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## GENERAL COUNCIL

# Always Called to Mission

**S. Philomena Pazhuruparambil**  
*General Council*

In the past few months I have had the joy of spending some quality time with our sisters in the United States and in Denmark. Both of these provinces have recently experienced many major transitions. Sisters have moved into different settings as the provincial house where they have lived is being sold. Some are going to nursing homes, or waiting to be moved into another setting. It is a huge change for these senior sisters, many of whom have serious health issues. I can proudly say that in all my conversations with them, these sisters expressed contentment and gratitude, without denying some of the inconveniences they face.

I have been inspired by the passion and commitment of so many who have lived a long life. Their commitment was visible to me in the United States when all were assembled in the chapel to receive the new Constitution. A touching



*S. Philomena giving the new constitution to the Sisters in the chapel of the US province*

moment for me was when they extended their hands to bless the constitution and receive it, showing their great desire to live by it. I truly felt blessed by each one as I gave her a copy of the constitution and blessed her.

In both Denmark and the United States, I had many opportunities to sit with different groups of sisters at meals or for a short chat in

## SUMMARY

### GENERAL COUNCIL

Always called to Mission

COVER

### J P I C

*Rome:* Since it is impossible not to communicate

2

*Brazil:* PROJARI, an experience of building peace

4

### PROVINCE/REGION/MISSION

*Pachmarhi:* Incessant Rains Devastate Kerala, India

5

*Pachmarhi:* Relief Work for Flood-hit Kerala

6

*Pakistan:* Celebrating with the Women

7

*Brazil:* Caring for the Venezuelan Immigrants

8

*Bolivia:* America in Mission-the Joy of the Gospel

9

New Saints

9

*Italy:* Young People Ask for Recognition

10

*France:* Celebrating the Past to Enliven the Present

11

*India:* Women Celebrate Their Accomplishments

12

different settings. These sisters, now retired, have been teachers, leaders in schools and hospitals and various organizations. They are well informed and have much to contribute even today. All those who can, are involved in some ministry according to their ability. There is a kind word for each one who passes by, be it nursing staff, kitchen staff or anyone else. They are truly in mission, being a wonderful presence in whatever setting they find themselves.

This experience made me think of the words in the recent letter that S. Sally sent on "Call to Mission to Sweden, Tanzania and South

Sudan." In the last lines she invited the sisters "to be open to the Spirit and to these calls to mission, willing to respond if possible and if not, to pray for those who will feel called to respond."

While our older sisters cannot respond to the call to go to another country at this time, some of them had been on mission in another country when they were younger. One example of this is the Danish sister, Helene Peerenboom (91years old), who was missioned to Pakistan for a few years. When I went to meet her in her room I was amazed to see her at her desk with a beautiful map of Pakistan

and a lot of mementos from Pakistan, placed around the table. She spoke to me at length, sharing the current information on Pakistan, showing her interest in the mission of Pakistan even today. She keeps in touch with the sisters there through letters and supports the mission with her prayers. What an amazing missionary!

She and many others, who at this time may not be able to move to another country, continue to be in mission with their prayers and their support for those who respond to the urgent calls of today.

J P I C

# Since it is impossible not to communicate, we might as well do it right

World Nonviolence Day: let's start with Communication  
- Rosenberg method

**S. Mariaelena Aceti**  
*General Council*

October 2, World Non-Violence Day. We renew our commitment to the cause of peace, developing a nonviolent lifestyle, as Mahatma Gandhi, whose birthday we celebrate on this date, tried to do in his life. We know that the culture of nonviolence is not just

a method of action, but a lifestyle that involves many aspects, including the relationship with creation. However, if we talk about violence among human beings, the most universal and daily experience is undoubtedly what we experience in communication. In fact, nobody is really happy to be violent, even when it may seem the opposite. We all want to learn how to avoid conflicts, at least because of the consequences that spring from

them. Many people are convinced that the opposite of communication is silence. Silence itself is a language. Even absence speaks. If we act or not, if we speak or are silent, we always send a message.

Therefore the question is not "if" a person is communicating, but "what" is communicated, even through silence or absence. And every communication, in addition to transmitting information, always

defines the relationship. But why is the relationship in human communication so important, often even more so than the content itself?

It is because communication provides a confirmation or denial of the self. Confirming and being confirmed in relationships is a very human desire. Confirmation leads to acquiring confidence and self-awareness, indispensable for human survival, hence, the tendency to treat rejection as something negative. But if we define refusal, however manifested, as rejection of the content and not the person, it becomes an equally important and indirect form of confirmation, since it implies a positive tension towards the other, in an attempt to correct an erroneous vision of self and the world. Think of the corrections of parents or teachers: do they not express perhaps an undercurrent of love?

