



HATIGAON TIDINGS

MSMHC GENERALATE - LITTLE FLOWER CONVENT, HATIGAON



Vol. 13.3

December, 2014

From the Superior General

TRUE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas is one of the distinguished events of the year celebrated across the world. It speaks of the importance of sharing, caring and loving. It offers an occasion to come together as families and communities to be renewed of their allegiance and staunchness. Christmas is beyond all these... it moves us to explore the mysteries of God, who delights to unveil to us the true greatness which lies in simple things of life. It calls us to ponder on the manger, the shepherds, the star, and above all, the serenity and sacredness of the moment. We have heard of many confounding and beautiful tales. Here is a story of the 'golden slippers' by an anonymous author which stirs our thoughts and understanding of Christmas.

It was only four days before Christmas. The spirit of the season hadn't yet caught up with her, even though cars packed the parking lot of our local discount store. Inside the store, it was worse. Shopping carts and last minute shoppers jammed the aisles.

Why did I come today? She wondered. Her feet ached almost as much as her head. Her list contained names of several people who claimed they wanted nothing but she knew their feelings would be hurt if she didn't buy them anything. Buying for someone who had everything and deploring the high cost of items, she considered gift buying nothing but fun.

Hurriedly, she filled her shopping cart with last minute items and proceeded to the long checkout lines. She picked the

shortest but it looked as if it would mean at least a 20 minutes wait. In front of her were two small children - a boy of about 5 and a girl younger to him. The boy wore a ragged coat. Enormously large, tattered tennis shoes jutted far out in front of his much too short jeans. He clutched several crumpled dollar bills in his grimy hands. The girl's clothing resembled her brother's. Her head was a matted mass of curly hair. Reminders of an evening meal showed on her small face. She carried a beautiful pair of shiny, gold house slippers. As the Christmas music sounded in the store's stereo system, the girl hummed along, off key but happily.

When they finally approached the checkout register, the girl carefully placed the shoes on the counter. She treated them as though they were a treasure. The clerk rang up the bill. "That will be \$6.09," she said. The boy laid his crumpled dollars atop the stand while he searched his pockets. He finally came up with \$3.12. "I guess we will have to put them back," he bravely said. "We will come back some other time, maybe tomorrow." With that statement, a soft sob broke from the little girl. "But Jesus would have loved these shoes," she cried. "Well, we'll go home and work some more. Don't cry. We'll come back," the boy said.

Noting the children's conversation, she quickly handed \$3.00 to the cashier. These children had waited in line for a long time. And, after all, it was Christmas. Suddenly a pair of arms



came around her and a small voice said, "Thank you lady."

"What did you mean when you said Jesus would like the shoes?" she asked. The boy answered, "Our mummy is sick and going to heaven. Daddy said she might go before Christmas to be with Jesus." The girl spoke, "My Sunday school teacher said the streets in heaven are shiny gold, just like these shoes. Won't mummy be beautiful walking on those streets to match these shoes?"

Her eyes flooded as she looked into her tear streaked face. "Yes" she answered, "I am sure she will." Silently she thanked God for using these children to remind her of the true spirit of giving.

This season reminds us to reach out to others in love, find meaning in the ordinariness of life and to discover the true spirit of giving. It is a time to appreciate the gift of each person in our families and communities. Let our love be genuine, and that we may make room for every person, accepting, respecting and valuing the gift that they are.

Sr. Philomena Mathew
Superior General



Provincial Chapters mark another milestone for MSMHC

Provinces of Bangalore, Kolkata, Tinsukia, Shillong, Tezpur and the Italian Delegation crossed another milestone with the Chapters held during the months of October and November 2014. The Chapters with the theme- "Spirit and Spirituality of the MSMHC", were preceded by six days of spiritual retreat preached by Fr. Roy Anthony SDB of Silchar Province. The retreat itself was an invitation to the Capitulars to delve deep into their rich legacy of Spirit and Spirituality, handed down by their Father and Founder, Bishop Stephen Ferrando. Being reminded of the words of Pope Francis to the Korean Bishops during his visit to Korea this August, Fr. Roy

urged the Sisters to be "the guardians of memory and hope", and explained to them the importance of treasuring the history, and re-visiting the heroism, commitment and generosity of the pioneers. Guiding them to ponder on Jesus' life and mission, and Mary's submission to God's will, he reminded them of their own call to holiness, nurturing communion and communities.

