HATIGAON TIDINGS

MSMHC GENERALATE - LITTLE FLOWER CONVENT, HATIGAON

Vol. 17.1 January - April 2018

We Greet our new Leaders



Sr. Christine Mynsong
Assistant General



Sr. Philomena Mathew
Superior General



Sr. Asha Dihe Mao
General Councilor for Formation



Sr. Bridget Diengdoh
General Councilor for Evangelization



Sr. Rose Hauniang Paite
General Councilor for Social Apostolate



Sr. Katherine Joseph
General Councilor for Education



Sr. Ancila Jose
Economer General



Capitulars of GC - IX 2018

FROM THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

Grace filled Days



Pondering on the grace filled days of the IX General Chapter evokes in us spontaneous outbursts of sincere gratitude to God who accompanied the capitulars as 'cloud by day and flame by night.' The entire MSMHC family participated in this historical event through incessant prayers offered for the smooth unfolding of the various proceedings of the chapter and for its fruitful completion. The Lord was ever gracious to the capitulars as he steered their hearts and minds, beaconing them to be "always more and always better" in their commitment to discipleship. The chapter was a clarian call to the entire congregation to 'put out into the deep' for a surprising catch. Although sailing through the turbulent waters of the present day challenges of consecrated life, the MSMHC ship keeps moving because the Master of the sea is in the ship, saving the ship from the danger of being drowned. How can we fittingly thank the Lord for His unfailing accompaniment of the congregation in spite of her many failures and setbacks? The IX General Chapter with its theme "radical renewal in our consecration and mission according to the vision of our Founder" has undoubtedly kindled new flames of enthusiasm to begin afresh our commitment to a radical living of our consecration and mission. While it fanned into flames the 'missionary trust' the very hallmark of the congregation, it also insisted on revamping the personal and collective commitment to holiness of life for effectiveness in mission. Besides, the Chapter has clearly articulated not only where we ought to go but also how to reach our desired goal for no matter how well we know where we are to go, if we miss the 'how' of it, we may miss also the goal or linger on along the wrong paths, delaying in reaching the goal.

The experience of the IX General Chapter was intense for both the capitulars and the entire congregation, bringing forth manifold blessings upon the congregation. The capitulators truly experienced the guidance of the Holy Spirit as they listened to Him in prayer and discernment, in the voice of their conscience, through the interventions of one another and the various proceedings of the chapter. The Chapter paused before the entire congregation serious questions on the life and mission of the congregation. The many reflective questions addressed at the chapter challenged every MSMHC to stop the tendency to pursue unconsciously the standards of the world, which often widens the gap between who we are and who we ought to be as consecrated persons with a special commitment to a specific mission, which God has entrusted to us. The only way to reduce this gap is to live our life authentically and consciously by facing the challenges with faith and courage, joy and optimism, always trusting in God who directs the destiny of the congregation.

We are invited to walk with Him overcoming every tendency to walk alone, always reminding ourselves 'if the Lord does not build the house, in vain the builders labour, and if the Lord does not watch over the city in vain do the watchman keep vigil. In vain will our early rising and going later to bed…" (Cf. 127: 1-2). As we remind ourselves of the great work of God in our lives, my earnest desire is that, we may more and more understand the need to follow the Lord, asking Him to walk before us so that having our eyes fixed on Him we may steadily walk the path of holiness. May we passionately and totally engage in the mission of the congregation, placing all that we are and all that have at the feet of the Lord so that He may 'use' us for His purpose and in the way he wants.

May we remain totally available to the Holy Spirit after the example of Mary our Blessed Mother and our Holy Founder, overcoming every hidden tendency to cling to our personal and private plans and projects without discerning them in them with the Lord in earnest prayer. May the fruits of this chapter be ever solid and lasting! May the Lord root out of our hearts every tendency that might strangle the growth of the congregation, making it stagnant in spite of the many efforts for a radical renewal! May every MSMHC assume personal responsibility to work earnestly to actualise our common venture towards a radical renewal in our consecration and mission according to the vision of our Founder!

Sr. Philomena Mathew
Superior General

GC IX – its journey

"Radical renewal in consecrated life and Mission according to the vision of our Founder"

The IX General Chapter with the theme, "Radical renewal in consecrated life and Mission according to the vision of our Founder" was held at Little Flower, Hatigaon from 02 – 30 January, 2018. It was attended by 45 capitulars from different provinces, delegation and region. With the arrival of the capitulars on 02 January, this landmark event began scripting a significant page in the history of the Congregation.

