

Annual Gathering of the Temporary Professed Sisters

At Carmel Haven, Pune



The Annual gathering of the temporary professed sisters was held in Pune at Carmel Haven from 22nd February to 17th March 2016. Out of 29 Temporary Professed Sisters nineteen were able to attend the whole programme. We came from seven states of India and had been looking forward to meet one another with our directress. We were happy to welcome Sr. Julia from East Asia Province who attended with us the session on the year of Mercy. She came for her international experience for six months.

The first session was the sharing of the 'Formators' meeting held in the Philippines and it was conducted by Srs. Mariam, Resi, Kala and Latha. Some of our leanings were:-

- We learned the importance of respecting the richness and diversity of our culture. Though we come from different backgrounds, we live together accepting and upholding one another with our vulnerability and striving towards the fulfillment of our mission of reconciliation.
- We were happy to accept the new knowledge that anyone who is part of our mission is our lay partner.
- The session on accompaniment gave us the insights in the way Jesus accompanied many persons and how they were led to be transformed.
- We learnt that discernment needs to become a habit in our daily living and the importance of entering into one's own core to make proper decisions.
- Another learning was the need to be sensitive to the needs of the community members and live joyful lives of loving service.

We were happy to attend the province meet with the senior sisters on 'Administration for Mission' by Sr. Yolanda; the Congregational



Treasurer. She had special love for the temporary professed Sisters. She gave us the opportunity to share our views and raise the doubts for clarification. The group discussions on various themes created an interest and passion for the learning. Some of the insights and leanings that we received from this session were:-

- God is the owner and we are the stewards. Whatever the talents we have we need to return to God with increase because we need to save for the future generation.
- All of us have the co responsibility in our mission and administration.
- The purpose of Centralization is the expression of being 'one body with many parts' for the mission.
- It is good to have a Centralized Financial System to bring about distribution of funds according to the needs of each community and its mission.
- We need to have the "we feeling" among ourselves and transform our mind set to create a life giving atmosphere for the growth and development of each person in our communities".

From 27th to 29th February 2016 we had the Echo session of the 30th Congregational Chapter by Sr. Sabina and Sr. Silvia.

The reflection papers of Br. Phillip Pinto were very rich and deep

Our learnings are:

If we decide really to live for others, then we have a future.

- The place where we are right now is sacred place.
- We need to learn that nothing is so sacred that cannot be questioned because our hearts grow hard from lack of questioning and doubt.
- God is not only in the church but he is also in the street, God is not a pious God but he is fire.
- Life is a sacred journey that is held and surrounded by mystery. It is also a call to go beyond our comfort zone.
- We are not just made by God, we are made of God.
- May our life preach more loudly than our lips! Walk the talk!



- **Doing what is right even when it is difficult. For any growth let go attitude is necessary.**
- **Stop waiting for things to happen but go out and make them happen.**
- **Without the cross we are not the disciples of the Lord, we are worldly.**
- **God created man in God's image but man created God in his / her image. Heal the past, live the present and dream for the future.**

Two days was spent in reflecting about the importance of the growth assessment. We were led by Sr. Mariam towards personal and group reflection in this process of assessing our growth. We were made aware of the expectation of the Province from us, the temporary professed sisters. We put down steps that we need to take for our growth. This session was very challenging and growth promoting.

Fr. Paul Raj the professor from JDV Pune took sessions on Pope Francis' Encyclical letter "Merciful like the Father" for the year of Mercy. He explained the 25 paragraphs of the Encyclical letter with scriptural references from the Old Testament and the New Testaments. The Church today needs the most 'is the ability to heal the wounds and to warm the hearts of the people' was an eye opener for us to embrace our own vulnerability and to be merciful to our brothers and sisters who are around us. We felt that the year of mercy is the opportunity for us to be a little more patient, merciful and compassionate with our sisters in the community, the children, girls, women and the lay mission partners in our apostolate. He also inspired us on the topics on the 'Dharma of Jesus' and on 'Prayer'.

- **The word Dharma is not a Hindu understanding of Jesus but an Indian Christian understanding of Jesus. It is a way of life based on ethics and religion. It is also a way of life implying a world view, values and conduct.**
- **Jesus had the ABBA experience of the Father and He realized that God is free and He is a freeing God. So, during His time Jesus was freely moving around the villages healing the sick, raising the dead and proclaiming the good news to the poor. This class challenged us and we were able to reflect on the questions, 'Am I really free, open and how**



deeply do I relate to my neighbor?’

- Some of our leanings on the session on prayer were the types of the prayers in the Old Testament and New Testament. There is no commandment on prayer but there is an invitation to pray. Jesus often went to lonely places to be alone with the Father and sought guidance for His mission.
- We were given orientation on personal prayer, community prayer, intercessory prayer, thanks giving and the prayer for forgiveness. We were happy to know that the ‘Our Father’ is divided into two parts; the first three lines are called as YOU prayer, since they referred to God and the rest of the prayer is OUR prayer as it referred to our needs.

The input session by Fr. Michael SDB on religious life and vows, community life, Time Management, and Spiritual direction made us to appreciate the preciousness of our call and the need to respond to it in a mature way. We were also fortunate to learn the new method of the setting one’s own personal plan in various aspects namely Human, Intellectual, Spiritual and pastoral. The group discussions on community life gave us the space to share some of our strengths, limitations and difficulties in community living.

The annual retreat by Fr. Amrith Raj was something unique and very spiritual. We learnt quotations from the Bible, increased our love for scripture and gained much knowledge on Jesus life’s journey. It challenged us to be faithful followers and true witnesses to the Gospel. The time spent in silence and prayer nourished our soul.

We had a wonderful time together and refreshed ourselves as we spent a whole day out in visiting a few places of importance in Pune.

This one month gathering gave us opportunity to co - learn through sacred space conversation, integrating the insights we gained that helped us to understand the need to be effective religious in today’s world.

We Thank Sr. Sabina the Province Leader and her team who set aside this whole month for us to deepen our relationship with God and one another. We are grateful to Sr. Mariam our Directress for her zeal for formation, her nurturing accompaniment and patience in the



process of our growth. We thank our community leaders and the members for their timely guidance and support. A big thanks to all who guided, enlightened and helped us during our stay at Carmel haven. Thank you Oh wonderful God our Father.

Temporary professed sisters

