

OUR LADY OF THE VISITATION
PROVINCE ASSEMBLY 2015
BANGALORE, KARNATAKA, INDIA



Province Assembly was a time to be together to reflect, renew and to refresh our life as Sisters of Notre Dame in the Visitation Province, Bangalore. The presence of every member present for this assembly on May 6th, 7th and 8th was a time of union and journeying together towards a new tomorrow. First of all, I thank the good God for His unconditional love, mercy and grace in the past ten years as a Province. During the three days of the assembly, each of the participants could experience God's manifold blessings, the love of **Jesus, the Word Incarnate** and the Spirit's guidance.

The theme for all three days was very relevant to our life. The **first day** was **Witness of Life**, which was well-presented by the guest speaker, Bishop Lawrence Durai Raj, the Archbishop of Dharmapuri Diocese, Tamil Nadu. In his address he frequently quoted our Pope, Francis. He further stated that at all times we need to preach the Gospel by example, if necessary use words. Religious must also cultivate the spirit of intimacy with the Lord and attract others to join religious life. Every religious holding any position in the congregation must carry out the responsibility with the spirit of servant leadership. He further stressed that we are supposed to be prophets: a woman of God who received the Word, a woman of solitude, and a woman of prayer. The understanding between Mission and Function was well explained as our religious life is more and more affected by this aspect. He invited us more to be rooted in the local culture and language of the people. Finally, the Bishop stated that we are called to be like Mary

ever virgin, docile, missionary, to have great human concern and sensitivity, and to be bearers of joy.

The **second day** we were lead to reflect on the theme **Prophetic Witness**. This was systematically explained and carried out through the entire activities of the day. The eminent person addressed the theme was a familiar Sister among the religious group in Bangalore and even in some other states, Sr. Inigo, of the Congregation of Saint Ann, Madras. Simple was her appearance, and yet efficiently delivered her reflection on the theme which left us speechless. With no preplanned materials in hand or technology, the Word of God was the key point for her to lead us in wonder and in awe. The passage on the multiplication of the bread was her main focus from the Bible and she narrated the theme. All of us were taken aback with her simple and yet marvelous thoughts on Prophetic Witness. She repeatedly explained that religious must have contemplation and compassion as the uppermost qualities. Moreover, most problems of religious can be avoided or solved by proper caring of oneself spiritually, emotionally and physically.

The third day's theme was on **Community Witness**. We had Sister Mary Sharan, our former Provincial, as our resource person. She explained the importance of speaking life- giving words to one another in communities, developing the spirit of prayer, preparing ourselves well for liturgy, especially before receiving the Eucharistic Lord, and then building a Gospel community wherever we are.

There were various ministry reports read by the respective Sisters that gave us joy and enabled us to think deeply for the betterment in the days to come. Sister Mary Sandhya, our Provincial, briefed us about the Province's growth, development and concerns. Sr. Divya, the treasurer of the Province and Sr. Kiran, the treasurer of the Mysore Notre Dame Sisters Society, clearly informed us about the financial condition of the Province. Finally, a few concerns were brought to the group to be aware of and to live a life that is pleasing to God.

Each participant was enriched and empowered to go forth to live joy fully with a renewed commitment. Together with Mother Julie, Our Spiritual Mother, we proclaim "Oh, how good is the dear good God!" May Mother Mary continue to help us to be joyful bearers of Christ to the world.