Preparatory Days

An enriching input sessions and spiritual exercises spanning from 3 – 14 January marked the preparatory days of the Chapter which set the ambience of the event conducive for radical renewal and change. The overarching objective of each session was to ensure a meaningful entry into the uncharted days of the Chapter with clarity and focus on its theme and goal.







Fr. Julian Fernandez SJ initiated the group focusing primarily on spiritual discernment which was indeed crucial in decision making.

Highlighting the most pivotal elements related to the theme of the Chapter, **Fr. Pascual Chavez SDB**, former Rector Major of Salesians of Don Bosco guided the Capitulars in retreat. Focusing on consecrated life and its various dimensions, his talks were challenging and inspiring to be true to the Founder and Don Bosco in living the Consecrated Life and mission in radicality founded on Gospel truths.

Sr. Inigo SSA, former Superior General of St. Anne's Congregation enabled the capitulars to open their inner eyes to the many challenges of Consecrated Life in the modern world and how to face these with a contemplative and prophetic stand.

Inauguration

The inaugural function held on 15 January set the stage ready for another milestone to a fruitful journey, paving the way to new perspectives and freshness in living the consecrated life as envisioned by Founder.

At 8. 45 am, the capitulars of GC IX along with Most Rev. John Moolachira, Archbishop of Guwahati and other invitees gathered in the Chapel for prayer and inspiration. Drawing inspiration from Founder's letter to the capitulars of the second General Chapter held in 1975, the assembly entrusted themselves to Jesus and sought for the assistance of Mother Mary.

After prayer for the success of







the Chapter, the assembly went in procession to Chapter hall led by Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General, carrying a lighted lamp and Sr. Nancy Augustine, General Councillor for Formation, carrying the Holy Bible, followed by the General Councillors, Provincials, Capitulars and the invitees as the resounding hymn to Founder "Let voices now be raised in song " echoed in melody.

A beautifully bedecked hall with creatively designed backdrop highlighting the theme, "Radical Renewal in Consecrated Life and Mission According to the Vision of our Founder", statue of Mary Help of Christians, portrait of Founder and inspirational quotes from the writings of Founder set a suitable ambience to the occasion. The Superior General placed the lighted lamp before the statue of Mary Help of Christians while Sr. Nancy Augustine placed the Holy Bible on a stand prepared at the centre of the stage to give prime place to the Word of God throughout the Chapter.

Reading of the Word of God from St. Jn 1:1-8 and a short reflection on it gave a befitting start to this august event. The lighting of the lamp symbolizing the light of Christ which would guide the proceedings of the Chapter, was officiated by Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General, Most Rev. John Moolachira, the Archbishop of Guwahati, and other prominent persons representing the close associates of the MSMHC.

As a mark of love and respect to Late Sr. Elizabeth Packumala, the Former Superior General and elected delegate of the 9th General Chapter, silence was observed for a minute.

A brief history on the growth of the Congregation over the past 75 years was followed by a grand march with the flags of various mission countries of the MSMHC's presence. Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General led the march carrying the Congregational flag escorted by NCC Cadre of Little Flower School.

The Chief Guest of the program and other dignitaries were accorded an official welcome by the Superior General and were honoured with phoolam gamocha.

The compere, Sr. Asha Mao officially invited the President of the Chapter, Sr. Philomena Mathew and Sr. Mercy Philip, the Moderator to take charge of the proceedings which was followed by declaration of the General Chapter IX open by the President.

The program went on with the presentation of messages from the dignitaries and special invitees. The message of Archbishop Giambattista Diquattro, Apostolic Nuncio to India read out by the Moderator, Sr. Mercy Philip encouraged the MSMHC to be ambassadors of compassion, humility, sweetness and simplicity towards the poorest and to remain rooted in the Charism and Spirit of the Founder.

Speaking on this remarkable occasion, Most Rev. John Moolachira, the Archbishop of Guwahati emphasized on the urgency to revisit the rich legacies and fond memories of the pioneers, to grasp the high ideals, vision and values which inspired them while living the consecrated life. He













beckoned the MSMHC to recommit once again to the people of God and to the mission of Christ in the present situation with renewed enthusiasm and zeal.