All the Provinces had the privilege of being supported and guided by the Superior General, Sr. Philomena Mathew, who made sure to be present in all the Chapters, accompanied by the members from her Council. In an effort

to enlighten the assembly on the theme she dealt extensively on its meaning and its various dimensions. She pointed out that abiding by the Spirit and Spirituality is a concrete way of living the vocation as MSMHC after the example of St. John Bosco, St. Mary Dominica Mazarello, other salesian saints, and Founder Bishop Stephen Ferrando.

The Provincial Chapter was an invitation to enter into a deeper understanding of the Spirit and Spirituality of the Congregation, treasuring its rich legacy. It had its emphasis to become the guardians of memories, and carrying forward the flame of hope.

Province of Little Flower Bangalore

The significant days of the 4th Provincial Chapter in the annals of Little Flower Province, Bangalore were held on 3-5 October. Prior to the inaugural function on 3rd morning, the Capitulars, along with the Superior General, Sr. Philomena Mathew and General Councillor for Social Apostolate, Sr. Rose Paite, gathered in the Chapel for the Divine touch, after which was the procession to the chapter hall which was led by Superior General carrying the lighted candle and the Provincial Superior carrying the Holy Bible. Floral tribute was paid to the Patron saints as the assembly invoked their blessings for the coming days. On reaching the Chapter hall, the Superior General was asked to light the candle before the portrait of Bishop Ferrando, invoking his blessings for everyone.

Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General, Sr. Rose Paite, the General Councillor for Social Apostolate, Fr. K.O Thomas SDB, the vice Provincial, Fr. Jossy Fernandez OFM Cap and Sr. Leoni SMMI were among the dignitaries present for the inaugural



function. Sr. Mercy Scaria, the Provincial Superior welcomed everyone and invited Sr. Lissy George to assume her responsibility as the moderator of the Chapter.

Superior General in her inaugural address spoke of Bishop Ferrando, an authentic son of Don Bosco who lived as his father and imbued his daughters with the same spirit as that of Don Bosco.

Fr. K.O Thomas, SDB, Vice Provincial of Bangalore, specified that Chapter is a moment to review, renew and re-launch. He spoke about the principles and adaptations for renewal of religious life, given in *Vita Consacrata* and

Perfectae Caritatis and invited all to become fruitful witnesses of the Gospel, contributing God to the world.

Sr. Rose Paite, the General Councillor for Social Apostolate in her message said, "Religious life should be lived with authenticity and fervour of the founder so as to become relevant in today's society".

"Spirituality is a matter of attitude, conviction reflected in our relationship with the world, with others and with God. It is not what we do matters but what we are before God," said Fr. Jossy Fernandez introducing to the capitulars a vivid and broad understanding of Spirituality.

Province of Mary Immaculate Kolkata

The 4th Provincial Chapter of Kolkata Province was held on 10-12 October at Ferrando Convent, Bandel. The first day of the Chapter began on 10th October with a solemn Holy Eucharist presided over by Fr. Nirmal Gomes SDB, the Salesian Provincial, imploring God's abundant blessings

upon all the Capitulars of the Chapter. The inaugural function held at 9 a.m. was blessed by the presence of Sr. Philomena Mathew, the superior General, Sr. Christine Mynsong, the General Councilor for Evangelization, Fr. Nirmal Gomes SDB, the salesian provincial of Kolkata, Fr. Thomas Gomes SDB, the prior of Bandel Basilica, Fr. Samuel Mondol SDB, the rector of Don Bosco seminary, Bandel and Fr. Anand Raj SDB.

In her inaugural address, Sr. Philomena

Mathew, the Superior General portrayed Bishop Ferrando, as a faithful son of Don Bosco, who infused his daughters with the same spirit as that of Don Bosco. She wished all the capitulars to be nourished and sustained by the four pillars of salesian spirituality, namely, the Marian devotion, Eucharistic piety and union with God, love for the church and pope and the preventive system of love.

Fr. Nirmal Gomes SDB, the Salesian Provincial of Kolkata, exhorted the capitulars to change their strategies to suit the mission but never to change their mission to suit their strategies. He also reminded them of the importance of assimilating and reinterpreting the patrimony they have received from their Founder Bishop Ferrando.

Sr. Lissy Sebastian, the Provincial Superior managed the execution of the programmes of the Chapter days and Sr. Sini Mathew carried out the responsibility as the moderator of the Chapter, keeping track of the planned events.