The real issue, the one that triggers conflicts and brings destruction, is “nonconfirmation,” an attitude which denies the reality of the other. In other words, while the refusal is equivalent to the message “you’re wrong”, the lack of confirmation actually transmits the powerful, almost destructive message of “you do not exist”.

There is unhealthy communication, characterized by a constant



struggle to define the roles in a relationship, and violent communication, where the information transmitted is consigned to second place. Beyond the pathological cases, the problem is that most of these communications are inadvertent, unintentional, or unconscious. For this reason, we often find ourselves in conflict without knowing how we got there and not knowing how to resolve the situation.

Guilt, humiliation, shame, blame, coercion or threats are some of the consequences of a failure of communication, sources of conflict that the Rosenberg Method can teach us to avoid. It is a model for “nonviolent communication”, in fact, finding a simple way,

such that each person achieves what for them is really important, thus avoiding or resolving conflicts. Thus, be attentive to: observations, feelings, needs and requests.

These are four steps anyone can use to consciously be in tune with others, in harmony with our deep and genuine human needs. For this, I would refer you to the abundant literature available on the web, in all languages, both texts and videos. As one example, I suggest the following article, taken from WikiHow: “How to practice Nonviolent Communication”. A good perspective ... because, since it is impossible not to communicate, we might as well learn how to do it right!

### JPIC in theory and in practice

Beginning with this issue, a series of articles dealing with both education and thematic stories on “Cultural diversity and conflict resolution”. There will be contributions from the presenters and participants of the formation program which was held in Le Puy from 2016 to 2018. The educational pieces are meant to provoke interest and lead to deeper personal knowledge, while the stories are meant to give a lived example of the theory. The first article coincides with the celebration of the “International Day of Nonviolence,” established on October 2 by the United Nations.

# PROJARI - An Experience of Building Peace Through Communication

**Elton Bozzetto**

*Brazilian Journalist*

The Associação Beneficente São José, of the Sisters of St. Joseph, through its PROJARI project, in existence for 31 years in the city of Guaíba, RS/Brazil, has consolidated its mission of “Lives in the service of life in unity in diversity”, while being “a point of reference for the formation of healthy human beings in the exercise of citizenship, the sharing of knowledge and the development of potential”.

As a strategy to counter the current environment of violence, PROJARI requires of everyone who participates, to adopt a non-violent lifestyle. Many persons acting peacefully will trigger a movement of nonviolence. Those involved exercise tenderness daily, rather than aggressive attitudes.

One approach that the educators of PROJARI have adopted as a rule is to understand the reactions of participants in their 24 workshops in the areas of sports, culture, dance and productive inclusion. All the activities are preceded by a round of dialogue, where personal problems are aired. One of the important aspects of this activity is PROJARI's attention to one's personal history



and family reality. The aim is to enhance and promote the basic goodness in every human being. In so far as the person feels valued positively, their actions promote the potential of every human being.

PROJARI's motto is, “We are important and make a difference”. This means, “Because we make a difference, we are important”. This methodological path underlies actions, so much so, that it is emphasized on the facade of the building with the inscription: “Life and peace, our commitment”. The data from security services are encouraging. The Civil Police of Guaíba report that in the

Bom Fim neighborhood, where the project is located and in the city, the incidence of murders and incidents of violence have decreased. This was the first social impact of this working methodology.

In addition to the experiences within PROJARI, the organization and the participants take part in activities in the community. One example is the campaign, “Zero violence, 100% tenderness”. A communication that creates an environment of peace and tolerance shows signs of being effective, because peaceful attitudes are found throughout the social environment, not only in the institutional space.

# Incessant Rains Devastate Kerala, India

**S. Maurice George**

*Pachmarhi*

The incessant rains, Aug. 8 to 19, 2018, in the southern Indian state of Kerala forced over one million people to move to relief camps set up in 13 out of the 14 districts of the state. Floods, landslides and the collapse of buildings and bridges caused the death of more than 400 people. Thousands of livestock were washed away in the flood. Many families and relatives of the sisters in the Indian provinces have been affected by this havoc. The three sisters from Pulluvazhi convent had to be rescued by boat because the flood waters reached the second floor of their convent.

