



# HATIGAON TIDINGS

MSMHC GENERALATE - LITTLE FLOWER CONVENT, HATIGAON



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## MISSION CONGRESS: MSMHC ON MISSION



Panel discussions were held on various apostolates in which the sisters presented papers highlighting and discussing on various issues related to the apostolates. The floor was enlivened and enriched by interactions and sharing.

The missionary tempo of the Congress was raised to a higher level by enriching input sessions by various resource persons- Fr. Kuriakose on the encyclical, 'Maximum Illud' in the context of MSMHC mission today; Fr. TJ Francis SDB enlightened the group on "Mission in Don Bosco way"; Archbishop Thomas Menampampil spoke on "evangelizing in difficult times" and Fr. Jose Varickasseril on the topic, "Venue for Proclamation: Return to the sources". These sessions highlighted the core aspects of mission drawn from the scriptures.

Speaking on the occasion, Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior

Striking at the root of its core existence as missionary, the MSMHC organized Mission Congress with the theme, "Baptized and Sent" at Bethel from 30 October to 3 November. Its main purpose being to strengthen and renew the missionary commitment and celebrate its mission, the program was a unique reminder of the missionary call of the MSMHC as envisioned by Founder.

Setting the right ambience with a meaningful inaugural function with the display of symbols of the missionary traits of the congregation had the entire proceedings of the Congress focused on the theme. It was an

opportune moment of collective reflection, introspection and show of solidarity to various wings of apostolates carried out by the congregation.



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## From the Superior General

### *Contemplating the Nativity Scene*

The last edition of *Hatigaon Tidings* for the year 2019 brings tidings of blessings and graces, successes and achievements, fidelity and commitment, missionary passion and apostolic fruitfulness and along with these, it's good to stop a while to contemplate on the tidings of joy the angels proclaimed at the birth of Christ. In his apostolic letter *Admirabile Signum*, Pope Francis has offered to the universal church a beautiful and profound catechesis on the meaning and importance of the Nativity scene which should linger on in our hearts and minds as we step into the ordinariness of our daily lives. The contemplation of the nativity scene is not to be limited to the period of Christmas season, rather it is to continue to inspire and strengthen us as we carry on celebrating the joy of opening the doors of our hearts to the Immanuel, our God with us every day of our life. How could one ever stop contemplating the mystery of a God who completely shared the human nature so that humans could in turn share in his divine nature? Born in a manger with hay as his bed, he became our food: the food of life eternal, bread of life divine. (Cf. *Admirabile Signum*, 2). The Holy Father draws our attention to everyone and everything in the crib. He beautifully explains their purpose and meaning to make us understand that the images in and around the crib are there, not merely for an aesthetic purpose as modern men might think, but with a deeper meaning, a specific mission to fulfil. It is interesting to see how the contemplative eyes of

the Holy Father find deep spiritual and theological meaning even in the most insignificant of the symbolic figures of the nativity scene: “the beggars and the others who know only the wealth of the heart. They too have every right to draw near to the infant Jesus; no one can evict them or send them away from a crib...” (*Admirabile Signum*, 6). The nativity scene that we have contemplated over and over again during the season of Christmas invites all of us to understand the depth of God's love that become flesh in Jesus born in the manger as a friend to the lowly, a threat to the powerful, a comfort and solace to the outcast and an answer to the seeker.

The word incarnate in the manger challenges us to give a personal response to his silent invitation. Contemplating the nativity scene should motivate us to find our rightful place in the scene. Can we say that we are like the poor and lowly most in need of God's love and eagerly asking him to draw near to us? Or are we 'fooled by fleeing promises of happiness' that comes from the passing glories of this material world? Does the power of his meekness and gentleness, his helplessness and fragility, his humility and poverty scandalize us when our hearts consciously or unconsciously crave after the power the world tends to offer us? Does the power of his 'weakness' to love and forgive, seek after us and go before us, threaten us like Herod, who out of fear of a helpless little child, remained totally deaf to the tidings of joy? Do we remain indifferent to the revolution of



God's transforming love in the person of Jesus? Do we remain conveniently away from all that happen in the manger for fear of getting involved in a process of transformation? Or do we become heralds of good tidings like the angels who sang glory to the Lord and invited the poor and lowly to worship the creator? Can we be like the star that led the magi to the manger?