Province of Sacred Heart of Jesus, Tinsukia

The 9th Provincial Chapter of Sacred Heart Province of Tinsukia was held from 17 to 19 October at its Provincial House. The inaugural ceremony on 19th began at 8.45 p.m. with a prayer invoking the assistance of the Holy Spirit and praying the prayer of Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and entrusting the Chapter to the care of Mary Help of Christians. Followed by this, the capitulars proceeded to the Chapter Hall in procession led by Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General, Sr. Ancilla Jose, the Economer General and Sr. Daisy Jacob, the Provincial Superior, carrying lighted candles, which they placed before the statues of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mary Help of Christians and Bishop Stephen Ferrando.

The ceremonial lighting of the lamp at the Chapter Hall was done by Bishop Joseph Aind of Dibrugarh, Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General, Sr. Ancilla Jose, the Economer General, Sr. Daisy Jacob, the Provincial Superior and Sr. Rose Sharon, the Moderator of the Chapter.

Addressing the Capitulars at the inaugural function, Bishop Joseph Aind spoke about Bishop Ferrando

who, like Saint Don Bosco desired to save souls. He wished the Sisters to continue living the Spirit and Spirituality of their Founder, bringing greater fruitfulness in their mission.

Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General in her message emphasized on the importance of being inspired by the founding spirit and charism to be true to the spiritual legacy. She exhorted the Capitulars to become daring





missionaries, suffering for love and accepting serenely and joyfully the demands of daily life which call for many sacrifices.

Sr. Ancilla Jose, the Economer General in her message called on the capitulars to be responsible to the task that they are called to do and to be imbibed with the Spirit and spirituality of MSMHC. She stressed the need to be focused and

committed to do the will of God in their lives.

Sr. Kaini Martha FMA, representing the Salesian Sisters spoke to the Chapter members about the theme of the chapter and reiterated the importance of the same as an invitation to rediscover and revive the charism and dynamism of their Father and Founder, whose sole

aim was to evangelize and save souls.

Messages of Bishop George Palliparampil of Miao Diocese and Bishop James Thoppil of Kohima, which were read at the inaugural function gave expression to their appreciation and gratitude for the Congregation's services in their Dioceses.

Province of Mary Help of Christians, Shillong

The Province of Mary Help of Christians, Shillong had its 9th Provincial Chapter at the Pastoral Center, Shillong, on 25- 27 October 2014. The inaugural session at 9. 00 a.m. was preceded by a special prayer at the Chapel and procession led by Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General and Sr. Mary Concepta Dkhar, the Provincial Superior. The Chief Guest of the inaugural function was the Archbishop Thomas Menampampil and the dignitaries present were Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General, Fr. George Malliekal SDB, Provincial of Silchar Province, Sr. Jane Francis, General Councillor for Education, Sr. Cecilia Sad, Mother General of VSDB, Sr. Marvella Shangpliang, FMA, Vice Provincial of Shillong, Dr. Mrs. Bonnie Margaret Nicole, representative of Past Pupil's Association and Mrs. Biloris Lyngdoh Mawnai representative of Women Association for Catechesis (WAC), Mr. Samuel John Lyngdoh, President of Young Apostles of Christ (YAC), Shillong and Mr. Wanborlang, YAC Member.

Having set the tone for the Chapter, Sr. Mary Concepta Dkhar, the Provincial Superior invited Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General to take the place at the dais and then, invited Sr. Sisily Cherian to assume her responsibility as the Moderator of the Chapter.

Addressing the capitulars, Sr. Cecilia Sad, VSDB, the Mother General



invited the Capitulars to have an overall understanding of Spirituality. She said, "In modern times an important component of spirituality is subjective experience. It may denote almost any kind of meaningful activity or blissful experience." Sr. Marvella Shangpliang FMA, the Vice Provincial, emphasized on the theme of the Chapter and said that it is an occasion to deepen the Spirit and the Spirituality which is to be lived in its integrity.

Mr. Samuel John Lyngdoh, the President of the YAC expressed his happiness to be present on the occasion and said that he is proud to be a part of the Congregation by being the YAC. Pointing out the present situation of the Church, he spoke of the need to have daring leaders to proclaim the Word of God.

Thanking the dedicated collaborative efforts of the province, Fr. George Maliekal SDB, the provincial of Silchar Province, conveyed his prayerful wishes. He stressed on the need to be ever watchful in scrutinizing the signs of the times to have a clear awareness of the challenges and

influences affecting life.

Focusing on the theme, Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General called for a serious reflection and study on the theme of the Chapter, that it may influence profoundly the day to day living. She emphasized on the need to be inspired by the founding spirit and charism, to be true to the spiritual legacy inherited from Don Bosco and Founder.

