife. In order to be effective in the healing ministry which was our main mission in Kuttikad, she took trouble to learn the language, Malayalam, which is not easy but she succeeded to be able to communicate with the patients. Though she was a joyful and fun loving person she had her values. I remember once she was doing night duty and it is told not to speak after 10pm in the ward. But our women are good in talking still they fall asleep. Sister was disturbed and concerned about the sick so she came and told them not to speak "samsarikaruth" but they continued. She came second time and reminded again. But third time she came instead of telling them she called them out to the main door opened the

lock and put them out. She told them in Malayalam, I told you once, twice and third time" out". They finally understood the seriousness of their mistake and their responsibility.

When Sr. Dorothy takes you out for some work it is with a purpose. Next time she will ask you to go alone and do it. I am grateful to her because one becomes responsible to take up the responsibilities. Sr. Patricia also is like that because she has taught me to claim my actions. Once she asked me did you make your commitments in condition that you will live if others live it?? I have kept that in my life because I know the purpose of my coming to religious life is to please my God alone. Many times when I face difficult situations I recall what she said to me in my younger days. There are many moments we shared together in that first community in India is in my heart. The visits of Rev.Fr. Claude OFM Cap to the Jeevadhara community are times of joy and sharing. We can never forget their contributions which gave strong foundation to Indian mission for the past 50 years. May the compassionate Lord reward them.

There are many many memories in my heart but it is not possible to pen them all. May we continue to cherish the dedicated missionary zeal of the beginners and make it our own to impart it to the coming generations to bring to fruition the vision of Blessed Marie Poussepin in our Indian soil.

**Sr. Josephine op
Karehally, Shimoga**



The Footprints of the First Mission in India



Jeevadhara Convent was started in 1972 in Kuttikad about 10 km away from Chalakudy town in Thrissur Dt. The very next year, sisters began Jeevadhara Hospital. Even though People of the area insisted of having a huge hospital like Vellore, sisters started a small

15 bedded hospital with outreach programmes. It was a great necessity of that time since there were no other medical facilities in several interior Villages. Since there were no road facilities, transportation also was difficult.

In the medical care facilities besides curative aspect, we adapted preventive methods and other holistic approaches. We gave lot of importance for the outreach programmes, such as mobile clinics, free medical Camps for the tribal's and the poor of the area, CRS programmes, House visiting etc.

Preventive Methods

We believed " Prevention is better than cure". Besides giving medical care in Jeevadhara hospital, we were going to the surrounding interior Villages to give Vaccination especially for the Children, polio and Triple. At the same time, we were giving health talks about cleanliness, giving good nutritious and balanced diet. Fifty years ago Kuttikad was economically backward as well as people were uneducated. Poor people even used to go hungry. With the help of the Diocese we were able to start CRS Programme (Catholic Relief Service). We had 600 beneficiaries and so were helping all these Children and families. It was a great help for the Children and families. They are very grateful to us even today.

House Visiting

Since Jeevadhara Hospital was small, we were able to relate to all the People of the Villages through house visiting. We also wanted to make sure

that they make use of the food we give through CRS programme. The long walks by foot to far away Villages like Pulinkara, Chaippankuzhy are still live memories. Once as we were going to a far away village and had to walk through paddy field. There was a small bridge to cross over and Sr. Mary Dominic was frightened to pass through this bridge. All of a sudden, I saw her crawling through the bridge. Even though I was laughing seeing her, I admired her determination to cross over to the other side. I am sure many of our sisters, Novices and Postulants were faithful to this Mission.

Mobile Clinic

During those days the road facilities were beyond description and so there were no Vehicles due to this People were unable to come to the hospital. The Seriously ill Patients were brought to the hospital by the Armchair. So sisters with the help of our Doctor and staff started to go to different villages to conduct Mobile clinics once a week. People of the interior villages were happy to get the treatment in their own places therefore they were grateful to the sisters for the service.

Free Medical Camps

About 20 kms away from Jeevadhara, near Athirappally and Vazhachal,(water fall), there were tribal's with no medical facilities at all. The Lion's Club and Doctor from Jeevadhara took up the responsibility of conducting free medical Camps in these areas once in a month. Besides having our own Doctor, Lion's Club also used to bring Doctors and sample Medicine. Sisters were happy to do this service in this rural and hilly area with beautiful scenery and waterfall. The tribal's were happy with our services. Thanks to the lion's club for their generosity.

We the Dominican sisters of the Presentation through Jeevadhara hospital with the help of our Doctors and Staff have given Medical Services to the surrounding villages from 1973



to 1989. Until now all the financial support was given to us from our sisters in USA. We are always grateful to them for their hard work and support. We remember with gratitude especially Sr. Ascension, Sr. Patricia and Sr. Dorothy. We were unable to continue this Mission, due to various reasons. With much reflection and study, finally we closed the hospital in 1989. After this, sisters prayed much and God gave us the Mission of starting the poor Girls' home and later on Couples' retreat in J.F.R.C.

In spite of the great difficulties and Challenges they had to face, our pioneer sisters Sr. Patricia and Sr. Dorothy selected the hilly and rural Village of Kutikad for their Mission work,

through the instrument of Fr. Claude. Trusting in the Divine providence, the two American sisters started their Mission in Kuttikad. The ministries both in the hospital and outreach programmes had to depend on the help of God and the support of the Community. The village people were loving and simple. They accepted us and appreciated our work. I am sure all our sisters of that time were looking forward to come to Kuttikad and be part of this Mission. I believe it was the plan of God and our Mother Foundress to start our Mission in Kuttikad rather than a developed and more convenient area.

**Sr. Annamma John Attathichirayil OP
Varadium, Thrissur**

Bring God to People and People To God



....was the cry of that time, 1972 when Jeevadhara first took root in Kuttikad. Many families were migrated families who were struggling to meet their end. Few families were organized farmers who had land. The others were laborers working in their owner's field. They got either produce or very little cash. So poverty and misery was prevailing to say the least. Children and pregnant mothers were not getting any care at all. No immunization no balanced diet. It is at this scenario Jeevadhara came to their mind as a beacon of hope.

Jesus went up to the mountain to be in communion with the father. This is what I thought as a young sister of 22 when I saw people coming up to the mountain top of Jeevadhara to receive what we then called CRS food. At this point of time, the Diocese of Irinjalakuda selected Jeevadhara as a center to distribute CRS food to the poor. (Oil, milk powder, nutritious flour to make bread) The programme was for 600 hundred beneficiaries. It was a total package for pregnant women and children up to 5 years.

We offered not only food but health checkup for mothers, care for the children including immunization, checking weight, education on how to live a physical, mental, moral, spiritual, balanced life believing that prevention is better than cure.

Our pioneer sisters Patricia and Dorothy, who had a heart for the poor, accepted the offer of the diocese with an open heart. Since the number of beneficiaries was 600 hundred, we had the privilege of touching the heart of 600 poor families. Regular visit to their families on foot created a bond between them and us. A close monitoring of the children who were below 5 resulted in decreased children mortality rate. A regular check up for mothers resulted in promoting safe deliveries. The programme had well planned system to monitor checkups and immunization.

Before I get into the core of the programme I cannot but to proclaim the love, dedication and faithfulness of our pioneer sisters. When the first and third Sunday comes the joy and the eagerness of our first sisters had to meet the poor was commendable. Especially I remember Sr. Ascension who was waiting for them as if she is waiting for God to come in. I bow my head before her for the love she has for



the poor and her love of work. This is very true with Sr. Patricia and Dorothy. I say this because they are the personalities who were my initial life teachers. May be all this changed Lisa who knew only to eat and sleep into a hard working Lisa. Hats off before them.

