



SVD Divine Word Centre (DWC), Chennai

Presents

Star of the Mount

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From the Editors' Desk

Dear Readers,

Christmas is the gentlest, loveliest feast of the revolving year. In this joy-filled season of Christmas the editors of **Star of the Mount** are glad to provide a launching pad for our young and highly spirited seminarians to express their insights, experiences and inspirations of life here in Chennai. Their soulful sharing will indeed touch you deep down and in turn raise your Christmas spirit. Fondly remembering the spiritual and material patronage of the staff members and all the benevolent souls, **Star of the Mount** joyously proclaims its message to all.

May the spirit of Christmas bring you Peace!

The gladness of Christmas give you Hope!

And the warmth of Christmas grant you Love!



Rector Speaks

Teenage is a time of excitement, growth and activity. Sometimes it can also be an experience of struggle and confusion. But a healthy environment would serve as a fertile ground for the youth to find their identity and grow as healthy individuals.

Divine Word Centre is home for 55 youthful college going SVD seminarians hailing from nine different States of India. Three priests and a brother on the staff accompany these young men in their pursuit to become vibrant religious-missionaries. Along with their personal effort, a well tested programme is provided by the formators to discern their vocation and eventually make a commitment for good. Truly each of them is a treasure to us and we cherish their presence in the community.

This News Letter is an expression of our joy and gratitude to all our benefactors, well-wishers and our mother Congregation for your valuable prayers, support and encouragement. May you have a meaningful Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

VISION AND MISSION OF DWC

Fr. Kulandai Samy, the Rector in his orientation talk of this academic year, clearly spelt out the following Vision-Mission Statement of DWC community.

Vision: Founded on the Divine Word and His mission, we, the sons of Saints Arnold and Joseph strive to achieve integral development focusing on academic excellence and self-reliance.

Mission: we the members of DWC are committed to:

- Disciplined living by following the time table.
- Regular reading and meditation on the Word of God.
- Active participation in the Holy Eucharist, personal prayer and spiritual direction.
- Being in touch with various SVD missionary activities and the signs of the times.
- Optimum use of our intellectual capacity.
- Achieve self-reliance by engaging in part time job and manual work.
- Create life-giving relationships based on mutual respect and understanding.
- Avail ourselves entirely for various activities of the community.
- Discover and nurture our talents and skills.
- Foster values of silence, openness, hard work, honesty, responsibility and punctuality.

As the saying goes, "Where there is vision people flourish", we are confident that the translation of our Vision-Mission Statements into concrete action will help us keep going.

B. Sharath Chandra

UNITY IN DIVERSITY



We the members of DWC hailing from various parts of the nation unanimously embrace the rich diversity of cultures, languages and ethnic groups. Cultural diversity brings collective strength among us by dissolving differences and building bridges. Besides, it also grants us the rich and coveted privilege of celebrating regional festivals namely Monti Fest, Onam, Ugadi, Pongal, and Diwali which are God sent invaluable occasions to learn the traditional cultures of one another. The celebration of the above mentioned feasts not only take our pleasant memories back home but also nurture in us a sense of belonging, openness and appreciation to our multi-cultural society, increasing the fun quotient in our community life.

Sunil Soreng

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



There cannot be any height that can't be scaled by an industrious person. The undying passion for success accompanied by tireless efforts and unflinching determination make the students of DWC stand tall in the prestigious Loyola College.

Once again they have proven their mettle by upholding the enviable standards in academic and co-curricular parameters with an assortment of six gold-medals, 20 merit scholarships and a dozen medals in sports. Above all, "The Outstanding Loyolite" of the year 2008-2009 conferred on our versatile student, Dixon.L.D'souza, adds another glittering feather to the cap of DWC's feats. We the SVD students ever remain indebted to the Staff of the College as well as the Seminary who are instrumental in our academic achievements.

N.Sleeva Raj

IN TOUCH WITH REALITY

The Loyola College comes forth with a unique programme named "Outreach" exclusively for the second year collegians to reach out to the poor ardently. Exposure of this sort enables us to be in touch with the realities and to have dialogue of compassion with the vulnerable and abandoned. Activities oriented towards the empowerment of women, uplift of slum dwellers, welfare of the youth, health and sanitation of the sensitive and unprotected people make us aware of the pressing needs of the neglected lot.

"Internship" is another such programme for third year collegians which deals with work experience



Founder - SVD

"Happy are those who do not shrink at leaving their homeland, leaving their own people, taking up a life of thousand sacrifices and privations in order to win people for Christ."

St. Arnold Janssen

they have to gain for a period of thirty days in a firm or an organization. The amount of time, risk and energy consumed in seeking out a job is indescribable. The dawn to dusk working schedule in far away challenging places gives one really a tough time to be dealt with. In spite of all these struggles and difficulties the experience which we acquire through the Internship is enormously enriching and beyond words.

Sushil Machar

THE DRIVING FORCES

The meticulous spiritual guidance and formation offered here in DWC serve as an inexhaustible driving force. The daily Eucharist complemented by jubilant singing and thought provoking sermons, personal prayers and meditation profoundly enthuse and energize me and see me through my daily activities. Monthly recollections are mighty means of transport and communication to get me sooner and nearer to the Almighty. The annual retreat preached by Fr. Abraham D'Souza, SVD was once in a life time experience for me. Fr. Abu's inspiring messages, proficiency in the Bible and Divine experience touched me to the core.

