

# Report of Maria Droste Novitiate-Mangalagiri

St. Teresa of Avila says that she was the most grateful woman in the world, a characteristic of her high sanctity. With true humility she inspired her sisters saying "Gratitude is not a virtue in me, but a natural instinct. It is how I am made; in fact, if one were to give me a sardine, I would feel an affectionate gratitude towards the giver."

As the Congregation joyfully celebrates the 220th birth anniversary of St. Mary Euphrasia, we, the Sisters and Novices of Maria Droste Novitiate feel happy to express our sincere gratitude to the Lord Almighty for all the graces and blessings He so generously bestowed on us during this year 2016-2017.

We thank the Shepherd God for our young sisters Benoshiya, Benito, and Rosita who made their first commitment on 30<sup>th</sup> of July 2016 during the solemn celebration of the Eucharist, presided over by Rev. Fr. Stanley S.J. and fifteen concelebrants. The presence of Sr. Sabina Pathrose, our Province Leader and her team and the sisters from many communities will be gratefully cherished for years to come. Congratulations dear newly professed and may you walk in the footsteps of Jesus the Good Shepherd all your life long.



In the evening of the same day we had the Initiation Ceremony for three of our Pre-Novices, Divya, Sandhiya and Rupa. They had a very solemn entry into the Novitiate during the Prayer Service conducted by Sr. Julia Mary, the Directress of the Pre-Novices and attended by many of our sisters from the Province. As we thank God for their vocation, we pray that He may form them for His Mission in today's world.



In the month of August, five of our Novices attended the Inter Novitiate classes with 103 other Novices of various Women and Men Religious Congregations. The theme of the sessions was the 'Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist'.

Two of our second year novices had their apostolic community experience in our communities. I am grateful to both the communities for their accompaniment of our young ones.

Three of our first year novices had their regular classes, presentations on various current social issues and debates. Every Sunday the novices enact the lives of saints and sages.

Some of the resource persons who generously offered to take sessions for the novices are:

**Sr.Usha Varghese – Constitutions of our Congregation.**

**Sr.Rosily Malpan who shared her experiences and insights on Vowed life and Community, Conferences of our Mother Foundress**

**Fr.Jeya Raj SJ – Spiritual Director for the Novices. He also sees to the monthly recollection combined with the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Spiritual direction.**

**Sr.Deanna –Classes on St.John Eudes**

**Sr.Maria Rose- Gender Discriminations' and Women's Empowerment**

**Sr.Lucy George-Health and Hygiene**

**Sr.Mariam- Sessions on Discipleship and Christian vocations**

**Fr.Bala from Vijayawada Diocese – Christian Spirituality & Discernment**



**Sr. Deepti -- Shared her experiences of religious life and ministry in Andhra Pradesh  
Mr. Sathyan- MDO-Manager - On Leadership, Self esteem, and Social Analysis -and the present situation of India**

**Congregational Leadership Team members Srs Josita Corera and Frances Robinson visited the Novitiate and spent valuable time with the Novices listening to their life experiences.**



**We sincerely thank them for their contribution towards the formation of our Novices.**

**Our Novices actively participated in celebrating International Women's day and Human Rights' Day. The Novices were specially invited by the Women's Desk –President Mrs. Leela Kumari –A well known advocate of Guntur Diocese. Our Novices do get ample opportunities to witness to many Religious programs and Inter Novitiate Classes.**

**Apart from the planned novitiate programme the Novices are provided with opportunities to learn handicrafts, tailoring, singing, gardening and games. It is very satisfying to see the growth, development and the positive changes that have taken place in them as persons and in their religious orientation. We thank God for His care of us.**



**Rupa, our first year novice, shares her experience of being in the Novitiate:**

**“Called to dwell in the Merciful Heart of Jesus”**

**30<sup>th</sup> July 2016 was a memorable day for my companions Divya, Sadhya and I. We knew that it was an invitation to enter deeply into the mystery of God’s wonderful love for us personally, to experience His mercy and learn how to be useful instruments in His hands. We were indeed privileged to begin our Novitiate during the year declared by Pope Francis as “The year of mercy.”**

**“Prayer is the key of the morning and bolt of the evening” says Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of our Nation.**

**‘You learn about prayer by praying’ is the dictum. So in this Nursery of the Congregation I learned the importance of prayer and felt the need to pray. Gospel reading, time spent alone with God, participation in the daily celebration of the Eucharist, Shared Prayer, Faith Sharing, Lectio Divina and the Prayer of the Church helped me to know God better and enter into an intimate relationship with the Trinitarian God. I am now more aware of the purpose for which God has created me and the mission He has planned for me.**

**How true are the words of Our Mother Foundress who says: “Novitiate is the richest time of your life; it is worth gold and priceless diamonds”. This first year of novitiate has taught me who I am and the deep meaning of my life. The guidance given by Sr.Anto, our Directress, was God’s way of molding me to be more like Jesus, His Son.**

**The many and varied inspirations I got from the classes in the novitiate and the inter novitiate sessions, the sharing of our sisters, our living together and the exposure to many real life situations of the people aided my formation to be a mature women and a committed religious. I am learning to accept myself and others with our strengths and limitations, live and work together. I join Sr. Anto and my companions to thank all those who have been instrumental in our formation to be strong and yet to be kind and gentle shepherdesses in the spirit of our Foundress. Thank you one and all.**



**Sr.Antoniammal and the Novices Maria Droste Novitiate Mangalagiri.**