Well, let me step into the CRS programme. As I mentioned about the number of beneficiaries, we had 600 which is the highest number given from the Diocese of Irinjalakuda. Present garage was our distributing point. The time was 1PM the hottest time of the day. We can see from the hill Top, Ocean of mothers coming from four side of our hill carrying their children and the bags to take their ration. Some used to walk more than 6 KM to reach our place. That is not a matter for them when they get food for the whole month. Those years were not like the present. Starvation was great. Government ration was only a fixed amount. It was in this times Jeevadhara was a source of support for their daily living.

It was not only food that we supplied for the body, but enough knowledge for their mind and God for their lives. Sr. Dorothy was the pioneer for this idea that if 'you teach a mother you teach the whole family'. She educated the mothers in spite of her language barrier about the preparation of nutritious food as well as Natural family planning. One of our sisters used to show them how to prepare nutritious food from what they got from Jeevadhara. When they hear about balanced diet the poor people thought that it was not possible for them. So we wanted to convince them that it is possible and things are at their reach. Some Sisters had an interesting idea to portray this visually by putting up a human figure using different vegetables that are very cheap and

easily available. An exhibition was put up for everyone depicting it through a human figure made up of vegetables and leaves, at the same time some prepared food with what they got from Jeevadhara and some of us explaining to the people the importance of this exhibition. People came walking from near and far from 9 AM to 5 PM. Simple people were so much in awe at our humble effort to teach them. There were neither sophisticated equipments nor visual aids to do all this. Sisters mind and heart, hands and feet put together we made the day something beautiful for God and our people This is how we brought people to God and God to the people. I cannot forget the community working together for all this common concern for our mission. I can proudly say that we are the pioneers for working from the grass root level for prevention of diseases and promotion of health. Our family visits on foot created ripples in the society. Indirectly we were bringing God to them and at evening we brought people to God. True we were very famous at that time among the poor people. It was truly what our mother foundress envisaged when she sent our first sisters to Kuttikad.

In modernity we sisters are caught up in the web of individualism and individually oriented success, difficulty to leave comfort zone and fall away from love of work has created faintness for our true vision of working for the common good. Though I have not lived with Marie Poussepin, I had opportunity to live with our pioneer sisters who taught me true love for the congregation through our community living, mission and hard work.

Sr. Lisa John Kadampattuparambil OP
Varadium, Thrissur



“When divisions arise or lines of fracture become manifest in a community on account of differences in conviction or persuasion, then it is time to pause and conscientiously consider whether adherence to such divisive convictions is truly done in God’s name and reveals Christ’s presence in their midst.”

Br. Gerard Francisco Timoner III OP - Master General



Jeevadhara Girls Home, Kuttikad



As the presence of presentation comes to the golden year, it is very joyful to look back to the years; the Lord led us through ups and downs. I joined Kuttikad community in the year 1998, just after three years of my first profession, I was a person, noticed by all, while I was doing TTC because, I belonged to an international community. But one thing, I was surprised that I was ignorant about the missions of our house of Jeevadhara, while many others knew better than me.

Slowly the question that they used to ask me "What are you doing in Kuttikad?" became a pain for me, since I knew those days there was no running ministries in the house with a huge building. And I knew how hard it could have been for our dear sisters also to face the same question especially the ones who were members of the community at that time. For sure the Lord gave an answer to our deep pain, prayer and discernment as we started the home for poor girls for education, called as Jeevadhara Girls Home, Kuttikad. I remember, it was in 2000, while I was walking back from the parish after Eucharist with a great visionary Sr. Annie Maliekal, telling her, if we could

start a home for poor girls as we have a home for boys nearby. Sr. Annie took much interest of it and adding to it Sr. Lisy Vithamattil, vibrant missionary took charge as superior of the house in the same year. Sr. Vimala Vadakumpadan being the provincial that time gave full support to the mission. It also was remarkable year as the first Indian sister Sr. Celine Kariattil to go to eternal rest.

I believe the grace of God, Prayers of many especially Sr. Celine made the way to open the home for girls in 2001 June. The girls in the first batch were 9 but few years after their roll strength came up to 36 too. Now with the new rules, number of children has come down but sure, we have about 20 girls. Almost 200 girls have completed their few years or full study from here. Girls come here with their own different stories of rejection, unwantedness even from their parents. There are many around the world who help us with this project with their prayers and financial support. We also remember with gratitude all those who have served this institution. May the Lord, who has begun this beautiful ministry may carry it on and let us trust in the divine providence of God as Marie Poussepin always did with all her ministries. May Mother Mary and St. Dominic be guardians to this great, life giving ministry.

Sr. Reena John Kanivayalil O.P.
Jeevadhara, Kuttikad

St. Dominic De Guzman



with the Tenacity of a Prophet...

Blessed Marie Poussepin





Archanashram To Dominican Ashram



When I started to reflect on what to write, the scripture passage came to my mind is Rom. 8:28-30 “we know all things work together for the good for those who love God who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His son in order that He might be the first born within a large family.”

Yes this passage comes true to me after a long time of waiting in patience to have a house as our own. We stayed in a rented house around 5-6 years. Sr. Mary Patricia and Sr. Dorothy were the pioneers of this community. The struggles and challenges of this mission were plenty. In the beginning of any mission we have to learn to do a lot of adjustments. It was beautiful to see how these two sisters were an example for living this mission of Jesus.

It was in 1976 June we started the formation house in Bangalore in a rented house at Cox town Charles Campell road. Our first novices were Sr. Vimala and Sr. Nirmala. They left Kuttikkad along with Sr. Mary Patricia and Sr. Dorothy to start the house. They arrived Bangalore the next day and got ready the rented house. We called it “Archanashram”. A place one is prepared to offer everything to the Lord. It was after few days Sr. Marina Mejhia arrived from USA to be the novice mistress.

To speak about the house, as we enter there is a big hall, which we divided into two parts, one side dining room and at night the other part became the bed room. The novices used the chairs to tie the mosquito net. In the same side we had a small room as our chapel. There was one common toilet on that side. In the other side there was a small room which Sr. Marina used as bed room cum office. There

was another common room were Sr. Dorothy and myself used. Those days we had two sisters studying in Martha’s Sr. Elizabeth Mary and Sr. Rose. When they come for their off days we slept on the floor. We didn’t have gas connection but used kerosene stove for cooking. For ironing our cloths we used charcoal iron box. It was not easy because it took long time to get it hot. I still remember getting the saree black because we buy the charcoal from Shivajinagar and in the auto with other things it was difficult to manage. Life was very challenging. As a young sister I learned to live with minimum. We had to wait for water just like ordinary people with all the containers ready. I remember one time we did not get water for a few days. So we went to the next house to draw water from the open well next house. We even took meals in the leaf, so that we didn’t use water to clean them. Everything was a challenge.

By this time we changed our habit into saree. It is in Bangalore we started first wearing the saree. The first one to change into saree were Sr. Mary Patricia, Sr. Dorothy Sr. Marina and myself. We were belonging to St. Francis Xavier Cathedral but for daily mass we went to Ascension church by walking. It took as 20 minutes to walk. Sr. Dorothy was teaching in Martha’s as a tutor. She had a loona which she used to go up and down. Sr. Mary Patricia was in Kuttikkad, she will come once in a while only to Bangalore.

Mean time we were looking for a house. We were not sure whether to buy the land or to build the house. One day we went to see a house in Davis road not far from Charles Campell Road which is the present provincial house of SDB fathers. We liked the house but there was no land. Sr. Patricia wanted some land for the sisters. Life went on, we were constantly praying for this intention.