With the floods not relenting, the state suffers huge losses, even as air, rail and road traffic stands disrupted across the state. All the airports were closed and the flights into and out of Cochin International Airport remained suspended till August 29 due to flooding in and around the airport. Over thirty thousand camps were set up and the Army, Air Force, Navy, Police, Fire force, youth and fishermen plunged into rescue operations to save lives. This is in addition to the 58 National Disaster Response Force teams who carried out rescue operations in flood-hit Kerala.

Though the suffering, the loss, the aftereffects and the trauma attached to this event are immense, there is tremendous appreciation expressed from all quarters espe-

cially for the ordinary fishermen who risked their lives and their fishing boats to launch into areas where even the army could not reach to rescue the stranded. They analysed the issue and found a solution of their own, mobilising 100 double engine boats and 300 skilled swimmers. They opened their own control room under Kerala Independent Fisher Workers Union and started communicating with the district administration, Disaster Management Team, Indian Coast Guard and the Police in the floodaffected region. They rescued thousands of persons from the high-risk disaster zone.

Rescue efforts were in progress around the clock. Many States have contributed to Kerala's relief fund in cash and in kind. The Government of United Arab Emirates has offered 7 billion rupees for Kerala flood relief which has not yet been sanctioned by the Indian Government headed by prime minister Modi. Kerala is suffering losses of about 210 billion rupees. The Prime Minister of India did make an aerial survey and sanctioned 6 billion rupees which is just a pittance in face of this severe loss and calamity. There is pressure all around to declare the floods as a National Disaster. However, a dead silence prevails among the leaders of the nation.



# Relief Work for Flood-hit Kerala

**S. Navya Neelam**

*Pachmarhi*

At the initiative of the four provincials the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry from the Indian provinces reached out to the flood victims of Kerala, India, in cash and in kind. Almost all the sisters contributed from their own pocket by giving one or two months allowance to the flood relief. A few sisters from different convents and institutions went to Kerala to render voluntary service, while the sisters living in Kerala extended their help to the local flood affected areas. Both students and staff from our schools and other institutions contributed a huge sum for the flood victims.

The majority of the Sisters of St. Joseph in India (60 to 70 percent) are from the state of Kerala. Many of their families and relatives were affected by the flood, with all the distress that this situation brought with it.

Both television and social media are full of stories regarding the help offered by various organizations and individuals to the people affected by the recent floods. In one case the parishoners of Manjummel Amalothbhava Church Kochi, Kerala, donated to the flood victims 200 grams of gold from ornaments taken from statues of Jesus and Mother Mary. Hundreds of similar stories inspire



*Sisters Helen and Staniya from Idgah Hills, Bhopal in Kerala for the relief work*

everyone. The media thus has turned from their usual focus which avoids any mention of helping the poor and those in need and is encouraging people to reach out and help those who have lost so much.

The estimated value of destruction “is more than the annual outlay of our state,” Chief Minister Pinaray Vjayan said on Thursday, Aug. 30. With 1,450,000 persons in relief camps, more than 20,000 homes heavily damaged and a total of 57,000 hectares of crops destroyed, families face the herculean task of cleaning debris and rebuilding. Damage assessments are still under way and the incidence of suicide among farmers is

skyrocketing.

To add to the tragedy, the state of Kerala is now battling an outbreak of leptospirosis, or rat fever, after the devastating floods in August. With at least 1006 confirmed cases and many more suspected cases, this disease, transmitted from animals to humans especially during floods, has already claimed 42 lives.

“Now that the tragedy is over, rehabilitation work has to take a systematic approach,” said K.M. Mani, a veteran opposition legislator of Kerala. The government needs a huge amount of money to rebuild the state, yet the ruling party of India, the BJP (Bharatiya Jana-

ta Party), has underestimated the loss incurred in the state of Kerala.

The reality is that none of the states ruled by the government party contributed anything for the relief work, because Kerala is not ruled by them.

The flood has left a trail of death and destruction across the whole state of Kerala that is indeed unbelievable. The people are trying to stitch their lives together again. Though they have lost everything, there is tremendous confidence and

determination to rebuild Kerala anew. Among the decisions taken to support this effort, the state government has decided not to host any official events for one year and to use the money thus saved for flood relief and rehabilitation.

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## Celebrating with the Women

**S. Sana Bhatti**

*Pakistan*

In this Eucharistic year of 2018, the community of Jamilabad, Multan, celebrated “The Eucharist as the source of Union, Peace, Reconciliation and Forgiveness” on August 30. This was one way we chose to implement one decision we made during the regional meeting: to arrange Eucharistic year gatherings with people, leading them to experience oneness.

