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Celebrations in India South Unit

Submitted by: Egmore Community, Srs Anastasia Erattachirayil and Vilheta Carvalho

Final Professions of Sisters Lilly Pushpam and Grace Esther

When you surrender yourself completely to God, as the only truth worth having, you find yourself in service of all that exists. It becomes your joy and recreation. You never tire of serving others.

- Mahatma Gandhi

True to the words of Gandhi, it was with great joy and enthusiasm our dear Sisters Lilly Pushpam Francis and Grace Esther Irudaya Raj committed themselves in total surrender to God and to the whole community of life on 31 July 2021. It was a moment of grace and blessing. The theme of the perpetual profession was;

Chosen to be a Joyful Witness



The entire assembly was gathered in the Parish church, St Anthony's, Pudapet, which was beautifully decorated. The Sisters to be professed went in procession accompanied by their parents, followed by the celebrants and the Sisters to the altar. The main celebrant, former Bishop of Salem, Rev Dr Singaroyan, along with the other concelebrants officiated at the Eucharistic celebration and solemnised the perpetual vow ceremony. In his homily, the Bishop called forth the Congregation to witness to the truth which is Jesus Christ Himself to strive towards holiness and be a witness of Christ's love in charity. His message was very inspiring, thought-provoking and challenging. The newly

professed prostrated before the altar while the choir sang the 'Litany of Saints'. It was a moment of joy, oneness and communion with God as they expressed their response in gratitude to God for having chosen them and blessed them with the grace to say "yes" by singing joyfully *Here I am, you called me...*

The Eucharist became deeply touching with the melodious choir of our Sisters from Church Park and Manora House. After the Eucharist, everyone gathered to greet and celebrate with the two young Sisters. It was a day of rejoicing to have the presence of the parents and siblings of Lilly and Esther.

Our prayer for our two Sisters is that being ignited by the spirit of our founder, beloved Venerable Nano Nagle, they may imbibe her spirit of *unbounded compassion, deep contemplation, indomitable courage, radical creativity, native shrewdness and indefatigable zeal for faith* (Praying Our Journey). May Jesus and Mary, our beloved Mother, bless us and continue to accompany them in their journey of life.

Diamond Jubilee of Sr Anastasia Erattachirayil

On 16 July 2021, the date of my Final Profession, I celebrated my Diamond Jubilee of Religious Profession.

It was indeed a wonderful day for me! We had the Eucharist at 11am. Our Parish Priest Fr Pappuraj and Fr Paul Antony from RTU were the celebrants. Our staff and our Sisters from Theni, Varusanadu and Kodaikannal and a few well-wishers joined me in my joy. It was a simple celebration due to Covid-19, but very meaningful. It was a time for me to recall all the countless blessings the Lord had bestowed on me during these past sixty years. It has deepened my realisation of how the Almighty is all sufficient for me



and to look forward to this realisation, trusting in the Lord for His unconditional love and guidance. I am very grateful to my Community for making this day very special for me.

Golden Jubilee - Sr Vilheta Carvalho

I thank God for His faithfulness and abiding love

Celebration of my Golden Jubilee - fifty years of my life as a PBVM have been years of "God's Faithfulness and abiding love." Thanks to each dear Sister and all the people who have been a blessing in my life in varied ways. Thank you for your love and care. And not



forgetting your prayers, my dear Sisters in my community who made my day a memorable one in every way...with meaningful liturgy above all else.

Friends of Nano – India North Unit

Submitted by: Sr Molly Joseph for Friends of Nano

Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement and success have no meaning. – Benjamin Franklin

The members of Friends of Nano (FoN) from Srinigar Unit are thankful for providing them the opportunity to be in service of the children of our school, so that they hone their thinking, learning and overall development of their personality. Providing them the platform of debating was one such initiative in this direction.

An Intra-School Online Debate was organised by FoN, Srinigar Unit. It was conducted for classes IV to XII in different phases. In the preliminary round, twelve students from each class were selected to participate by their English teachers. In the final round, the selected students were divided into five groups according to their classes and after a stiff competition three students were declared winners in each group.



To celebrate the winners, the members of FoN group organised an online Award Ceremony in the school. All the winners were invited to the function which was held in the school. The function was attended by all the Sisters and the members of FoN. Students were awarded with a certificate and a book each as the prize. They were extremely happy to receive the certificate specially designed for them for this event. Refreshments were served during the event; all the protocols of Covid-19 were adhered to strictly.

