



Ursuline Links

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EDITORIAL

Year of Prayer - 2024



Pope Francis has declared 2024 as the Year of Prayer, in preparation for the Jubilee of 2025 with the theme, "*Pilgrims of Hope*". To hope it is necessary to pray: it is certainly not something vague or abstract. Praying is an act

of the whole person, body, soul and spirit. The Holy Father has announced that 2025 will be a Jubilee Year, something which happens every 25 years, and it will be a year of hope for a world suffering the impacts of war, the ongoing effects of COVID-19 pandemic, and the climate crisis.

This period aims to spiritually ready the faithful for the Jubilee, fostering a deeper connection with God through prayer and reflection. The Church encourages the faithful to engage in various forms of prayer, including personal devotion, communal worship, and Eucharistic adoration, emphasizing the importance of hope in the Christian journey.

The Year of Prayer seeks to rejuvenate the spiritual life of individuals and communities, inspiring a renewed commitment to faith and service. It serves as a reminder that prayer is a powerful tool for seeking divine guidance, fostering unity, and cultivating a hopeful outlook amid life's challenges. By embodying the pilgrim spirit, the faithful are called to embark on a spiritual journey, nurturing their relationship with God and each other.

Through this dedicated time of prayer, the Church hopes to prepare hearts and minds for the Jubilee's celebrations, echoing the sentiment of hope and renewal. As "*Pilgrims of Hope*," believers are invited to reflect on their spiritual paths, strengthen their faith, and look forward to the Jubilee with renewed optimism and a deeper sense of purpose.

But we may ask: **What exactly is Prayer?**

There are very many definitions of prayer. Most of us right from our childhood have been taught to pray. When we talk to our parents or our friends we speak to

them spontaneously with love because we know who they are and how deep is our relationship with them. Prayer is just that, a deep communion with God- we talking to God expressing our heart to God and God revealing his heart to us. It is a two-way heart to heart loving communication that nourishes our faith. Pope Francis said, "*The Year of Prayer, fits into this context as a way of fostering our relationship with the Lord, offering moments of genuine spiritual rest. It is like an oasis sheltered from daily stress where prayer becomes a nourishment for the Christian life of faith, hope and charity.*"

He says, "*Everyday God passes and sows a seed in the soil of our lives. If we are not in the habit of regular personal prayer, we will miss that seed.*"



The story is told of a little girl who was instructed by her grandmother to kneel and say her prayers to prepare for bed. The grandmother noticed that the little girl had said her prayers and now for sometime she had been silent. The grandmother said to her, "If you are finished with your prayers why don't you get off your knees and get into bed?" The little girl responded, "*Oh Grandmother, yes I have finished saying my prayers but now I am waiting for God to talk back to me.*" May we cultivate this childlike simplicity and unshakeable trust in GOD, certain that God listens to us when we speak to Him and responds to us with love when we listen to Him.

Sr. Susanne

Mission at St. Joseph Convent - Chandavar

"The only way to do great work is to love what you do and believe you can and you're half way there"

This year 2023-2024 all the three of us- Sr. Maria, Sr. Fatima and Sr. Marium were new to the community. The Parish Priest and the parishioners welcomed us warmly.

Mission:

"God's plan will be always greater and more beautiful and nothing can stop God's plan for our life"



Activities:

- Pre-Primary School :** This is the 6th year of our Pre-primary school. This year 55 students were enrolled in Nursery, Junior KG and Senior KG. The parents were very happy for the academic performance of their children. This year we had the Annual Day program. Parents and people around the village appreciated our effort in moulding the little kids.
- Tuition classes for the village children:** As every year this year too we had tuition classes for the children in the village. There was a good response from children in the beginning. The attendance of the children was not regular, that was a bit discouraging.
- Spoken English Classes for adults and students:** Sr. Fatima was taking these classes. Many young boys and girls and even married people came for the spoken English classes. They all were happy and benefitted a lot. Some of them even passed in the interviews and got good jobs. Feel happy and satisfied that they can learn to speak English well.
- Teaching English in Government school (Part time):** Sr. Fatima went to the government school to teach English to the students. The parents of that school were very happy that their children though being in Kannada medium can learn to read,

write and speak in English. We were also happy that we could share our knowledge and experience with the deprived children and instill in them good values.