Message of the Archbishop Dominic Jala was read by Sr. Sisily Cherian, the Moderator. Making a reference to the chosen theme of the Chapter, it focused on absorbing the spirit for enriching one another in life and mission.

In his key note address, Archbishop Thomas Menampampil, the Apostolic Administrator of Jowai powerfully conveyed the need to become inspirers and guides in humanities' search for God. He explained the different dimensions of missionary spirituality and the ways of communicating faith to various cultures and communities. He wished that spirituality ultimately be related to sharing the faith.

Province of St. Joseph Tezpur

The 9th Provincial Chapter, a historic event of St. Joseph's Province was held from 31st October to 2nd November at Jyoti Bhavan, Tezpur. The Chapter began with a procession led by the Superior General, Sr. Philomena Mathew, Sr. Mary Perunilam, the Assistant General, Sr. Christine Mynsong, the General Councillor for Evangelization and Sr. Anita George, the Provincial Superior, followed by the Capitulars.

The inaugural ceremony began with the lighting of the lamp by Bishop Michael Akasius Toppo of Tezpur Diocese, Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General, Fr. V. M. Thomas, the Salesian Provincial of Guwahati Province and Sr. Anita George, the Provincial Superior.

Bishop Michael Akasius Toppo, in his inaugural address, spoke about the great harvest and the need of labourers. He emphasized that, the Provincial Chapter is a great event to recount the blessings of God, and also to reorganize the life of the Province for the better effectiveness of its mission. He acknowledged the contribution made



by the Sisters for the growth of the Church in North East India and conveyed his support and prayers.

Fr. V.M. Thomas in his message thanked and appreciated the sisters for their unique and sincere service in the spreading of the Gospel through evangelization, especially in the region. He highlighted the key elements of Don Bosco's Spirituality: An Apostolic Spirituality, a Pastoral Spirituality, a Catechetical Spirituality and a Missionary Spirituality.

Fr. Xavier Lakra, the Mission Superior of the Jesuits in Assam, spoke about the importance of witnessing life and quoted Mahatma Gandhi, who said, "Our life is a message".

Sr. Mridula Xalxo, the Provincial

Superior of the Ursuline Sisters, in her brief message, encouraged the Capitulars to reflect on the Spirit and Spirituality of the congregation as it can bring renewal.

Sr. Mary Perunilam, the Assistant General in her address, highlighted the pastoral charity of Bishop Ferrando who was a replica of Don Bosco. She said that it is a great moment to examine the Congregation's fidelity to its founder and Don Bosco.

After the messages from the dignitaries, the Aspirants of Jyoti Bhavan sang the theme song of the Chapter which was composed by Sr. Mary Sebastian. Thereafter, Sr. Asha Paul assumed her responsibility as the Moderator of the Chapter and followed up the details of the three days.

Delegation of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, Italy



The 3rd Delegation Chapter of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, Italy, was held on 13-14 November at

Rossiglione, the native place of Bishop Stephen Ferrando, the Founder of the MSMHC. The inaugural function was held at 2:30 p.m. in the hall of St. Dominic Savio (Oratory). The capitulars went in procession with lighted candles to the Chapter Hall, led by Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General and Fr. Alfredo Vignolo, the invited guest for the occasion. This was followed by the lighting of the lamp, prayer and reading from the Word of God.

Sr. Marta Rosario welcomed everyone and then the message of Monsignor Cesare Nosiglia, the Archbishop of Turin was read by Sr. Mary P.C. Followed by this, Fr. Alfredo Vignolo

spoke on the importance of living an authentic life to witness the Gospel values in today's context. He reminded them of the exhortation of Pope Francis to go to the periphery, where there is both material and spiritual poverty.

The formal opening of the Chapter was held as Sr. Juliet Zothampari, the moderator, invited Sr. Marta Rosario, the President of the Chapter for opening declaration. This was followed by a talk on the theme of the Chapter by Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General. She stressed on the importance of remaining faithful to the spirit and spirituality of the MSMHC, committing themselves totally to Jesus Christ and to His mission.



25 Years of MSMHC Presence in Italy



The MSMHC's 25 years of presence in Italy as missionaries was noted with a grand Silver Jubilee function on 15 November, 2014 at Rossiglione, in the presence of many distinguished guests, friends, benefactors and well-wishers from Rome, Acqui Terme, Turin, Genova, Loretto, Milan, and Alessandria. All the Sisters from twelve communities of Italy joined the function.

