

Asia Pacific Justice Peace Network

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd



Dear mission partners!

I am much encouraged
by all your contributions.
Thank you!

This newsletter brings
you information about
the success of the No
Interest Loan Scheme
(NILS) which began by the
Good Shepherd Sisters,
Australia in 1981.

Also a report about the
work of the migrant
ministry of the Malacca-
Johor Diocese, Malaysia
led by Sr. Angeline Lau rgs
and her volunteers.

Enjoy all the other stories.

With gratitude,
Gloria
Coordinator of
APJP Network

FROM
Australia

Life changing loans for families on low-incomes in Australia



More than 155,000 people have experienced
the social and economic benefits of access to safe,
fair and affordable small loans in Australia.

The Good Shepherd Sisters began the No Interest
Loan Scheme (NILS) in 1981 to enable women on
low incomes to take out small loans with dignity
on fair terms to buy essential items.

With three million adults (17 per cent) in Australia
deemed completely or severely financially
excluded, Good Shepherd Microfinance was
established in 2012 to increase the reach of
microfinance in Australia. In addition to the NILS
program, it has grown to include the StepUP low
interest loan, AddsUP Matched Savings Plan and
Good Money community finance stores.

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Now Australia's largest microfinance organisation, Good Shepherd Microfinance offers a range of people-centred, affordable financial programs for those on low incomes through 669 community provider locations across Australia.

The NILS program recently featured on Australia's leading current affairs program 'A Current Affair' which is watched by around one million people every week night.

Built on the basic principles of trust, respect and non-judgement, Good Shepherd Microfinance aims to enable people to define and then realise their own economic wellbeing through appropriate financial services, in the process feeling valued and in control of their finances and lives. These principles are integral to the success of its microfinance programs, which experience a repayment rate of around 97 per cent.

Together with its corporate partner, National Australia

Bank (NAB), Good Shepherd Microfinance aims to reach one million people by 2018.



Shayla was struggling with lengthy and expensive public transport journeys. She was able to buy a car using a StepUP loan, making life much easier for her and her nine-year old daughter Raya.



Candiann and her family were finding it hard to put together the money for regular trips to the Laundromat, something they no longer have to worry about after Candiann used a NILS loan to purchase a new, efficient washing machine.

Find out more:

www.nils.com.au or www.goodshepherdmicrofinance.org.au

Link: A Current Affair

People's Climate March

_____The largest mobilization on Climate Change in history took place on 21st September 2014. Over 675,000 of people marched around the world. It was a beautiful expression of our love for all that climate change threatens, and hope that we can save this world and build a society powered by 100% safe, clean energy. In Sri Lanka people gathered to Independence Square Colombo 07 to seize this moment, for our future, our kids' and everything we love. †



“Maintaining the Charism / Updating the Methods: The application of human rights – Empowering Sri Lankan youth within Good Shepherd programs”

_____A training session for the sisters and lay staff of the ministries of education and residential care was held from 7th – 20th November. The

training facilitator, Clare Nolan journeyed with us imparting knowledge and skills, challenging, directing and inspiring us to change our outlook on the many aspects in our ministries.

The group exercises helped the participants to integrate theory into practice. Planning the advocacy programs within the groups, allowed the participants to identify the issues which need priority in this area, within their residential care programs and school settings and to know the “why, what, when, who and how” of the process. The panel discussion, comprising of the panelists selected from among the participants themselves, gave the whole group a greater awareness of the reality reflecting on our past, looking into the present and focusing on the future.

The 12 day training program was very challenging and action oriented. The need to update and renew all ministries to ensure relevant and high standards of care, using modern professional methods which include coherence with national laws and international standards and approaches to human rights is of paramount importance. The urgent need of our time is to formulate very strong human rights based policies for our ministries. †



'Seth Sevana' completes 6 years

_____ 'Seth Sevana'- Career Development Centre situated at Good Shepherd Convent, Bolawalana, Negombo, Sri Lanka completed 6 years recently. This was established in January 2009 to cater for the under privileged girls under the care of the Good Shepherd sisters. Every year 'Seth Sevana' provides educational and life skills programs to around 35 students free of charge. It is a one year residential program.