Sr. Marina’s ill health didn’t permit her to stay in India but had to go back to USA. Sr. Reetha came back from Rome after her studies and took over the novice Mistress. Sr. Vimala and Nirmala made their profession in saree



before Sr. Marina left. Mean time we heard that good shepherd sisters are having some land for sale. If don't sell it government will take it. So we rushed to see the land. We decided to buy 4 ½ acres of land. Soon we started the construction. As soon as one wing of the building was ready we moved to that. We called it "Dominican Ashram", 80 Feet Road at Indiranagar. There was no electricity or water connection but we managed with kerosene lamps. We used to wash our dishes in the courtyard. At least one year we used this kerosene lamp because the KEB asked us a huge amount of bribe which Sr. Dorothy did not pay. She wanted to hold on to her values which was an inspiration for all of us. It took us long time to get settled with everything. We took one room as our chapel, another as class room. The present

noviciate kitchen was used as our kitchen.

Everything was going on smoothly, during the chapter at USA Sr. Dorothy was elected as provincial, but she was not in the chapter. So she had to leave immediately India and take over the chapter. Sr. Reetha took over the whole responsibility.

For me when I look back I see the Lord was walking with us guiding us all through these experiences. As a young sister this was a beautiful and challenging experience, with gratitude I remember Sr. Mary Patricia who worked tirelessly for the mission in India.

Sr. Ann Padinjakkara O P
Bangalore

A Dream come true through the Creche



It is with a lot of gratitude, satisfaction and sense of fulfilment I am writing these experiences of mine. I was always guided, cared and protected by my good Lord in my ministry in the crèche. Yes, the Lord used me as an instrument of His love, care and guidance to the poor children of the slums.

In 1992 when Sr. Shincy Joseph Kadampattuparambil and I used to visit the slums in Bangalore we became aware of the terrible situation of the slums which was heart-breaking. So many children were walking around without education, proper shelter, food and clothing. The children were left behind in the houses when the parents went for work. There were parents who gave sleeping pills for the children so that they will sleep until they come back. Some children were left with the goats and dogs. Others were cared by the elder siblings who themselves were deprived of their schooling. Our novices who used to go

for house visits also shared their experience of meeting these children. After a thorough study, discussion and meetings, we were able to identify some of the urgent needs in the neighbouring slums (ADE, Binnamangala, Old Byppanahally, New Byppanahally). We felt that starting a crèche for children from these slums was a priority; parents could leave their children in the crèche and go to work knowing that their children were in safe hands until they return from work. We started the creche in December 1992 with 50 children. The number increased as years passed.

Seeing the need for giving basic education for the children of the construction workers, a builder approached me and told me that he will build a creche by his own expense near Mayo Hall in 1994 with 40 children. As it proved beneficial for the children and helpful to the parents, we opened another satellite creche at Cunningham Road in July 1995 with 45 children. Those Crèches were discontinued as they were no longer needed. But the Crèche which we started in the Provincial House premises continues till today.



The children were brought to Maria Kirana Creche daily at 8 A.M. before parents went for their work as domestic help or daily labourers. The children were taught to read and write both Kannada and English as well as to sing rhymes and to tell stories. They were given milk and snacks daily. Midday meal is served at 11.30 am. After lunch the children used to sleep for about an hour. When they woke up they spent some time at play till their parents came to take them home.

Children who were of the age group of two and half to five years were given admission in the crèche. As we were struggling financially we were not able support all of them for their further schooling. When they were ready for 1st standard many of them took admission in other schools. But we took admission for the very poor children in the Resurrection school. We helped them to pay for the fees, books and uniform. I am truly grateful to the many benefactors who helped us generously. We called on the students from time to time to enquire about their studies and marks they received, and gave them instructions on moral and Christian values. We gave them medical check-up once in a while and medical help whenever was possible. Every year we celebrated Christmas with Creche and School going children. The benefactors were invited for the program on this occasion as a token of gratitude. The children put up the cultural programs and the children were given gifts, snacks and meal etc.

There were various experiences to learn from, to grow and to be grateful to the Lord. I used to go to many families seeking for help to start as well as to run the creche. I remember with gratitude many persons who gave their continuous support. When I wanted to send children above 5 years to school, many of them

did not have their birth certificate. I was told that if I approach the temple poojari, he will give the certificate. So I went to a temple. The poojari was surprised to see me sitting with the people. He came to me and we talked. I told him about my concern and he was very obliging and gave certificates for so many children.

. But I have had very negative experiences as well. Once when I approached a family, the man of the house was so angry and he even spat at me. I really got upset and was in tears. Later when I reflected on it, I was consoled to think that I had the same experience as that of Saint Mother Theresa who was spat at when she asked for help. It seems that she said to the man, "What you gave, I take it for myself; but now give something for my poor people".

It was very providential that the right time the resurrection school was opened and we were able to admit the 1st batch of children in 1995. School uniform, admission fees, books and bags, etc were sponsored by many benefactors. It truly was an experience of joy, satisfaction and fulfilment to be able to help these poor children from the slums. I was never worried about money; everything was provided by my Good Lord through His generous people. Yes, so many children came up in life with good jobs and brighter future. I Thank God for His marvellous and wonderful work and His providential care in my ministry. Many children and their parents are grateful to God and expresses their appreciation for the help we have offered them. I believe that through this ministry, I was able to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to these children, their parents and all those with whom I came into contact. All glory and praise to the Lord Jesus!

Sr. Annie Maliekkal OP
Bangalore



“Mission. Ite, missa est. Communion is ordered towards being sent, towards mission. One who receives holy communion is impelled to share, to bring Jesus to others. In like manner, our fraternal communion is always oriented beyond ourselves, towards mission, to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).”

Br. Gerard Francisco Timoner III OP - Master General



- Experience of Ashirwad, Truly a Blessing -



On August 1980, accepting the invitation of then Bp Abraham Viruthukulangara, Srs. Dorothy and Rose Mary went to visit the diocese of Khandwa. As part of their discernment process Srs. Dorothy and Jussina once again visited the diocese. Bishop gave them a warm welcome and showed them several villages and spoke to them about the possible apostolates. On August 12th, 1984, Sr. Rose Mary came with me and I stayed with SMMI sisters in Karpur to get to know the culture and language. Later Sr. Lilly Vadakeniyath joined me. In November, 1984 Sr. Rose Mary came with Sr. Mary Dominic to make a final plan for us to move to Dhulkot.

We three (Sr. Elizabeth Mary, Sr. Lilly and Sr. Philomina Pulikottle) of us arrived in Dhulkot on 18th December 1984. Srs. Rose Mary and Reetha accompanied us. The Parish Priest Fr. Tarsius Sunni and the people of the village with much pomp, ceremony, drums, dancing and plenty of garlands welcomed all of us. The C.R.S. storage godown was transformed as the temporary house for the us. Even though we moved in on December 18th, the official blessing was on 22nd January 1985. The house is named Ashirwad which means "blessing", a name with a Dominican Touch and with a prayer that the sisters' presence will really be a blessing for the people of Dhulkot.

We as the first sisters, our full attention was to get to know their culture, traditions, taboos and their needs. So we visited houses and the families around and as well as in far away villages. It helped us to figure out the purpose of our existence in the village.

Dhulkot is a small village situated in the district of Khandwa. (Now it's under Burhanpur. I do not know whether it was the same or not). The village is populated mainly of the

Tribes and Harijans. The population is around 5000. About 50% of people are farmers. Sarpanch is the head of the village. Harijans speak Nimmadi and Tribals speak Bilai. Though they live together they kept their tradition, belief and language precious.