The solemn Holy Mass presided over by Bishop Pier Giorgio Micchiardi, the Bishop of Acqui, was concelebrated by Bishop George Rajendra Kuttinadar, a Salesian

Bishop of Thuckalay from India, Fr. Sabino Frigato SDB, the present Vicar General for the Consecrated Life in the Archdiocese of Turin, Fr. Paolo Ripa, the former Vicar General for the Consecrated Life in the Archdiocese of Turin and sixteen Priests and two Deacons hailing from different parishes and institutes where the MSMHCs carry out their mission. Fr. Alfredo Vignolo, the Parish Priest of Saint Catherine's Church, Rossiglione, organized the day's Liturgy. The presence of Superior General Sr. Philomena Mathew and

Mother Elizabeth Packumala added joy to the celebration.

Followed by the Holy Mass was the gathering at St. Dominic Savio Oratory Hall for felicitation and family meal.

Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General gave a brief talk on Founder, Bishop Stephen Ferrando, the beginning of the congregation and presented the Italian Mission as the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Founder. She thanked the three pioneering members, and in a special way remembered late Sr. Celine Phawa.

Responding to God's Faithfulness

Final Commitment on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception: December 8



The day brought in excitement and joy to all at Hatigaon and the weather that morning seemed befitting the occasion. As the preparations for the day's celebration carried on, the invited guests from far and near began to arrive. At 9.45 a.m., twenty three Sisters lined up to proceed to the Little Flower School Auditorium along with the celebrants of the Holy Mass.

The Congregation, gathered on the occasion rejoiced with the twenty-three Sisters, who made their final commitment during the solemn



Eucharistic celebration, presided over by the Archbishop John Moolachira of Guwahati Archdiocese along with Bishop Andrew Marak of Tura, Fr. Thomas Lakra SDB, Vice Provincial of Guwahati Province and thirty Priests.

In his homily, Archbishop John underlined the meaning of consecrated life and the importance of total self-giving in God's service. Speaking about the year, which is dedicated to 'Consecrated Life', he said that, it is an occasion to look to the past with gratitude, to live the present with passion and to embrace the future with hope. He exhorted the Sisters to find fulfilment and joy in giving themselves

to the service of God's people.

Besides the number of Priests from various institutions and parishes, the event was participated by Sisters and brothers from nearby institutions; and, parents, friends, relatives and well-wishers of the finally professed Sisters.

The Sisters had their intensive preparation period at 'Bethel', Barapani, under the guidance of Sr. Nancy Augustine, the General Councillor for Formation. The programmes during the preparatory days aimed at helping them understand the meaning of consecrated life and to be convinced of their vocation.

First Profession at Cathedral Church Bongaigaon

The feast day of the Mary Immaculate on 8th December 2014 at the at Cathedral Church in Bongaigaon was made noteworthy with the First Profession of twenty-one novices. The solemn Holy Eucharist at 10 a.m. was presided over by Bishop Thomas Pullopallil of Bongaigaon, concelebrated by other Priests. In his homily Bishop Thomas said, "Religious are to radiate joy to awaken the world. They are to be experts in building communion and should be ready to go out of themselves." He also



exhorted the Sisters to be joyful, meeting the challenges of life courageously.

The day was blessed by the presence of Sr. Anita George, the Provincial Superior of Tezpur, Sr. Rose Sharon,

the Vice Provincial of Tinsukia, Sr. Bridgit Dingdoh, the Provincial Councillor from Shillong and a good number of Sisters along with the parents and dear ones of the newly professed sisters.

Orientation Programme for newly Professed

The newly professed Sisters were warmly received by the Superior General, Councillors and the Sisters of Hatigaon Community on 9th December, 2014 at the Generalate, Hatigaon. They had a two-day orientation programme under the supervision of Sr. Mary Perunilam, the Assistant General. They were given inputs on community life



and apostolate by the members of the General Council. All the sessions during the two days aimed at giving

them confidence and courage to face the real life situations of community living.

First Candidate from Africa Enters Novitiate

At the end of the day's celebration on 8th December, the community of Hatigaon, along with the Sisters who made their final commitment, their parents and relatives gathered in the

Chapel for the vestition of Boithabiso Priscilla Molelengane, the postulant from Lesotho. Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General expressed her joy of welcoming Priscilla to the Congregation and presented her the religious habit of Novice. Sr. Mary Perunilam, the Assistant General offered her the medal which had the imprint of Mary Immaculate, while Sr.

Nancy Augustine, the General Councillor for Formation presented her the Constitutions of the Congregation. She was entrusted to the care of Sr. Nancy by the Superior General, until her joining the group of novices at Mawroh, Shillong.

