

ALÉGRATE
Rejoice !!!



Consecrated men and women are also called to true synergy with all other vocations in the Church, beginning with priests and the lay faithful, in order to spread the spirituality of communion, first of all in their internal life and then in the ecclesial community, and even beyond its boundaries". (Evangelii Gaudium 87)

How to celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life in the Region/in our communities? We discussed a lot and put concrete steps to respond to the calls that God is making us today, in two months time the year of Consecrated life will finish how do we feel? We had the occasion to write our experiences of Consecration in the last Regional Meeting, now we

share with each other in order to thank the Lord for the gift of our vocation as Handmaids and to love and accept each other so as to work together as one Body in and for the Mission. As we look to the past with gratitude, should help us to live the present with Passion and a future with hope. Going through the experiences one notice that what makes us happy and joyful is the



simplicity of life, closeness to the poor & special children, Eucharistic Adoration. We all are grateful to the Lord for our vocation, grateful to the congregation who has been an instrument in moulding us the persons that we are; called by the same Lord for the same Mission. We have another Year of Mercy at our door to experience the Merciful Love of the Father and to be merciful to others.

As we share our experience of consecrated life, let us deepen our love for each other, let us open our doors for the new forms of consecrated life, may be living with all who are seekers of God as some of our Jesuits friends thinks and proposes.

“Consecrated life is a gift to the church, it is born of the church, it gown in the church, and it is entirely directed to the church.”

We received our vocation of Handmaids of the Sacred Hear of Jesus in the Church... We are the Church. We think with the church; we follow her teaching and guidance....”
(Const. 11)

With Gratitude and Love.
Margaret Durom ac





Sr. Monica Rodriguez Aci

“Remaining in His love...”



As I look back from the time I have entered the Religious life till now, I feel deep gratitude to God for he has called me, chosen me, trusted me and consecrated me to be with Him and to walk with him to continue His mission. The vocation to be a Handmaid is very special for me. The name “Sacred Heart” has helped me to experience His merciful love so strong that He never abandoned me and always walk closely with me in my ups and downs.

My experience as a consecrated person is His great love and compassion which he has shown me in spite of my unworthiness and failures, to live the life worthy



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of my call as Handmaid.

The vocation to be a Handmaid is very special for me. The name "Sacred Heart" has helped me to experience His merciful love so strong that He never abandoned me and always walk closely with me in my ups and downs. This convinced me that I totally belong to Him alone.

My personal vocation which I imprinted in my ring "remain in my love" keeps reechoing in my heart to follow Him more and more closely and to celebrate, to adore and to serve Him in my daily life in loving service.

Jesus is the centre of my life, my being and doing and in Him, through Him my relationship with self and with others continues to grow. I feel immense joy to know that I am His .Jesus in the Eucharist is my source and my inspiration to make myself a gift to Him.

One of my strongest experiences of God carrying me in His arms with His tender, caring and loving arms was when I was sick. I know that as a consecrated person I am an instrument in His hands. Day by day He keeps transforming my life and journey with me to live faithfully and joyously as a Handmaid of His heart and living my life towards fullness.

"This year I want to be the Joy of the Lord!"

St. Raphaela Mary



Sr. Margret
Durom Aci

“I have called you and I will be with you” ...



“And those whom He predestined He also called; and those whom He called He also justified; and those whom he justified He also glorified” (Rom 8:30) But I had strong experience of Jesus calling me by name saying “I have called you and I will be with you”. Yes I am set apart for God from the beginning of my conception and my parents brought me up as God's child- that I belong to God. My first communion was at very young age and the confirmation on the following day was an experience of being consecrated to God and Mary as the mediator. From then I developed a special friendship with Jesus, attending daily Eucharist and receiving Jesus. His accompaniment was always felt in my life. There was no



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doubt about it. I started to search Him more and more and slowly I realized that He is interested in me more than I am interested in Him. My father was a guide and example for me. He loved me, valued me and trusted me. I learned to respond his trust by being an obedient and good child. And that was my relationship with God too, a Father who trusted me.

I confirmed my vocation in 1977 during the Easter Vigil Mass when the priest announced that there is a vocation camp for the girls who are interested in Religious life. I knew that was for me and I went for it and met 3 Handmaids. Since then I commenced my journey. My father was a great support for me until he died in 2010.

In early religious life I had some difficulty in relationship with a companion and I felt may be I am not called for this life but one night during the examine, I had a strong experience of Jesus

calling me by name saying “I have called you and I will be with you”. Since then I never had a thought of not continuing the religious life. “The joy of the moment when Jesus looked at me” and to recall the important and demanding, underlying meaning of our vocation”. Pope Francis

I can say that my most fulfilling life was my time spent in the small island in East Timor from 2004 - 13. I felt that I had found my treasure and wished that no one would take away from me. I want to remain there forever especially where I had to sacrifice my parents and beloved ones. I was confirmed that it was the Lord who brought me to this land to live with the simple and poor people. And I wish and pray that God will grant my desire to go back to my beloved land. Nevertheless, I want to live as a Handmaid, open and ready to do whatever He asks of me through my superiors. Fiat! Sr. Margret

“The joy of the moment when Jesus looked at me” and to recall the important and demanding, underlying meaning of our vocation”. Pope Francis



Sr. Kochuthresia
Konath.Aci

**“I have come
that they may
have life to
the full” ...**



When I reflect on my vocation story as a Handmaid, I feel great joy with the experience of being enveloped by Jesus in the Eucharist with his unconditional love for me. This was visibly experienced in my first communion and confirmation. I could hear the sisters altogether telling in one voice: “Here comes the light of the world” – I was very much touched by their joy, simplicity and their being with us as one among us. This helped my connectedness with the handmaids to grow deeper. I remember that in my teenage hood, during the family rosary, I could not utter words, as I used to get lost in gazing the picture of Sacred heart which was placed at the centre of our



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prayer room. I used to feel that I am embraced by His look and it was there He captured me to be His own. I was also very much touched with my mother's large heartedness towards the poor by helping the needy and homeless and seeing them as one of us.

As the search was growing in me some of the Handmaids visited my home. Their overnight presence confirmed my vocation as a Handmaid. There was an incident which confirmed it 'i.e.' during the supper, the electricity went off and I appeared in the midst of the sisters with a candle light and I could hear the sisters altogether telling in one voice: “Here comes the light of the world” – I was very much touched by their joy, simplicity and their being with us as one among us. This helped my connectedness with the handmaids to grow deeper and

went for a “come and see program” very often. There too I was very much attracted by the Eucharistic life and community life. In short, “I went, saw and was captured by the Lord”.

My family was not convinced about me being a handmaid and send me to a local congregation for a month's experience where I could not even stay for a week as I was already decided and convinced my call as a Handmaid.

During these past experiences of my life I am most touched by the life in Roha, where I see it as my first home, where I was called to commit myself to the poorest of the poor and marginalized; where I experienced and lived my vision and mission to the full. “I have come that they may have life to the full.

“Christ is the seal on our foreheads; he is the seal on our hearts: on the forehead because we always profess him; on the heart because we always love him; he is the seal on our arms because we are always working for him.” Pope Francis



Sr. Lizzie
Veluthedath Aci



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The person of Jesus Christ is the source, meaning and goal of my consecrated life. I have come to this life because of Christ's initiative. I am called like the apostles by Him and sent by Him to continue His work on earth.

The image of a tree relate to three vows, chastity, poverty and obedience. Like the roots of a tree which fix it firmly in the ground only to exist for the nourishment of the tree and they unite in transmitting the necessary nourishment to the trunk, branches, leaves and fruits. So each day I get the nourishment to live these vows from the Eucharist.

I am happy to be a consecrated person, much



more to be a Handmaid.
Because Eucharist is the
centre of my life from where I
draw courage, strength, life
energy, enthusiasm and hope
to live and face the challenges
of life every day.

By my consecration to Christ I
commit myself to love and give
myself like Christ; by living it I
am trying to be more and more
like Him -the “Yes” to the
Father

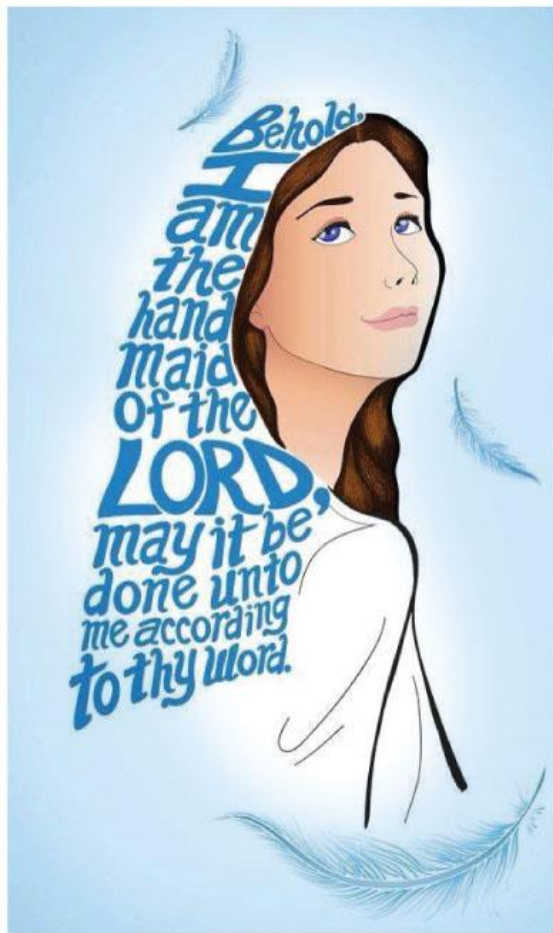


*“People today certainly
need words, but most of
all they need us to bear
witness to the mercy and
tenderness of the Lord
which warms the heart,
rekindles hope, and
attracts people towards
the good. What a joy it is
to bring God's
consolation to others!”
Pope Francis*