Dhulkot has basic facilities like Government School up to 10th class, post Office, Government hospital, Forest office, Bank, Ration shop and few other shops. The villages enjoy transport facilities and electricity. Common wells and hand pumps are available for drinking water. In the hot summer Dhulkot struggled for drinking water.

The situation of the women is very backward. The literacy rate is very low. Most people are interested in cultivation than sending their children to school. The children are poorly educated. The parents send their children to forest to feed their cattle.

The sisters found themselves involved with health care, adult education, tuition for the school going students and sewing for women. The daily schedule was arranged in such way to be available for the people.

There were changes in community members and even parish priest changed. Fr. Tarsius Sunni was first Parish Priest and then Fr. Clement SVD. Adjustment in the living space, prayer, meditation, cooking, struggling with the language of the place, and all the limited facilities kept us united. In 1987, Health care program for Mothers started in collaboration with Catholic Relief Service and MCH program.

On June 13th, 1987 ground breaking and foundation stone was laid to build the house for the sisters. After much coaxing and hard work the construction of the house was completed and blessed on January 31st, 1988 in the presence of our beloved Bishop Abraham. Sr. Carole Mello, the Provincial counselor and Sr. Dorothy the Provincial from USA, Fr. Simon Roche Op, Fr. Thomas Ryan Op, fathers and sisters of the diocese were present on this great occasion. There



were novices and also aspirants at different occasions who came for community and mission experiences, were great help for the sisters and they returned with rich experiences of the Mission.

Bishop Abraham Viruthukulangara was a simple man with a great heart of a Shepherd. All the priests of the diocese were too good to each one of us and had great concern for our mission.

The days and months lived among the people enlightened us of the richness of the new culture and lifestyle of the people. This truly taught the us to take new ventures in this mission area. Dhulkot remained and ever remain a most loved mission in the hearts of all the sisters of the Presentation.

Sr. Elizabeth Mary Chakkiyath OP
Dalmadhiih, Jharkhand

“You Did It For Me.” (Mt.25.48b)



I recently had a chat with Sr Beena Raphael Parakkadath. Sr Beena is the Superior of Ashirvad Community of the Dominican Sisters of Presentation, in Dhulkot of Khandwa Diocese in Madhya Pradesh. She is a dynamic religious in the community that was

founded in 1985. She is a Nurse by profession. It was a joyful, fascinating conversation, and I thought you'd like to hear it.

Yes, our Lord fulfilled all what is entrusted to Him by His Father. His whole life was to "let Thy will be done". When He ascended to His Father, He entrusted us with the mission, (Mk: 16;15). Now it is our responsibility especially as religious. Sr. Beena I know that you are privileged to partake of His healing ministry. We would like to know how you see this aspect in your ministry where our Lord restored the wholeness of the person regardless of the illnesses she/he was in and also gained them to heaven. I am sure that you will be able to enlighten us with your rich experiences of your healing ministry.

Sr. Daisy: we will start with the very simple thing. What do you understand by "health ministry"?

Sr. Beena: Heath ministry is a ministry, where one take care of a patients who is sick not merely the physical illness but mental, physical, &

spiritual. In a way it is a holistic approach to life.

Sr. Daisy: Do you have any specific reason to choose health ministry? Or is it asked of you and now you love it?

Sr. Beena: I liked nursing. Our senior nurse sisters were also an inspiration for me.

Sr. Daisy: Can you share with us some good memories of your studies?

Sr. Beena: Study was not that easy, added to that those years few of our sisters those who were studying or working in the same institute left the congregation.

Sr. Daisy: How do you see yourself part of the health ministry of Jesus?

Sr. Beena: I feel very much that I partake in the healing ministry of Jesus. Many people every day eagerly wait for the health centre to be open. I realized that very many patients had been healed by my simple treatment & I never take credit on me but on God as St. Paul says I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me (2 Cor 12.8) Along with Mary I say Jesus has looked upon the humble servant, His grace flow through me to many sick & they regained their health.

Sr. Daisy: Do you find yourself different from a



lay nurse? How?

Sr. Beena: Yes, off course. In all the ministry we religious differ from others. Nurses are called "the Angels on earth" then what about the dedicated religious? I feel with the patients, I spend extra time with those who go through depression & loneliness. I bring all the patients to the Lord. I see Jesus' face in them. "Truly I tell you just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it for me." (Mt.25.48)

Sr. Daisy: Will you share with us some interesting yet challenging experiences of your varied places you have served?

Sr. Beena: Amala hospital working in an oncology department was very challenging experience. Patients undergoing chemotherapy & radiation were very painful to see especially the small children with leukemia. Patients pain & family members suffering s made me to raise my heart & mind to the Lord.

St. James hospital working as a night supervisor was very challenging. Night any critical case comes supervisor has to see to it. Many at a time I felt that I am holding the life of others in my hands like patients in ICU, accidents cases in emergency ward. Let me explain with a small incident where I could save a life. One day during mid night one auto came having a bleeding patient inside. Seeing the patient, we, all the night staff understood that it was a bike accident. No one was with the patient & patient was unconscious with head injury. Urgent CT scan was needed. Since patient was alone in a critical condition, I needed administrator's (fathers') permission to take the scan. I called him but he did not respond, then I told the doctor to carry on with the CT scan, I will see to it. Meanwhile we have taken blood for all the investigation. Patient needed urgent blood transfusion since he was bleeding added to that he has to undergo neuro surgery immediately. Our blood bank had no stock of the blood of the same blood group of the patient. I ran to Medical Intensive Care Unit which is in 3rd floor as I have seen many bystanders were waiting there for their beloved ones in Intensive Care Unit &

Child Care Unit. I told them someone please donate blood to save an accident patient. With my pleading to save the life few men came with me to donate blood, among them 2 were able to donate their blood for the unknown dying patient. Meanwhile hospital Pro had contacted his family members through the mobile which was with him, as soon as his relatives came, with their permission patient was taken for surgery. They paid for CT scan & advance for surgery. If I could wait for administrator's permission when the relatives come, they could take the dead body and gone home.

Sr. Daisy: I feel it's very much challenging for you to serve in so many different places, languages and cultures. Can you reflect what helps you to be an effective witness?

Sr. Beena: To serve in many places with different languages & culture was not a barrier for me to reach out to the patient. Love overcome all the barriers. Away from hospital set up to work in our dispensary was entirely different. Here I am everything. (I work as a doctor, nurse, pharmacist, accountant, then cleaner) all kinds of patients come from paediatric to geriatric. Patient come anytime of the day. Teaching them discipline was one of my aim but they in turn taught me that not too strict with discipline but strict with my call to discipleship- Ever ready to follow the master or ever ready to serve the master. I do fail to attend them when they come out of time but the constant reminder of the discipleship & the inner voice which push me out to attend them & when I do it what a peace of mind I have it otherwise what a disturbance I go through within myself.

Sr. Daisy: Last but the most important one, will you share how do you fulfil the mission, "proclaim the good news"?