Recognising our rightful place in the crib will necessarily define our true place in the mission of the church/congregation. Failing to take our place in the crib leaves us mere spectators not only in the scene of nativity but in the mission of the church. May all the experiences of this passing year enable us to be more effective and more involving in the mission of sharing the good news of salvation always by word and witness! May our experience of God's unfathomable love manifested in Jesus Christ enable us to find thousand creative ways to share that experience with others, thus leading all to the experience of being loved by the Immanuel. May we continue to contemplate the mystery of incarnation until this mystery gets incarnated in us in the concrete situations of our daily lives.

**Sr. Philomena Mathew**  
**Superior General**

# Hatigaon Tidings



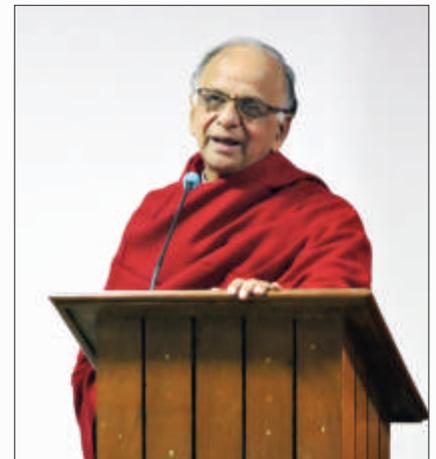
General exhorted the members to be spirit filled missionaries after the example of Founder and Pioneers.

The Congress had a befitting conclusion with a grand opera on Founder Bishop Stephen Ferrando

staged by the differently skilled children of Ferrando Speech and Hearing Centre, Barapani. The performance highlighted the pastoral activities of Bishop Ferrando among the young little

children whom he called young apostles of Christ.

The entire event was a motivating factor to brazen the missionary spirit to face the emerging challenges of mission.





## Inter Provincial Council Meet



Upholding the core element of GC 9, Inter Provincial Council Meet (IPC) held at Bethel from 10 to 15 September emphasized on radical

living of consecrated life with focus on new strategies and prospects of the mission in line with the vision of Founder. The meeting was officially



inaugurated in a short and prayerful ceremony after a meaningful procession and lighting of the lamp. Sr. Rose Paite, the General Councilor for Social Apostolate presented the theme of the IPC 2019, "Radical Renewal in our Consecration and Mission According to the Vision of Our Founder". In her key note message, Sr. Christine Mynsong, the Assistant General called on the members to be aware of their leadership role and the need to be guided by values and principles.

Centred on the theme of *Christus Vivit* (Christ is Alive), the paper presented by Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General concerned with encountering the risen Christ and concrete involvement in the lives of people in the mission.

Days were spent in reflections and discussions on the state of the congregation considering various aspects of its mission.

## Pilgrimage to Founder's Tomb



The 36 Junior sisters took a day out on pilgrimage to Founder's tomb at Peachlands,

Shillong on 21 September accompanied by Sr. Jiji Thomas, Directress of the Juniors. Setting

out with exalting minds and spirit to pay homage to Founder and offer prayers and invoke his blessings, the sisters remained reflective in prayers and singing songs of worship throughout the journey. The Holy Mass was celebrated by Fr. L.B Anthony SDB at Peachlands Chapel and he spoke about the kingdom of God and urged everyone to be generous in sharing God's gift



received for the good of others. After the Mass, the sisters paid homage to Founder with bended knees at his tomb connecting themselves to him in prayers.

Being her first visit to Founder's tomb, Sr. Flory Lalmangaihi exclaimed, "A pilgrimage to Founder's tomb was one of the most precious experiences of my life. I could feel his presence encouraging me, blessing me and strengthening me." Sr. Rita Thenon too testified it as the most touching experience of the year as she felt immense joy and closeness of Founder while praying at his tomb and the experience strengthened her missionary vocation.

A visit to Don Bosco's Museum, Mawlai thereafter was an enriching experience for the group as they explored the display of multi-cultural lifestyles, costumes and traditions of the Northeast.



## God is Good All the Time: Festive Oratory



The reverberating sound of the catch - all - phrase of the day - 'God is good all the time' filled the air at Little Flower Convent, Hatigaon as children raised their voices in unison proclaiming God's goodness at the annual festive oratory on 22 September.