Sr. Marina Kanikal Aci

**“Here I am Lord...
surrendered...
committed...
to love and to serve”!**



Out of the darkness Oh Lord, you called me - to live my life as a Handmaid of your Heart. Here I am Lord... your Handmaid... surrendered... committed... to love and to serve. My consecrated life has been a free gift from God. Perseverance till today is a grace. It is the Eucharistic presence of Jesus that sustained me through ups and downs. My life journey as a Handmaid of the sacred Heart of Jesus is fulfilling, joyous and fruitful. It is 30 years since I said “Yes” to the Lord. Ever since the Lord has been at my side, both in good times and in not so good times. He has been my strength, my fortress and my stronghold. Walking with Him has been a challenging, yet strengthening



My consecrated life has been a free gift from God. Perseverance till today is a grace. It is the Eucharistic presence of Jesus that sustained me

experience of growth. Most of my life was spent being with the special children. They taught me the great lessons of life. The first lesson was to accept myself with my strength and weakness. They also taught me to care for others, to do everything possible to make others happy and above all to forgive and to reconcile. Relating with them has transformed me from within. I thank the Lord for this opportunity, where I learned to give love and to receive love.

My consecrated life has been a free gift from God.
Perseverance till today is a

grace. It is the Eucharistic presence of Jesus that sustained me through ups and downs. At all times I was strongly convinced of God's personal choice for me.

The happiest and significant event in my life was my first vows. The day I consecrated myself to God totally and promised Him to live chaste, poor and obedient.

To be a Handmaid of His heart is a unique experience. It demands detachment, self sacrifice; surrender above all availability to God's plan in my life. This in turn gives me great joy and fulfilment in my life.

“The more the mission calls you to go out to the margins of existence, let your heart be the more closely united to Christ's heart, full of mercy and love”. Pope Francis



Sr. Pearly
Chettiveetil Aci



Fixing my gaze up on Him ...!

As I write this experience my heart is full of joy and gratitude to the Lord who called me to be a Handmaid of His Heart. It was my great desire from my childhood to be a consecrated person- to belong totally to God. The seed of my vocation is sowed very well in me from my family. What attracted me to be a consecrated person were the Eucharistic adoration and my special devotion for mission Sunday. The Gospel passage which we hear on every mission Sunday explains my special devotion to it: "The Harvest is plenty but the laborers are few so pray to the Lord of harvest to send more laborers to the harvest". These words very much inspired me. When I used to attend the





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adorations on Maundy Thursdays there was something that was stirring deep within me. The question of Jesus in Gethsemane towards His own disciples disturbed me. “Can't you not wait with me for an hour?” were the words that found its way right in to my heart and helped me to respond to His call. The Eucharist is the place of my refuge and source of my strength and it gives the courage to live every day in the community and in its mission with grace. I can say that being a Handmaid of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, is a wonderful gift. As Handmaids we have Eucharist as the center of our lives, and I feel He called me to the right place and I really feel that I had found the great treasure in my

life which is “the Eucharist”. It gives me a lot of consolation and strength.

When I look back at the past 26 years of my consecrated life I believe that “it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me”. The Eucharist is the place of my refuge and source of my strength and it gives the courage to live every day in the community and in its mission with grace. I am aware that I have my human limitations but I trust in the one who has called me and made me His own and that He leads me on in His path accompanying me in each and every steps of my life. I know that personally I still need to grow in various aspects of my life; however I believe and experience God's greatness and my littleness in my life.



I desire to be His reparative presence wherever I am. To be a person who is joyful, forgiving, compassionate and the one who build the communion wherever I am and with whomever I live. I am aware that I can achieve this only if I fix my gaze on Jesus. As a consecrated person I feel the call to



follow Him more closely and I seek to be completely identified with Him –even to the extend to become the bread which is broken and the wine that is offered for the redemption of the world. I desire to surrender myself to Him as the Handmaid of His heart in order to break myself each day for the community and the mission that is being entrusted to me. I look at Mary our mother and St. Raphaela as my models who will help me follow Him in the ways that he leads me in the daily rhythm of my life. Here I am ...the Handmaid of the Lord!

“Be not afraid. Do not be afraid, because the Lord is the Lord of consolation, the Lord of tenderness. The Lord is a Father and he says that he will be for us like a mother with her baby, with a mother's tenderness”. Pope Francis



Sr. Celine Joseph Aci.

“In the hands of the Potter...”



As I look back to the 25 years of my religious life as a Handmaid, my heart is filled with gratitude to the Lord for calling me to be with Him and to work in His Vineyard.

The image that comes to me when I think of my vocation is the image of a potter and the clay. “I was and I am that clay in the Hands of my Lord. He started shaping me and reshaping me, mouldingI was and I am that clay in the Hands of my Lord. He started shaping me and reshaping me, moulding me and using me for his service to His people. me and using me for his service to His people. His processes of “moulding” were sometimes very painful but I can say that it had a purpose. His presence



I was and I am that clay in the Hands of my Lord. He started shaping me and reshaping me, moulding me and using me for his service to His people.

in the Eucharist strengthens me, gives me courage to give myself to the commitments and to the people around.

Today as I celebrate my silver jubilee of my first profession I feel joy and fulfilment. The Lord has worked wonders in my life. My parents, whose exemplary life was a motivating force of my vocation. My brothers and sisters too played a great role in supporting and encouraging me with the choice. The Handmaids who are part of my life, their guidance, accompaniment and

support made me what I am today. The women, children and men with whom I worked and still working gave me more than what I gave to them. They taught me the lessons of life. Working with the marginalized and poor are my passion. I take them to the Eucharistic Lord and I ask Him what you want me to do for them? They kept me closer to the Lord. Like St. Raphaela, I want to abandon myself into the Hands of the Lord so that He can work wonders in and through my life. Sr. Celine Joseph Aci.

“The Lord calls us to follow him with courage and fidelity; he has made us the great gift of choosing us as his disciples; he invites us to proclaim him with joy as the Risen one, but he asks us to do so by word and by the witness of our lives, in daily life”. Pope Francis



Sr. Aleena
Rodrigues.aci.

“You alone Lord...!”



Yahweh, I know you are near
Standing always at my side,
you guard me from the foe,
And you lead me in ways
everlasting
Where can I run from
your love...?
If I climb to the heaven
you are there
If I fly to the sunrise or hide
beyond the sea
Still I would find you there!
Marvellous to me are your works;
How profound are your
thoughts, my Lord
Everything in
my life is a song of gratitude-
Magnificat! The tremendous
Love of the Lord for me has
brought forth a response from



Everything in my life is a song of gratitude- Magnificat! The tremendous Love of the Lord for me has brought forth a response from my heart. Anything asked of me has generated a humble “yes” to His service.

my heart. Anything asked of me has generated a humble “yes” to His service. Even if I could count them, they numerous as the stars in the heaven!

This psalm speaks to me aloud of my 25 years of life journey as a Handmaid. I am filled with awe and wonder for all that He has done in my life and I have no words to express my gratitude to Him. Where can I run from your love Lord: Yes! I am so filled with Lord's passionate love for me. What always bring tears in my eyes is that the Lord always surprises me by fulfilling my desires...

Everything in my life is a song of gratitude- Magnificat! The tremendous Love of the Lord for me has brought forth a

response from my heart. Anything asked of me has generated a humble “yes” to His service. The Lord's tender love, His compassion, His trust has led me to put my faith in His hands. Many times I tell myself that I am not worthy Lord for so much love, yet I know He spoils me. This is my experience of my God. I am aware in everything that I am His Beloved Handmaid – small, weak, fragile, yet loved and blessed. With this experience I am convinced that He loves me with an everlasting love. He says, I have called you and you are mine.

I thank the Lord for choosing me to be a Handmaid of His heart. He and troubled me with the same question which



He asked St. Margret Alaquoque and during my month's retreat I wrote "You alone Lord". Though I have failed Him at times He has always been faithful.

For my first destination after my vows I was sent to Roha. I experienced a great joy to go to the less privileged and learn from their poverty, later on to reach out to the hostel girls and to their families. The best time was spend in the villages. The mission united us in the community especially during the time we were questioned of converting the tribals. Yes, during this time of trial, I learned this mission belonged to the Lord and we are only collaborating in this mission.

