

## GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT – CHENNAI



Good Shepherd Convent Chennai campus was kept busy throughout the academic year 2015 – 16. This is a good time to share the activities taken place in our various ministries. This time we thought of highlighting values imparted to students and residents through our various programmes.



## MOTTUKKAL - HOME FOR DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN



Mottukkal is a residential care ministry for disadvantaged girl children at risk. These children are enrolled either in a nearby government school or schools run by private managements. Through the visits to their families and the schools we establish relationships so as to bring out the best in the children. Parents too are made responsible to do their part in the upbringing of their wards.

We conduct various programmes for these children for their holistic development like coaching classes, career guidance, civic sense, personality development, personal Hygiene, Spoken English and Life skill training. We instil in them concern for others, forgiveness and acceptance of one another. By living together they



learn to be responsible, loving, caring and to use freedom responsibly.

The frequent outings, the games, the entertainment programmes, birthday celebrations, summer camps and cultural events provide occasions to relax, to enjoy themselves and to have fun and frolic, thus reducing the conflicts and stress within them.



## COACHING CENTERS

As an outreach programme of Mottukkal we work in 12 slums of



Chennai. The children of these slums go to government schools where the teaching is not adequate. Most of these children come from disturbed families and their parents being illiterate are unable to assist

them in their studies. So we conduct remedial classes in the evenings to make them capable of appearing for the exams. These

centres also serve as a platform for children to develop their talents through drawing, singing, dancing, storytelling and reading the news. These extracurricular activities motivate the children to come to these centres so that in an atmosphere of peace and acceptance they can concentrate on their studies and also develop their hidden talents.





It gives us great joy and satisfaction to reach out to these less fortunate children in our residential care and outreach centres. Due to our intervention, a number of them have been able to pursue higher studies, get professional training and raise the

standard of living.

## **MARIAN HOME - HOME FOR DROP OUT GIRLS**



The first few months of the year the girls and staff of the Marian Home spent stitching the school uniforms. The nursery children were the last ones to get theirs at the end of July.

Then, they concentrated on learning to cut churidars and other small dresses. It was a proud moment for them when they could wear the dresses cut and stitched by themselves!

For the girls day starts with celebration of the Eucharist followed by the daily chores of cleaning, cooking, bathing, washing and so on. Apart from the daily tailoring classes from 9 am to 5 pm with an hour for lunch break, they had some classes in basic Tamil, English



and Maths as well as value based inputs, sharing, occasional outing to beach and other places of **importance**. In the month of September we had the joy of spending a week in Divine Retreat Centre in Muringoor, Kerala and a few days visiting some beautiful tourists' spots near by. The Annual celebration of Foundress' day Christmas and Pongal, give them opportunities to exhibit their talents and help to break the routine of daily life.

The girls were excited when they were able to buy some jewellery with the money they saved from their earnings.

Marian Home staff and girls had our share of helping those who were affected by the flood in December. Some of them went with our sisters and other volunteers to distribute food, water and other relief materials to the flood affected people in Chennai.



May God be praised for the good He enabled us to do this year and for all the persons who helped us.

## **ROSHINI NIVAS**

Roshini Nivas is a Hostel for young working women and college students, a home away from home. The Sisters of the Good Shepherd Convent Chennai with the mission of sharing the compassionate love of Jesus the Good Shepherd, opened this Hostel on 1<sup>st</sup> October,



2000 with the aim of catering to the needs of the working women and students (girls) going to college including those from low income group. It is also our objective to provide shelter, food and a conducive atmosphere through personal care, guidance and counseling. The main aim is to inculcate in them values for life and the integral growth of each person in our care. The working girls continue their education through correspondence. This is also an income generating unit for the community and gives protection and safety for the residents. At present there are eighty three young women aged between 17 to 30, studying in nearby colleges and working in various hospitals and offices.



**Hostel Day:** The residents join the campus celebrations on the founders' day (Hostel Day) and Christmas. A get together is organized with games and prizes are awarded for the winners.