Sr. Beena: I am very contented with my call as a religious, & my ministry as a health service to the sick & needy. A nurse can enter the life of a human being as a teacher, social worker, caretaker by meeting their physical, psychological & spiritual needs. Being with the people is the proclamation of good news. I take it as a privilege to work among the non-Christians where the val-



ues of Jesus are not preached but practiced, I just won't treat the patient with medicine alone, my gentle touch, listening ears, compassionate look, interesting conversation about their family members, visiting their families make them feel that I am interested in them as Jesus was interested in the poor & the outcast. Many ask me for rosary or cross, I made them aware that it is not fancy thing to wear & explained the meaning of it, & still they wanted to have it, by being convinced of their silent faith I have given the Rosary, Cross even Bible to read. Some patient wanted to pray over them & I have put my hand on their head and prayed to Jesus. By seeing the big Good Shepherd photo in the health centre many asked me why Jesus is carrying the sheep & it gives me the opportunities to directly proclaim about the love of God for the humanity.

Sr. Daisy: What advice do you have for young women that think they might be called to religious life?

Sr. Beena: "Let it be done to me according to your word." – Luke 1:38. These are Mary's words. Her response to God's invitation to be the Mother of Jesus. It's a beautiful prayer for us today and words we can say to the Lord now. Let it be done to me according to how you desire my life to be,

Lord. Let it be done to me according to the plan and story you've written for my life, Jesus. Let it be how you would like it to be, God. It's a prayer of abandonment to the Father's will and it's so sweet and precious to Him. Be patient with God's timing. Be patient with your discernment. Be patient. Don't be afraid to open your heart to the Lord. He is trustworthy. He is faithful. He is loving. He is unchanging. He is awesome. He is worth it. Also, you don't have to figure it out today. Be who you are meant to be now, as a student, a daughter, a friend, a mother. Stay close to Him and talk to Jesus daily. Deepen your friendship with Him. He wants to be with you and loves you as you are now. God will lead you. Trust Him, for He is trustworthy. Take courage.

Thank you dear Sr. Beena, for your sincere and spontaneous sharing. I know you shared from your heart. The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26) May you be an inspiration for many more.

**Sr. Daisy Rose Peenikaparamban OP
Jeevadhara, Kuttikad,**

Learning Corner



In the world of today computers have become very important part of daily life! Due to pandemic the laptops, mobiles and the electric devices have become part and parcel of our life.

Without them even a day doesn't pass by. Surely these gadgets have helped us in many ways and to finish our work within a short period of time.

Everyone likes to finish their responsibilities and works as early as possible. Therefore we look for easiest ways. Here are few short cut keys that could be of help to you while working on your laptops and computers. In the beginning

it would a difficult but once you are used to the keys it will help you to save much of your time. A computer short cut keys function quickly and make your work easy.

Here is a list of commonly used shortcut keys in the MS word that can provide an easier and quicker method of using computer programs. MS Word shortcut keys

- Ctrl + A -- Select all contents of the page.
- Ctrl + B -- Bold highlighted selection.
- Ctrl + C -- Copy selected text.
- Ctrl + X -- Cut selected text.
- Ctrl + N -- Open new/blank document.
- Ctrl + O -- Open options.
- Ctrl + P -- Open the print window.
- Ctrl + F -- Open find box.
- Ctrl + I -- Italicise highlighted selection.
- Ctrl + K -- Insert link.
- Ctrl + U -- Underline highlighted selection.

Continued on page. 25



They Welcomed Us To Their Heart!



A call came unexpectedly! To serve anywhere, I accept without a second thought... But to be in charge of the community... I never imagined... I do not have the dominating power or commanding character, in this situation to lead a group of sisters in a community! I just could not think of it. But God's ways are very different. Trusting in God's Providence, under obedience, for the love of God and His people I accepted the responsibility of the superior in the new community and mission in Karehally.

We three sisters, Sr. Philomina Pulikkottil, Sr. Saleena Parkadath and I accompanied by Sr. Reetha, the Regional Superior, left from Bangalore heading to Shimoga in June 1993. We were welcomed at the Bishop's house, Shimoga. with much joy. After doing errands for the new place we were brought to Karehally, our new mission station, on June 6th, 1993. Fr. Simon, the parish priest and the people of the parish who were waiting anxiously, welcomed us. Fr. Simon had found a house with necessary facilities in the heart of the village, at the roadside. One side of the house the main road, in the front another road, in the back there was sugarcane field, a beautiful place. We were lucky to have that house in that village, thanks be to the Lord for His intervention. The house was rented. The owner was good with us all through our stay. Sr. Reetha helped us to get settled in the new place. After few days she left for Bangalore.

The people of Karehally, specially the Christians, were migrants from Tamil Nadu who moved to this place some time ago. They were very poor, coolie workers who lived in huts. Most people had no land, except for two or three families. Few ladies were ever ready to

help us. They were guides for us. They took us around the village and the neighbouring villages and introduced us to all the families. In this way they accompanied us for few months. The parish priest and the people were very much helpful, concerned and caring. The people used to share with us what they had with joy. We were involved in the parish activities, social work and health care. There was a small building behind the presbytery where we started a crèche for the little ones. We started health clinic from nothingness. Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo from Bhadravathi were conducting health clinics; but they discontinued their service when we arrived. We also had extension health care services in the neighbouring villages.

We were financially supported by the bishop of Shimoga. Without knowing the language to communicate properly, with the help of the people and above all by the grace from above we did what we were asked. The people were angels who accompanied us in our journey. The receptivity from both sides helped us to go forward courageously in this challenging situation trusting in the Divine Providence. In every event, in every step, in each moment, in every place we experienced His presence and his constant companionship in our movements. He helped us to discern and to do His will for the people. Though there were difficulties and problems, they were happy moments for the people, for us; we enjoyed working with them and for them. In short, in the beginning of a new mission it is always very difficult, very much challenging but one thing is sure that it is not our merit or credit or ability but it is God who does everything, he needs people with willing and generous hearts to co-operate with Him.

With God everything is possible.
Thanks be to God !!!!

**Mary Joseph Urumpumkuzhiyil O. P.
Paruthiyor , Thiruvananthapuram.**



Call Within A Call



It's a joy to go back 26 years of my life experiences being a missionary in a foreign land where the culture, language, life style, people all together very strange and different."

In 1994 when I was doing my CEMP in France I got a call from Sr. Joanna Fernandes (USA Provincial at that time) that I am assigned to begin a mission in South Korea. Without knowing anything of this country I said "Yes" to this mission..

Journey to the Unknown:

Do not be afraid I am with you Mk 6:50" This words were echoing in my ears, when I started my journey to an unknown land "South Korea" in 1995 and this voice still resounding in me when I live through my experiences here whether it is joyful or painful..

I landed in Kimpo airport in July 28th and I felt I am in another world.. Suddenly I saw 2 sisters (Sr. Graciella- Colombian & Sr. Young soon- Korean American) and they welcomed me. I had an opportunity to live in an international community at the beginning.

"Live with the foreigners in a foreign land"..I followed them and we reached the house belong to the Sisters of the Servants of the Holy Family"(Korean Congregation)..The sisters of the Servants of the Holy Family were very good and generous in helping me. In between Sr. Young soon's departure made me to deep sorrow..She left me a message " Be a good missionary in my homeland". Beginning itself I found it's a challenge to become a missionary. I myself had the determination to overcome this feeling and to live my call as a missionary in faith. God was only my strength and I spent long nights in prayer, looking at the crucifix .

To begin a mission in a foreign land you need a lot of courage, openness, joy above all

Faith. At the beginning like any other missionaries I had to go through loneliness, struggles to learn the new language, culture and the strange look of the people, effort to understand and inculcate the life style of the people and so on..... Though I felt lonely and sad, I could feel some where, someone look at me with smile and trying to be friendly. Though I wanted to become closer to them I could do only to smile on them. Gradually once you open to all these experiences and take it with a broad mind, I could see the difference in me and in the people. People started to understand and accept me.