'Seth Sevana' is registered with the Tertiary Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) which is a government body. It teaches several National Vocational Qualifying (NVQ) courses at different levels. The courses include beautician, tailoring, computer and bakery. Those who are qualified in these subjects will receive nationally and internationally recognized certificates. †



'Orange Your Neighbourhood' throughout the 16 Days of Activism

_____ Good Shepherd mission partners including the girls of St. Euphrasia's Home Nayakakanda, school children, teachers and people of Kahawatta Estate support the 'Orange your Neighbourhood' Global Campaign to end violence against women from November 25th to December 10th (International Human Rights Day). †

Training and workshop on the 23rd Universal Periodic Review in Yangon



_____ Sr. Lucy Aung Sian Zam participated in the Human Rights workshop which focussed on the 23rd Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the UN Human Rights Council on Myanmar. It was held from 12–17 January at Kayin Baptist Home Mission Church. The training workshop was facilitated by Pax Romana International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs (ICMICA) from Switzerland.

The workshop is based on the identification of immediate actions to be undertaken by the Government of Myanmar and other stake-holders in order to improve the Human Rights situation on the ground and lessons learned from the 1st UPR and from other countries. During training 35 representatives from different Catholic dioceses and civil society organizations attended. They formulated the recommendations for the second UPR. The selected thematic issues are: Democracy and Good Governance; Labour and Migrant workers; Freedom of Religion and Beliefs; Internally Displaced People (IDP); Rights of Child; Rights of Women; Rights to land and Human Right Defenders. †

Memorial service for the two victims of sexual violence in Shan State in Myanmar

_____ Sisters Veronica and Olivia and 30 girls from Good Shepherd Leadership Training Programme attended the memorial service of two volunteer teachers who were raped and killed in a village in Northern Shan State of Myanmar on the 19th January. The memorial prayer service was held on the 26th January at Kachin Baptist Church. About 200 people attended to express their solidarity and

to denounce sexual violence against women and girls.

These two girls were volunteer teachers at Kaung HKar Village, Muse Township of Shan State, Northern Myanmar. On the morning of 20th January their naked bodies with stab wounds and head injuries were found in the Baptist Church compound where they lived. Local people have accused the government soldiers as they found a Tatmadaw (Army) belt on the spot of the crime and footprints made by soldier's boots nearby. The camp nearby has been blamed for the attack but no arrest has been made.

Women Organisations and Networks in Myanmar mourn

for the brutal death of these 2 girls by wearing black dresses and white ribbons for a week. The special prayer intentions include: to bring justice to this case as soon as possible and to end all forms of violence against women and girls. †



16-day Anti-violence Campaign: Raising Awareness, Expanding Network

_____Weta Gerak Shelter (Light of Women) run by Good Shepherd Sisters in Ruteng organized a 16-day campaign against violence together with JPIC Commission of the Diocese of Ruteng and other congregations as well as government agencies and NGO's. Activities included seminars, training, interactive dialogue at a radio station and anti-violence socialization in parishes.

At the start of the campaign a gathering of about 100 participants, mostly young people expressed their vision in combating various forms of violence. By involving young people in this event it is expected that they can be good ambassadors of non-violence in their neighborhood, schools and in society at large.

A signature campaign in protest against violence was initiated. Banners which read "STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN" were put in four corners of the main roads leading to the downtown Ruteng during the campaign period.

For the public an interactive dialogue and discussion by a radio station was held. Among the issues of discussion were – domestic violence, anti-violence law as well as case-treatment and guidance for children who were victims of violence. The listeners responded well and enthusiastically too.

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To increase the knowledge on how to handle child abuse cases, a three day training programme was organized. The participants included the staff from hospitals, the police department, law practitioners, professors, students and social institutions. We also invited priests and religious leaders to build communities by planning joint activities for the anti-trafficking programme and to give sermons on the issue of anti-violence. Socialization activities addressing the issues of human trafficking were also held.

In collaboration with the Church, government leaders and the National Human Rights Commission, Weta Gerak Shelter held a seminar with the theme "Development in the Perspective of Human Rights".

We concluded the 16 day campaign by distributing anti-violence stickers in several public areas such as gas stations, parking lots and shopping centers in the downtown Ruteng. †

A research on the migrant population

_____The migrant population in Manggarai – East Indonesia has been increasing at an alarming rate. This has been a concern of the Good Shepherd Sisters and the Church.

On November 2014 the Good Shepherd Sisters together with WVI (Wahana Visi Indonesia) and University of STKIP Ruteng signed a MOU to work together in a research on migrants in this area. This research will help us present the situation to the government †

'16 Days' Campaign

_____ In response to the recommendation made by Justice and Peace Commission, the sisters at Good Shepherd Convent, Mysore conducted a programme for our school and college students along with Odanadi Seva Trust, past students and Parents Association, Mysore. The theme was 'Stop child abuse, violence and atrocities against women'. The input given to the students was very informative and enlightening.