We thank our Shepherd God for His protection and guidance experienced throughout this year. We are grateful to Sr. Maria Rose and Community for their prayerful support in all our endeavours.

## **NURSERY SECTION**

For our tiny tots the day in school begins with the morning assembly. They learn to pray and to be self-disciplined. Punctuality is also inculcated in them.



Every morning after the assembly they are taken around the campus, an opportunity for them to admire the beauty of creation and to learn the different names of flowers and trees.

Through rhymes, singing, dancing and physical exercise they learn to be disciplined and imbibe the values of love, care, respect, obedience and an attitude of give and take.



A



charity box is kept in every classroom to encourage children to share what they have with the less fortunate. These values inculcated in them, help the little ones to grow to be well balanced and value oriented

persons.

## JUNIOR SECTION

The aim of Education is the knowledge not of facts but of values, which most often are caught not taught. Through an enlightened curriculum and myriad activities a strong character is formed keeping in mind that our values become our destiny.



The day begins with the staff prayer where we surrender ourselves to Jesus, the greatest teacher and go through the day conscious of His guidance. A thought assembly daily inspires students and



sets the moral level for the day. Meaningful skits, uplifting prayers, inspiring songs, choreographed messages, motivating thought for the day and sometimes a quiz seeks to touch hearts and minds and steer children into right beliefs, thoughts, actions and feelings.

Moral Science and Catechism classes are invaluable. The values of the Good Shepherd are spread through our classroom teaching and Eucharistic celebrations. Prayer services inculcate spiritual values that touch the souls of our children and they learn to live by them.



Our school endeavours to make industrious students who persevere in quest of excellence. Parent /Teacher Seminars and Open Days enhance Parent / Teacher / Student relationship which is the basis of a stress free, happy and successful child who will be the best that she can be; always keeping in mind the school motto –“Do well all that you do”.

Our National Festivals are well-planned and well attended and is a time when we acquaint the students with India’s glorious past and instill the importance of patriotism, religious tolerance and acceptance of all religions, sacrifice, unity, courage, integrity and a love for the people of our country.

Self-discipline is of utmost importance. Punctuality, personal hygiene, cleanliness of the environment and adhering to school rules is strictly observed. Students prepare well for tests and submit commendable activities and projects on time showing efficiency, hard work, creativity and team spirit.

The group activities in class and festive celebrations manifest equal opportunity and social interaction



among the students. They are courteous and respectful to teachers and fellow students.

Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other; every student is given the opportunity to lead and work as a team in various capacities - as captains, in projects, Bulbuls and social events. Talent Ease programme gives an added impetus.

An event like SANTA for exceptional children, Dumb Box collections in every class and Mass offerings enable the students to brighten the lives of others, making both the receiver and the giver happy. We encourage children to be socially aware



and to respond with compassion, sensitivity and empathy as they reach out to the underprivileged; differently-abled marginalized and victims of natural calamities not merely with monetary aid but to share their time, love and care generously. Sports Day and Parents Day are the highlights of the school year when

the Good Shepherd family unites. Every student is given an opportunity to put her best foot forward or to showcase her talent. Self-esteem is at its peak as students proudly participate in school events. Coaching classes for the weak students are conducted on a daily basis so that they are confident to face the examinations. We thus aspire to fulfill the mission of St. Mary Euphrasia who said "One person is more precious than the world".

'Save the planet' is a global mantra. Students are sensitized to curb pollution by keeping the campus clean; they conserve water and power with the intention of making it available to all.



We teach children to appreciate God's creation, to nurture nature and maintain a beautiful environment.



By providing the opportunity to pursue extra-curricular activities in the campus, aesthetic skills are imparted to the students and their talents are developed in a safe and friendly environment.

If a person is educated but has no values she is a danger to the society because 'Our value is the sum of our values'.

A good moral foundation has been given to the students as we follow the suggestion of our foundress 'DO EVERYTHING AS FAR AS POSSIBLE THROUGH LOVE AND YOU WILL SEE WHAT GREAT THINGS YOU WILL EFFECT' in the Junior Section and they continue to grow in truth, beauty and goodness making a difference wherever they go, being the change they want to see.