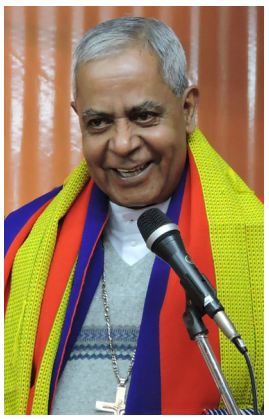
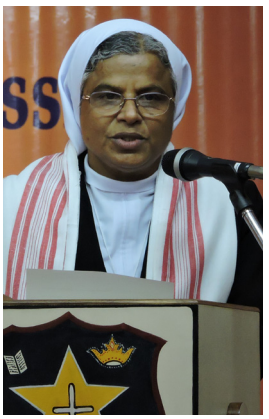
The message of Salesian Rector Major, Fr. Angel Fernandez Artime SDB read by Sr. Mary Thadavanal affirmed the relevance of the theme of the Chapter as it would undoubtedly put the Congregation in a movement of search for an ever greater fidelity as consecrated people who try to live in full harmony with the vision of Founder, fidelity in following Jesus, to 'embrace the future with hope 'and reach out to the existential peripheries of life.

In his inspiring speech, Fr. Pascual Chavez Villanueva, SDB, the former Rector Major of the Salesians of Don Bosco exhorted to start afresh from Christ according to the vision of Founder and become once again disciples who are docile to the voice and to the action of the Holy Spirit, who want to deepen the charismatic identity, the specific spirituality and the mission and the field of apostolate.

Fr. V. M Thomas SDB, the Salesian Provincial of Guwahati reiterated in his speech that those who are constructed on spiritual rock and who are retaining their essential and constitutive spiritual and historical identity will survive the test of time. Pointing to the present conflicting situation as challenges, he stressed on the need to encounter Christ with fresh enthusiasm and announce the Word of Hope and salvation to the people.

In her address, Sr. Elizabeth George FMA, the Provincial of Guwahati specified on the challenges to preserve the freshness of the charism, spirit and traditions inculcated by Founder and at the same time give a prophetic response to the current needs of the time.

Speaking on this significant event, Sr. Jancy Francis, SMI, Provincial Superior of North East Province called on to generously dedicate to the mystical and prophetic dimension of the call in the postmodern era and




revitalize the vision of Founder.

Tracing the root of MSMHC spirituality to Founder, Don Bosco, St. Francis De Sales which is ultimately linked to Jesus and God the Father, Fr. George Panthanmackal MSFS, the Provincial of North East Province defined the call of MSMHC as the Divine call for divine mission which is made fruitful by God's grace.

Representing the MSMHC Past Pupils Association, Miss Bedasri Sarmah highly applauded the Congregation for effectuating its calling with dedication and selflessness. She expressed support and solidarity for the Congregation's noble task which paves the way for many to grow up as useful citizens with values.

Acknowledging the YAC movement as instrumental in leading



many young people to the right path, Mr. Khrawkupar Kharsyntiew, representative of Young Apostle of Christ (YAC) emphasized on preaching and sharing God's unconditional love for everyone as God's plan.

Terming the start of Women Apostle for Catechesis (WAC) as an enterprising step, Miss Deviflora Pariong, delegate of WAC thanked the Congregation for the movement as it is a platform for faith formation and training in the field of evangelization and building up of the Church and the society.

The message of Most Rev. Dominic Jala, the Archbishop of Shillong read by Sr. Christine Mynsong highlighted on the urgency to be opened to the questions and concerns of the people and the need to undertake new initiatives and demonstrate the vitality and relevance of Founder's Charism in the Church of our time.

The inaugural session ended at 10.50 am with the vote of thanks proposed by Sr. Lisa Chetri .



Orientation Talk

Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General presented the orientation talk on the first day of the Chapter. Stressing on the great responsibilities placed on the capitulars to contribute to the common good she invited them to have the right inner disposition to wake up to a radical living of consecration and mission. She challenged to part with the familiar shores of material, sociological, psychological and spiritual securities ad move into the depth, trusting only in Him who is the master of the sea and ever present on the boat of everyone's life.

Presentation on the state of the Congregation

Taking stock of the Congregation in all its dimensions, a comprehensive report on the state of the Congregation (2012 - 2017) presented by Superior General helped trace and focus on graced moments in the life of the Congregation and a thousand reasons to thank God – *'It was a journey with the Lord who went ahead of us at times as 'a pillar of cloud,' and at other ties accompanying us like 'a pillar of fire'... '*

Sr. Ancila Jose, Economer General presented the financial status of the Congregation.

Sr. Mercy Philip, the Moderator presented a Working Document dealing with various issues, strengths and weaknesses related to life of consecration and mission





In put sessions



Fr. V.T Jose: "Every returning to the origin of the MSMHC Charism must make the present MSMHCs to ask themselves how they can respond in the present I a renewed fidelity to the original Charism to the challenges of consecration, mission, education and evangelization."