Joyful moments:

Sr. Marta Luz from Colombia (New member) Joined us in December. It was a joy for us to begin again the community with three members... Once I began my language class, mingling with many nationalities, sharing our life experiences all become real stories to live through.... We had different activities, busy in studies, going out with the group and to get to know the Korean culture, people, life style, were the precious and cherishing time to love my call as a missionary. Once I began my language class, I started to look at the world in a different way, I spent time to be with the elderly (old age home) near by our community which give lot of joy each other.

Challenges:

There were a lot of challenges in front of me.. While I was studying for children's education class, among the hundred students, I was the only foreigner there and all the students looked at me differently even the professors. There were people who asked me why did you come here while you can do so much in your country? Then I told them the meaning of "being sent" Beginning they couldn't understand what I am saying. Gradually I made friendship with them with my broken Korean, by explaining the meaning of a Missionary. I spent time with the people in the market practicing my Korean. Some correct me when I make mistake, some laugh at me, some keep quite... But I see these are the time I can



make myself humble and to see this is my poverty. Learning this language though it is very different, I could pick up easily with the grace of God and many generous heart. Once you started to speak Korean they find at ease with you...

While three of us learning the language and the life style of this country, we came to know the need of this people. They themselves expressed the need for the day care where they can send their kids whole day. it was the greatest need at that time. Also we have to vacate the house (Sister's place) where we lived.

Then we moved into an apartment in Yeokkok with the help of the Servants of the Holy Family sisters.. While we are in the apartment for 2 years, we were looking for a place for the community and mission. Many places we went looking for the land finally we bought this land in Chuneui- Dong (Bucheon) where we are now. As soon as I finished the studies, in 1999, we opened a day care called "Dominican Charity Day care", Dominican Charity Day care since 1999~ Our Day care is situated in Bucheon City. It is recognized by the City Hall. We welcome all the kids in our Day care. They are from the broken families, working couples. migrants, different faith, rich poor and so on.. Day care is opened at 7:30 to 19:30. We offer help to the poor and broken families by helping materially, listening to them, allow them to share their problems, visit their families if they allow us to do .

we continue this mission and it goes on well with the help of the dedicated and responsible staff, and the parents also the generosity of the people.. Children are the same whether you are in abroad or in your own country.. Working with the children is very interesting.. They teach you when you pronounce differently, also their sincerity, love, openness, innocent smile capture me at times..

We help the kids not only in education and various activities but to grow in their faith through celebrating Eucharistic once a month also giving them short reflection for the important feasts in the church.. We make them to be aware of the "Ecology" recycling programs and the safety.. We make the kids to be aware of the realities of the poor and the sick and help them when it is needed. Many parents expressed their love, joy and gratefulness for the moral values and the basic teachings we offer in our day care..

Though there are many struggles and unexpected things happens in my life I still trust in God's providence and care.. Today I can talk bravely and inculturated this life style is because of my missionary Spirit and zeal I could say...In all that I could say that God make use of me as his instrument and shapes me according to His plan..

Sr.Celine Parakadath, South Korea

Ctrl + V -- Paste.

- Ctrl + Y -- Redo the last action performed.
- Ctrl + Z -- Undo last action.
- Ctrl + G -- Find and replace options.
- Ctrl + H -- Find and replace options.
- Ctrl + J -- Justify paragraph alignment.
- Ctrl + L -- Align selected text or line to the left.
- Ctrl + Q -- Align selected paragraph to the left.
- Ctrl + E -- Align selected text or line to the center.
- Ctrl + R -- Align selected text or line to the right.
- Ctrl + M -- Indent the paragraph.
- Ctrl + T -- Hanging indent.
- Ctrl + D -- Font options.
- Ctrl + Shift + F -- Change the font.
- Ctrl + Shift + > -- Increase selected font +1.
- Ctrl +] -- Increase selected font +1.

- Ctrl + [-- Decrease selected font -1.
- Ctrl + Shift + * -- View or hide non printing characters.
- Ctrl + (Left arrow) -- Move one word to the left.
- Ctrl + (Right arrow) -- Move one word to the right.
- Ctrl + (Up arrow) -- Move to the beginning of the line or paragraph.
- Ctrl + (Down arrow) -- Move to the end of the paragraph.
- Ctrl + Del -- Delete word to the right of the cursor.
- Ctrl + Backspace -- Delete word to the left of the cursor.
- Ctrl + End -- Move cursor to end of the document.
- Ctrl + Home -- Move cursor to the beginning of the document.
- Ctrl + Space -- Reset highlighted text to default

Sr. P. Premalatha OP
Dalmadhih, Jharkhand



Dalmadih- Dream of a New Horizon



JULY 15, 1995 an auspicious day in the history of Dominican sisters of charity of presentation in India... as written in the golden letters of Dhalmati community in Bihar state, the present Jharkhand.

Four sisters in the leadership of Sr. Reetha Mechery then regional superior, arrives in Gumla Diocese to start the mission in Dhalmadhi parish on 14th July. Parish Priest Fr. Linus Minj and Assistant parish priest Fr. Pinkel along with the whole parishioners welcomed us, washing our feet, real Biblical way. They accompanied us from the main road to the parish by singing and dancing.

On 15th the Bishop Michael Minj, Bishop of Gumla officiated/ celebrated the Eucharist along with the parish priest and assistant in the Parish. During the Mass Bishop welcomed us officially to the diocese and to the parish.

The gestures of the villagers were very touching. During the offertory procession they offered all that we needed for us to live there. We the southerners it was the first and new experience, and it is first experience to be there in that state.

After the solemn Eucharistic celebration all proceeded in procession to the school, for the blessing of our convent. Bishop blessed the convent and Sr. Reetha cut the ribbon. Bishop has already arranged to make the grill in the veranda, in front of the school building for our safety and another small grill in front of our rooms. Two class rooms of the parish school was converted to the convent. In one of the rooms four plastic, steel cots were there, that was our dormitory. Another class room, we arranged as chapel, dining room and kitchen. The chapel we fixed with a small rock stone to keep the Cross,

a bible, the lamp and a mat to sit, simple but prayerful. In the middle of the room we fixed the round plastic table and four steel chairs. The other end of the room was our kitchen. We fixed a few stones and kept wooden pieces. That was our cupboards to keep utensils and plates and groceries. On the other side we kept our kerosene stove.

Nights were pitch dark, the kerosene lamps served as our tube lights, buckets and pots filled with water, in the corner of the veranda they had made an Indian toilet with wash basin. We were so happy for their thoughtfulness. The essentials were there... real immersion, only difference is that villagers were living after the road. Though boundary walls were made the parish, rectory and fields and the school remained as isolated.

As sun goes down and evening paves way for night, darkness embraces the earth and sky, an unknown fear attacked us... though we all acted and talked as brave as lion deep within us a trembling invaded. That is the moment we were more and closer to God, called out the name of Jesus for our safety, for our being as missionaries in Bihar. The Lord Jesus who called us walked before us, with us and led us ahead. "Be not afraid I go before you always..." The vehicleless roads and shopless markets, walking hours and hours to reach our destinations did not bother us. We had only one aim, bring the knowledge of Jesus Christ, live the charism of Blessed Marie as Poussepin. How can I forget my sisters concern for me, as we boil four glasses of water to make black tea in the morning they gave me half glass to brush, because of the freezing cold, my teeth gave me enough struggle. In all the inconveniences we adjusted, we participated in all the activities of the parish. I really felt, the early Christian communities experience was relived there. Drawing water from the open well, standing on the middle, on bamboo sticks, something new for us...



