

REPORT OF THE PROVINCE LEVEL VOCATION MISSION PROMOTERS MEETING



The annual meeting of the Vocation Promoters was held at Good Shepherd Convent, Chennai on 28th and 29th September 2017. The meeting was attended by the PLT members and vocation promoters from nine communities and six communities' vocation promoters were absent. On the 28th at 9 am we started the meeting with a very inspiring opening prayer conducted by Sr. Stella. The participants were asked to reflect on the prayer and share our thoughts.

Sr. Sabina Pathrose the Province leader then delivered the opening talk which invited us to be creative in our society and in our mission. We are called to be prophetic. Sr. Sabina put forth these questions to the group to reflect. What new questions can we ask ourselves and what new steps do we need to take to be relevant in the life of children and women? How can I make a significant difference today?



Fr. Parthiban sdb was the resource person for the day and he took session for half day on our work for vocations. He dealt on the crisis of education and faith and process of vocation animation and various suggestions for presenting the apostolic vocations. Father's session was very interesting, informative, and creative. His sharing enriched and challenged us to work for the vocations. He shared some of the suggestions as how we could attract the girls to our Congregation They are as follows:

- Foster contact with persons and communities and accompany those who are showing interest.
- When we go for vocations speak the facts not to entice them with false promises.
- Continuous follow-up of the girls, keep in touch with the girls by sending greeting cards and wishing them before the exams.
- Organize one day camps in the localities.
- Communities should be model for the young girls, provide good food and be kind and approachable when they come for the camp.

In the afternoon we were divided into 4 groups and three questions were given for reflection. 1. What inspired you the most from Father's talk?
2. What are your challenges during your vocation promotion mission?
3. List some practical steps to promote vocations in and around your areas.

The reports from the groups were read out in the larger group. Sr. Kala explained some formats which needed to be taken up during the vocation promotion mission. Sr. Amala explained certain points with regards to vocation promotion mission which she had received from Tamil Nadu State level vocation promoters' meeting in Trichy.

On the second day session started with a creative prayer lead by Sr. Priyanka. After the prayer the community vocation promoters shared their annual report of their vocation promotion activities on the following points.

1. What is the joy of being a vocation promoter?
2. How did you implement the society wise action plan?
3. If not implemented what was the reason?
4. Any success stories?
5. Details of the vocation promotion activities.
6. Details of the camp or any other programme conducted to motivate the girls in the schools or in the parishes.
7. Reasons for not getting vocations this year.

8. Give suggestions to make this Vocation Promotion Mission more result oriented from your experience?

The vocation promoters have contacted 743 girls during the year. They were very promising in the beginning but once the result was out, all wanted to go for higher studies.

Some of the reasons for not getting vocations this year.

No regular family visits in our parishes and in other places, not much of accompaniment and follow up of girls after one visit. Girls are attracted to higher studies and to the technologies. Before the result they said that they would join but once the result was out most of them went for higher studies. Many parents are not willing to send the girls to faraway places. Some of the girls are opting for habit as their dress code. Since some of them have left the Congregation, parents are afraid of their coming back which is a prestige issue. Small families are another reason. The parish priests are interested to send the girls to the Congregation whom they know. Sending only the TP sisters is not good as they themselves are in formation and they are unable to dialogue with the parish priests or convince him and the parents.

Following are some of the suggestions to make vocation promotion mission more result oriented.

- Continue to pray for the vocations
- Be a witness
- Have a full time vocation promoter for the Province
- Visit the catholic families in our parishes once a week.
- Visit the families at the beginning of the year and continue it throughout the year. It is not useful if we go only at the end of the year.
- Make two visits once a year to each place when the places are far.
- The state level commission in charge sister can depute sisters for vocation promotion mission with the consent of the local leader.
- Constant turnover of the vocation promoters affects the activity of the vocation promotion.
- Have a good rapport and be hospitable with the local priests so that they may help us to get vocations.
- Create friendly environment in our communities for the girls to feel at home with us.
- Organize camps in neighboring schools and parishes.
- Have a one day camp for the catholic girls in their places or in our convents after one or two visits.

Sr. Sabina told the group not to be disappointed or discouraged and continue the hard work and God will reward us. The next session was chaired by Sr. Pushpa, where all the VMP were asked to do the action plan Society wise and it was shared in the larger group. For each Society one person was chosen to be responsible to implement the action plan. They are Sr. Arockia Mary S. for Mangalagiri Society (Andhra and Telangana), Srs. Julia Mary and Pushpa for Nagpur and MP Societies (Nagpur, Balaghat, Garrtola, Chainpur and Assam) for Chennai Society (Chennai, Pallavaram and Salem) Sr. Amala C. for Mumbai Society (Andheri, Virar, Karjat and Goa) Sr. Mary Jose.

Sr. Julia Mary proposed the vote of thanks and the two days session came to an end at 1pm with a thanks giving hymn to our Lord.