Sr. Rosita Joseph: " At this historic time of our Congregation we, the Missionary Sisters are called to live the magnanimity, equilibrium and intuitive qualities of Bishop Ferrando so that we will carry on the precious legacy of our missionary charism to all peoples, places and situations, with fidelity,





creativity and apostolic dynamism."

Sr. Jancy Joseph : " Mere proclamation of the values of Jesus Christ will not make us true followers of Christ, it is only by living these values, struggling day in and out to be faithful, identifying with both cross and resurrection in the joy and pain of life's encounters that will really 'brand' the disciple as authentic and real. "

Flipping through various apostolates











A brief report presented by General Councilors in charge of various apostolates stated on the new ventures, challenges and visions accomplished for the past six years.

Sr. Mary Perunilam, Assistant General focused on the implementation of GC 8 policies through various programmes.

Sr. Jane Francis, General Councilor for Education spoke on the educative mission of the Congregation, Founder's vision especially for the poor children.

Sr. Christine Mynsong, General Councilor for Evangelization emphasized on the great role played by YAC and WAC in sharing the evangelizing mission of the Congregation.

Sr.Nancy Augustine, general Councilor for Formation dealt with minute details of the formation programmes and some of the major concerns of formation.

Sr. Rose Paite, General Councilor for Social Apostolate spoke of the apostolate spreading out its wings gradually to women, girls and children and the most vulnerable section of the society.



Election of the new team (2018 – 2023)

Being the day of election of the new Superior General and her team, 27 January was a decisive day that marked a new beginning in the history of the Congregation. A day of recollection and prayer observed prior to the election set an ambience for openness to the Holy Spirit and discernment.

Sr. Philomena Mathew was re-elected as the Superior General for the second term. The new team was greeted with showers of blessings, songs, bouquets, gamochas and shawls by the community sisters of Hatigaon. Some sisters from the neighbouring communities and other congregations nearby too came to greet the new leaders.







In an hour of thanksgiving adoration, the newly elected Superior General and her team as well as the outgoing General Councilors went in procession with lighted candles and symbolically the outgoing members handed over the lighted candles to the newly elected who placed those at the altar. The outgoing members: Sr. Mary Perunilam, Sr. Nancy Augustine and Sr. Jane Francis were specially thanked for their committed service during their term of office. At the end of the adoration, the Superior General and the newly elected General Councilors took the oath of office witnessed by Sr. Nancy and Sr. Jane Francis.

The Holy Eucharist



Celebration of the Holy Eucharist every day of Chapter was the source of spiritual strength and life and the homilies served as inspiration and guide.

Most Rev. John Moolachira, Archbishop of Guwahati: He portrayed Moses as the most humble man in the scripture, who always stayed close to God and was empowered as the leader of Israel. He said that, staying close to God and remaining humble is essential for good leadership.

Most. Rev. Thomas Menamparampil SDB, Archbisop Emeritus of Guwahati: Centering his thought on the person of Jesus and highlighting the richness of the Gospel as the ultimate resource, he emphasized on tapping the inner resources, individual commitment and religious loyalty for vitality of the mission.

Most Rev. Akasius Toppo, Bishop of Tezpur: Highlighting the significance of unity terming it as the beauty of vocation wherein the members live, work and conquer together,he spoke of the need to be rooted in Christ to stand against the forces of evil.

Most Rev. Dominic Jala, Archbishop of Shillong: Speaking on the significance of the Ark of the Covenant in the life of the Israelites, which was the symbol of strength, joy and the assurance of victory against the enemy, he drew a parallel between the Ark of the Covenant and the Constitution of the Congregation which is the stronghold and guide, giving a unigue identity to the members along the journey.

Fr. V. M. Thomas SDB, Provincial of Guwahati : He warned of the danger of getting stagnated if the Congregation does not confront the realities of today in an enlightened way and emphasized on adapting changes with renewed attitude towards new and pressing problems which we encounter.

Fr. George Maliekal SDB, Provicnial of Shilllong: He stated enthusiasm as an important criterion

for effective missionary endeavours. He said that enthusiasm will rejuvenate the mission and charism; and vibrancy of the Congregation depends on vibrant members.

Fr. Arul SJ, Provincial of North East India Province: He said that conviction comes from deep within which will enable one to withstand opposition. It is important to uphold the Constitution to keep the institution relevant.

Fr. Stephen Mavely SDB, Vice Chancellor of Assam Don Bosco University, Guwahati : He commented on God's choice of David, the youngest son with no experience to be the King of Israel who knew the heart of God and understood his kingship as a means of service and compassion.