As a whole entirely different life style... more prayer, more trusting in the Providence of God, seeking help from each other, more sensitivity...and content with what we have, though the beginning limitations was a challenge, we tried all our possibilities. Two were teaching in the school, one was involved with healing ministry...the little veranda in front of the convent room became the mobile dispensary...house visiting in the villages, catechism under the tree...

A few months after one aspirant also joined us, she also immersed in all our activities. She became our translator.

In the struggles of our adjustments, adaptation with new culture, new people, new language we held on the Lord. He remained

our Good Shepherd, who guided us, strengthened us, empowered us to with stand the attacks and challenges from outside... (vishwa Hindu Parishath and Maoists).

I gratefully remember our parish Priests, our villagers their thoughtfulness and help, the valuable prayers of our sisters that enabled us to bring the Charism in the Eastern part of India. Today, 26 years back when we look at our presence there I thank God all our sisters sacrifice for this mission.

If I write all the events those days it could be a novel. I really feel God's protection, care when we do His will and plan in our lives. The mission in Dalmadhi is best example... Thank you Lord journeying with us.

Sr. Lilly Chalackal OP
Philippines

A Rich Experience in a Poor Village.



A journey to a village called Dalma-di, in Jharkhand was a memorable one. Saying goodbyes to our Sisters in Bangalore and leaving to an unknown place was a heartbreaking one. The Lord led us through to begin His plan in July, 1995 to begin our community.

Life was simple and laborious, adjusting to the new surroundings where there was no electricity, running water, transportation etc was a different experience. All of us who were the pioneers of this mission had a sweet memory of a loving God who protected us and who accompanied us to be available to the needs of the poor in Pastoral care, Education and Healthcare etc.

This life has attracted the local youth who came to experience the life. Later on through the Divine call God allowed us to begin a new mission and be available to the people.

To collaborate
-in the work of healing through our healthcare,
-in the work of education in the Parish,
-in the Pastoral Care in the Parish, and
To live the Charism of Blessed Marie Pouseep-
in Promoting a new way of entering into the life
of a Tribal community was a difficult process...
promoting respect and welfare of the other...to
see our surrounding villages a place of care.

A call to learn, a new culture, leave everything, trust in the Providence of God to know a new people to serve them...to learn from them simplicity, generosity was an enriching experience for me.

A new beginning to believe in the Providence of God...that all will be done according to His plan. There were joys, difficulties and struggles but the presence of God united us to live His plan by serving the poor in Education, Healthcare and Pastoral Care.

Thank you Lord for calling me to follow you in order to serve you in the mission of serving the felt needs of the poor people in Dalma-di. I always cherish simplicity and generosity which I saw the people live daily in their lifestyle.



We thank you Lord for calling us to serve you, through the poor and needy in Dalmadi and the surrounding villages the past 26 years.

Beginning of this Mission and continuation of the mission was the most beautiful experience. An unforgettable experience when I got

cerebral Malaria...these poor people prayed for me and my sisters cared for me, prayed for me. God gave me a second life. I had the privilege to go back to serve the poor again in Dalmadi.

Sr. Lilly Vadakeniyath OP
Philippines

The Sight of the Sea was Fantastic!



When India became a Vice Province in 1994 the the vice provincial government had to face many challenges for the growth. We had so many priorities that concerned spiritual, financial, formation as well as missionary aspects of our life. We felt the need of one more house in Kerala, and presumed that northern districts of Kerala would be ideal. Our search extended to three of the northern dioceses of Kerala. When we visited the bishop's houses and told them our charism and our desire to work in a parish where there are no other congregations. All of them appreciated our charism but all their parishes had convent of the sisters, even in the villages where there is a possibility of a future parish. We were thunderstruck! My ignorance was so great! I had presumed that the northern Kerala, full of mountains and forests (Wayanad) must be more remote and underdeveloped worse than Kuttikad of 1973 when I first came to get to know of the missionary congregation. So our journey of search for a mission land proved my lack of knowledge of my own native Kerala. The towns were much more developed than my prestigious, cultural town of Thrissur.

Thus our search continued to the south of Kerala. When I did my Masters in Sociology in 1992 in Kerala University, Father Joseph Vice Chancellor of Malankara rite diocese whom we accidentally met, had helped me a lot to register without any difficulties. His great help continued

to find a convent to stay for the examinations as well as a month of quiet study. So I decided to ask his help. Since I did not have any contact with him for a long time, and had lost his address, decided to go to their bishop's house directly. And one auspicious day sister Celine Kariyattil and myself left by the evening train to reach there at 6 A.M in the morning possibly to return the same day. When we reached the Thiruvananthapuram Central station, took an auto to the Bishop's House. We waited in the parlour and a priest came and asked our purpose to see the Bishop. He asked us to follow him to the dining room for breakfast. As we were explaining our Charism, some other priests came in wishing "Good morning Pithave". Wonderful we met the right person too. We expressed our desire to work in a parish where there are no other convents. He told us to go and refresh at the animation centre and to meet him at 10. From the priest who accompanied us to the animation centre, we gathered that we are at the Latin diocese. Once again here is a proof of my ignorance! I had believed that there is only Malankara rite in Thiruvananthapuram!

Father Jerome, secretary of the bishop was ready in the car and took us to 7 different parishes. Six of them were in hilly places, small parishes. And we did not see much people either. The seventh was a big church, on the beach full of fishermen huts, clustered together, hundreds of children playing all over the beach. The sight of the sea was fantastic! It was mid-day and the sun was very hot but the sea breeze lightened the heat on us. Of course seeing the strangers with the parish priest, the children



followed us all along the beach. As we returned to the church, we saw the school. It was the lower primary school of the parish. When we asked why the children who were following us, do not go to school, they answered they just won't go and the parents don't care either. We saw filth everywhere, because there was not much toilet facilities but in open air. A swam of flies arose as we entered the church. At the water tap a group of women attired differently than the

Kerala we know, fighting with their colorful water pots! They spoke a Malayalam which we could not understand. Where else could the daughters of Marie Poussepin need to be?

Thus we came to Paruthiyoor Parish of Thirivananthapuram Latin diocese.

**Sr Jussina Pulikkottile OP
Rome**

Accompaniment of the Families - The Need of the Hour



Mathew 16:15, Jesus says, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the Good News to the whole creation."

Pastoral Ministry envisions faith filled families, communities, and societies through leading, teaching, preaching and celebration of the Gospel through collaboration and dialogue.

I began to work with Family Apostolate in the Latin Archdiocese of Trivandrum since June 2018. Indeed it is a great opportunity and privilege to learn and to practice many things of the poor people of the diocese as a whole, and to help the underprivileged of Pulluvila forane, where I am the animator for taking care of the family ministry activities in 14 parishes of the forane.

We live in a world which is digitalized, globalized, pluralistic and rapidly growing towards development and achievement where spiritual death, loneliness, emotional imbalance tossing us down. Into this pastoral dryness, there need a good Shepherding. Good shepherding involves protection, tending to needs, strengthening and encouraging the weak, feeding the flock, making provisions, shielding, refreshing, and leading the fragile humanity to

holiness and to wholeness.

The major focus of the ministry is to work for the welfare and wellbeing of the families. The objectives are;

1. To restore and rejuvenate the families,
2. To take care of the left alone,
3. To build up strong families with moral values and ethics,
4. To encourage and accompany the families with sacramental life,
5. To take care of the sick, the bedridden, the differently abled with physical impairments, the widows, the singles, the deaf and dumb, the Okhi cyclone victims and
6. To provide psycho-social support to families and their members.
7. Marriage preparation courses (MPC) to orient the young person's for a successful married life.
8. Help the poor girls who are economically deprived to help them to get marry.
9. Counseling is another important element of the ministry to provide psycho-social and spiritual support to people with varied family and personal problems to help them lead a comfortable and confident life.