A total of about 200 oratory children from 10 centres of Sunday apostolate accompanied by local catechists, church leaders and some parents gathered for the annual festive oratory with much pomp and enthusiasm. Organized by the Missionary Animation Centre (MAC) in collaboration with the community of Hatigaon and the Junior Sisters, the day's program specifically aimed at communicating God's love. The inaugural function which commenced at 9.00 am had Bible reading, prayer dance and lighting of the lamp. Speaking on the occasion, Sr. Bridget Diengdoh, the General Councilor for Evangelization and Director of MAC emphasized on the presence of God in one's life and His never ending love and compassion for humanity. In her message, Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior

General and Chief Guest of the festive event spoke on the power of God's love citing everyday's simple life experience to let it take deep root in the fragile and tender hearts of the young.

The day's program was scheduled with an evangelizing and educational purpose for the budding young children. It was packed with various games and sports as well as competitions with an extracted theme from the Gospel.

### What do they say?

*"I thank God for the day's event which helped me to feel God's love and experience His graces and blessings."* **Lamiki Sungoh, Nongspung B.**

*"Sunday oratory is very helpful for our children as they have improved a lot as compared to the past. We experience family spirit and unity. We would like to have again Festive Oratory for the faith formation and character formation. We thank sisters for their hard-work and love."* **Julie M. Sangma and Basida J. Marak (Catechism School Teachers)**

*"I feel happy to be a part of this Festive oratory. I feel encouraged and enriched by seeing different people, languages and different cultural dance."* **Kajol Khatun, Snehalya.**





# Editorial

## Seeking Hearts

To seek, to find and to establish...

Mission Congress just held at Bethel in the month of October to mark the extraordinary month of the Mission declared by Pope Francis was a time of introspection on missionary endeavours, to gain perspective and reset strategies to go forth with greater force to all nations.

The word 'missionary' or 'mission' undoubtedly is one of the most popular words on the lips of a Christian and more so to the MSMHC and it's important to note on how far it has taken root at the heart level of existence. If the heart knows what it means to be a missionary, then every little deed becomes meaningful and is sure to be directed towards the goal of mission.

In times of natural calamities and human tragedies such as floods, tsunami, fire, earthquake, air crash, terror attack and so on, a search and rescue operation is always quickly deployed on a mission to find the missing ones and rescue the survivors. There have been times when the rescuers themselves had lost their dear lives in the act of saving others.

The one important trait of a missionary is a heart that seeks out, seeks for the lost and the needy as the Gospel says that God, 'goes out in search of the one who is lost' (Lk 15:4). The one that seeks for another's good forgets own heartaches, comforts and interests. Unafraid to lose one's life and fortune, a sacrifice is made to save the other with the heart of a shepherd.

Knowing where and whom to seek out is essential and it calls for relationship with people around, to be in touch with their vibes and context. Hence, a missionary has to be well informed, educated with matters related to the people and the society. A true missionary is a seeker of souls, promoter of life and well being without any discrimination of caste, creed or colour.

Missionary nature at the core of its existence has sown the seeds of a missionary heart in the MSMHC which has produced hardcore missionaries down the decades of its history and has made an indelible mark in the Church. Yet, it's a time proven fact that all is and never can be a smooth sailing in one's missionary journey. It calls for a heroic heart to withstand the tests of the time.

However, inspired by the lines from the poem *Ulysses* by Alfred Lord Tennyson -

*"Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield, "*

Let each missionary sister continue to sail beyond the sunset with a missionary heart to seek and to find souls.

*Sr. Irene Zosiama*

## TITBITS

### Educational Tour



The staff and students of St. John Bosco Pre - School, Malkerns Swaziland had a day out on 25 October as part of an educational tour which provided an opportunity to explore and learn.

### Founder's Feast Day



Hatigaon community paid homage to Founder on 26 December in celebration of his name feast, the feast of St. Stephen, the first martyr for Christ.

### Juniorate Course - 2020



December month saw the commencement of Juniorate Course - 2020 at Hatigaon for the 63 Junior Sisters from different provinces of the Congregation.