Pastoral Ministry:

1) Sacristy Work

Sr. Marium was in charge and she did her best and worked tirelessly.

2) Teaching Catechism:

It is one of the most loved apostolate in our parish. Sr. Fatima was taking catechism for middle school children. Along with other catechism teachers we had many activities for our catholic children like Children's day, Girl- child day and Catechism day, Christmas celebration and fun fair during the Church annual feast were the activities through which we could instil in the children the gospel values and an ardent desire and love for scripture.

3) Women's league:

Sr. Maria was in charge of the women's league. Every month meaningful meetings were conducted. This was a wonderful occasion to give some input sessions for the women who are most of the time dedicated their time and energy only to earn and take care of their families. Often Sr. Maria, taught them about, hygiene, happy home building, and how to be a good mother and bring up their children in Christian faith.

Women's Celebration in the Parish:

Sr. Maria is also appointed as the coordinator of women's league of the Kumta Deanery. She actively organized programs like women's day, deanery level pilgrimage program in our parish etc. It was well appreciated and loved by many women of our Kumta deanery. Visits to the sick and praying for them was a meaningful time spent together by all the women of our parish. It was a kind of sharing in their pain and sufferings, and also accompanying them in their sorrow and pain of losing their dear ones.

Sr. Maria as coordinator along with the diocesan women Commission and the Secretary of women's commission gathered the widows of three deaneries and organized a day's program for the first time in the diocese in



Honnavar at Prathibohya. It was a day to uplift the widows and give them a place of honor and acceptance. The program was a great success. An input session was given to appreciate them and strengthen them. Entertainment programs were conducted that made the day a happy one for them.

4) Children's Club:

Along with the Assistant parish priest, Sr. Marium and Sr. Fatima together conducted many lively activities for the children. Monthly meetings were conducted regularly which encouraged the children to imbibe the values of our faith.

5) Visiting Families:

Sr. Maria and Sr. Fathima regularly visited the families. Sr. Maria took keen interest in visiting families not only in our parish but and all our sub-stations, around 18 villages. It was a time of sharing

faith and love with the people.

Other activities:

Besides our various apostolates we also took time to strengthen our vocation and nourished our spiritual life. We had a meaningful and strengthening gathering of four three closer communities(Kargal, Magundi and Kadabugare), where we could share our rich experiences and encouraged one another and learnt something for our mission in our parishes.

Conclusion:

We are ever grateful to God, Sr. Marina and the team for placing us together as a community which was an enriching experience for us. And also grateful for their generosity in providing all the necessary things! Praise God for this!!! We loved what we did and we had faith in God, in one another and in ourselves.

Sr. Fatima, Sr. Maria, Sr. Marium

Taking care of the Old in the Evening of their Lives

"Truly I tell you, Just as you did it to one of these members of my family, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:40).

All of us are members of the Universal family. We belong to God alone. We come from God, we live in God, and we return to God. On this journey, life takes its turns and twists as we continue our journey on this planet. In this fast-moving world with various occupations, we do not notice that the "evening of life" has arrived at our doorstep. This reality has been expressed by many of the inmates of St. Mary's old age home. For me personally, it's a very painful experience for an individual to leave their own family, home, and get rooted in an unknown place and begin all over anew. Already, the person has struggled and worked hard as a youth in the past, faced the departure of loved ones, and now in the evening of life, to face rejection from kith and kin is not easy at all.



Most of the inmates are from Goa, and some of them are from Mumbai and Pune. 80% of the children want to keep their parents with caretakers or in an old age home. Personally, I have seen and experienced women who silently cry for their children and grandchildren.

This vacuum no one is able to fill, however, we provide the best facilities. As our foundress Venerable Mother Anne gave the highest priority to education for girls and

women, we put ourselves at their service and give preference to the poor, sick, needy, widows, and spinsters. We have a number of childless widows. Few of them were cheated by their own family members for property and money. This is challenging work where we drain our energy. Sometimes we get soaked with pain, sorrows, and the negativity that can creep in. Therefore, we need to keep ourselves updated, centered, connected, and focused on our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.



