

## Making Music Together

The province of Central East India Nepal celebrated Neuvillites Day (Celebrating Mission Partners) on 4th September 2021, organised by Mrs. Sashi Natarajan and team. This day rejuvenates our partnership where every sister and partner-in-mission renew their commitment for mission.

We were proud to celebrate this event on a digital platform along with the communities of Central East India Nepal, spanning over six local languages.

Life is like music, some on high notes, some in the lower notes but always a beautiful synchrony. Like an orchestra which comprises a group of instrumentalists, we



come from different walks of life as a symphony. The octave relationship is a natural phenomenon which is always referred to as the basic miracle of music. Likewise, the mission partners are called to perform miracles in the life of others with the theme for the event “Making Music Together”. Let us harmonize and celebrate relationships for mission effectiveness. We had a synchronised event with pre-recorded videos of mission partners' sharing their voices about the joys and strengths of partnership.



*Making Music Together*



**Good Shepherd  
CEIN**

**Neuvillites Day**

**04/09/2021**

## Good Shepherd CEIN TV

The crux of the event was the interview of sisters and lay on their journey together in "GS CEIN TV Channel". We had a few eminent personalities who worked tirelessly for mission effectiveness, who stirred our spirits up and made us be a better partner in mission: Sr. Pushpa Louis CEIN province Leader, Sr. Deanna the cornerstone for the evolution of partnership in India, Sr. Neticia young, vibrant and energetic sister representing the young religious of CEIN at the forthcoming Congregational Chapter, Hazel Tabak a dedicated and enthusiastic partner from Good Shepherd Mumbai, Mary Fathima, a humble and efficient soul who has been in our Good Shepherd family for more than 24 years working on various projects giving her best at Mangalagiri, Mr. Govinda, a man who thinks that gender equality is not just a female fight but a human fight, the Program Manager of Good Shepherd International Foundation Nepal. Following are the some of the inspiring responses of the speakers:

### **Hazel Tabak:**

1. **What are the qualities of the Good Shepherd that has attracted you to be a mission partner?**

Piety, Sincerity, humility, empathy, exceptional prayer life, valuing others above themselves, unity in diversity, the capacity for feeling for another's unhappiness or misfortune are some of the qualities that have attracted me to be a mission partner. I have personally witnessed and experienced all of this over the years.

The Good Shepherd people spent considerable time, attending to people who were seeking their help, they would be patiently and willingly giving them a listening ear. This mission led me to think that these are true disciples of Jesus and that they were leading a meaningful ministry of Mother Euphrasia.

2. **How has it impacted your personal life?**

Honestly, I don't know how and why I was one day guided to the doors of the Good Shepherd Convent. Initially I had decided to spend an hour or so of my free time working for the underprivileged but in due course, after witnessing the work of the Good Shepherds, I was touched and impelled. This brought about a great emphasis on helping me grow in my relationship with Jesus to the sacraments and the word of God and in service to humanity.

They helped me restore faith in myself. And through this I have experienced and learned from our sisters that accepting suffering from the Lord is sweet surrender. Today I am a better, stronger and a much fulfilled person.

On a closing note, I will dare to say that over the years we, the Good Shepherds, know the pulse of our sheep, and this is what the church and community really need, especially now during the post covid world.



### **SR. DEANNA**

1. **Is there any unforgettable memory that you shared with any lay partner? Can you please share it with us?**

In 2008 we had the first Asia Pacific lay partners meeting in Kuala Lumpur. We were 8 in all 3 sisters, 2 male partners and 3 female partners. It was the first time lay and sisters were coming together. We in India had not done anything in this regard. We just chose some folk and went, religion no bar. For the first time the other provinces were pushed to think outside the box of Catholic lay partners. They were questioning Sashi and Dr. Giri as to how they joined and asking us how this is possible. We told them charism is not confined only to Catholics. All religions promote compassion, mercy and love. For all of us it was a beautiful experience. Before the meeting the men were separated from us, we women had a flat to ourselves and plenty of space so after the meeting we told the organisers we would stay together. Once again they were surprised. We shared space with the men and had a real bonding. From there started our partnership journey. A dream I had was that we should consider all our staff teaching, non-teaching, gardener, driver, cook etc, as partners, as without them we cannot function. Finally, in 2015 I was delighted my dream had come true.

At the beginning, it was not an easy task at all. The concept was not understood by either the sisters or the lay. Both were reluctant. Sisters felt- why should the lay be given any preference? It was not preference but recognition as partners. They were saying:

'Why are you giving so much importance to so and so what great work is he/she doing?' The positions of the sisters were threatened. They thought they would lose out if Lay Partners are given importance. No amount of referring them to the beginnings of our congregation was sufficient. We tried to make them understand that our ministries without lay partners cannot exist. Lay Partners felt reluctant to collaborate because of the negative vibrations from the sisters. But continuous formation sessions and efforts have brought us to where we are today. Do not think that we have succeeded, there is still a long way to go. The younger ones still think they are the bosses and do not fully accept and understand partnership but it will come. Till then both sides have to be patient.