Having our Eucharistic – reparative mission- St. Raphaela Mary is a strong motivational force in my life. Her life has been an example, grace and challenge. My great desire before joining was the deep thirst to know God and Love Him. Yes...I am convinced the Lord loves me, He prepared a banquet for me through the exemplary life of St. Raphaela Mary

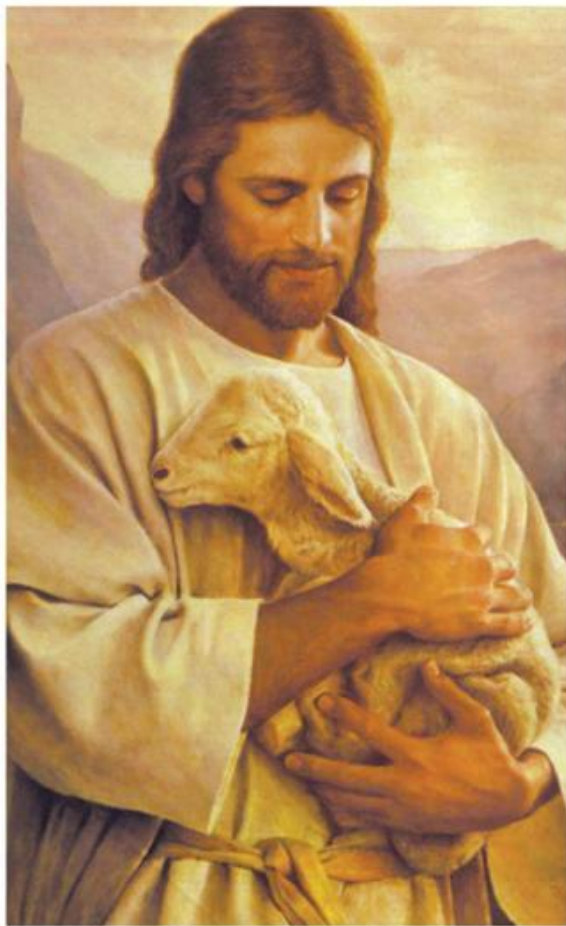
Live Community life always with a big heart. Let things go, do not brag, be patient with everything, smile from the heart. And a sign of this is joy" Pope Francis





Sr. Janet Andrade Aci

“With the great Shepherd of my life to the end...!”



I Thank the Lord for the gift of my life and vocation to belong to the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I have now completed close to 26 years of following the Lord and serving Him with joy and gladness. I am truly delighted with my Handmaids vocation, I love the congregation and St. Raphaela Mary because all these years I have received countless blessings and where ever I have been sent, I have given my very best be it in the small or large events of my apostolic and community life.

My vocation has been nourished by my personal prayer and daily Eucharist which my parents inculcated in me and which helped me to experience of God's love deeply. My foundational experience is deepened





through the daily Eucharistic adoration – remain in my love and abide in me- where my conviction of being a child of God experience peace, joy, self worth, hope and the deep conviction that I belong to God and Jesus is my Shepherd and there is nothing I shall want. I know I can rest in God's Love.

My union with the Lord flows in my relationships with God, others and nature. The shepherd, who takes care of me with compassion and tenderness, guides me to build communion, understanding, respect and dignity. It gives me the strength to relate with every one may it be rich or the poor, the weak or the strong, the sick or the healthy and very especially in my community. The beautiful treasure is the experience of Gods forgiving love for me which enables me to have a forgiving and a compassionate heart.

The shepherd, who takes care of me with compassion and tenderness, guides me to build

communion, understanding, respect and dignity

While I was in Pune, every morning Begum a mentally disturbed woman would come early in the morning and spend the whole day in our garden. Looking at her behavior I noticed something is not okay, I visited her family and they explained to me about her, that she has many fears and phobias. She has five girls. Looking at her pathetic condition where she will not take a bath, dirty clothes, not eat, not bothered about her family and children as she was so miserable. But she said coming to the sister's place she finds peace and she would sit plucking the grass of the pathway. I was moved with compassion towards her and her children. I spend time listening to her, becoming friendly, encouraging and appreciating her, and convinced her of her need to be treated for her situation and I accompanied her to the psychiatric doctor. It required a lot of patience, understanding and tenderness with Begum. Every day she

The shepherd, who takes care of me with compassion and tenderness, guides me to build communion, understanding, respect and dignity



would come to the convent, have breakfast and we would give her the medicine. Slowly there was an improvement and she felt respected, loved and worthwhile to live her life.

The community sisters also began to enjoy the company of Begum. I helped her to work on her phobias so that she could face the life and the situation. She began doing the cleaning work in the convent and she was paid a salary. We encouraged her to make the "chapattis" as she was so frightened of the stove and the fire. Begum overcame it all. She was very neat and perfect in her work and in her speech. She began loving her home and her children. As time went by she said now I have to take care of my family and children so I will not come to work. That was a great joy for us. It is the power of patient love and took nearly seven years for Begum to get back to her normal life. After I got transferred from Pune, it is a great Joy when Begum calls and

tells me about her family. This experience brings me deep lasting peace and Joy and reminds me of the Divine Shepherd who will go after that one sheep which is lost.

My prayer is to live the Eucharist in our daily lives, in our homes, our places of work and in our communities for it is the power of Eucharist and the adoration that has given me the strength and grace to live my life with dedication and fulfillment, bringing life in abundance where ever I am or where ever I go. And so I end with John 10:10 "I have come in order that you may have life- life in all its fullness"

"I want to say one word to you and this word is joy. Wherever consecrated people are, there is always joy!"

Pope Francis As I continue my journey, I trust in my shepherd who leads me and guides me because my joy and happiness lies in Him alone.

*"I want to say one word to you and this word is joy.
Wherever consecrated people are, there is always joy!"
Pope Francis*



Sr. Prisca Aci

I have carved in the palm of my hand ...!



I thank the Lord for the mystery of my life. God has been the source and strength of my life. I feel deep gratitude to God as I see how He was leading me through the different experiences of my life. Like a new born child I have been held in His hands; giving me His warmth, care and protection. “I have carved you in the palm of my Hand” is my personal experience of God. Being the youngest in the family of seven children, I was looked after by all my brothers and sisters and especially by my mother. My dad passed away when I was just ten months old. I am grateful to my mother who has been the source and strength of my vocation.



“I have carved you in the palm of my Hand” is my personal experience of God

During my school years I used to attend daily Eucharist before going to the school in the morning. Then once in a month I used to make time to visit the Blessed Sacrament in the adoration chapel. It was during that time my desire to become sister started growing in me.

When I finished my SSLC I went to have mission experience with my cousin in Nasik who was working in a dispensary. While being there with her for a month, I attended a course on First aid care. During that month I met a Jesuit brother and I expressed my desire to become a consecrated person. He directed me to our Congregation. I met the sisters and they explained me about the charism- “Reparation to the Heart of Jesus” of the congregation. Before leaving the convent they took me to the chapel where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed in adoration and there I felt

something moving deep within my heart. I fell in love with the Eucharist. I realized in those moments that it was this that I have been searching for.

I am completing 24 years of my consecration and I can say that I am very happy as the Handmaid of His Heart and I have received many blessing from the Lord. I like to share an experience that I had while I was in Roha where we are working with the tribals who live on a hill tops. They are very simple, loving, and free. They work for to meet the day's end and get lower wages to spend for their family. They live for each day and they never store or never get worry for tomorrow. They really practice the Gospel values in their lives. They are very joyful and happy persons.

It helps me live joyfully each day; to be grateful for all that I receive and to be content with what I have.

“In calling you God says to you: 'You are important to me, I love you, I am counting on you'. Jesus says this to each one of us! Joy is born from that! Pope Francis



Sr. Regeena Xavier

His grace called me and still upholds me ...



“I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth. (Jer 1:6)” When I felt my vocation to be a Handmaid, I asked Jesus a similar question to that of Jeremiah. Am I mature enough to take a lifelong decision to be a Handmaid? After three long years of prayer and discernment, at the age of twenty, when my parents started to look for a marriage proposal for me, I took a final decision, to join Handmaids. There I began my inner journey to find joy and fulfillment in my life. What attracted me most about the Handmaids was the adoration to the Blessed Sacrament. I was told by my formator, that our foundress St. Raphaela Mary used to



I believe that it was the grace of Jesus which called me to be His and still upholds me as His own. I thank Jesus for making me His instrument of life.

say that “For me adoring the Lord means He looks at me and I look at Him”. In the early years of my formation I did not know how to spent time in adoration that I began only looking at my first love- Jesus- in those silent hours of adoration. It was my strength and this continued all throughout my last 25 years of religious life. I believe that it was the grace of Jesus which called me to be His and still upholds me as His own. I thank Jesus for making me His instrument of life. The formation years were an inner journey to myself. In that journey, I discovered the depth of myself and also I was happy to explore to different languages and cultures. Interpersonal relationships in

the community and in the apostolate pointed out my strengths and weaknesses. This year being the year of the Consecrated, I complete 25 years of my joining to the Handmaids family. Though my life is a continuous search for fulfillment, today I can say that I am a happy and grateful Handmaid.

When I look back to the years of my life as a Handmaid I can say like St. Paul- “God's grace is sufficient for me”. I would like to narrate one of my experience in which I am confirmed the above words of St. Paul. Last year, it was few months after I joined in the school as a Counselor, I was sitting in my room, and it was about 10.30 am. Suddenly the Principal



phoned me to say that there is an emergency and so I have to go to the office immediately. When I entered the office, I saw a boy, aged 14, holding up his bleeding hand. The blood spread widely on his shirt and on the floor gave me a shiver on my knees. I was told that he cut his vein to end his life. I found myself praying in my heart “Jesus I need your grace to deal with this situation”. It was my first such serious case that I have dealt with. I put my hands across his shoulder and I took him to my room and talked to him for a long time. I believe it was Jesus who gave me strength to give life to this boy. Before leaving my room, he promised me, that he will not do such actions anymore and he wants to live. After dealing with this boy I had to inform his mother who is a young widow. When I

narrated to her what had happened to her son, she burst out weeping. It was very difficult to find the words to console her; it was only with the grace of Jesus I could help her out too. It was really a challenging experience in which I encountered the powerful presence of Jesus in my life.