Over one thousand students took part in the rally around the city carrying placards and shouting various slogans against child abuse and the need to respect human rights. They had orange flags and wore orange sashes and caps. The colourful and meaningful rally made a good impact all over the city.

The event was published in the local newspapers and channels. †



'Anti Human Trafficking Day'

_____ Our school organized an awareness march against human trafficking. Students of class 7 & 8 took part in the march and formed a human chain on either side of Residency Road, holding placards with pictures and slogans depicting "Anti Human Trafficking Day". This activity instilled in the children a sense of responsibility towards the society against the exploitation of human rights and human trafficking.

A prayer service was conducted in St. Agnes' Higher Primary School, Bangalore to create an awareness of children abused through human trafficking. How a human being is being bought and sold and the value of each life is made known to them. The children were made to form a heart shape human chain, as a symbol of anti-human trafficking. They were made aware of how life has been abused in the society as well as in the world at large today. †

Addavalla Hakkula Sangam (AHS) Organization for Women's Rights run by Good Shepherd Sisters, Mangalagiri, Andhra Pradesh, India shares their work.

CASE 1

_____ I am U. Kumari and my husband is Balaiah. My husband and I sell coconuts in the village called Undavalli in Guntur District, India. Last November, we purchased 50 bags of sand from Undavalli sand quarry for the construction of toilets. As soon as the material reached my house, Mr. Vemareddy and his friends who belong to other caste came to my house and questioned me as to where I bought the sand. I told them that we purchased the sand and showed them the bills but Mr. Vemareddy and others did not believe me. They abused me with filthy words saying that I had stolen the sand. He abused me saying that I belong to the low caste. He called me a prostitute and used harmful words on my daughter. He tried to beat us.

INTERVENTION BY ADDAVALLA HAKKULA SANGAM (AHS)

_____ We belong to Schedule Caste and we are considered as low caste in society. So nobody comes forward to help us. We went to the police station many times. Police did not respond to us. The First Information Report (FIR) was not filed. The police did not take action against the offender. No justice was done. So we approached the AHS office for justice. The sisters and staff helped us. They took up the case and the AHS staff did the fact finding. The case was booked against Mr. Vemareddy in the police station and the FIR was filed. Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) and Crime investigating officer came to my house for the investigation. The DSP is handling the case. The case is in progress. Through the support of AHS, the police filed the FIR. Atrocity against SC/ ST Caste is not taken into consideration. I am happy that justice will be done to me and my daughter with the help of AHS. Mr. Vemareddy is a political leader at the local level. He has a lot of support from the police so he has not been arrested yet. I hope there will be justice soon.

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CASE 2

_____ I am T. Monoja and my husband is T. Gopaiah. I am 8th month pregnant. We are agricultural laborers. My husband and I were going to see the dead body of my father. On the way we met D. Rama Rao who belongs to OC caste. He abused me in the name of caste saying that I am not working properly, I am prostitute and used bad words and abused my husband and I so badly. He stamped on my stomach.

INTERVENTION BY ADDAVALLA HAKKULA SANGAM (AHS)

_____ I belong to Schedule Tribe Caste. Cases of Atrocity against us were filed. Police refused to listen and write the First Information Report (FIR). So I approached the AHS officer for legal support. With the help of AHS staff and the sisters, the case was filed in the police station. It was written down. I was accompanied by the police to the Government hospital in Amaravathi for treatment. As my health condition worsened they shifted me to the District Government Hospital. DSP and CI visited my house for the investigation and had taken down the details. The DSP is carrying on the investigation. Rama Rao has not been arrested since his son is the president of the village and they have lot of political influence. †

Sisters saved me from my over protective father by Barbara Gomes

_____ I came to Good Shepherd Convent with my uncle who wanted to help me. It was Sr. Pushpa whom I met first. They protected



me from my daddy who was overprotective. He would not let me to go outside to see the world. He would not allow me to meet any of our relatives or be friendly with anyone, not even with the neighbours.

I used to stay in the crisis intervention centre, Good Shepherd Convent, Mumbai. Sr. Pushpa took good care of me. My dad was searching for me frantically and my life was in danger. So the sisters sent me to Chennai where I was sheltered in a home for girls. At Chennai the sisters welcomed me and I was happy to stay there. I learnt flower making, knitting and tailoring. I had a great interest for drawing and painting as well. After few

months I returned to the Good Shepherd hostel at Mumbai.