My close observation of the transition from this life to the other life, as I have witnessed in many cases, is as follows: In the beginning, there is a lot of aggressiveness, anger, restlessness, defense, and a fight with God asking, "Why me?" The body becomes rigid, dry, stiff, with no cooperation from the self. The moment a person surrenders and total forgiveness takes place, the person becomes gracious. It's so very pleasant to

look after this person. We accompany the person until the end as we pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet or the prayer to St. Joseph. Since the rosary is available on YouTube, we continuously use this prayer form. As the time approaches, the person becomes restless, but as they surrender the spirit, a glow appears, and the face becomes shining and serene because the radiant light of Jesus Christ shines upon them.

Sr. Chitra, Sr. Nilu

Our Manipuri Children On Holiday

29th May we had the visit of our Manipuri girls who stay with our sisters at Jharsuguda. They all go to school there and these days being holidays Sr Mercian brought them all to Pune for a holiday. They were 25 girls who were accompanied by Sr. Mercian, a teacher and a lady to cook for them.

On 1st June we arranged a session for them by Mr Shirish. He along with three girls came as a team and conducted different self-help sessions for them helping them to develop a positive attitude towards themselves and each other. The team shared their testimonies of how they found Jesus as their best friend. At the end of the day they were divided into three groups and each group had to present their learnings of the day through creative drawings. The girls thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Later on they visited our sisters in the three communities at Chinchwad. They enjoyed themselves at the water park and other places of interest.

On 2nd June they travelled to Ratnagiri to visit our sisters there. There too they had a hilarious time especially at the beach. Sr Valery organized some sessions for them by two sdb priests. The highlights of the sessions were talks, games, and sing-song. Through the symbol of a broken and empty pot, the animators helped them to see how at times they too feel empty and broken especially now without their parents and loved ones. A story was narrated of a broken cup of a king and how it was mended by carving beautiful designs on it. Like this story their lives too can be mended by living and caring for each other. Their broken pots can be mended by the Great Mender- Jesus. Another session was taken by the parish priest of Ratnagiri. The highlights of the talk:

1. Everyone has some difficulties in life.
2. Faith and hope are important.
3. There is a reaction to every action.
4. Never underestimate the strength of a woman.

Fr also taught them songs and dance. Sr Valery too had a session with them. She shared her experiences and the difficulties she faced in school. She also guided them as to how to memorise and study different subjects. Happiness is when we make others happy by doing good to them. Living our lives not only for self but for others.

They then visited our sisters at Rosary Cottage and St Ursula- Varawade. They returned to Shanti Ashram 8th morning having thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

On 9th June they visited some of the neighbouring seminaries. Fr. Rajesh the parish priest of Christ the King Parish served them a sumptuous meal. That evening we had recreation together. The girls danced and spoke words of gratitude and appreciation. Our Junior sisters and novices too entertained them with a dance. We then had a power-point presentation on our Congregation. A surprise item by way of gifts were given to them.



10th June was a visit to the science park, planetarium and a 3d movie brought them much joy and happiness. In the evening they attended the Parish Mass. Fr Alfred the parish priest then entertained them with games and dinner.

As all good things come to an end so too the visit of our Manipuri friends. They said good bye to us on 11th June

and started their journey back home to Jharsuguda feeling sad to leave us yet happy and grateful for the memorable holiday they had.

Looking back on the days spent with our girls, we have learnt much. In spite of the pain of leaving their parents behind and knowing the problems they face with the war still going on in Manipur, these girls have a lot of

resilience to move forward in life. They have been so full of life and a happy lot taking everything in their stride. Their faith in God is strong as could be seen in their loud participation at Mass. Always cheerful, always happy it has been a joy to have them around. They indeed brought life to our communities. We pray that God may always take care of them and their loved ones.

Sr. Susanne

A New Academic Year- New Beginnings, New Adventures....New Challenges.

In the new academic year, everything is fresh, energy is palpable, there is optimism in the air and everything seems possible.

The new includes, new clothes, new bag, books etc. it includes a new class, classmates and new teachers. Thus the beginning of an academic year is a time of excitement, challenges and opportunities. Thus it calls for a time to recommit, try new things and thus to



impact the future.