I believe that it was the grace of Jesus which called me to be His and still upholds me as His own. I thank Jesus for making me His instrument of life. I feel a sense of fulfillment and gratitude. I am deeply grateful to the Congregation who nurtured me all throughout these last 25 years of consecrated life as a Handmaid.

I can tell my whole heart ...”YOU HAVE TOUCHED ME AND I HAVE GROWN....”

*“Religious should be men and women able to wake the world up.”
Pope Francis*



Sr. Alice Aci

“I am the Light of the World...”



I am the light of the world” these words of God had inspired me to follow Jesus with the experience of mother Teresa's life. In my consecrated life I had different experiences. One of the experiences that I would like to share was something that I recently had when I went to meet street children on the railway station in Odisha. We have initiated our work with the children on the street. That day I was I asked to go alone and I was very much worried and upset about handling the language and still uncertain about how to manage the children alone. Before I went to visit them, I asked the Eucharistic Lord to accompany me and guide me in my endeavor. Though I



It is from the Eucharist both celebrated and adored that I draw all my strength and courage to live my life. Thank you Jesus for calling me to be the Handmaid of your Heart.

was to go to the place by auto rickshaw, due to some technical problems I had to walk all the way to the station. Later I understood that it was the plan of God because I met the children on the way. As I saw some of the children playing near the station, I called out to them and from the other end a little boy soaked in dirt and filth came and hugged me welcoming me to their group. The little one - Rohit – took me by hand and we all went to the

police quarters and sat under the tree. We started the prayer and began the class. Two policemen came to see what we were doing and I was more tensed about my language. However everything went on well. I believe it was God who guided me and the Holy Spirit that helped me to speak well.

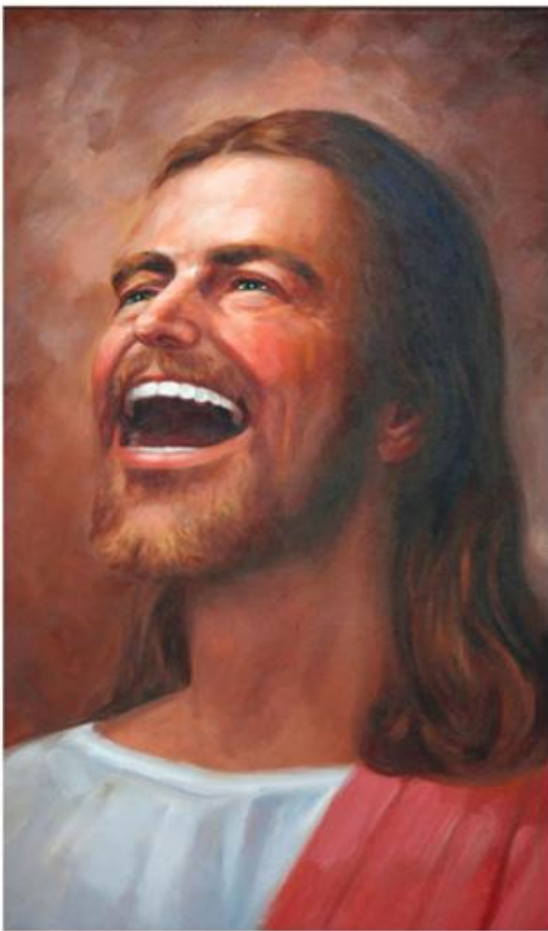
It is from the Eucharist both celebrated and adored that I draw all my strength and courage to live my life. Thank you Jesus for calling me to be the Handmaid of your Heart.

“Look into the depths of your heart, look into your own inner depths and ask yourself: do you have a heart that desires something great, or a heart that has been lulled to sleep by things? Has your heart maintained a restlessness searching or have you let it be suffocated by things that will finally harden it? Pope Francis



. Sr. Kitty Nigrel Aci

“Wake up the world!”



This year being dedicated to the consecrated persons, very often I hear this sentence “Wake up the world”. When my attention went to the poster in the chapel which read “Wake up the world” the question that came into my mind is “Am I sleeping”? And I ask myself again “Kitty ... are you sleeping? “ This indeed helped me to go to the root of my call. As I recall it, I thank God for my vocation, my family, my religious family and all the people who help me continuously in my consecrated life.

I experience the Joy of being called and chosen. The call to Religious life has attracted me and my consecration to God is collaboration towards the



“Consecrated life is born in contemplation from relationship from moments of intense communion and from deep relationship of friendship with Christ and from the beauty and light which was seen shining on His face”.

growth of church by being, relating and doing for what I am called and challenged. I am witnessing it and I could say YES to God. I have read in a book called “Starting from afresh” that “Consecrated life is born in contemplation from relationship from moments of intense communion and from deep relationship of friendship with Christ and from the beauty and light which was seen shining on His face”. This is what exactly I have experienced in life. When I was younger my consecrated life was not very easy for me. I still remember during one of the worst time of my life, it was my intense communication and relation with Jesus Christ in prayer and the friendship with God that

has help me in to go forward to this today. I have seen the light shining on His face as he listens to me. I really thank God for such moments.

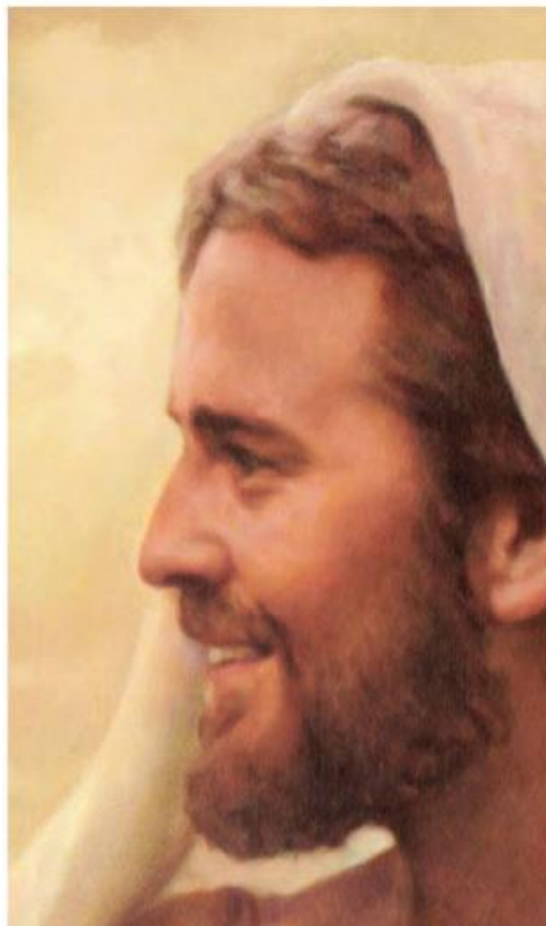
I find life by giving my life. When I am with the weak I find hope and try to give hope. I have experienced the positive energy when I am fully available to the needy. The conviction and motivation of my life as a consecrated person helps me to be joyful witness. The awareness of my own limitations helps me to be more compassionate. Consecrated life gives me the freedom to choose, reflect and to be available. I feel that I am a courageous prophet who speak and act with the attitude of prayer and Discernment.



This consecrated life helps me to be a sign of unity, Joy and hope in the midst of a world of darkness and division; it indeed helps me to be a sign of Gods kingdom. It helps me to focus on my life as a constant gift from the Lord and helps out to live common mission in a community life.

I would like to state a small incident to share about my witnessing of consecration which took place during my life in East Timor. I was working with the youth group. When I was working for the youth encounter of FABC of South East Zone, I was asked to be with this group in order to plan and organized the whole program with the help of another sister, a priest and youth. My presence had brought great Joy to that group with my service in organizing without limits and this was expressed by the Bishop. I remember him saying “sisters presence makes a difference very specially the sister who is sensitive dedicated and available for whatever situation”. For me this has brought me to light of my availability and of my being Handmaid.

“This is the beauty of consecration: it is joy, joy... The joy of bringing God's consolation to all”.
Pope Francis





Sr. Jacklin
Ghonsalves Aci



To be my voice for the voiceless...

I thank God for the precious gift of life and my vocation as a Handmaid. The vows which I pronounced is none other than communion with Christ in his life and mission, being with Him and following Him closely has helped me to live my consecration more radically. As a consecrated person I live my vocation joyfully in the midst of difficulties and I always hope for good of the other. I would like to share my profound experience of living as a consecrated person in Raigad mission. While working with the poorest of the poor, I heard the “cry of God”. My being with them helped me to experience their hard life and the struggle to earn their daily bread. Slowly my interaction with them built a cordial



As a consecrated person I live my vocation joyfully in the midst of difficulties and I always hope for good of the other

relationship where I felt free to share all the information and enhance their self esteem.

As I spent more time in prayer before the Eucharistic Lord, I experienced God's leading hand in my life and slowly the passion was increasing to work for the poor without expecting any reward in return. There was a lot of political pressure even they wanted to get rid of my life, at times poor responses from the people with whom we were working were discouraging but did not stop to voice out for the voiceless.