## Graduation of the Juniors



Graduation ceremony of the Juniors at Hatigaon on 29 September marked the celebration of the successful completion of the Juniorate Course 2019 under Ferrando Institute of Spirituality,

Umsning. Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General conferred certificates to the 36 graduating sisters and urged them to always stay focused on Jesus and the mission.

The ceremony began at 5.00 p.m with a prayer and reflection on the Word of God. Sr. Jiji Thomas, Directress of the Juniors presented the annual report of the course which was laden with educational and spiritual inputs on various topics systematically planned to enable the young missionaries to embrace future mission with clear vision and purpose. A short meaningful entertainment program staged by the Juniors sent out the message to light up the world with goodness.

A thanksgiving prayer service was organized by the community sisters after which Mother Mary Rose Thapa had the final word urging the sisters to keep Jesus in their hearts and live a holy life.

## Local Catechists Training



A three-days training program for the local catechists was organized at Kudda from 4 to 6 October with the theme, "I am the Good Shepherd." (Jn. 10:11) which had a total of 81 participants. Delving deep into the theme of the program, talks were centered on 'being for' others which is the core element of leadership and the fundamental value to redeem those in want.

Organized by Missionary Animation Centre (MAC), the main resource person was Sr. Celina Surin, MAC member and she was accompanied by Sr. Rita Kullu, Provincial

Councilor for Evangelization, Kolkatta.

The program began with enthronement of the Bible, prayers and reflections on the Word of God. The main topics dealt with were the Word of God, Sacraments, Call and Mission of the Catechists. They were also given some instructions and guidance on liturgy as well as basic leadership qualities.

Time spent in prayer, reflections and meditation on the Word of God had been instrumental in deepening their faith and a source of enlightenment.

## Foundation Stone Laid at CDI

Foundation Stone for an extended wing of Centre for Development Initiatives (CDI) was laid on 1 October at CDI to respond to the needs of women in distress and to provide transit facilities to victims of human trafficking and unsafe migration. CDI is grateful to the esteem donor Missio Germany for the extended help and support. Sr. Rose Paite, General Councilor for Social Apostolate and Director of CDI welcomed and briefed the gathering with the purpose of the new venture. The foundation stone was blessed by Fr. Maxim, the Regional Superior of SVD and the Salesian priests from Azara. Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General, Sr. Christine Mynsong, the Assistant General, General Councilors and sisters from nearby communities were present for this milestone event.





## Salesian Vicar General Visits Hatigaon



Vicar General of Salesians of Don Bosco, Fr. Francesco Cereda accompanied by his Secretary Fr. Saimy Ezhanikatt and Fr. Januarius Sangma, Provincial Superior of Guwahati Province SDB visited Hatigaon on 15 October. He had come to Northeast for the

celebration of Diamond Jubilee of the Salesian Province of Mary Help of Christians, Guwahati.

In his homily during the Holy Mass, Fr. Francesco reminded the sisters of Founder Bishop Ferrando's wish to spread the love of God which is to be carried out in a Salesian style

of joy and simplicity. He stated the significance of the name of the congregation of the MSMHC which is to be a constant reminder of their missionary commitment and trust in Mary Help of Christians.

As the community echoed a melodious song of welcome, Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General expressed the joy of the community for his visit which was a source of grace and encouragement.



## Cardinal Charles Bo at Hatigaon



Speaking to the community sisters at Hatigaon on 9 November, Cardinal Charles Bo said that the MSMHC was born of a deep desire of Bishop Ferrando to serve the people especially the needy. He exhorted the sisters to continue serving the Lord with joy and thanksgiving and draw people closer to God.

Cardinal Charles Bo, Archbishop of Yangon, the President of the

Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC), Member of the Pontifical Council for Culture and Consecrated Life, and member of the Pontifical Commission for Communication visited Hatigaon community on 9 November and offered the Holy Mass. He was accompanied by Fr. George Plattottam, SDB Executive Secretary, FABC Office of Social

Communication.

The Cardinal was on his way to Shillong to attend the annual Eucharistic procession. Remembering the Archdiocese of Shillong which mourned the sudden demise of its Shepherd Archbishop Dominic Jala in his prayers, he acknowledged the giant contributions made by the Late Archbishop for the growth of the Church and prayed for the repose of his soul during Mass.

The community welcomed him with a melodious song and spent a quality time of interaction with him which was spiritually motivating and inspiring.