The start of a new academic year reminds me of the potter picking up a new piece of clay. The potter with his hands, skills and deep passion and love for his work will shape and reshape the piece of clay into a beautiful pot. In like manner I see the educators who will accept every child like the piece of clay and work and rework through their skills and love for teaching by filling them with knowledge and shaping every learner to become responsible citizens of the future.

The new academic year brings mixed feelings. There are some who look forward with all excitement to meet new teachers, classmates, new learning's and are ready to face any challenges of the year. Whereas there are some who are anxious about the new environment. There's a feeling of nervousness in the air about fitting in and making new friends. On the other hand parents are busy trying to give their best to their children by providing them new things to make this academic journey meaningful and happy. This time of the year entails a lot of expenses, but every parent wants to make it the best for their child a memorable experience.

On the other hand the school administrators are busy, the long summer in trying to chalk down a yearly programme. The focus of this plan is to be a formal one with the requirements of completing the syllabus and in a non-formal way inculcating education through co-curricular activities making learning more creative and fun.

Today technology has become so much a part of education. Access to information and resources is the need of the hour. Technology provides students with instant access to a vast amount of information and resources. The internet and the digital tools allow

students to explore various subjects, conduct research and access educational materials that may not be available in traditional textbooks. Today technology allows educators to remove the physical barrier of the classroom offering students a way to connect the curriculum with the real world and those areas of academic focus that can genuinely enrich the student's experience. Thus the educators during the summer are busy working out to integrate these technologies into the regular curriculum and ongoing activities ensuring that all these will help students also for their future.

STEM education is a way of learning and thinking that helps students develop essential skills for the future work and society. Thus educators and the entire administrative body of the education system is looking at ways to provide a supportive environment for students. Educators during the summer were updating their knowledge and learning new techniques and strategies so as to improve, inspire and engage students through the latest learning techniques available.

The core of every student's life is education. It's not just about exams but to find ways to help in their personal development. In the Yearly programme, space is provided for activities in sports, arts, communication development projects which will improve social and



leadership skills of students.

In today's fast-paced world motivating students is important. Thus school administrators begin the academic year by conducting motivational sessions, orientations, seminars, etc. at the start, so as to ignite the desire to learn, achieve and excel so as to make a significant difference in the academic journey that they are embarking on.

The new academic year is all planned so as to build the future. It is a collective effort of the students, educators and institutions to pursue knowledge, foster growth and prepare for the future. As we embark on this journey, the promise of new beginnings and the pursuit of excellence remain the driving forces behind a successful academic year.

Wishing everyone good luck, enthusiasm and growth in this journey of learning.

Self - Discovery Through Enneagram



Rev. Fr. Tony, a Jesuit priest belonging to Patna Province took seventeen of us Juniors on an Enneagram expedition, helping us to delve deep into ourselves to find the treasures therein. This journey lasted from 10th to 21st April 2024.

The exercise began by reflecting on 180 statements on self and we were asked to encircle the ones we believed is true of ourselves. After totalling the numbers we were able to get a specific number. Here in brief are the different numbers and it's nature.

Personality Style 1:- The Good Person

The key motivation is to be right, to strive higher and improve others, to justify my own position, to be beyond criticism so as not be condemned by anyone.

Personality Style 2:- The Helpful Person

Key motivation is to be loved, to express feelings for others, to be needed and appreciated, to coerce others into responding to them to vindicate claims about self.

Personality Style 3 :- The successful person.

The key motive to be affirmed, to distinguish self from others, to receive attention, to be admired, to impress others.

Personality Style 4:- The Unique Person.

The key motive is to understand themselves, to express self in something beautiful, to withdraw to protect their feelings, to take care of emotional need before attending to anything else.

Personality Style 5 :- The Wise Person.

The key motivation is to understand the environment,

to interpret everything as a way to defend the self from threats from the environment.

Personality Style 6:- The Faithful Person.

The key motivation is to be secure, to be liked and have approval of others, to test attitudes of others toward them, to fight against anxiety and insecurity.

Personality Style 7:- The Joyful Person.