### **Mary Fathima**

#### **1. What has changed for you in the way you have been associated with the Good Shepherd over 24 years?**

“Gratitude is the memory of the heart”

I am happy and privileged to share my feelings and experience in Good Shepherd Convent. Before I could join, I had no knowledge about social service. After joining slowly, I started to learn about the vision and mission of the congregation. With the same spirit I took an interest in working in the field. I started to work with the women in a self-help group giving awareness on different topics along with the sisters. We used to go in the evening to conduct meetings and give awareness on acts; we stayed in the village at night and came back in the morning. During these visits, the sisters encouraged me and gave me an opportunity to learn. I also worked in the legal cell as a fact finder. After the awareness and family counselling to the broken family to become one made me more satisfied and happy. I also worked as a field worker in Karunalayam for rescuing the children from various places. I feel happy and it is an opportunity to develop in the field. The growth of Good Shepherd sisters increased village level to district wide

I learned to work with more enthusiastic dedication and became a partner of Good Shepherd Sisters. This Congregation gave me courage to move forward. I used to participate in meetings in various places like Bangalore, Chennai, Salem, Bellary and Goa and was able to meet different people and got an opportunity to develop in my career. At present I am working as a Community organizer in Chalice Project. I am happy and satisfied to work with orphan and poor children to educate them; to give awareness on health and family development. I am able to conduct the meetings in the villages very courageously and motivate the parents. The encouragement, supportive contributions of the Good Shepherd Sisters helped me to develop in all aspects over these years. Once again I express my sincere heartfelt thanks to Good Shepherd Sisters.



## **SR. NETICIA**

**1. You have lived in India and Nepal; you have varied experience of lay partnership. How has it been, we are curious to know?**

My experience of Mission Partnership is like 'offer for limited time' but with a strong USP (unique selling proposition). It was fun and enriching moments of working together with Lay Mission Partners of two countries even though it was a short time. It gave me an opportunity to contribute and work as a GS team for the GS mission with love and commitment and also widen my knowledge on partnership for mission effectiveness.

**2. As a young religious person, how do you look at the significance of partnership for mission?**

In the beginning the partnership concept was new for me, but in the course of time my understanding has developed. Partnership for mission is a great step that our congregation has taken. And in our province it is fairly implemented. For me the partnership in mission is not just of some religious but it is the involvement of the persons of different walks of life. This partnership in mission gives one goal and mission which is founded on love and this brings all of us together. It is walking together to do marvel - that is 'joy of togetherness in GS mission'.



## **Mr. GOVINDA BHATTARIA**

**1. Being a man... How is it to work for women empowerment with the women fraternity?**

Let me begin with the saying of Mother Foundress St. Mary Euphrasia "A person is more valuable than the whole world". As the Good Shepherd mission intends to reach the most vulnerable, poor and marginalized ones especially women and girls, I understand this opportunity as a privilege to me to work for the mission with Good Shepherd International Foundation and Good Shepherd Sisters. As social work is my passion, I feel it is a blessing to be in the position where I could contribute to the empowerment of women through the Good Shepherd mission together with sisters.

**2. Where do you like to find this partnership in the mission leading you to in the next decade?**

I am very much hopeful that the mission will flourish in other most needed parts and areas in the coming decade. Through the mission, many girls and women will get protection, justice, skills and support for livelihood and have their capacity enhanced to be socially as well as economically empowered. The understanding, coordination and cooperation amongst mission partners and the units will deepen to have sustainable impact in the lives of people, especially girls and women.

This event was followed by a short entertainment to soothe the soul "Let's sing together" and there was deep learning through the point of view shared in an orchestra where even a typewriter found a place in the symphony.

Renewal requires opening ourselves to new ways of thinking and feeling. With great delight, in the presence of this august gathering, we had the solemn part of the program the 'Renewal of our commitment towards partnership in mission'.

The event concluded with a thank you note and a message from Euphrasia the Musical recalling Mr. Julian Pelletier saying to his daughter Rose Virgine "Be the light in someone's day"

Truly, you, me, we can work together. We are propelled to carry this message into action in and through our lives in carrying forward our mission.



Link for the videos: sharing their voices about the joys and strengths of partnership.

[Joy of Sharing - YouTube](#)

[Making Music together - YouTube](#)

[Creators of new world - YouTube](#)

[Together in Mission - YouTube](#)