Fr. VT Jose SDB, the Facilitator of the Chapter : He focused on God's might which subdues the power of the world. Drawing a parallel between King David and the Congregation as believers chosen to do God's will, he emphasized on the need of facing the forces, challenges and attractions of the world with the strength of God.

Fr. George Poovathinkal MSFS: Highlighting the three challenges plaguing consecrated life, i.e, crisis of identity, individualism and cooling of fervor, he stressed the need to live a life focused on God and others in the context of today's world which is questioning the relevance and credibility of religious life.

Good Night Talks

Good Night Talks given by the Major Superiors kept on binding the members together in one heart and mind, creating a couch for greater focus and renewal.

Excerpts from the Good night talks:

- Solitude is a necessity to enter into deep reflection like that of the Blessed Mother Mary so as to understand the will of God and know His ways to make the Congregation alive and vibrant.\
- It is important to recognize everyone with the attitude of Jesus, build bridges instead of walls to maintain good relationship.\
- It is essential to become creative in the proclamation of the Good News.\
- Welcome love in our hearts and communities and reach out to others in love and seek only God's glory.\
- Radical renewal in consecrated life and mission will take place only when one becomes another Christ and see Christ in the community members.\
- Mission to be considered a co - responsibility by the members of the community.\
- Allow the faith, love and commitment of Founder to influence every aspect of life in the Congregation.\
- Transcending his human feelings Bishop Ferrando remained graceful nourished by his interior life of prayer.\
- The touch of Jesus brings healing and wholeness.

Valedictory Function





The Valedictory Session held at 6.00 pm was a moment of prayer and thanksgiving for the past days of the Chapter. An audio visual displayed gave vent to the deep-seated gratitude to God for His marvelous interventions and abiding presence.

It being a moment of gratitude, special thanks were offered to Fr. V.T.



Jose, the Facilitator; Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General and her Councillors; Sr. Mercy Philip, the Moderator; Drafting Committee, Chapter Secretaries and Hatigaon community. Sr. Jane Francis on behalf of the outgoing General Councillors addressed the gathering and thanked everyone for their cooperation during their tenure. A flash back of few photos enabled the capitulars to re-live the bygone days of the Chapter.

The official handing over of the Chapter file was done by Sr. Rose Sharon, one of the Chapter Secretaries to the Moderator Sr. Mercy Philip who in turn handed over the same to Superior General Sr. Philomena Mathew the President of the Chapter. The Moderator expressed her sentiments of thanks to all for making the Chapter a time of renewal. Thereafter, gratefully acknowledging the concerted effort of all the capitulars and all the others towards the fruitful completion of the Chapter, the President declared the Chapter closed.

The assembly then proceeded to the Chapel intoning the hymn to Founder led by Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General with lighted lamp and Sr. Christine Mynsong, the Asst. General carrying the Holy Bible, the Provincials and others carrying flags representing various countries of MSMHC presence.

In his concluding message, Fr. V.T. Jose said that General Chapter document and its proposals become effective in the life of the congregation, its communities and individuals in the measure we encounter Jesus Christ in communion with the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Thereafter, the capitulars made an act of entrustment to Mary Help of Christians, received the Chapter souvenir from the hand of the Superior General and received the light of Christ from the lighted lamp which symbolized Christ.

Thus, the historic moment of the ninth General Chapter crossed the threshold and sealed its page in the annals of the Congregation.







In Appreciation of you...

"At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us." Albert Schweitzer

A note of thanks and appreciation to Sr. Mary Perunilam, Assistant General, Sr. Nancy Augustine, General Councilor for Formation, Sr. Jane Francis, General Councilor for Education for their dedicated service as General Council members for 12 years. Creating a spark through their enthusiasm in mission, relentless help, leadership quality, genuine care and love for the Congregation, they lighted the flame within many souls.



Sr. Mary Perunilam



Sr. Nancy Augustine



Sr. Jane Francis

Dear Sisters, with efficiency and competence, you accomplished the mission with great zeal. Your life steeped in values and the rich contributions you have made graced the history of the Congregation. Being stalwart leaders and inspiring personalities, you steered the Congregation to great heights in line with Founder's vision and Charism of the MSMHC. Thank You for leaving the footprints of unbounded love and service.

Thank You ...



Sr. Philo Simon

Little Flower community, Hatigaon organized gratitude day on 23rd April 2018 for Sr. Philo Simon, the Superior of the Community who was assigned to a new mission in the province of Tinsukia. The rich contributions she had rendered in generous service graced the community and the Congregation.

"I ask only one thing of you to be always renewed in your religious life of consecration to our Lord Jesus Christ. "

- Bishop Ferrando

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