Priscilla hails from Lesotho, which is a landlocked country, completely surrounded by South Africa. The MSMHC launched its mission at Lesotho on 31 January, 2009. Priscilla joined the sisters as an aspirant after her higher secondary and she completed her pre-novitiate formation at Ferrando Convent, Johannesburg, under the guidance of Sr. Bina Basumatary. She was unable to join her group for the vestition ceremony held at Mawroh as she had to meet the African Embassy at Delhi for her visa.





NEW VENTURES IN MISSION OVERSEAS

The main thrust of the MSMHC at present is centered on getting rooted to its charism and mission. One of the best ways the Congregation chooses

to express its commitment to the mission is shown in its endeavour to reach out to the mission fields in African Countries, which are in

greater need of assistance. This year the Congregation has opened one centre at Mosambique and another at Ethiopia.



MOSAMBIQUE

Mosambique is a republic nation in Southeast Africa bordered by the Indian

Ocean to the east, Tanzania to the north, Malawi and Zambia to the northwest, Zimbabwe to the west, and Swaziland and

South Africa to the southwest. The MSMHC Centre at Mosambique is named after St. Joseph and it forms part of the community of 'Our Lady of Fathima Church', which is close to the country's capital, Maputo. Sr. Mary Clara Topno and Sr. Saroj Kindo are the members in this Centre. They collaborate with the MSFS Fathers and carry out pastoral ministry.

The only official language of Mozambique is Portuguese, which is spoken mostly as a second language by about half of the population. Common native languages include Swahili, Makhuwa and Sena. The largest religion in Mozambique is Christianity, with significant minorities following Islam and African traditional religions.

ETHIOPIA

The center at Ethiopia has four members - Sr. Anney Jose, Sr. Asrita Turkey, Sr. Budbhalang Sutnga and Sr. Poonam Mary Doimary. They work in the Diocese of Meki, engaging themselves in the task of faith formation and carrying out various other activities of the Diocese.

The country is officially known as the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and it is bordered by Eritrea to the north and northeast, Djibouti and Somalia to the east, Sudan and South Sudan to the west and Kenya to the south. Its capital and largest city is Addis Ababa.

Ethiopia is Africa's oldest independent country and it is the second largest in terms of population. Apart from a five-year occupation by Mussolini's Italy, it has never been colonised.

Ethiopia is a multilingual society with around 80 ethnic groups. It has close historical ties with all three of the world's major Abrahamic religions. In the 4th century, the region was one of the first in the world to officially adopt Christianity as the state religion. Its majority of the population is Christian and Muslim forms a third of it.



Reaching out to grassroots through WAC

Women Apostles for Catechesis (WAC) movement shares the mission of missionary evangelization and Catechesis of the Congregation. Since its existence in 2013, efforts have been made at the central and provincial levels to reach out to the grassroots through this movement. Hence, WAC is initiated at the local levels, encouraging the participation of women in the villages.

Inauguration of WAC (local level) was held on 9th December at Satgoan in Diphu Diocese under the initiative of Sr. Christine Mynsong, General Councillor for Evangelization and Sr. Helen Barla, Provincial Councillor for Evangelization, Tezpur Province. The formal inauguration of the movement was followed by two-day animation for the newly formed members of the WAC. Clarifying the purpose, aims and objectives of the movement, Sr. Christine Mynsong explained the responsible role of the members of WAC in collaborating with the Congregation. They also had input



sessions on the role of the mothers in the family, importance of family catechesis and faith formation. They were taught of the importance of sacraments, family prayers and the need to study and reflect the Word of God to carry out their mission. They also dealt with some of the challenges of today and discussed some of the problems encountered in the family and society.

Another inauguration of WAC at the local level was held at Goreswar, a Parish Centre of the Archdiocese of Guwahati on 10th December. The programme began with the Holy Eucharist, presided over by the Archbishop John Moolachira of

Guwahati. The inaugural ceremony after the Holy Mass was officiated by the Archbishop. There was hoisting the flag, scripture reading, lighting of the lamp, special prayers and messages delivered by the dignitaries. The members were guided to attend two days programme which had input sessions on various topics related to the movement. The programme had its focus on the role of mothers in families and discussed on family issues and problems. They were given understanding on the importance of sacraments, family prayers and Word of God which would sustain them while they undertake the task of catechesis and faith formation in their locality.