Meanwhile both my parents died and I was totally lost and lonely but the sisters were like Good Samaritans. They consoled me and empathized with me. I owe them gratitude and am grateful for their support and constant guidance. I was giving tuition to the children who were coming to the centre for supplementary classes

At present I have a good job in the school where I am very happy. The sisters helped me grow into a beautiful person ready to face the world. I will remain grateful to the sisters and will continue to support them in bringing justice to girls like me. †

The Good Shepherd Sisters sought Justice for me!

My name is Leerina Mary. I am currently studying in Std. XII. I was studying in another school till my 10th Standard. My father is an auto driver who earns daily wages and my mother is a housewife. I have an older brother who is studying in Loyala College. Since my father is the sole earning member in our family, we had a lot of financial constraints and I could not pay the school fees. The school authorities were unsympathetic towards me. Moreover, they withheld the Practical Record notebook and gave it to me after much harassment on the day of the Board exam. I suffered a lot of embarrassment and humiliation in front of my classmates, due to these unfortunate situation. To top it all, they did not issue my Std. X Mark sheet and Transfer Certificate at the time of declaration of results. My parents and I were at our wits end, not able to find a means of higher education.

At this point, when I thought that all opportunities of higher education was closed and there was no way out of the school without settling the overdue fees, God revealed to us the compassionate love and kindness of the Good Shepherd Sisters. It was a turning point in my life!

My mother and I had applied to Good Shepherd MHSS for admission to Std. XI. As per the procedure, I was expected to produce all the documents necessary for admission. When we explained our plight to Sr. Mercy George, the Principal, she took personal interest in my case and helped me. On discovering that the earlier school was collecting a fee structure much higher



than the one determined by the Department of Education, she approached the authorities and influenced them to challenge the illegal fee amount charged by the school. With her persistent query and support, a letter was sent to the school management and they were asked to state the actual fees due towards my education, as per the Government rules. She went one step further to settle the fee due to them and thereby helped me to retrieve my documents and bring justice.

The generosity of the Good Shepherd Sisters knows no bounds. Thanks to this great institution, I have been provided free education for the past two years and today, I am on the threshold of appearing for the Std. XII Board Examinations. Today, I have developed into a bold, strong and confident girl and the sisters and teachers have made me feel comfortable and secure, and opened the gates of a promising future. I assure you, dear sisters and staff of Good Shepherd School, that I will uphold the name of this great institution and in turn study well and reach out to many more souls like me who seek justice and shelter. †

Justice & Peace: Unity in Diversity

_____ Youth-PREP Centre (YPC) organized a one-day youth inter-religious workshop. It was also a platform for youths to have a better understanding of each other's religion. Thirteen participants from different faiths visited places of worship around Kota Kinabalu. Representatives at each place were at hand to give a simple briefing.

Here's Randal's sharing. He is currently serving with the Catholic Student Group of University Malaysia Sabah. "The program has been nothing but enlightening, and opened up my sight, seeing God and His attributes in each religion. God ultimately unites, and though we are diverse in our beliefs and ways of practicing what we understand of Him, He is still the same in one religion as He is in the other. Understanding this goes beyond respect for the other religions and extends the love we have for one another as the common man with the one God we know." †



Beyond Campus - World Day Against Child Labour

_____ The World Day Against Child Labour is held on the 12th of June every year. Youth-PREP Centre together with 25 youths visited the city's market as an exposure to child labour.

They walked in groups to different areas to observe the children. They prepared small bags of food to give to them as a way to get them to talk to them.

Some children did not bother to say much because they were busy helping out the vendors. But a few started to chat. Even though they come from the nearby island, they work around the market most of the time. It is also their playground, place to eat and sleep. The children were made to do manual labour such as lifting and cleaning besides selling plastic bags and cigarettes.

The participants shared that they felt more grateful with their lives especially the opportunity to have access to education. †



*Masjid
Bandaraya
Likas*



*KK Tzu Chi
Buddha
Temple*



*Sacred Heart
Cathedral,
Kota
Kinabalu*

#HentikanRogol campaign

_____A nationwide public action called 'HentikanRogol: AkuKisah!' (Stop Rape: I Care!) with the objective of raising public awareness and support for an end to rape in Malaysia; as well as to demand for state accountability to

effectively address rape and other issues related to violence against women.

Seri Murni Crisis Centre (SMCC) together with Youth-PREP Centre (YPC) and the animation team hosted the first of a series of activities held on 26th July 2014 leading up to the grand launch for the campaign in August. Using freeze flashmobs

and dance at 5 malls in Kota Kinabalu, the team of about 16 members managed to catch the attention of curious mall-goers in the midst of last-minute shopping for Hari Raya Aidilfitri.