I prepared and gathered people to fight for the good cause and I put my complete trust in God,

no matter what will happen to my life. I felt Jesus too was radical in living His mission, so why to close my ears when I hear the injustice has been done to my brothers and sisters. I was convinced that change will not come at once but let me sow the seeds so that slowly the poorest of the poor will have their dignified life.

As a consecrated person I live my vocation joyfully in the midst of difficulties and I always hope for good of the other. At times I fail, but the spirit of reconciliation helps me to forgive and move on living a meaningful life.

"A joyless community is one that is dying out. [...] A community rich in joy is a genuine gift from above to brothers and sisters who know how to ask for it and to accept one another, committing themselves to community life, trusting in the action of the Spirit".
Pope Francis



Sr. Rozy D'souza Aci

I belong to Him alone!

While I was discerning about my life I came in contact with Handmaids. My first contact with two Handmaids made a great impression on me of their joyfulness and of their interior freedom in life. I felt this is what I am looking for and also God is asking of me. It is Jesus in the Eucharist whom we adore is the one who inspires, strengthen and gives me courage to live my life with joy and in an authentic way by giving my life more generously to the service of the people who are living around me When I was in the novitiate I had a deep experience of God in the Blessed Sacrament which filled me with tremendous joy and courage to go deeper in my life as a Handmaid: "One day as I was in the adoration I saw a cross in the host which is the same cross of my parish and that moment the tears rolled down my eyes and some verses of a hymn was resonating within me: "Christ has no body but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours ". Deep down in my heart I felt a great joy





It is Jesus in the Eucharist whom we adore is the one who inspires, strengthen and gives me courage to live my life with joy and in an authentic way by giving my life more generously to the service of the people who are living around me

experiencing the love of God which was really overwhelming my whole being. This strong experience made me to live my life with more meaning and joy. As I journey on I still cherish and draw strength from this experience especially when the things turn out to be difficult.

In my life of consecration as a Handmaid of His Heart living through different communities and apostolates I can say that I am happy and content. The memorable and most inspiring moments of life was that of my experience of living the mission in Roha with the tribals. It gave me a lot of satisfaction in life even though at times it was frustrating because of their noncooperation. But they have taught me to be more patient, generous, loving and selfless. They shared everything out of their poverty and their

simplicity and challenged me to live a life based on gospel values.

At present as I am working in the parish community centre for the poor, I feel that God who is just and loves the poor gives me the courage to feel with them and to speak for them for their rights and to become voice to the voiceless in this world.

It is Jesus in the Eucharist whom we adore is the one who inspires, strengthen and gives me courage to live my life with joy and in an authentic way by giving my life more generously to the service of the people who are living around me.

I remain with great joy and satisfaction for this consecrated life as a Handmaid. God has been journeying with me all the through my life and I am grateful to God for calling me to follow Him and to live my life as a Handmaid of His heart.

“Our meeting with Jesus lights up in us its original beauty, the beauty of the face on which the Father's glory shines, radiating happiness”. Pope Francis



Sr. Sangita Dabre Aci

Wearing Christ in my heart to love ...



The sign of Christ is in our face and in our hearts...in our face to proclaim Him always, in our hearts to love ... and in our arms to do good." (Pope Francis in his letter to the consecrated men and women). As a child this was my desire and attraction towards religious nuns whom I have encountered. I knew only this that their life is to serve the poor. I also wanted to serve the poor. I did not have the deeper knowledge of consecrated life. It is only after joining the religious life I understood what it is to be a consecrated woman. As I look back after the 15 years of my consecration I am filled with gratitude to God that He has called me to be His Handmaid. My experience of





God moulds me continuously so that I live my consecration more effectively.

being a consecrated woman has three important aspects and it has helped me to live my consecration with Joy. I am happy to be the handmaid of His heart. The three aspects are:

- Life centered on Jesus Christ
- Community life
- Apostolic activity

God moulds me continuously so that I live my consecration more effectively. Life of prayer, adoration, and personal prayer helped me to be in more communion with Jesus who has called me. The Ups and downs of life has helped me to find strength from Jesus. God moulds me continuously so that I live my consecration more effectively. I know by my experience that it can't be lived in isolation. Community

is the place where I felt I am helped to live my consecration more joyfully and effectively by being in communion with one another and by being compassionate and sensitive to the other. It also takes us to understand, accept and encourage one another to live more radically.

I had an opportunity to work in different places. I always enjoined living my apostolic activities in those places where language or culture was not of my own. There were learning experiences and situations that made my consecrated living more challenging. But it is only in Jesus Christ that I have found strength to face such challenges.

These above three aspects continue to help me to live my consecration with joy,



creativity, compassion and communion.

Finally I would like to share my experience living my consecration while working with the young-adults of mentally handicapped. When I went to Kochi I did not know the language or their culture. It was a great challenge for me learning how to communicate

with them. I was very happy deep down in my heart to work with them though I had the fear of how I would actualize my desire of empowering them. But to my surprise in few months I realized that they understood me so well and accepted me with love. They are the ones who taught me to be more loving, joyful and hopeful. I learned from them to put my trust in God, to be simple and humble in my living.



*We have a thousand reasons for remaining in joy. Its roots are nourished by listening with faith and perseverance to the Word of God. In the school of the Master we hear: May my joy be in you and may your joy be complete (Jn 15:11) and we are taught how to practise perfect joy.
Pope Francis*



Sr. Suvarna Aci

Lord you have seduced me



As a Handmaid for last 15 years I can say that we are living in a time of epochal change and there for, of profound transformation not only in the socio- economic and political fields, but also in the cultural and religious context. The distinguishing characteristic of consecrated life is the exclusive commitment to the God quest. Religious are not called to live differently in this world, which all Christians must do but to create a different world which will offer a prophetic witness to- and sometimes against the values of - this world. This I can say with conviction and to share my own experience as a consecrated person I can say it began long back I can't even trace out exactly. It all began as





“As I make my slow pilgrimage through the world, a certain sense of beautiful mystery seems to gather and grow” I see my growth and my transformation. I believe that it is an ongoing process

a dialogue with God and who was this God for me? It was Jesus who was introduced to me through the devotion of Sacred Heart by my mother. I fell in love with this person of Jesus whom I contemplated most of the time as a young girl and it is with Him I wanted to spend whole of my life. I was not much interested in doing because I believed in being , so I wanted to be with the Lord the rest of my life and from there to do whatever He ask of me.

During my formation the different formators made me to realize the goal and purpose of my life and that helped me to deepen my thirst for God who is the soul master of my life. As I grew in the religious atmosphere my passion for Christ and for His mission grew. I was content with the charism of Handmaids especially with the Eucharistic adoration where I could adore the Lord face to face. This

Eucharistic adoration strengthened me to go forward in spite of any barriers. Each day the joy and enthusiasm increased and it was not that important for me what I was doing but the being gave me more inner strength to continue my journey.

I always saw my consecrated life as a pilgrimage where I am passing only once in life time and am called to do good, called to bring life. My prayer life helped me to build an intimate relationship with God and that became my boost to do any type of work that was entrusted to me with full zeal because I felt that is what the Lord was asking of me. There were also difficult moments where I struggled yet I never thought of breaking my journey and take another direction because in this process of my journey I have experienced God as a friend and as a soul mate, who is constantly there with me



walking and guiding, protecting and caring. On this course of action I have realized that the supreme power comes from God and not from me. This many years of religious life has helped me to discover the strength of God's love in my life.

A. C. Benson says "As I make my slow pilgrimage through the world, a certain sense of beautiful mystery seems to gather and grow" I see my growth and my transformation. I believe that it is an ongoing process. I have learned to accept God's will for me and my own vulnerability. I am strongly convinced that God never deserts me, I am proud to be a unique human being created in the image and likeness of God. I want to embrace my past with gratitude and walk towards

the future with hope in the one who created and chose me. I embrace the present moment with the experience of wholesome conscious living. I remain faithful to my sacred holy self as an integrated being enjoying a meaningful life. I know that the mighty grace of fortitude centers me, protects me and guides me in all my accomplishments. I surrender to spirit and accept that I am an open channel for its whole expression. I want to be thankful for what I am, want to be creative and innovative. With the help of the lord I want to think differently and positively. And with prophet Jeremiah, it is good to confess and say: "Lord, you have seduced me, and I was seduced. You are stronger than I am and you have overpowered me" (Jer 20)

"The primacy of God gives full meaning and joy to human lives, because men and women are made for God, and their hearts are restless until they rest in him." Pope Francis



Sr. Bindu
Michael Aci.

“If you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me”.



As I look back to my life of consecration, I am filled with gratitude for my vocation as a Handmaid. My decision to join the religious life shocked and surprised my family and friends. Naturally I did not get any support from them. Even though my mind was full of doubts and confusion, my heart was beating with the anxiety and fear of the unknown, I still joined to experiment the consecrated life. I was stubborn with my decision in spite of so much opposition from my family and I feel it was the grace of God that gave me this stubbornness to choose this life of consecration. I wanted to follow Jesus whose life was so challenging. I wanted to serve Him in the poor and the marginalized. I wanted to be His voice for the voiceless and all the more I wanted to do something



He kept on lighting the little candles of faith and hope within me through different people and situations. He kept on whispering, "My grace is sufficient for you". He taught me to Trust Him completely in the midst of inner war and we celebrated my coming back in the silent hours of adorations.

good before my death. The scripture text which gave me courage and conviction was from Prophet Jeremiah 29: 11-14, "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me". I was convinced of those words and I got courage to say yes to Him. And He never left my hand from that day of 2nd June, 1996 till now. Gradually I fell in love with the Handmaids and their spirit of joy, simplicity, hospitality and freedom. I felt at home with the sisters and their mission. I liked the Eucharistic adorations the most and I felt great union with Lord and

enjoyed conversing with Him in the silence. St. Raphaela Mary's words always echoed in my heart," The heart of a handmaid should be open to the whole world".

