

Blessed Maria Droste – Novitiate

Mangalagiri



Our Mother Foundress, St. Mary Euphrasia says to the Novices “Our dear Lord has always given us special proof of His love. From the very beginning He has sent us subjects according to His Heart, religious full of zeal and enthusiasm. What a fervent Novitiate it has been, a school of holiness!”

It is a great joy for the Novices to experience the school of holiness in following her footsteps in the form of prayer and in contemplation here in Maria Droste Novitiate at Good Shepherd Convent, Mangalagiri. We are privileged to have Blessed Maria Droste as the Patroness of our Novitiate, who had a great devotion to the Heart of Jesus. May her blessings be upon our Novices.

On 31st July 2015 two of our second year Novices, Srs.Divya and Maria, who were undergoing their formation in the South West Province, Bangalore, under the guidance of Sr.Preethi, the Formator of the Jeevan Jyothi Novitiate, having completed their two years Novitiate, came back to their respective Province, Central East India/Nepal, to make their First Profession in Maria Droste Novitiate, Mangalagiri.

Indeed it was a great joy for the Province Of Central East India/Nepal to witness this event on the Birthday of our Mother Foundress, St.Mary Euphrasia. Our Province Leader Sr. Sabina Pathrose, and her team, Srs Mariam, Aruna, Pushpa, and Mercy

George, and a few of our sisters from various communities were present for their First Commitment in religious Life. It was a great event, to thank God for their call to our Province and for all the Blessings that we received. To add to the joy of the day there was the Initiation Ceremony of three of our Novices, Jenifa, Kavitha, and Sujatha who began their Novitiate.

In the Novitiate, the prayers, contemplation and interior silence were given much importance to the Novices. Various classes in our novitiate and inter-novitiate were a great help for the novices. They were privileged to attend Inner Child Sessions in Dindugul, followed by nine days Ashram Experience at Shantivanam, Trichy, Tamil Nadu. The Novices expressed that it was a great help to know themselves deeper and to recognize their potentials to live their life meaningfully. Ashram Experience enabled the Novices to be in touch with themselves, with nature and with God. There was a lot of learning from Indian Spirituality.



Here we would like to present the personal experiences of two of our novices at Maria Droste Novitiate.

A Novice expresses her personal and lived experiences of her Novitiate by quoting from the conference of our Mother Foundress St. Mary Eupharsia who says to the Novices: “Your Novitiate is the richest time of your life. It is worth gold and diamonds”



“Yes I can say that my Novitiate life is very rich and precious. I cherished every moment, every day and night here with God, sisters and my companions. I experienced and can truly

testify that novitiate is a real place to encounter God at every moment of life. St. Mary Eupharsia says “You can no more live a spiritual life without an interior spirit” than a fish can live out of water” so I beg you to learn how to live an interior life during your novitiate” Since the last two years in the Novitiate we are learning and we live an interior life and to be a reflected person. During these years I can see the change in my spiritual life. My prayer life is strengthened and I have deepened my faith in the Lord, my Shepherd. I encounter Him and listen to Him through the Word of God and through my personal prayer. The Eucharist became part of my life and I find meaning in every Eucharistic celebration as I participate in it daily.

Novitiate not only helped me to grow in my spiritual life but also helped me to grow intellectually, emotionally, psychologically through various sessions and experiences. Many classes on various topics helped me to widen my knowledge”.

Another Novice expresses her Interior life in the Novitiate “Abide in me as I abide in you” (Jn 15) this is the invitation Jesus offers to us who wish to follow him. I responded to his invitation as I entered the Novitiate on 31st July 2015. Prayer is the source of my life. I encounter God in my Personal prayer, in meditation, in the gospel, in the Eucharist, in the Spirit and in the traditions of our Congregation. The community prayers and faith sharing help me to deepen my faith and my love for Jesus. I receive personal accompaniment and guidance from my formator to understand and to live my vocation faithfully. Also the spiritual guidance helps me and shapes me to be a good spiritual person. As our Mother Foundress says in her conference “Novitiate is the Nursery for the Religious life”. The 1st year of Novitiate taught me “who I am and



the purpose of my life". Through the various classes and seminars I have grown intellectually, spiritually, psychologically and emotionally. The study of the lives of St. Mary Euphrasia, St. John Eudes and Blessed Maria Droste and the Conferences and Constitutions, helped me to know the spirit and the mission of our congregation. The sessions on sacred space, four capacities, sexuality and Inner Child Healing enabled me to understand each person's dignity as child of God and take responsibility for my own life. Many opportunities were provided to bring out my talents, capabilities such as acting out the narrations from the Gospel, lives of saints and sages, presentations and handicrafts. By living together I learnt to accept others with their strengths and weaknesses. I experienced love, concern, support and the warmth in the community and also there were challenges, difficulties and struggles which I realized is part of everyone's life.

The three second year novices, went for their apostolic community experience where they were given opportunities to combine community life and the ministry. It was for them a fruitful and growth enabling experience. They learnt to be effective and life giving persons in their calling.

As a community we had gone for a day's outing to the Holy Land in Eluru Andhra Pradesh and to Gunadala - Our Lady's Shrine.

**Srs. Cecilia, Anthoniammal and Novices
Mangalagiri**