## **“AGE QUOD AGIS”**

### **‘Do well all that you do’**



“Life is a precious gift from God with a comprehensive and cosmic purpose.” Education helps us seek the real meaning of this God given life.

In the heart of bustling Chennai city, lies our school, which works constantly on the grounds of love, compassion, integrity and kindness. Sisters and teachers inculcate the *art of living* a valuable life for their students for the past 90 years. The school’s motto “AGE QUOD AGIS”, ‘Do Well all that you Do’, is applied in all the activities of the school.

**Like the gentle beams from the sun which breaks the darkness at dawn, the day begins with the staff prayer and prayer followed by a common assembly for the students where moral and spiritual values are inculcated through creative**



tableaux, role plays, narration of stories or poems, action songs, soulful music and much more. Every student is encouraged to come on stage, thereby giving equal opportunities for all.



“One person is more precious than the whole world – Saint Mary Euphrasia,” Every student is welcomed, accepted and loved unconditionally, without discrimination of any sort. The moral values are inculcated, and reflection on the Holy Scriptures is encouraged

through moral science and catechism classes. Through a range of activities, the students imbibe the charism of our Mother Foundress.

We impart academic knowledge and prepare the students to *be contributing citizens*. Group work promotes mutuality and inclusiveness in the classroom. All barriers of religion, language, caste, creed or race are removed and justice, equality and fairness are highlighted in all classroom activities. Special attention is given to students who are academically challenged in order to help them join the mainstream.

In order to teach the students *how to live*, the school has a holistic education programme. Every class goes on an educational field trip to enhance their knowledge and also has a social outreach programme by which the students, parents and teachers get an opportunity to “*see and learn*” how to count one’s blessings and be a blessing for others.

**SAMPOORNA** is a voluntary student oriented outreach program, which



aims at helping to enrich one by reaching out to others. Through this

programme, hundreds of students, volunteers, staff and parents have grown in the spirit and zeal of Saint Mary Euphrasia, to spread love and compassion, to bandage the wounded with love, to bring back the strayed towards God and *live the education*. SANTA is an annual event where the entire Good Shepherd family welcomes over 800 underprivileged children into the campus and shares the Christmas spirit during the day-long programme of fun, frolic and love. Students also offer their time to scribe for the differently-abled children and share their blessings with the economically backward children to make a difference in their lives.

The teachers not only go after the last, lost and the least but also shepherd God's creation by respecting Mother Earth. "Eco-rescue Drive" is a programme wherein the staff, parents and the students work towards a cleaner and greener environment in keeping with the principles of the Earth Charter.

One important aspect of education is building physical and psychological strength. Every student participates in compulsory sport activities. The Annual Sports Meet is a feast for the beholder. Through an array of games and events, the true spirit of sportsmanship, courage and teamwork is brought out in every individual. Various intramural competitions enhance the creativity and aesthetic sense of the students.



It is gratifying to see the fruits of labour, when we witness students who have left the portals of this institution, and are successful entrepreneurs, government officials, career women, loving daughters, sisters, and mothers, homemakers, deeply rooted in the ideals of our Foundress. Inspired by the core values that they have imbibed as students, many of them come back and partake in the Good Shepherd Mission and render invaluable service.

## CONCLUSION

For us Good Shepherd Sisters in the campus, it was indeed a year of grace and experience of God's powerful hand working in and through us. We had our share of grief when we lost our dear Sr. Assumpta Raj on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015. May she enjoy the beautification in the company of all the



saints. Celebration of the year of Consecrated Life gave us a wonderful opportunity to participate in some meetings, celebrations and days of reflection and prayer together with other religious and priests especially with our neighbouring communities. Our community building that was in a bad

shape that needed repair and renovation is being attended to at present and it takes another two or three months to complete the work. May our merciful Shepherd help and protect all those who are engaged in this work.

With grateful hearts we praise God for His countless mercies received during the year and implore His blessings on us and on all those who are associated with us.