Samir Kujur



Missionary to China

“Becoming a missionary is not a sacrifice I am making to God. It is a grace He is offering me.”

St. Joseph Freinademetz



SELF-RELIANCE: A CHALLENGE

Seminarians should have the opportunity to gain experience in practical trades. In this way they learn to esteem the value of manual work and make a small contribution for their education. (SVD Const 516.13).

Drawing inspiration from our Constitution and considering the dwindling financial resources in our Congregation, we, the DWC community planned out several possibilities to promote the spirit of self-reliance. Individually and in small groups we visited various companies and sites exploring the possibilities. We kept searching patiently and persistently and as of today 10 of us are offering tuitions at various places around our seminary. No doubt, it is an additional burden on us demanding more sacrifice and hard work, but the humble remuneration we bring to the community and the service we offer to children fill us with joy and satisfaction.

In the seminary, some of us also forego evening games three days a week and put in more time on manual works like painting, cutting fire-wood, etc. The effort taken by the staff to find local benefactors for the community and their contribution for the pastoral services encourage us to actively involve ourselves in efforts that promote self-reliance. Above all, the invaluable practical experience and

the numerous lessons which we all acquire from our part time works bring us more close to the reality of the outside world. And, it would not be an exaggeration for us in taking pride that we take the road less traveled and in turn leave a trail behind for the future generation.

Bala Vara

RIPPLES OF CREATIVITY



Action may not always bring happiness, but there is no

happiness without action. Upholding this simple mantra and deriving inspiration from the eminent leadership of Fr. Kulandaisamy SVD, the CAC (Creative Action Committee) with its five effective members designs a bouquet of colourful events and spreads forth fragrance of happiness in the DWC community. Their maiden event of the year, “St. John Vianney Table Tennis Tournament”, elevated the dipping spirit of the community and the sporting yet indomitable disposition of the players made the event a memorable one. This was followed by an oratory competition on the topic, “SVD response to current national crises.” It was a thorough entertaining extravaganza and yet an acid test for the gift of the gab of the participants. In the days to come, the CAC with many other innovative events is eagerly awaiting to recreate in the community rippling waves of euphoria.

Patrick

A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

DWC community this year was privileged to have many soul-stirring sharing of SVD missionaries from around the world.

The flamboyant narration of daring and death defying missionary endeavours of Fr. Bala Prasad SVD amidst the Maoist infested Northeastern States of India touched our hearts and minds.

"Inconvenience is my convenience" was the striking and thought provoking maxim of Fr. Zacharias SVD, a determined missionary who even in his mid seventies, strives earnestly for the rehabilitation of prisoners in Orissa.

Fr. Anthu Joseph SVD, who is deeply engaged in pastoral ministry, in his talk came up with very rich insights blended with bold zeal and enthusiasm on the dire need of ministers to shepherd the flock.

Fr. Siluvai SVD, an unassuming and zealous missionary to Brazil highlighted the tremendous role played by BCC (Basic Christian Communities) in promoting the Christian faith and rejuvenating the failing spirits of the people of Brazil.

We were absolutely thrilled to have one of our first Indian SVDs, Fr. Dr.

Joseph Puthumana, a vibrant missionary, renowned educationist and scholar. In the sharing of his life and experience with us, he underlined that education devoid of spirituality is meaningless and we need to base our lives on conviction, determination and perseverance.

Eleas & Joshy

VOICE OF THE LEADER



"A Leader is one who knows the way, shows the way and goes the way."

It gives me immense pleasure to share my views as the leader of the community and mediator between the staff and students. Experience had been my best teacher in the near past as my whole being underwent a gradual metamorphosis from being imperfect to perfect, ignorant to enlightened, tender to mature and timid to courageous. In my stand point, "Leadership is not being the best; but bringing out the best in others." In tune with that, in every thought, word and deed of mine I attempted to offer whatever I could and strived to bring out the best in others. Unarguably, my role as a leader was a rare opportunity to mould myself as a selfless, service minded person in my effort to become a missionary.

Eugine Densingh

CO-MISSIONARIES FOR MISSIONARIES

Co-Missionary group is a well-knit prayer team composed of 35 young and exuberant volunteers from the community, who by dint of their fervent and unceasing prayers and words of encouragement reach out to the missionaries of their choice, toiling in the remote parts of the country or elsewhere in the globe. Occasional phone calls and frequent drafting of letters to the missionaries in the far-flung mission stations bridge the communication gap to a great extent. This reciprocal sharing and caring for one another, benefits both the co-missionaries and missionaries considerably by nurturing fine qualities of a missionary in the former and by instilling support in times of challenges and hardship in the latter. The pilgrimage of the co-missionaries to the Mother Mary's shrine in Besant Nagar, Chennai on 5th September was yet another precious moment to pray for the well being of our SVD missionaries.

Agnel & Sushil Xess



DIVINE WORD CENTRE - COMMUNITY