The journey of consecrated life was not very smooth. There were faith crisis, darkness, struggles, disappointments and a great inner war between family responsibilities and my vocation. There were moments I just wanted to run away from His presence, but I did not have the courage to say "NO" to Jesus. He kept on lighting the little candles of faith and hope within me through different people and situations. He kept on whispering, "My grace is sufficient for you". He taught me to Trust Him completely



in the midst of inner war and we celebrated my coming back in the silent hours of adorations. He gave me inner strength to face the difficulties and each moment He was proving to me that I am precious to Him and He wants me to be His own.

My mission was always with the children with Intellectual disability. The children taught me to trust and rejoice even in the little things. Through their innocent laughter, tears, hugs and simplicity, I experienced the touch of God and it is transforming me. They have touched me and I have grown in compassion, patience, love, reparation and sensitivity. Most of the children think that I have direct contact with God, so

they come with prayer requests when their grandparents are sick, if some unpleasant things happen and they make sure that I announce it in the assembly and pray for that intention. They do reciprocate these prayers to me when I am sick and say to me, "we will pray and you will be well" - that has touched my heart so much. This challenges me every day to come little closer to God and to be fervent in my prayer life.

I am happy and contented to be the Handmaid of His heart. I want to renew this everyday by saying, "a toda la costa"... And my prayer is that I may never leave His Hand!

"The Church must be attractive. Wake up the world! Be witnesses of a different way of acting, of living! It is possible to live differently in this world. It is this witness I expect from you". Pope Francis



Sr. Brigit Viji Aci

Merging my springs in the sanctuary of His great River of life....



When an axe is pierced into the heart of the sandal tree, it said to the axe: “ Each one shares what each one's nature is; your nature is to cut down and mine is to give fragrance even to the one who cuts me down..” and indeed it was, the axe smelled so strongly of the sandal. Yes, each one shares what we really are. When I trace down my memory lane of my desire to be a consecrated person, there were two dreams that alimanted it – one was to remain close to God and another one was to live happily with so many sisters. Though I could find so many sisters praying in many congregations, what attracted me to the Handmaids were the adoration and the joy of the sisters that I met. Of course,





When any one asks me what is the happiest thing in my life... I tell them that it is to be a Handmaid of His heart that I belong to Him... what greater joy than being the “Esclava (slave) of a God who is pure infinite Love, continuously whispering to me like a mantra, “I love you and I am with you”.

there was a bonus too. I felt very much at home with the Handmaids in spite of all the pain that I felt leaving behind my world and my own. I heard an inner voice saying to me: “at last you have reached your home”...that voice and that feeling are still fresh in me no matter wherever I am.

When I look back at those days, I still remember that super nervous, hyper active girl who had a lot of good will and passion to love and serve the Lord and His people but with a lot of low self esteem, fear and uncertainties. Today I can say that it was really worthwhile to go through the process of “digging one’s own grave, dying and rising and the painful but beautiful process of “Reparation and Healing” before the Eucharist. He has found a

“good crackpot mended” so that in His hands it can reach out to wherever He take me very specially to the outskirts and peripheries where the main stream is aloof to reach out. Thanks to all those instruments of formation that with their help the Lord had made me discover the “Pearl” that I am. I am the pearl that He holds out to the world to show them what God can do with the “little stones of pain and suffering in the shells of our comfort zones”. When any one asks me what is the happiest thing in my life... I tell them that it is to be a Handmaid of His heart that I belong to Him... what greater joy than being the “Esclava (slave) of a God who is pure infinite Love, continuously whispering to me like a mantra, “I love you and I am with you”.



It has changed my perception towards life, love and people, the way I relate with people, the way I do things. It gives me the joy of owning who is not of my own blood, culture or language, to love even when it is not reciprocated, to cry with those who are vulnerable, heal the wounds of suffering, to be with the people in need, to fight for their rights but with compassion and justice, to forgive and move on even when it hurts.

Since I know by experience that it is God alone who heals, I find a lot of meaning in the words of St.Raphaela when she says, “Bring the people to adoration”, I have heard witnessing of people about this greatest treasure of Eucharist that heals and consoles ,may it be the tribals, children, women or the fisher folks. I have found the

Lord in their laughter and tears, in their simplicity, generosity and richness of humanity. St.Raphaela Mary says, “A Handmaid's heart should be large enough to embrace the world”. I think it has affected our lives so much, I feel so happy to belong to this universal family, I appreciate our wider perceptive in life and mission, our freedom and openness to be with the people wherever they are and wherever they may be, open our houses for the people to enter and experience the warmth and friendship of our consecration.

There are certain experiences that never fade away from my heart. The most beautiful experiences are that of Roha, where I really felt so fulfilled as a Handmaid who live the



reparation, where people confirmed that our lives are the 5th living gospel. The only one which they will read! During one of the village meeting in the tribal hamlet, the leader of that village told: "You know my grandfather was killed in front of my father who stood so helpless. But now they are frightened to molest us because they know that you are with us and justice will be done...what a joy to know that our presence itself communicate a sense of security to the little ones...another occasion during the women's meeting...one of the ladies told... your God-Jesus – is very good...I asked why? Because you are good. You come to us to help us in spite of the sun and rain, you do not cheat on us, we are no one to you, still you treat us as if we are your own..."

I have come across many people saying about us that you all are very happy and free, very original and

spontaneous, you have disagreements but soon you are together, laughing or working. You are so special that we felt at home with you all. You are our sisters. I think that is the beautiful thing being a Handmaid – owned by God, by the universal family of Handmaids and by the people with whomever we live and work. I conclude by stating the sacred God experience of flowing like a river along with God and with my sisters and the universe. A river that springs forth from the deeper self of my being and flows out embracing all the shores. It is a special joy to flow like Handmaid because it means sharing the streams of healing from the sanctuary of life- the Eucharist. And in the course of flowing together with Him I realise that my spring has completely become one with the living water in the sanctuary of His life in me. I am blessed because I am the Handmaid of His heart

"Joy is born from the gratuitousness of an encounter! And the joy of the encounter with him and with his call does not lead to shutting oneself in but to opening oneself; and joy also spreads. Do not be afraid to show the joy of having answered the Lord's call, joy, true joy, is contagious; it is infectious... it impels one forward". Pope Francis



To be the embrace of God...



“Life is a precious gift of God to us and what we make of that life is our gift to God” In the year of Consecrated life when I look at my life, 'My heart overflows with joy and gratitude to the Lord of Life and Love who has called me to be His own and to be the witness before the world -To be His Heart! In these years the Lord of my life and love has been working in and through me in order to make me a person of compassion, self giving and the joy to be in this world.

In this year of grace as I have an opportunity to look at the gift of my vocation as a Handmaid, my memory goes back to the tender love of God that created me in my mother's womb and put that put the



In these years the Lord of my life and love has been working in and through me in order to make me a person of compassion, self giving and the joy to be in this world.

desire to be His own. My parents nutured that desire and supported me in spite of their daily struggles. As I grew I remember myself being influenced by our parish priest Fr. Roshan Menazes Cap. Who was a tender loving self giving priest. We as children use to hang on to him and He loved us so much and gave his life fully for us. Sometimes I use to question myself: "what makes him to be so loving and self giving"? I have seen him praying in the church and I too wanted to imitate him. As the years passed I realised that it was the prayer that makes a person so loving and self giving. I too decided that I wanted to give myself for others in service. Slowly the desire grew in me and I was in search of the place where God is calling me. After my degree I did go to Dominican sisters and as I had come home for the discernment Sr. Aleena and Margret visited my home and that is how I came to know

about the Handmaids. As I prayed about it I felt to go for a come and see with the handmaids. As I came to Mumbai I participated in the celebrations of the final profession of Srs. Janet and Prisca and that triggered my desire and I felt that this is my Home and I said "HEAR I AM LORD" . Now I have completed 12 years of my consecrated life. In these years the Lord of my life and love has been working in and through me in order to make me a person of compassion, self giving and the joy to be in this world.

I would like to share an experience of living and sharing the joy of consecration. I love the children and I have worked with them in many places and they have touched my life and I have grown. This is an experience as I have been working with the children on the street in Odisha. One day as I was just reaching the



railway station to call the children on the street I saw six children running and coming to me. They were dirty but with the tender smile. As they were reaching nearer to me my human tendency was drawing me back and to stop the children at a distance. At that time the words of Jesus that came to my mind: “let the little children come to me...” also the words of a psalm: “The lord lifts up the lowly from the ash heap...” That moment I went close to the children to hold them together in my hand and the joy that I felt was

tremendous. I would like to quote words of pope Francis: “People today certainly need words, but above all they need a witness to the mercy and tenderness of the lord, which inflames the heart and awakens hope”. I am convinced that as consecrated women we are called to bring the embrace of God.