The campaign culminated with the the official launch of the nationwide campaign in Sutera Harbour on 23rd August, in conjunction with the 7k Sunset Run. Staff and volunteers of YPC and SMCC participated in the 1 Billion Rising dance together with members of other women's organizations and volunteers in Sabah.

Raising awareness for this campaign had involved a lot of commitment and time especially since it involved 4 weekends in a row. Nevertheless, it was rewarding to see the campaign grow from a handful of youths to a large group of people from the public. †



Safe City, Streets Free From Harassment

_____In conjunction with this year's White Ribbon Campaign, Youth-PREP Centre (YPC) organized a campaign, "Safe City, Streets Free From Harassment". The objective is to build a community free from public sexual harassment and assault. This campaign focuses on men as the solution to ending sexual and street harassment towards creating a city that is pleasant to live, work and play for all genders and from walks of life.

The launch on the 25th November included an awareness talk and a role play on street harassment. An online survey on street harassment was distributed, followed by "I swear" ceremony to support the end of street harassment. There were 30 participants including young men from a nearby local college. †



**The Migrant
Ministry
Malacca-Johor
Diocese Johor,
Malaysia**

‘Church without frontiers, Mother to All’ - Pope Francis

The Migrant Ministry led by Sister Angeline Lau, rgs and her volunteers have been reaching out to the migrants and refugees by providing spiritual and pastoral care. They also extended their mission by going beyond borders in reaching out particularly to the community in Pekhon Diocese, Southern Shan State, Myanmar.

Mission Outreach

Responding to the urgent basic needs of the villagers by securing funds for the following:

A. BOATS FOR POOR VILLAGERS, LUNKE

– as their only means of transportation for the villagers and the priest pastoral visits. We funded three boats for three villages.



Bishop Peter Hla on pastoral touring using Angel Line 1 donated by Johor migrant mission outreach team



Fr Joseph Tin Oo (parish priest in white shirt) with villagers of Lunke

B. WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM FOR NANKI VILLAGE

– to install piping and to replace existing storage tank. The villagers have been depending on rain water for their daily needs. During summer, the villagers have to walk more than a mile to access water from the hillside spring.

C. LIVELIHOOD AND SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS

- i. Pig farming for villagers / orphanage
- ii. Cows for milk for Sacred Heart Cathedral orphans/ boarders
- iii. Chicken farming for Sacred Heart Orphanage / boarders and villagers



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D. SPIRITUAL NEEDS

– construction of Our Lady of Fatima Chapel, Aporkone Village



E. CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR ORPHANS / BOARDERS / CHILDREN FROM VILLAGES



More funds needed for:

A. TROLLEY CARS

– multipurpose vehicles which are the most practical means of transport in the remote areas. They are used for farming and transportation of school children, firewood, crops, rice, people....



B. TILLERS

– for farming to increase productivity and reduce intensive labor

C. CISTERN WELL AND GENERATOR FOR YEPHYU PARISH / VILLAGE

The majority of villagers are illiterate and poor. Their plight was made worse by the political turmoil in the area whereby many have become internally displaced. With the lack of resources, development is hindered. It takes a 30 minute walk to access water from the nearest spring. A better water supply system will help tremendously to meet the needs of the parish center and the surrounding villages.

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**The Migrant
Ministry
Malacca-Johor
Diocese Johor,
Malaysia**

D. TO COMPLETE THE CONSTRUCTION OF INFANT JESUS CHAPEL, SIMILAO



E. TO BUILD A HEALTHCARE CENTRE AT LOPU PARISH

Lopu is situated in a very remote area. Currently there is no healthcare centre to cater to the needs of the five Catholic villages in the area. Diseases like malaria, skin diseases, dermatitis, eczema, cholera and typhoid are common. Infants, children and maternal mortality rate are high.



*Beneficiaries
of medical
healthcare
center*

F. TO INSTALL A GENERATOR FOR NANPOLON PARISH

The parish has to loan a generator from the neighboring village for their evening programs. When there is more than one event at the same time, it is impossible to do so.

G. TO CONSTRUCT EIGHT TOILETS FOR STAR OF EVANGELIZATION MINOR/INTERMEDIATE SEMINARY, PEKHON DIOCESE

The seminary is almost 17 years old and the local diocese has been blessed with talented priests serving in the church and society. After 17 years, most of the facilities within the seminary are in a deplorable state. The most urgent need is to construct toilets. This will benefit 50-60 seminarians and lay staff. Some of the seminarians had suffered from different kinds of diseases due to poor sanitation and unhygienic environment. †



Seminary



Existing Toilets

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