There ceremony was attended online by the judges, faculty members of the school and also by the members of the FoN group residing outside the valley through a zoom link. It was a great experience and we believe that *If you light a lamp for someone special else it will also brighten your path.*

News from the USA

Submitted by: Sr Kathy Hogan and Ms Colleen Monahan

A Time to Remember and Celebrate

Let us not forget that the Eucharist is meant to nourish those who are weary and hungry along the way. A Church of the pure and perfect is a room with no place for anyone. On the other hand, a Church with open doors, that gathers and celebrates around Christ, is a large room where – everyone, the righteous and sinners – can enter. – Pope Francis, Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, 6 June 2021



The Sacred Heart Community, Fargo, North Dakota, celebrated the feast of the Most Holy Blood of Christ sharing brunch with a few of the Friends of Nano/ Associates. The Fargo group is celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the first Associates/FoN making commitment. The Sisters enjoyed sharing stories of the first group and discussing how our Presentation Circle continues to grow and thrive.

2021 Nano Nagle Awardee Announced by St Norbert Catholic School in Orange, California, USA

On 3 June, following the graduation baccalaureate and student honours ceremony, Principal Joe Ciccoianni announced this year's Nano Nagle Award recipient. A tradition at the school since 2009, one teacher each year has been honoured for exemplifying the charisms of Nano Nagle, founder of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who established St Norbert Catholic School in 1965.

The process of identifying this teacher involved review of redacted student essays by a panel of judges. With over 100 essays submitted each year, this is not an easy task. In the words of one judge, *This was one of the hardest things I have done in a long time. The students truly love their teachers.* In fact, every teacher was nominated, making it clear that Nano's spirit is an integral part of the SNCS culture.

The students are asked to identify the ways in which the teacher of their choice exemplifies a trait of Nano's. This year, it was the virtue of charity. Student essays began with defining the virtue of charity, followed by two examples of the way Nano lived this virtue and a description of an occasion when the teacher acted so charitably it resembled Nano's charity. This year's awardee, Mrs Lisa Stephens, the Religion and Language Arts teacher and herself an alumna of St Norbert's, was nominated from a range of grade levels. Among the many validating statements students wrote:

Mrs Stephens will give her time and effort for any person who is struggling, not just in her class but with their family as well.

She offers to drive the supplies that distance learners need for their class.

She will even try to help us with other subjects that she doesn't teach.

I had a very serious problem and told the priest. He told me to find a trusted adult and talk to them about it. Mrs Stephens has always shown kindness towards her students, she was the first person I thought of. She helped me through it. Without her, I don't know where I would be today.

In recognition of this award, Mr Ciccoianni presented a cheque, lantern and certificate. The lantern is a tangible symbol of Nano Nagle and her work among the poor of Cork, Ireland where she would teach children all day, in defiance of the English Penal Laws and venture out in the dark of night to minister to the sick. Hence, she became known as 'the Lady of the Lantern'. Clearly, through the work of teachers like Mrs Stephens, her light still shines.

Garden of Oneness Gathering July 2021

Submitted by: Ms Holly Foley, Virginia Water Contemplative Centre, St John's, Newfoundland

I am sitting in our Community room at Virginia Water Contemplative Centre, looking at the trees, the forever faithful crows hopping on the grass and the ducks floating in the pond; I always feel a sense of awe and peace when I gaze at this landscape, then inevitably a whisper enters and says

what are we doing to our home? What are you doing? Recently, I have been trying to learn more about climate change and the different ways that we can care for the earth. As I sift through information, reflect, connect with others at Virginia Water and explore possible individual and collective actions, gatherings such as the one offered by the team at the Garden of Oneness keeps me grounded in hope and inspired as I listened to the stories about the empowering work that our Sisters and brothers are animating around the world.