The key motive is to be happy, to have fun and amuse themselves, to escape anxiety and to do and have more of everything.

Personality Style 8:- The Powerful Person.

The key motive is to be self reliant, to act from self interest, to have impact on environment, to prevail over others.

Personality Style 9:- The Peaceful Person.

The key motive is to experience union with others, to preserve things as they are to avoid conflict and tension, to ignore whatever would upset them to preserve their peace at any cost.

We were indeed so privileged to attend this class which helped us to discover the multiple graces and talents the Lord has blessed each of us with..It enabled us to accept all our strengths and limitations..We believe that it will help us to understand oneself and others as well.

At the end of the course we enjoyed ourselves at the Empress Gardens.

We are grateful to Sr. Marina, Sr. Divya and Sr. Sandhya for arranging this wonderful and inspiring Course for us.

Sr. Francina & Sr. Rashmita

Global News

Sr. Augusta Celebrated her 90th Birthday on 6th August 2024.

Thank You dear Sister for all these years of selfless dedication and commitment in the Vineyard of the Lord. We in India especially thank you for touching our lives and helping us to grow in God's Love.



Federation Meeting

The Annual Federation Meeting of the Superior Generals of the Society of St. Ursula of Anne de Xaintonge was held in Fribourg, Switzerland from 8th to 12th May. Sr. Marie Brigitte, the Superior General of Fribourg organised the meeting in a very friendly and conducive atmosphere.

It was a time to listen and share the Ursuline living and loving stories of the 4 Continents - Europe, USA, Africa and Asia. We also discussed our challenges and difficulties in present times. Yet there is a felt need to be connected where ever we are as little lamps of Mother Anne and share our apostolic works and mission.

So, a Federation Assembly is organised in France in October 2024, where about 40 sisters from the 4 Continents will participate and reflect on a common vision together. Sr. Jacqueline from Dole, with the help of experts are planning to digitalise the Archives in Dole so that it is readily available in future. They are also preparing 2 videos about the beginnings from Mother Anne's time till date, the life and mission of the Society of St. Ursula in Dole



and in its branches.

The Federation Sion is planning to have General Chapter of Elections in August 2024. They will have a new team of Superior General and the Councillors. May the spirit of our Foundress Venerable Anne de Xaintonge continue to guide us along the way.

Sr. Rita

Visitation of Sr. Rita and Sr. Augusta

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Jer. 29:11-14.

This was our experience during the visitation of our sisters. It was a great joy to have Sr. Rita and Sr. Augusta in our community in Baia Mare.

We indeed had an enriching and a wonderful time together. As we had the opportunity to journey through our personal, community and the apostolic life. We truly appreciate and are grateful for their loving and genuine concern, the listening ear, sisterly affection and understanding and above all for accompanying us during their stay in the sharings we had, in our daily activities and the mission. We could feel that the sisters were one with us and the people.

We had a day of sharing on community life and the mission in Romania. Sr. Rita began with a presentation on the life, call and mission of our beloved foundress Mother Anne. Each one of us was given the opportunity to freely share our lived experiences, difficulties and challenges, ideas and opinions. We felt the holy spirit leading and guiding us as we were open to one another and could gracefully listen and understand each other.



Our sisters were happy to see the kindergarten children and the staff. All so full of life and joy... We also spent an evening together with our hostel girls who expressed their gratitude for the good accommodation conditions and security which helps them to concentrate on their studies in order to have a bright future. The sisters also met our catechism children

who come to us every Saturday. They were also happy to be with our prayer group who too thanked our sisters for the prayerful support. We also visited few families with our sisters who shared their faith experiences and were happy for their visit. Our sisters had the opportunity to visit a nearby home for the aged where they could meet and comfort the elderly, sick and the lonely. It was indeed a heart touching experience.

We express our gratitude to you dear Sr. Rita and Sr. Augusta for all that you are and do for us and the mission. We are grateful to all our sisters in Brig, Africa and India who accompany us through your prayers. May we continue to reflect the love of Jesus through our acts of kindness thus keep the flame of His love burning... May Mary our protector and Mother Anne our beloved foundress intercede and pray for us.

Sisters Joseline, Marie Therese and Diya