## FINAL PROFESSION: Bride of Christ, Pride of the Congregation:



with their varied tribes and states, talents and potentials create a rainbow of different hues and colours adding glory and beauty to God and extend His kingdom.

Two months of intense preparation and prayers at Bethel with various spiritual programs and life skill under the guidance of Sr. Asha Mao, the General Councilor for Formation preceded this great and remarkable day. Days of deep reflections and prayers during the spiritual retreat guided by Fr. Julian Fernandez SJ marked an immediate preparation.

About forty priests concelebrated the Holy Mass and parents, well-wishers and religious dignitaries hailed the occasion and witnessed the event.

A crown of pink roses become a visible sign of the bride of Christ and a pledge of love to God. They are indeed the pride of the congregation with their final Yes to the Lord after years of dedicated service in the missions.

Amidst host of witnesses in a packed hall, the 35 sisters made their final vows to the Lord in a solemn Eucharistic celebration on 7 December at Hatigaon officiated by Archbishop John Moolachira of Guwahati Archdiocese. In his homily, the Archbishop

congratulated the sisters for coming forward generously to offer themselves to God and to the Church following the charism of the MSMHC. He said that the sisters



## Animation of Newly Professed Sisters



Enriching sessions with highlights on challenges and prospects in the missions, commitment and radical living of the vows as well as the awareness of being baptized and sent proved to be motivating factors to start their maiden apostolate with enthusiasm. Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General and the General Councilors animated the group.

The community of Hatigaon accorded a warm welcome and felicitation upon their arrival on 8 December. The sisters made their first vow on 7 December at St. Margaret's Convent, Peachlands in a solemn Eucharistic celebration officiated by Bishop Victor Lyngdoh of Jowai Diocese.

A two-day's orientation program for the 29 newly professed sisters from 9 to 10 December at Little Flower Convent, Hatigaon served as a spiritual elixir before setting their

first foot into the deep sea of the mission. The program designed to enhance faith and confidence had essential topics fundamental to religious and community living.



## Pre - Christmas Celebration, Iongkhuli

The spirit of Christmas burst forth with the singing of carols on 22 December at Pre-Christmas celebration in Iongkhuli village organized by the community of Hatigaon which had the participation of about 300 vibrant church members. Celebrating the birth of Christ by sharing the light of love and joy through simple gestures to the people of focus village, the sisters let the

feeling of Christmas overwhelm the hearts of people.

Time spent in prayer, Gospel sing out, recreational games and activities in the morning hour was rejuvenating. The entire program was coordinated by Sr. Celina Surin and Sr. Anjelina Marak with the help of local leaders. The Holy Mass was celebrated by Fr. Martin Marak sdb at 1.00 p.m.

After the Mass was a Christmas

entertainment program filled with Christmas carols, dances and prize distribution. Students of different classes who secured ranks were given an award to appreciate their hardwork and success as well as to encourage them for their futher studies. Sr. Philomena Mathew, the Superior General in her message spoke on God's unfathomable love for humankind.



## Children's Day Celebrated

Centre for Development Initiative (CDI) celebrated Children's day at its campus on 13 November gathering around 200 children from various parts of the city with a twin purpose of meaningful entertainment and orientation towards realization of their dreams. The staff of different projects animated the children to make the day joyful, interesting and enriching. Mr. Laxhmi Narayan Dey from Ministry of Corporate Affairs and Fr. Navin SVD graced the occasion with motivational talks and entertainments. CDI staff conducted drawing competition with the theme, "The Dream School". The beautiful pictures of Schools depicted their dreams of studying in a quality school just like any other children and explore their potentials and gain knowledge to take them to heights of success. It was an occasion to get more educated on their rights and the importance of quality education.



## Singing Good Tidings at Christmas

Little children paying homage to baby Jesus truly manifested the meaning of Christmas that Christ is born for all and is love. Little Flower Convent, Hatigaon celebrated Christmas with children from nearby localities and suburban areas and shared the good tidings of peace, joy and love at Christmas. Around 200 children gathered for the celebration which had some recreational games and activities, quiz on Christmas, prayers and singing of Christmas carols. The sharing of Christmas meals with all the children marked the day with joy and left an incredible memory of a meaningful celebration of Christmas as a time of sharing, love, joy and peace.