“I want to say one word to you and this word is “joy”. Wherever there are consecrated people, seminarians, men and women religious, young people, there is joy, there is always joy! It is the joy of freshness, the joy of following Jesus; the joy that the Holy Spirit gives us, not the joy of the world. There is joy! But – where is joy born?” Pope Francis





Sr. Alma Minj.aci



A dream come true...!

“Dream can reveal God's plan and it can disturb you if it is a real plan of God for you”

“Your life does not belong to you alone, but for the service of God among people”. A great sentence said by someone had touched me and made a golden remark in me and it remains with me till today- that your life does not belong to you alone.

As I grew in age my teachers inspired me along with my parents and elders in the family. I encountered and experienced the total self service of religious women as I was studying in their school. Their helpfulness and kindness drew my heart and mind for others. I wanted to be like them in my life. “Your life does not belong to you alone, but for the service of God among people”. God's call is mysterious. It was the year when I was studying in the 9th standard when I had seen a



Live Community life always with a big heart. Let things go, do not brag, be patient with everything, smile from the heart. And a sign of this is joy” Pope Francis

dream as a vision that many angels had come to take me. They were going up and down. I dreamt this repeatedly. I shared this dream with my aunty with tears in my eyes that the Lord is calling me. There was fear in me that either I am going to die soon or the Lord wants me to be a religious. Aunty told my mother about this dream. She heard it and kept it in her heart. Dream remains as a dream. I knew that after 12th only I will join the convent. But when I completed my 12th, I expressed my desire to my parents. One of my cousin brother told me and to my friend that we are very young and need to continue our studies.

Later on I entered in to the other world where my study was important for me. The desire was dying within me, but the word and the dream remained with me that I want to be a religious and the Lord is calling me. After completing my graduation my mother's words

disturbed me once again, that if I will start teaching in the school, after two or three years they will see proposals for me to get me married. Through teaching I wanted to help my parents because of their hard work for me but the other side they were looking proposal to marry me soon.

Once again I started to think about my life which life is for me to be single, marriage or religious. 26 years of age was my target year to choose a life that belongs to me. As I was preparing myself, one day I asked my mother about all my sisters and brother- in laws that if she is happy and trusting in them most. I was satisfied with her response and decided to leave my house to be the servant of the Lord. I bid good bye to my parents and sisters and came to Roha, where our sisters are working with the tribals their love and hospitality touched my heart and made me feel at home.

“Joy is confirmed in the experience of community, that theological space where each one is responsible for their fidelity to the Gospel and for the growth of all”. Pope Francis



Sr. Carmelita Aci

“The living water”



Rejoice, highly favoured one...” these were the words with which the Angel Gabriel addressed to Mary. When I look back to my consecrated life, the Angel's words are ringing in my heart. Yes, I am the favoured one. I thank the Lord for all the blessings which I have received in my life as a Handmaid. Being in the congregation as a Handmaid I loved many things which brought me closer to God who is full of love and understanding. I am not worthy to be called as the Handmaid of His heart, but it is His love and grace that make me worthy of it. There are many experiences that have brought the newness in my life.



Thank you Lord being the “living water” in my life who can satisfy my inner thirst and it is you who make me “living water” to others.

I would like to share few of them:

1. With the tribals: They have opened my eyes to the reality of life and helped me to be a person who is detached and life giving. I have experienced God very strongly in them.
2. When I was in Kerala, I have come across a lady who is so poor but ever ready to share her things with others. From her I have learned to be a compassionate person and to be a true human.

3. The experiences with the first Handmaids in India have deepened my vocation and I was really impressed by their courage and self giving.

Thank you Lord being the “living water” in my life who can satisfy my inner thirst and it is you who make me “living water” to others.

I am grateful to all the sisters who help me and give me their support in living my life as a Handmaid. I am happy and at home with the Lord and with all my sisters.

“Anyone who has met the Lord and follows him faithfully is a messenger of the joy of the Spirit”. Pope Francis



Sr. Rosy Tincy Aci.

“I am set apart for God....”



When I think of my consecrated life, the first image come to my mind is that of the day of my first profession; where I could see that I was entering from the main entrance of the church to the altar. Deep within me the words were repeating like a mantra that I am for God. As I reached the altar and I offered myself to God while looking at the crucifix, which gave me inner strength to say, “YES”. Yes I am ready to do your will. The conviction and experience that I belong to God gives me an inner strength, joy and happiness in all that I live and work. As I am set apart for God by offering my life as a consecrated person, I feel deep within me that I am called to live my life for God and for his people. That word of Yes freed me from and for God. As the



The conviction and experience that I belong to God gives me an inner strength, joy and happiness in all that I live and work. As I am set apart for God by offering my life as a consecrated person, I feel deep within me that I am called to live my life for God and for his people.

days, months, year's passes,
My Yes gives me the conviction and motivation to face all that comes to my life.

The conviction and experience that I belong to God gives me an inner strength, joy and happiness in all that I live and work. As I am set apart for God by offering my life as a consecrated person, I feel deep within me that I am called to live my life for God and for his people. I could see the changes in my life, in my way of dealing and sharing with others and in all that I do.

I always experience God's providence in my life. He has shown His love and support through many people. He helped me to complete all my tasks with peace and joy. I also enjoyed His presence in my struggles and in my strengths where I could feel that He is holding my hand which would

give me confidence to face tomorrow and to live my present and to persevere in my consecration to Him.

My consecrated life welcomes me to the great church as His beloved. It is not only God who welcomes me, but also others as God's chosen one. As I am set apart for God it has given me an opportunity to make the whole creation my home where I am welcomed, loved, cared and wanted as God's favourite child. This deep experience also gives me the awareness of the demand of this being "set apart" - to be broken and shared just like the Eucharist which we celebrate every day – yes my call to be a paschal mystery!

Thank you Lord, for calling me to be the Handmaid of your heart and thank you St. Raphaela Mary for being as my inspiration.

The interior pilgrimage begins with prayer. "The first thing for a disciple is to be with the Master, to listen to him and to learn from him. This is always true, and it is true at every moment of our lives". Pope Francis



Sr.Sunita Toppo Aci

I belong to Him forever...



Since I joined the religious life, especially in this particular congregation of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the year 2009, I have been experiencing God's call more deeply by knowing myself and my vocation, through the accompaniment of my formators. Then slowly I realized that God has chosen and called me to follow Him.

As I was growing in the intimate knowledge of God, during the time of my postulancy and novitiate I felt the desire to consecrate myself to God. I was very happy to enter into the stage of my novitiate life in the



In the journey of my life whenever I felt difficulties and problems, I also experienced God's love, grace and guiding hand.

year of faith 2013, and to make my vows in the year of consecration 2015. In the journey of my life whenever I felt difficulties and problems, I also experienced God's love, grace and guiding hand.

The day I consecrated my life to God, for me it was the day of great joy and gratitude which I felt deep within me. I also felt I became holy in saying "YES" to the Lord. I felt complete surrender, I am His and He is mine. I am happy in religious life to live and to do His will.

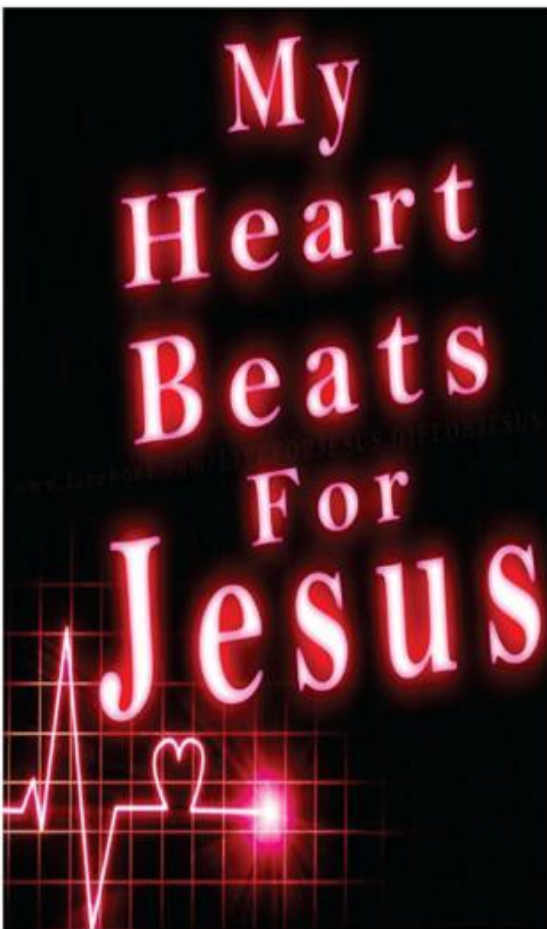


*"Since we are witnesses of a communion beyond our vision and our limits, we are called to wear God's smile".
Pope Francis*



Sr.Sushmita Aci

“I have called you, you are mine...”