Animation Programmes at Padampukhuri

Sr. Jane Francis, General Councillor for Education had the animation programme at St. Mary's Hr. Sec. School, Padampukhuri, Nagaland on



13-16 August, 2014. The opening of the Silver Jubilee of the School was also held on the occasion of her visit. During her four-day programme, she held meeting with the Sisters to discuss and draw up plans for improving the mission, conducted re-orientation programme for teachers and animated the students of classes VII, VIII, IX and X. Besides the animation programmes and

meetings, she also spent time for inspecting the School to verify the records. She assessed the education mission of different sectors and offered suggestions for improvement and effectiveness. Her conference to the members of the community focused on the spirit and charism of the congregation and highlighted the importance of assisting and accompanying the students.



Team from Little Flower, Hatigaon Qualifies for National Level Quiz

A team comprising of Angaraaj Das, Bibhash Anjan Chutia and Abhinav Das from Little Flower School, Hatigaon, qualified for the National Round of the XIV CBSE Heritage India Quiz 2014, participated in the event held on 21st December 2014 at Delhi. They had secured first position at the regional level which was held at Guwahati, and were selected to represent the CBSE, Guwahati Region.

Little Champion of the Year, 2014



Little Flower, Hatigaon is delighted with joy at the achievement of Aryan Hazarika, who won this year's reality show, "the Little Champs", organised by the News Live Channel. Aryan Hazarika, a fabulous soloist, who has captured the hearts of his listeners is a Class VII student of the School.

MY VOCATION A response to God's Love



Sr. Lucinda Salboro (Hawaii), the first vocation from the overseas, professed on 8 December, 2014 shares her vocation story.

God's ways are perfect and He makes everything beautiful in His own time. I left my good job and what the secular world calls securities - savings and checking accounts, retirement money, medical coverage, etc. I left my family, my mother who is now 84 years old and my younger

sister with whom I lived all through the past years of my life.

A flame was ignited within, when a Buddhist friend of mine during the high school days introduced to me about Mother Theresa. I happened to hear about her good works in India. I was stirred from within and disturbed when she talked about Mother Theresa, who saw Jesus in the needy, abandoned and marginalized. From that moment, I was in search to find out the person Jesus, about whom Mother Theresa talked often. Eventually, I believed that I too am called to work for Jesus, on a full time basis as a religious sister, and I waited for God's own time.

The MSMHC launched its mission in Hawaii in the year 2008. It was where I was born and raised. The then Superior General, Sr. Mary Thadavanal along with Sr. Mary Sebastian visited our parish in the beginning of the year 2008, and on the same year, in November Sr. Marykutty Mathew and Sr. Ruth Zonunthari arrived to start the

mission and they became part of our parish, the St. Joseph's Parish Family.

The presence of Sisters in the parish brought joy to all. It was a welcoming sight to see them in white religious habit. They reached out to the parishners, brought them joy, unity and gave new life to the parish. Sr. Ruth and her social ministry reached out to communities, not just for Catholics alone, but for all those who needed help.

Keeping in mind, my desire to serve Jesus, I approached Sr. Marykutty, expressing my interest to join them and she gladly accepted to forward my application to the headquarters of the Congregation. Six years have gone by since I joined the Congregation. I made my first profession at Bongaigaon, Assam on 8th December, 2014. Gratefully acknowledging the graces of God in my life, I move ahead to share the life with my sisters in the communities and with those whom I will encounter in the mission fields.

Juniorate Course a time of rejuvenation

Batch of 2013-14 receives course completion certificate.

The Junior Sisters of 2013-14 batch at Hatigaon completed their course of ten months in October 2014. The concluding day's programme was

marked on 15th October with the ceremony of awarding certificates to the Sisters. Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General, appreciated Sr. Asha Mao for her diligent accompaniment and congratulated the Sisters for their successful completion of the course. She presented to each of them the Course Completion Certificate along with the book, 'Catechism of the

Catholic Church'. The mark sheets were given out by Sr. Mary Perunilam, the Assistant General. Memories of the bygone days came alive as Sr. Rose Jolly James displayed the photographs of the various events of the year.

The ten-month long Juniorate course offered an enriching time of learning and togetherness for the Sisters professed in the year 2011. After

having lived two years of religious life in the communities, it was indeed a joy for them to be together in the Generalate House, to get further revamped for the future mission. For each of the 48 Sisters, it was a 'formative period' that brought in greater internalization leading to consolidation of attitudes, beliefs and values. The classes they had on various topics and the organized seminars and conferences were of great gain to broaden their minds to embrace their life with genuine love for God, Congregation and its mission.

Classes on 'Moral Theology' gave them practical knowledge to be prudent in life situations. It urged them to be human in their approach towards others to experience the closeness of God in their life. The classes on 'Missiology' presented before them some of the challenges such as plurality of religion, language, and lack of integral development, which they might encounter today in evangelizing.