On 27 and 28 July 2021, around twenty people gathered on Zoom from around the world for a Garden of Oneness online Retreat. Originally in 2020, we were invited to attend an in-person gathering at the Garden of Oneness, but this changed once Covid-19 began to sweep across the globe. Fortunately for all of us, Terry Abraham, Prema Antony and others from the Garden of Oneness were determined for these groups to come together. Over the two Retreat days comprised of silence, ritual, storytelling and sharing, the beginning of an interconnected community focusing on the New Story and earth justice began to take root. The groups who were part of this gathering included: Nano Nagle Birthplace in Ballygriffin (Ireland), The Family Centre/Wilderness project at

Balnarring (Australia), Erin Earth in Wagga Wagga (Australia), Virginia Water Contemplative Centre (Canada) and the Garden of Oneness in Zambia. We were also joined by Sisters in South India who attended to learn and garner insights on creating similar ministries.

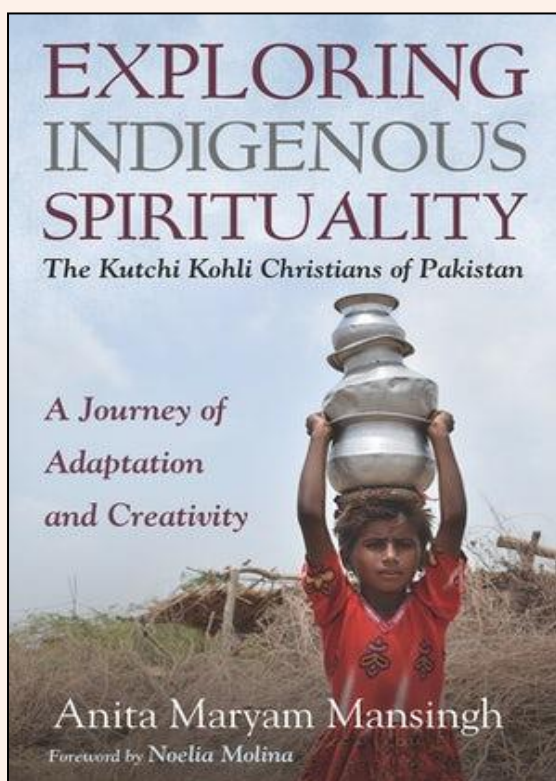
Whenever I learn more about Presentation Sisters' local and global efforts, I continue to be amazed. I listened to stories being shared from each group that demonstrated foresight and early coordinated action on many social justice issues, particularly the environment. For example, I was awed listening to the story of Erin Earth as their members shared the unfolding of their ministry that began in the 90's. Their focus was to educate, demonstrate and foster community about sustainable living and they have created a very successful volunteer community garden. Through all the stories, there was a notable thread of the active partnership and relational practice that the Sisters have developed within their local community. This emphasis on collaboration has supported the ministries' ability to remain open to evolving to meet the needs of today's world.



As a Virginia Water Contemplative Centre representative, participating in this gathering was a beautiful and inspiring experience. There was a group consensus that we would like to continue growing and nurturing these connections. I also left the gathering with more kindle in the fire of my belly to continue to support the community members at Virginia Water to become contemplatives-in-action so that we can be part of the growing global movement to care for our only home, Mother Earth.

Congratulations!

Exploring Indigenous Spirituality: The Kutchi Kohli Christians of Pakistan



Sr Anita Mansingh has recently had her new book 'Exploring Indigenous Spirituality: The Kutchi Kohli Christians of Pakistan' published. Anita is a Presentation Sister and she holds a Master in Applied Spirituality from WIT University, Ireland. She has focused her research on the study of spirituality and the Kutchi Kohli people of Pakistan. Thus, Anita explores their history, spiritual lives and social dynamics. She has previously published *Art Dispels the Darkness: A Spirituality of Healing*, where she reflects on the connection between art and spirituality as part of the process of healing and growth.

Anita's book is a deep and enlightening study of the spiritual experience of the Kutchi Kohli Christians of Pakistan. Producing a complex, versatile and appealing conceptual framework for studying their inner experiences, Anita provides conceptual tools for understanding the spiritual journey and relation with the divine of indigenous people in the south of Pakistan.

Relying on her own narratives, this book gives voice to the Kutchi Kohlis of Pakistan, allowing the readers to enter into their own symbolic and conceptual way to understand reality. In addition to exploring their spiritual experience, Anita shows us the creative way in which Kutchi Kohli Christians have adapted and recreated their own identity in relation to Hinduism and Islam. With most of the academia focusing on the study of indigenous people in India, this book offers a breakthrough into unexplored areas for understanding indigenous peoples and Christianity in South Asia.