We invited mothers, women and youth to come to this day of prayer and celebration, organized by the community. We began with a holy hour, the opening prayer offered by S. Flonia. S. Catherine George developed the theme in detail, connecting the theme with our spirituality and charism, emphasizing unity and reconciliation. She spoke of the Eucharist as an extension of love and the fact that we are part of this communion.

The parish priest Fr. Shahzed Nutmeat spoke in a similar vein, focusing on the Eucharist as an expression of the mystery of



*S. Sana (on left) with the women eating outside*

oneness, of that love which is the very essence of God. He affirmed that our participation in the Eucharist demands that we denounce situations where people suffer from injustice and exploitation. It is the Eucharist, he said, that gives us the strength and courage to work tirelessly to build the civilization of love.

The focus of the day was how we might be Eucharistic people, offering ourselves with love and

compassion for those in need.

After the concluding prayer, offered by S. Sana, there was a festive meal attended by over one hundred people, which included the women, the choir and the church organizing committee. This was one effort made by the Multan community to be peace-makers and bridge builders in a world so in need of both.

# Caring for the Venezuelan Immigrants

**S. Katia Rejane Sassi**

*Brazil*

Inspired by the challenges of the 2015 General Chapter, during the 2018 Provincial Assembly we reflected on the various missionary calls and made a decision to prioritize the study and implementation of a partnership to serve Venezuelan immigrants in Roraima, in northern Brazil.

In recent years, the political, economic and social crisis of Venezuela has led an increasing number of its citizens, including the indigenous population, to cross the Venezuela-Brazil border through the State of Roraima. Shortages of basic necessities, such as food, medicine, energy, basic hygiene, among others, has resulted in a great migratory flow with many immigrants settling in the town of Pacaraima, and in the capital of Roraima, Boa Vista. They are in search of better living conditions, with many requesting refugee status or humanitarian visas. From 2015 to 2018, Brazil has received between 40,000 and 60,000 Venezuelan migrants and refugees. The flow has increased, with about 400 Venezuelans crossing the border daily.

In the town of Pacaraima, the main entry point for Venezuelans who come to Brazil, we found around 600 indigenous Venezuelans, the ethnic Warao. Initially, they were in a situation of extreme vulnerability. As indigenous, they lack knowledge about their rights and have difficulty with the Spanish and



*Sisters Delcia and Ana Maria visiting a family in Pacaraima*

Portuguese languages. Children and young people do not attend school. Nine months ago, they were housed in a gym, receiving assistance from a humanitarian task force led by the army.

The non-indigenous Venezuelans remain in Pacaraima in the thousands. They are on the street or living in rented housing. Most of them continue to travel to the capital Boa Vista or other states in search of work and improved living conditions. In the face of this situation of misery, women, youth and children become especially vulnerable to human trafficking, especially for sexual exploitation and slave labor.

After dialogue with Don Mário Antônio da Silva, Bishop of Boa Vista, and Father Jesus Lopes, Pastor of Pacaraima, we made a commitment to join with those who are already attending to the Venezuelan and Brazilian

population living this reality of stress and conflict.

On August 10, Sister Delcia Decker and Ana Maria Silva, accompanied by the Provincial, Luiza Rodrigues, arrived in the new mission. In the first few weeks, the Sisters witnessed violent acts from the local population against women, men and children, Venezuelan refugees, as well as the solidarity of people, institutions and communities that welcome and protect migrant brothers and sisters.

Our Congregational charism will enlarge the tent through these, our missionaries. They are called on to be a female presence to help humanize the welcome in the shelters and on the streets, going to meetings, listening, being close to the situation and making referrals, as necessary. They are being links of unity and adding strength, through partnership, to assistance for migrants.

# America in Mission - the Joy of the Gospel

**S. Ortenilla Furlanetto**

*Bolivia*

The city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra in Bolivia was the site of the 5th American Missionary Congress, July 9 to 14, 2018. Moved to action by this event, the entire Church prepared for this great ecclesial happening, engaging all areas of Church life. The pastoral area focused on the slogan, "America in mission, the joy of the Gospel". We, as Sisters of St. Joseph, desired to be closer to youth. In our community, we are planning two vocation workshops with young people who are preparing for the sacrament of confirmation (120 youths), and three meetings with young people in more remote communities that we are accompanying. In the meetings we delve into aspects of missionary vocations. - The Church on the March. We are challenged to understand the world of youth, their concerns



*S. Ortenilla Furlanetto (first from the left) and young people in Youth Ministry*

with family, technology, the deceptive virtual world, motivation for life and faith, and commitment to transform the environment. Despite the situation of indifference and fear of involvement, they bring joy and hope to the Church. All around them is the tender and compassionate gaze of Jesus, the one who calls to the service of God's people. It is rewarding and challenging to work in the pastoral ministry of

vocations with youth. It is a joy to be with them, to give a word of encouragement, enthusiasm and strength, and to help them in their search for the path of true happiness that is Jesus. We learned that being with them requires much prayer, patience, understanding, and above all, perseverance. With hope and joy, we thank God for the joy of this mission that the Lord entrusted to us.