Praise and thank the Lord for the gift of my life and vocation. It is a great joy that I feel being a consecrated to the Lord. From the first time I experienced my call – at the age of six- till now my experience of God is “It is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me”. My heart is always grateful to the Lord for His unconditional love for me as a very unique and His special child. He is my strength to go beyond myself. My response to His unconditional love is, “Yes, Here I am... the Handmaid of the Lord”. It is a great joy that I experience to follow Christ. I truly feel that He is the only true giver of eternal joy and happiness. It is the inner joy that comes from Christ guides



It is a great joy that I experience to follow Christ. I truly feel that He is the only true giver of eternal joy and happiness.

and helps me to look to the future with hope. As I just beginning to live my consecrated life I dream and wish to do His will. As I am learning to prepare myself to do the service of God, I ask Him the same love and zeal that St. Raphaela had in following Christ. My conviction in following Christ gives me His light in my way of living His life style. I feel great joy to reach out to others

as I feel that I am doing it for Christ. This is what helps me to offer myself even to do a smallest work by readiness and with humility. I feel that it is the grace of God that He has chosen me to be with Him and to remain faithful to him till the end just like Mary did. Making her my inspiration I repeat with her each day of my life: "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to be according to your will".

"We are called to bring to everyone the embrace of God, who bends with a mother's tenderness over us – consecrated women and men, signs of the fullness of humanity, facilitators and not controllers of grace, stooped down in a gesture of consolation". Pope Francis



Sr. Asunta Nakade Aci.

Contemplation ... Communion... Compassion!



You did not chose me
... I chose you” Yes,
the Lord took the
initiative and called me to be
a Handmaid it was the Lord
who made me first His child
at the age of 13 when I
joined the Catholic school in
Japan and was baptized with
3 other classmates. Since
then I belonged to Him. He
became everything for me.
His loving presence
accompanied me in all my
activities.

When I came to know the
Handmaids in my country for
the first time, I felt this is the
Congregation which He was
planning to call me to belong.
I had no hesitation and I was
actually full of heavenly joy
which I could not express in
human words. The



If God would give me another chance to be born, what will be my choice? Do I want to marry? Do I want to join another congregation? Without any hesitation I would say that I choose to be a Handmaid

Congregation of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is not the place where I studied and I did not know anybody until I met the Novice mistress for the first time by being introduced by my spiritual father. Why did I feel such a heavenly joy? I don't know but I know only that He is the one who called me.

All my formation as a Handmaid was spent in Japan and after 4 years of Final profession I was sent to India. India is a land of rich spirituality. I joined a small community in Mumbai. At that time 5 foreign sisters were running the school for intellectually challenged children. I took a group of children with intellectual

disabilities. Apparently they are not attractive but they are unique and loving. It is not easy to deal with these children but our Charism which is to adore the Eucharistic Lord was a source of my strength and joy. The mystical experience of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist was similar to see Christ in our children. When God loves these children they become lovable.

India is a land of contemplation and spirit works in silence and takes us to experience of God's presence and His unconditional love. The following the 3" C" are my guiding stars.

- 1) Contemplation
- 2) Communion
- 3) Compassion



When I heard Fr. Keith S.J as he spoke to us in the Regional encounter 2015 I could associate three things

Our Being to- Contemplation

Our Relating to- Communion

Our Doing to - Compassion

If God would give me another chance to be born, what will be my choice? Do I want to marry? Do I want to join another congregation? Without any hesitation I would say that I choose to be a Handmaid. Thank you Lord for my vocation as a Handmaid.

How can I praise you enough?

How can I thank you enough,

How can I love you enough...?

“Every Christian, and especially you and I, we are called to be bearers of the message of hope giving serenity and joy, God's consolation, his tenderness towards all”. Pope Francis





Talking Life with Handmaids!!!

*The sisters who were not present at the meeting
responding to a written interview:*



Sr. Mary Mullor



Sr. Julie



Sr. Dixy

How do you like to share about your living on consecration in few words???

Sr. Mary Mullor: Living consecration is a challenge, a challenge to love, to give life totally, to live with commitment, trusting surrendering myself in the hands of the one who loved me totally and tenderly.

Sr. Julie: I would say that living of consecration is just like a tiny star giving the powerful light to the darken world. In the context of Timor, I feel the symbol of star is very significant. Bazartete, the mountain area, the place where I live, there are neither big buildings nor any illumination. Therefore even a tiny star radiates its powerful light for



us in the night. Very many times, this tiny star shows the way back home while I walk around.

My life as a consecrated woman is also just like a tiny star..... radiating the tender love, joy, peace and mercy of Christ to the simple people around me; especially the broken people. And I strongly believe that, the profound experience of God gives me the courage to challenge my life each moment even to the unknown.

Sr. Dixy: It is a challenge, but totally the GRACE of my LOVING GOD and at the same time my loving surrender to His passionate love! It is totally a FREE GIFT of God in unconditional LOVE, yet a whole hearted receiving of this beautiful, fragile gift

Happiest moments as a Handmaid of His heart...

Sr. Mary Mullor: The time that I spent with the simple people of Roha and Odisha

Sr. Julie: One of the happiest moments as Handmaid is living my life with the simple people of Timor Leste sharing the Chrism of reparation

Sr. Dixy: The time when I am in front of the Blessed Sacrament wholeheartedly; the time I lived in the presence of our founder sisters of India; the time of my Tertainship where I experienced the universal sisterhood of my vocation; the silent, tender yet strong transmittance of peace of Sr. Inmaculada in the midst of all busy schedule; the opportunity to visit St. Raphaela Mary's living memories at her place and in Rome

A significant experience through which you have touched someone's life and felt gratitude for your Handmaid vocation...

Sr. Mary Mullor: when I was in Roha I happened to accompany a child who was critically ill with her parents to a hospital in Mumbai. Unfortunately the child died on our way to the hospital. I do not know



why I accompanied them till the last ceremony was over. She was the only child that they had. I can still feel the expression of heartfelt gratitude towards for accompanying them in those difficult moments

Sr. Julie: There are many experiences, but I would like to share one of the experiences while I was in Pune just before I came to Timor. While I was transferred to Pune, I got a job in ENNS (Mrs. Erin Nagarvala School) as a remedial teacher to deal with the LD (Learning Disabled) children. It was a very old non catholic school with day scholars and the residents, run by Parsees. I was placed in a residential school. Soon after my interview, I was asked to be in charge of one class with sixteen LD children. Since I didn't have any idea about their academic level, I requested to observe the class for one month in order to build the relationship with them and also to get their level. And my Principal was agreed to my request, and I began my observation. But I was shocked to see the injustice was going on in the class. The lady who was in charge of that class was not a teacher, but the clerk who had done some short term course on LD. But in reality, she had no idea about the LD at all. Therefore she used to torture the children physically, mentally and psychologically; especially the girls were her target. She couldn't stand the girls, even one of the girls called Anjali was the victim of taking all her anger. With the result, the child lost all her self confidence and was not been able to say one word. With the fear, she used to stammer and when the lady hears her stammering, all the more she used to get angry. Together with the children, I suffered a lot in the class feeling total helpless. Soon a moment came that I couldn't bear any more. After the prayer and reflection, I decided to speak to the Principal and tell her everything what was happening in the class. When I spoke to her, she asked me to write an evaluation in detail. Soon after that the Principal appointed me as a class teacher of that class. Even though I had to bear the consequences from that lady, I was very happy to see the tremendous change in the behaviours and in the academic are of the children. They began to believe in themselves and thus began to perform well in all areas. Even Anjali could speak without stammering. The Principal and all the teachers were surprised to see the noticeable change, and that gave me credibility as a Religious Sister. Even in a non Catholic school, the management respected me



more than any other teachers who were working for so many years and always consulted me in any of their official matters. This was possible only because of my Handmaid vocation. Even today, some of the children from that group often write to me. Recently Anjali had written to me saying that “What I am today is because of Sister”. It is not that I have done something, but it is the Christ who lives in me. I really thank God for the gift of my Handmaid vocation.

Sr. Dixy: The two year period after my junior ate where I was a class teacher of special children at Dilkush. It was a time of experiencing the great love through the love of His “little ones” it was a time where I learned to touch their lives and allowing them to touch me with their small actions of great love. You have touched me and I have grown – our Logo is a meaningful experience of that period.

A message for the young sisters who will walk our ways:

Sr. Mary Mullor: Life is a free gift – a gift to be shared with joy. Let us try our best in giving.

Sr. Julie: Our vocation to be a Handmaid is a free gift of God. It is not because of our greatness we have obtained this gift. But it is God's mercy which made us worthy to be a Handmaid of His heart. Therefore we have to take care and nurture our vocation with an attitude of gratitude to the giver. Every moment of our life is important, and there is not even a single minute to waste. The broken world needs us..... Listen to the cry.... So live our vocation more meaningfully for the service of others radiating the tender love, joy, peace and mercy of Christ. “So that the world may know that you are my disciple”. Keep your eyes fix on the eyes of the Lord..... And never get tired of sharing.....

Sr. Dixy: Receive the gift wholeheartedly when He gives His passionate love for you. Hold His hands and walk with Him alone as He is faithful one in our infidelities. He will lead you to the promise land through the “RED SEA” as well as the desert experience? Do not be afraid. LOOK IN TO HIS EYES!



Youngsters Corner

The new seeds of vocation share with us their experiences and dreams of Handmaids



Joyful



Loving



Generous



United

Our
experiences
of Handmaids



God's
People



Forgiving



Available

Reparative

Eucharistic

Joyful

Humble

Selfless Giving

Risk taking

Prayerful

What Kind of a Handmaid that we want to be???

An ideal Handmaid of our dream ...

Compassionate

Generous

Optimistic

Caring

Gentle

Obedient



GRACIAS

HANDMAIDS OF
THE SACRED HEART
OF JESUS

YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE
REGION OF INDIA