Topics like Catechesis, Theology of religious life and History of religious life are among those they dealt with at length.

Having spent the ten months at Hatigaon, receiving many inputs, the Sisters feel better prepared to march forward to venture into the mission awaiting them. They are now filled with zeal and optimism, gratitude and love, prayers and good wishes, and good will to live for Christ. One of the Sisters from the batch, Sr. Joys

Immaculate said, "Our conviction in life is transformed and it has instilled in us a greater desire to strive after holiness. These ten months were a time of renewal, providing us with spiritual and intellectual growth." And, Sr. Esther Poumei exclaimed, "All of us are happy for the time we have spent together. As we disperse to different centers, we carry the memories of the beautiful days spent at Hatigaon."

Sr. Alphonsa David



New batch of Sisters begins Juniorate Course

The new batch of Junior Sisters arrived at Hatigaon on 15th December, 2014. The batch consisting of 31 Sisters from

different Provinces will undergo an intensive course of ten months' duration under the directorship of Sr. Jancy Joseph assisted by Sr. Rani Mathew. The entire programme is oriented to deepen their all-round formation and mission. Therefore, they will be given inputs on a number of topics by the experts in different fields.

Statue of Bishop Ferrando Installed

This year's celebration of the feast day of St. Stephen on 26th December was made memorable at the Generalate in Hatigaon by an installing of the statue of Bishop Stephen Ferrando by the Archbishop John Moolachira of Guwahati. The event was marked by special prayers and blessing of the statue, placed in front of the Generalate House on a well-furnished pedestal. The 6 feet tall statue of Bishop Ferrando was received as a gift from the Shillong Province on the occasion of the Province's Silver jubilee of erection as province.



The day's Holy Eucharist in the morning at 6.30 was presided over by the Archbishop John Moolachira. In his homily, Archbishop John spoke about the courage and wisdom of St. Stephen, the Saint and first martyr of the Church. Commenting on the zeal, commitment and passion of St. Stephen, he spoke of the edification and manifold advantages which the church received

from his martyrdom. He recalled the marvels done in the Church in Northeast India through the committed efforts of Bishop Stephen Ferrando, who toiled in its mission field.

The celebration of the day brought alive memories of the Father and Founder, whose patrimony of spiritual richness the Congregation enjoy today.



Christmas Day with the Kids from the Slums, Guwahati



The community of Hatigaon shared their Christmas joy with 250 underprivileged children from the slums of Guwahati. The children were received warmly by the Sisters of Little Flower, Hatigaon at their arrival in the campus on 25th morning. Those special guests of the Christmas day morning belonged to the Childrens' Club, formed for the children of the domestic workers from the slums of Bamunimaidan, Panbazar, Hatigaon and other areas of the Guwahati city. Spending the Christmas day with the underprivileged was thought out well in advance, with adequate planning and preparations by the Community of Hatigaon under the guidance of Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General. What moved the community for such a choice of action on an important day was the invitation of

Pope Francis to reach out to those who live in "peripheries".

Organization and transport of children from various slums were responsibly carried out by Sr. Rose Paite, the General Councillor for Social Apostolate along with the Sisters from the Centre for Development Initiatives (CDI) and other volunteers of the centre.

As the kids arrived in different groups, they were made to assemble at the lawn, in front of the house, and there they were given the opportunity to showcase their talents. A number of items were performed by them and they were entertained by the students of Little Flower and the Junior Sisters. Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General addressed the children in Hindi and expressed her joy of having them on that day. She spoke to them about the

importance of the day and inspired them to be transmitters of peace, joy and love.

The children were excited to receive gift packets, clothes and chocolates distributed by the Superior General and Sisters. They were beaming with joy as they were guided to have a sumptuous meal, prepared and served by the Sisters. At the end of the day's programme, as they were taking leave of the place, there was joy on every child's face. Though they did not utter any words of appreciation or thanks, one could see in them expressions of gratitude and joy. Much more was the joy and peace the Sisters felt within for having spent the time with those underprivileged. Certainly, this Christmas made a difference, leaving a lasting impression on all the members of Hatigaon community.



Editor : Sr. Shiji James, Published by: **MSMHC Generalate**, Little Flower Convent, Hatigaon
Guwahati - 781 038, Assam, India, +91 361 22 63631, 22 28601, msmhcghy06@gmail.com, www.msmhc.org
Designed & Printed at Luit Offset, Bamunimaidam, Guwahati - 781021

For private circulation only