## NEW SAINTS

S. Magdalene Pallan (82)	Tanmaya	22.06.2018
S. Ann Sabol (91)	USA	01.07.2018
S. Zenaide Bortoluzi (85)	Brazil	03.07.2018
S. Elisabeth Loisel (98)	France	08.07.2018
S. Maria Zandonà (92)	Brazil	13.07.2018
S. Rosa Saporito (94)	Italy	13.07.2018
S. Ignes Therezinha Mezzomo (86)	Brazil	21.07.2018
S. Edith Mary Madekunnel (88)	Tanmaya	28.07.2018
S. Maria das Neves Borghetti (86)	Brazil	31.07.2018
S. Terenzia Coniglio (88)	Italy	03.08.2018
S. Emma Martensen (87)	Denmark	07.08.2018
S. Guiomar Theresinha Chemello (82)	Brazil	07.08.2018
S. Annie Paul Mazhuvanchery (86)	Nagpur	10.08.2018
S. Anselm Ukken Tresakutty (81)	Nagpur	19.08.2018
S. Louise Antoinette Duc (94)	France	30.08.2018
S. Ellen Mary Doherty (98)	USA	31.08.2018
S. Maria Dalla Santa (89)	Brazil	10.09.2018

# Young People Ask for Recognition

**S. Rosalba Scaturro**

*Italy*

As the Synod of young people desired by Pope Francis approaches, and to prepare young people for the event, the national service for those accompanying youth, and the whole Church, proposed two very special events: “By a thousand roads”, the Diocesan pilgrimage of young people, and “We are here”, a weekend in Rome with the Pope, August 11 and 12, 2018. Forty thousand young people journeyed in pilgrimage there and another 70,000 gathered for the meeting with Francis on Saturday afternoon at the Circus Maximus in Rome and for Holy Mass in St. Peter’s Square on Sunday morning.

“The Church cannot sit on the bench with young people. We should be at their side to show the way. We must accompany them to look upward, as only the eagles can. The Church must help them to look up. We cannot fail in this mission. We cannot be less present in this mission or limit ourselves to just the material needs of young people which we also have to keep in mind. Young people have a thirst for the ‘on high’”, said Cardinal Gualtiero Bassetti, President of the Italian Episcopal Conference.

It is this thirst for God that was seen on the many different faces on the way through the streets



*A group of young pilgrims with Sr. Vanessa (4th from left) resting along the way*

of Italy. Sister Vanessa Perna, accompanying the young people of the Diocese of Salerno, said: “We have come to Rome on foot, with one request, large, deep and true, written in hearts, in smiles, and in gestures: Master, where do you live? The young people of the third millennium have a generous heart and seek the truth. Their hearts are thirsty for the Eternal, for God. The path from the Diocese of Salerno (Campania) to Rome has been tiring and without comfort, but it was worth it!!! Despite the weariness, these youth have not given up. And then the ‘sleepless night’, walking through the streets of Rome, from church to church, where they heard the truth about life today, tragic at times, but full of hope placed in Jesus. Times of prayer accompanied us until we reached Saint Peter’s at three in the morning, waiting

for the gates to open. And then the long wait in the sun for the Holy Father, between hymns and water sprayed on us to avoid our blacking out ... such a long wait, so much emotion ... and then the Holy Father arrived, and we broke out in praise and Thanksgiving. The whole square was there to see that face capable of really listening and giving important answers”.

“A young person who cannot dream is an anaesthetized young person; he or she cannot understand life, the power of life. Dreams awaken you,” said Francis, “they are your responsibility and your treasure; Make them also be your future. The dreams of the young often frighten adults, who have stopped dreaming and taking risks. But do not let yourselves be robbed of your dreams. be pilgrims on the path of your dreams...”