Nano Nagle Place Receives Award

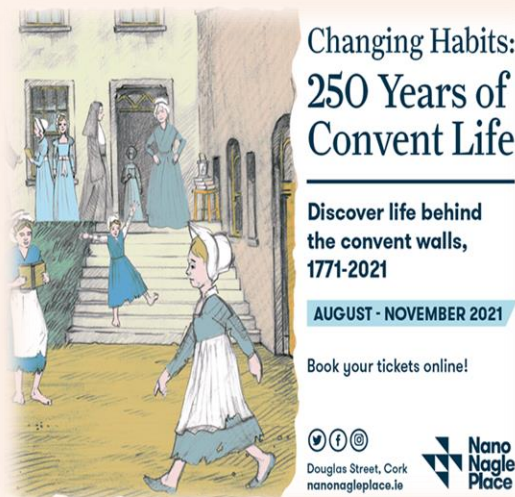


Nano Nagle Place, Cork, Ireland has received an award from the largest travel platform, making the Cork City museum one of the top attractions worldwide.

Currently hosting the hugely popular exhibition, *Changing Habits 250 Years of Convent Life*, Nano Nagle Place has been awarded the Travellers' Choice Award by Trip Advisor. The award puts Nano

Nagle Place in their top ten percent of attractions worldwide. The Travellers' Choice Award celebrates attractions that consistently deliver fantastic experiences to visitors. Trip Advisor said that Nano Nagle Place has *in this particularly challenging year, stood out by providing great service and experiences.*

Speaking on the award, CEO of Nano Nagle Place, Shane Clarke said, *We are delighted to win the Trip Advisor Travellers' Choice Award. The award recognises Nano Nagle Place as being in the top 10% of top-rated attractions globally. It's a pleasure to read and respond to the reviews we get on Trip Advisor. The reviewers consistently note the warmth of the welcome our wonderful team extend to visitors, the beauty and serenity of the site and the powerful, uplifting story of Nano Nagle and the Presentation Sisters.*



Significant International Dates in October

2 October - International Day of Non-Violence



The International Day of Non-violence is observed on 2 October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. The day is an opportunity to reaffirm the universal relevance of the principle of nonviolence and the desire to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and nonviolence.

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/non-violence-day>

4 October – Feast Day of St Francis of Assisi



On 4 October 2021, Feast Day of St Francis of Assisi, the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development will initiate a ‘formal launch’ of the Laudato Si’ Plans with organisations who are ready to make a commitment to the journey – that is, to the integral ecology of the seven Laudato Si’ Goals over the next seven years.

5 October – World Teachers’ Day



World Teachers’ Day is held annually on 5 October to celebrate all teachers around the globe. One and a half years into the Covid-19 crisis, the 2021 World Teachers’ Day will focus on the support teachers need to fully contribute to the recovery process under the theme ‘Teachers at the heart of education recovery’. A five-day series of global and regional events will showcase the effect that the pandemic has had on the teaching profession, highlight effective and promising policy responses and aim to establish the steps that need to be taken to ensure

that teaching personnel develop their full potential.

<https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/worldteachersday>

11 October – International Day of the Girl Child



International Day of the Girl Child is celebrated annually to highlight issues concerning the gender inequality facing girls and focus attention on the need to address the challenges girls face and to promote girls’ empowerment and the fulfilment of their human rights.

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/girl-child-day>

17 October – International Day for the Eradication of Poverty



The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2021 will focus on the theme ‘Building Forward Together: Ending Persistent Poverty, Respecting All People and Our Planet’. The Covid-19 Pandemic has resulted in more than 3.7 million deaths and is

reversing decades of progress in the fight against poverty and extreme poverty. According to the World Bank report on projected poverty impacts of Covid-19, between 71 to 100 million people are being pushed into poverty because of the crisis.

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/day-for-eradicating-poverty>

24 October - United Nations Day



United Nations day marks the anniversary of the entry into force in 1945 of the UN Charter. With the ratification of this founding document by the majority of its signatories, including the five permanent members of the Security Council, the United Nations officially came into being. There is no other global organisation with the legitimacy, convening power and normative impact of the United Nations. Today, the urgency for all countries to come together to fulfil the promise of the nations united, has rarely been greater.

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/un-day>

Keep up to date with our Presentation Sisters, Friends of Nano and Associates around the world. If you have a story or article you would like to share, please email it to communications@pbvm.org

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