

Auteuil, February 1, 2019

Dear Sisters,

“Every detail of our lives has been an object of a Divine thought, and that thought is one of Love.” MME

Once again, we come to share with you about our life, time passes quickly and we are gradually cultivating the experience of being an international community at the service of the Congregation.

- **Advent in France**

The advent word “**prepare**” was a concrete experience for all of us.



Sandra and Irene spent their advent at Mission Langues, Angers not only to learn French, but it was an experience of preparing for mission together with the other missionaries from the different parts of the world. The four weeks in Angers has been a good experience of initiation into French and immersion in French culture from an international and inter-congregational community. We continue the effort of learning the language and above all the experience of communication that goes beyond language.

Rekha, Isabelle, and Marthe continued to work and prepare our General Calendar for 2019 and for the coming years.

- **First Christmas in Paris**

Our Christmas Triduum together with the Auteuil community was spent in silence, prayer, and sharing that prepared us to celebrate the Mystery of the Incarnation and the renewal of our vows. Srs. Carmen and Isabelle prepared the points for the first two days, and on the third day we concluded with the Christmas Chapter of Sr. Rekha. We are grateful to Sr. Rekha, her chapter addressed each one of us personally in **our journey of encountering “God’s migration” in our experiences.**



On the 25th of December we had a breakfast party and lunch with some people who were invited to share. In the afternoon as a community we had a walk on the banks of the Seine and a visit to Notre Dame de Paris.

We thank each one of you for your Christmas Greetings, by mail or digital, you have made us feel your affection and closeness.

The year ended with an evening Eucharist, a time of adoration and a spontaneous celebration of which we had the strength to wait until midnight... For some of us a very different experience, but with the same deep sense of family.

- **A beautiful dinner**

We began the year with a fraternal dinner with Sr. Martine who was returning from Italy, a very warm time and again a space to thank her for her dedication and service. She is in better health and more rested. In January she returned to her province, visited her family, and then a time of renewal in Canada before integrating into her new mission.



We continue to be grateful for the gift of her person to the congregation. When we asked, “what is your word for us?” Her reply was, “**continue loving**”.

- **Sr. Rekha travels to Asia**

On January 3, Rekha traveled to India, and she made it for the Golden Jubilee celebration of our dear Sr. Leela. We are happy for Sr. Rekha to have rejoined our sisters in India even just for a few days. From India, she went to Thailand: “Thank you Sr. Lerma and the Thabom Community for the warm welcome in Bangkok.”



The other very important mission of Sr. Rekha in Asia was to attend the meeting and present a paper on poverty in the triple dimension of poverty, religions and cultures at the FABC (Federation of Asian Bishops Conference) meeting. The presence of Cardinal Ladaria (President, Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith) and his team from the Vatican and their dialogue with the Asian Bishops and Theologians as well as with members of the FABC made the meeting very special and unique. Congratulations dear “Mother Rekha” for your great contribution to the church.

- **Walking together**

Our life as general community is a “walking together”. Yes, we walk together to the Park. We work and recreate together. We are discovering our different ways of taking steps, our different rhythms, etc. We experience the gifts, joys, and challenges of interculturality and internationality. **In walking together, we grow together and reach the destination together.**

For the first three weeks in January 2019, the rest of the Council have been working on the implementation of the decisions of the Chapter according to the area entrusted to each one of us. It has been an experience of "beehive" and of "bees" exploring, searching, consulting...an experience

of teamwork and of learning from our diversity and from the efforts that have already been made to advance the mission that God has entrusted to us.

- **In Communion with our family and Sisters**

Sr. Isabelle went to Belgium for a few days to visit her mother and to attend the funeral of our dear Sr. Monique Elisabeth. Sr. Marthe, together with Srs. Cecile F. and Egle helped the community of Boisfort to move in the furniture from the community of Ciney.

- **A visit to the Museum (Musée de l'Immigration, Paris 12ème arrondissement)**

"Persona Grata" - personally acceptable or welcome, was the title of the exposition at the *Musee de L'Histoire de L'Immigration*. The good news but also the tragedy for today's world was expressed through different art works that invited awareness, reflection, and action for decisions. Here are some quotations from the exhibit:

"One is not born a stranger, one becomes a stranger."

"It takes two to offer a hand of friendship. Hospitality is a reciprocal welcome."

"There is something that precedes hospitality: assistance, a genuine humanitarian obligation to the other in distress. Then there is the heart of hospitality – welcome. We have to design what comes after hospitality: belonging. Nothing is worse than not belonging anymore."



The world situation continues to be convulsed at the beginning of this new year. To enumerate them all is not our objective, social explosion in France that exposes social and territorial inequalities, through the claims of the *Gilet Jaunes* and the president's proposal to get out of the crisis, the elections in Congo, the attack in Nairobi and in Jolo in Mindanao (Philippines), the repression and dictatorship in Nicaragua, the caravans of visible and invisible migrants, new dictatorial governments, the scandals and abuses in the church, and many other realities.

How can we become witnesses of Hope and make life circulate through these events and beyond what the media present to us?

The initiatives of women leaders in India, the actions of solidarity with migrants in various parts of the world, the WYD in Panama, the testimony and word of Pope Francis, and other untold narratives that contribute to making this world a better place to be and to live in. Let us continue to live our communion and share our stories of good news for the world.

- Let us accompany with our prayers Srs. Rekha, Sandra, and Isabelle as they visit the Province of Ecuador from 30th January to 17 February 2019.

With prayers and affection,

Rekha, Sandra, Isabelle, Marthe, and Irene