The sisters' continuous effort in our parish from the beginning of our existence here has a remarkable progress in the life style and the living standard of the people has improved. Our presence in BCC wards and unit meeting make a difference in them when we share our own life experience based on the WORD of God and encourage them to share their own life with its



challenges and demands. Due to lack of education and constant family problems that prevail in them cause a lot of fights among them which need a continuous follow up. Faith formation classes and moral education help them to increase their shallow faith.

Education, job opportunities and life style of the people are increased with the constant support and encouragement to the parents and students. Lack of proper budgeting leads to heavy debts and fights takes place often in the families and it even leads to suicidal tendency. Many youth are addicted to drugs, alcoholism and running away from home and get married with other casts. They need a constant follow up and proper direction. Jesus youth group is another wing where they come together for prayer and lot of charitable activities take place. Various pious associations are vibrant in all the activities of the church.

Life is a threat to the people, because many families live very close to the sea. Natural calamities like occasional cyclone, raging of the sea (Tautey) are very much frightening and many lost houses and they were staying in camps. Covid 19 has led the people to hunger and misery, where the people are prohibited from going for fishing and fish vending which is their main livelihood. From past one and half years, we are also limited to do our normal activities and it has stagnated our mission from many activities which we could have done for this suffering brothers and sisters. With the corona virus lock down and closing of our nursery for the past one and half years, the little ones who used to come has taken away the life around us. We are eagerly waiting for the normal life to begin and put everything back in order.

Accompaniment of the families in the pastoral perspective is one of the major factors. Today's family is challenged with the 'values that prize human rights, self-fulfillment and pragmatic utility on individual and societal level. Home is the place where people have to realize the Kingdom of God and enjoy the heav-

enly experience. Special attention is given to the families where there are lot of poverty and sickness, by which they are given an impression that "you are not alone, we are with you." Psycho-social and spiritual accompaniment is in the front line of the ministry by which ample time is spent with the individuals and families with a keen ear to listen and to support them with an empathetic heart. So, counseling is very important. Thank God for there are many individuals and families are brought back together who were separated or from the verge of separation.

1. Siluvapicha 35 years and Anthoniamma 32 years (not the real name) are married for 10 years and they have 2 girls and one boy. Siluvapicha is a fisherman and a heavy drunkard. Not responsible and does not give any money at home for the running of the house. He shouts and beat his wife for no reason at all. Anthoniamma came to me with her heart broken stories. After listening to her I called Siluvapicha and listen to him too. I had to call them both few times and spoke to them about the importance of family life and made them to reconcile with one another and arranged for sacrament of reconciliation. Both of them made confession and now they are living a happy and peaceful family life.

2. Sneha 17 years is a plus one student fell in love with Raju who is 21 years, an alcoholic and addicted to drugs. When nobody is at home, Raju comes to her house and spent ample time. Snehas' parents with her sister came to me and told their concern. Spoke to Sneha and she was adamant that she is not interested to continue her studies anymore and wanted to get marry as soon as possible. Spent few hours talking with parents and Sneha separately and together. Convinced Sneha that I will tell parents to let you marry Raju, but to finish her plus two. After a long time of telling her again and again, Sneha said, she wants few days to decide. About 3 days later, Sneha called me and said that she will get married with Raju only after 2 years, and she wants to continue her studies. Sneha and her parents were very happy and grateful.



Listening to the distressed and suffering is indeed a privilege and opportunity to bring many to faith, reconciliation and to lead a meaningful Christian life. I have increased my own faith in the Lord and learned to trust Him more. Only

God can work in everyone and bring hope and consolation. I learned from my own experience that nothing is my merit or ability, but His grace and compassion.

Sr.Vinitha O.P.
Paruthiyoor, Trivandrum

Call To International Mission Is A Gift Of Love



To be called and chosen for a mission is a gift of trust of the one who calls and the free response of the one who is called. It is a grace to be called and sent forth to an international mission. It was a moment to experience God's mercy, trust and His divine plan for my life. It is an opportunity to love God, serve and fulfill the mission of the congregation and the church.

My experience was like that of Abraham being called to leave his homeland to go to a place where the Lord will show him. In deep faith and trust I said yes to this mission to come to the Philippines. I believed in the promise of the Lord that He will go before me. He will bless those who bless me and He will be with me. The theme of the prayer for my send off from the province of India was that "you are needed". In spite of my unworthiness and limitations the Lord graced me with His strength. The sisters in the province lavished me with their love and trust, blessed me with their prayers and sent me forth with the best wishes for new beginning, life and growth of the mission awaited. what I carried with me was God's love I treasured in my heart, experienced from my family, my community and the sisters in the province and the trust of the congregation.

I believe the beauty of our consecrated life is joy, a call to live in holiness. When God calls, He says to us you are important to me. I am counting on you. Our joy is born from that

experience. The joy of the moment is that Jesus looked at me and called me to work with Him.

Though this 'yes' demanded me much as my mother was already in the late evening of her life. She encouraged me to go in peace and courage to serve God's people. She also told me that she will miss me, my visit to which she used to wait, yet it was very painful for me to leave her knowing that I will not see her anymore ... The comforting presence of the Lord accompanied me in the pains of leaving my sisters, novices, friends and family, and especially during the death of my mother, moments to surrender to God's will and find strength.

International mission is a gift, task and a mystery. It is a task because we are sent forth with a mission to accomplish, a message to transmit and to share the experience and knowledge of Jesus Christ where ever we are being sent. It is in this process that the Lord guides us into the acceptance of being a foreigner in a country yet it is a holy land that belongs to God. He led me to many encounters with the sisters in the community from different cultures and nations, with the people in the society, listening to them and building relationships and discerning with them the will of God for our mission.

We were so blessed with the support from our beloved Arch bishop, the priests and religious, the Dominican family and the parish community to which we belonged. Four months after our arrival it was a challenging experience for me to enter into the ministry of Education in a university teaching in the High school. Yet the promise of God was with me. His words gave me courage and strength to face the struggles. With the grace of God I am still teaching in the same



school. It is an opportunity to share the knowledge and experience of the Lord with the youth, teachers and parents. The poor to whom we are sent will teach, guide and enable and transform us if we are willing to surrender in faith and trust.

Being in an international mission is a mystery. As I have experienced it is an invitation to journey in faith. The plan of God will unfold in God's time and in His way. It is a call to enter in to the paschal mystery. When we come into a new community, we are invited to enter into a process of letting go of our familiar shores of culture, knowledge, experience, perception, attitudes, sometimes language, style of life and move out of different comfort zones with in us and outside us. It is a call to go beyond borders. These are moments to die to ourselves and freely cooperating with a God who is doing something new in us, helping us to accept His will and plan for our mission. We find joy in the mission because we see the loving gaze of God, it is His initiative.

The beauty of being in the International mission is very rich as we are from different cultures and countries and yet united in the love of God. Same Charism, but different expressions. Let us always look up to Blessed Marie Poussepin who is a source of inspiration and strength for all of us. Philippine Mission is a work of providence. We as a community and for me personally also have many experiences of God providing for our needs through different people and events from near and far.

I am so grateful to the Congregation, for the trust constant support, encouragement, guidance and close accompaniment from the General government.

I want to thank everyone for you have blessed me and I am graced. May God bless you ... Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity to share my experience

**Sr. Rosy Karippai OP
Philippines**

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