## NEWS FROM OVERSEAS

### Sunday Oratory, Leitawhtan

Sunday Oratory was officially inaugurated at Leitawhtan, Myanmar on 15 September thus augmenting the missionary activities in this newly launched mission station. The event was attended by the church members along with 35 children enrolled for the Oratory. The program began with a hymn and short prayer by the



Church leader Mr. Augustine Gin Khen So. Sr. Sabina Kim officially

welcomed the faithful for the event and encouraged parents to send their children regularly for the oratory. Sr. Julie Mate enlightened the gathering on the meaning, origin and purpose of oratory. Catechist Joseph in his message stressed on the importance of values and of hard-work to be successful in life. Variety program staged by children, women and youth contributed to the blissful success of the event.

### Rector Major with the MSMHC



The celebration of Italian Delegation Day at Crocetta on 1 October had the benign presence of Salesian Rector Major, Fr. Ángel Fernández Artime. Upon his arrival, the sisters accorded him a warm welcome with a delightful song and

dance. He celebrated the Holy Mass at 11. 30 a.m and thereafter he addressed the sisters assembled in the conference hall. Rector Major appreciated the MSMHC way of life, their simplicity and authenticity in particular. As the

successor of Don Bosco and father of the Salesian family, he exhorted them to always remember their call as missionaries to witness Jesus in the midst of busy life and to be close to people they serve. A shared moment with Rector Major and his motivating presence was a source of strength and encouragement to the sisters.



### Animation for Altar Servers

A two days' inter parish animation program for altar servers organized at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Matola, Mosambique from 16 to 17 November was attended by a total of 18 boys and girls from Our Lady of Fatima Church, Ponta Do Ouro under the leadership of Sr. Saroj Kindo.

It was an enriching and learning experiences for the altar



servers as they received spiritual formation, instructions and guidance. Divided into groups, each one had an opportunity of serving the Mass therefore putting into practice the knowledge they gained during the training program. Sharing of experiences as altar servers enhanced each other spiritually in their ministry of serving the mass.



## Joy at Christmas, Lesotho



Ferrando Resource Centre Special School, Lesotho had the

advance Christmas celebration on 26 November. The joy of Christmas

gave wings to the hearts of children bursting forth exuberantly the song of the angels, 'Glory to God in the highest' as they were led by Santa Claus to a nearby factory area. Through simple gestures of good will, greetings, sweets and snacks, the message of Christmas of peace and joy was spread to the people around. On the next day, a short entertainment program was organized at School in which students performed Christmas play with the message of Christ's love and compassion. A good number of parents were present for the program.

## Orientation Program, Malkerns

A day's orientation program was organized at Malkerns, Swaziland on 14 September for the Young Apostles of Christ which laid emphasis on what it means to be YAC in today's complex scenario. The program was also a platform to build up leadership qualities and it augmented team spirit and unity among the members. Sr. Mary Clara Topno along with Sr. Elsa Joseph and Sr. Susan Soren guided the young apostles to delve deeper into their responsibilities and duties as young missionaries. Speaking on the role of Mother Mary in the salvation history, Sr. Susan Soren encouraged the young to be fervent in their faith. Sr. Elsa Joseph re-energized them with the Word of God and to let the light of Christ shine in their life. The senior YAC members were felicitated for their dedicated years of service and commitment.



## World AIDS Day Observed



Hope flickered at Hope House, Swaziland on 29 November as World AIDS Day was observed with focus on healing of the mind and creating a positive attitude towards life and circumstances. Some dignitaries from the Ministry of Health, NERCHA, Manzini City Council, Caritas Office and church leaders were present for the occasion. Fr. Mbongiseni Shababgu, Rector of the Salesian Community gave a key note address speaking on the theme of light and hope. Mr. Harry Nxumalo, the Chairperson of Hope House Committee briefed the gathering with a short history of Hope House, remembering with gratitude all those who were instrumental in starting and bringing up the Centre with special mention of Sr. Elsa P. Joseph, the Program Manager of Hope House for her dedicated service. The event had a scintillating program staged by the students of Sydney William Primary School, Marimba Group from MYC and St. John Bosco Pre- School. The event was instrumental in bringing hope in life and faith in humanity.