# Celebrating the Past to Enliven the Present and Inspire the future

**S. Dominga Zolet**

*France*

**C**elebrating the Past to Enliven the Present and to Inspire the Future - was the theme of the Diocesan Day at Moûtiers on July 7, 2018, where the Sisters of St. Joseph (French, Brazilian, and Indian) remembered all the Sisters sent on mission and, more particularly, those of Tarentaise, who went to Brazil and to the United States. Indeed, between 1854 and 1887, 35 Sisters left Moûtiers for Carondelet (USA) to help this Congregation founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Lyon. Between June, 1896 and October, 1928, 87 Sisters left for Brazil by ship in 16 successive journeys.

Sister Dominga, a Brazilian Sister on mission in France for two years, traveled the diocese during the months leading up to this celebration, seeking out the families of the Sisters who left on mission in the 19th century. Members of these families were present among us to celebrate this beautiful day, rich with teaching, sharing, and exchanges regarding the missionary zeal of the diocese yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Jean-Paul Bergeri's address was much appreciated and helped us to better understand the incredible strength that led these men and women of Tarentaise to live the love of Christ far from home. There was also a presentation on what is happening today in Brazil and in the USA regarding the missionary



zeal of yesterday. This was done using stories, and especially the video showing the work of Jérôme Jarre, a member of the family of one of the religious who went to Brazil. He continues the mission today with contemporary means! What energy and what a witness of hope! With regard to the future, a question was asked of the participants, "as an heir of this missionary zeal, how do I feel challenged? What is my dream for the Church of Tarentaise tomorrow?"

There was a time for exchange and sharing in small groups. It was an intense moment, lived in all sincerity in light of the reality of the current church, where each is a responsible member. Prayer, singing, witnessing, photos received, videos prepared, exchanges, shared meals, and the international face of this assembly on July 7 in Moûtiers, all made for a beautiful day, the source of a new dynamism and experience, with particular attention given to the families, the human and Christian communities, and the Congregation to which these missionaries traveled.

We remembered and gave thanks together, priests, laity, and religious. We also further realized that now there are missionaries arriving from Africa, India, Brazil, and Vietnam, who come to us "to enliven the present" and "inspire the future".

The day ended at Moûtiers Cathedral with a beautiful Eucharistic celebration presided over by Mgr. Ballot, with our eyes and our hearts turned to the world. Here again, we were connected with the universal mission in songs, prayers, the homily of P. Bernard Turquet (a French priest, missionary in Brazil, back in France following a serious accident which left him disabled) and in thanksgiving expressed through Indian dances.

After the mass, with prayer, songs and photos in front of the Cathedral before leaving, and with happy hearts, we were convinced that "Missionary zeal is nothing other than the dynamism which drives us to share the joy of knowing Jesus and for that, to serve our brothers and sisters, especially those most in need!"

# Women celebrate their accomplishments

**S. Lucy Parakkattu**

*Lyon congregation, India*

**R**aipur Diocesan Social Service Society, an organisation committed to the cause of people who are pushed to the periphery, held a Women's Convention on July 23, 2018. This Social Service Society has, over the past twenty-six years, worked to promote justice, equality and fraternity in the state of Chhattishgarh, India, by empowering the voiceless, especially women, children, youth, small farmers and labourers through the promotion of integration and sustainability. The main strategies used are: strengthening community-based organisations; capacity building; networking with NGOs; transforming Panchayats (village councils) into "Gram Sansads" (programming for village development) by accessing government schemes and promoting income generating programmes and public distribution systems, among others. Aware of the essential role women play in development in the rural areas, a one-day convention was organised at the centre. Seventy



women, all of whom are the leaders of Federations from six different districts, participated in this programme. The strength of these women is visible in their collective campaign to attend the village council. They have grown in their networking with the government departments for securing various welfare schemes. As a group, women are gaining the courage to fight against social evils like alcoholism, oppression of women, illiteracy and child marriage. They are alert in checking and maintaining the quality of midday meals in their village schools. They take measures to reduce the number of school dropouts. The federations have even created their own bylaws which help them function better. Since women are becoming more aware of their

rights and duties for the development of their own villages, this convention was an opportunity for them to celebrate their achievements in the form of dance, song, speeches and short plays. Belonging to diverse castes and tribes, each group exhibited their unique cultural identity, bringing much colour to the celebration. It was truly an experience of multiculturalism within the same state. Rev. Dr. Victor Hendry Thakur, the Archbishop of Raipur, in his presidential address, congratulated the women for their united and tireless efforts for the development of the rural masses. At the end of the day, which concluded with an agape, the women received gifts, as a sign of encouragement and felicitation.

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