

The Society of St Mary the Virgin in India Director's Annual Report 2022-23

“One part at a time, one day at a time, we can accomplish any goals that we set”, as said by Koran Casey. We at the Society of St. Mary the Virgin in India are working one part, one day at a time time, dealing with the challenges before us. Many drastic changes took place as a result of the pandemic. We are facing a financial crunch, and this has pushed many children into child labour, and other income generating activities and as a result education is almost neglected. The Country is going through many issues too. Unemployment and under employment are at their highest levels in the history of post-independence India. The social fabric, peace and harmony of the country is disturbed, every aspect of life is influenced by its politics and political ideologies.

In spite of the difficult situation, we have hope, as God is in control and we always believe that He will never leave us or forsake us. I am presenting a brief report of the activities of different units under the SSMVI, Pune.

Ashish James, Director of SSMVI

St. Hilda's School

The St. Hilda's school aims to be the centre of excellence in education for girls, using state of art technology where the seeds of the all-round development of the girls are sown at an early age. The school focuses not only on advanced academics but also on extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. The school supports the students to incorporate a sense of responsibility, loyalty, team spirit and healthy competition to become graceful and dignified personalities.

We educate 450 girls in both the Primary School and High school. These girls are seeking education under the guidance of 25 dedicated staff.

1- Enhancement of Skills in teachers and students: Child Rights, child psychology, alternative disciplining methods and many other training support is organised for the school staff and students.

2- Counselling session: Girls taking part in the school final exam are always under pressure as the exam is conducted by the state government. A session was arranged to counsel them. All the girls were guided to prepare for the exam by a governance official.

3- Celebrations: St. Hilda's school Founder's Day was celebrated on 25th August. Musical worship in the Church was enjoyed, followed by a function to recognise the students and teachers' achievements.

4- The School Annual Social Gathering: The annual social gathering day was the happiest moment for all the staff and students after a gap of three years due to the pandemic. Many colourful programmes were put up by



the children and prizes were given away to all the winners.

5- Sports Day: All the schools under SSMVI organised a grand Sports Day on 29th Nov 2022. Miss Deepika Joseph, the Vice Captain of Kabadi Team India, graced the function as a special guest. It was a memorable moment for all the students.

6- Adventure trips, visits and excursions: The RSP, Road Safety Platoon, visited the busy square in the city and helped discipline the traffic, along with the traffic police. They displayed the traffic rules placard and created awareness about the rules the citizens need to follow.

The Primary and High-School are working hard to reach out to the girls in difficult situations and bring them in the main stream of education.



Epiphany School

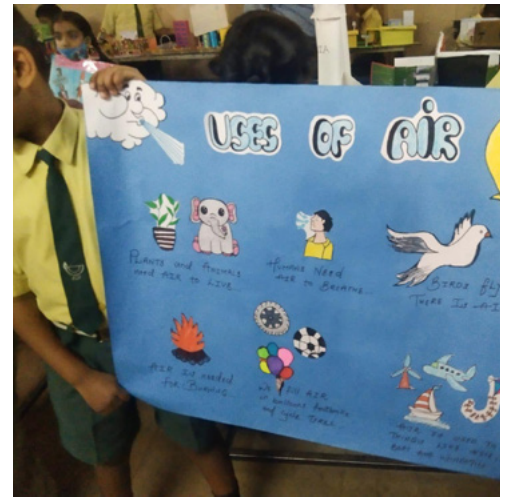
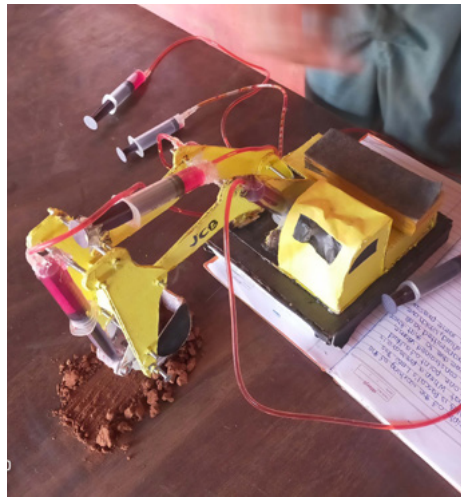
The Epiphany School is a co-educational, English Medium School. The school caters for 520 boys and girls from lower income families of the community.

The school is doing well, although we are struggling with admissions. There is a need for upgrading the infrastructure to make it more conducive for learning.

Our students are putting their best foot forward in all the competitions they have participated in. One of our students received a gold medal at the district and zonal level for weightlifting and a silver medal for karate at the district level. Another girl was selected to play football at the state level. A student from Std 9 was selected for an internship designed by IBM to train students in cyber security and digital awareness. She visited different schools and trained students from Std 6th to 8th grade. For this work she received a stipend of Rs.5000/ from IBM. We are truly happy with the leadership qualities displayed by our students.

Our teachers are undergoing training and using modern techniques to teach students as they are still struggling with their syllabus after the disruption that the pandemic had on their learning. A lot of hard work is going on to bring the students back on track in terms of studies and discipline.





Shanti Sadan School

The Shanti Sadan School is located at Lonawala, 45 miles away from Pune. We educate 240 students from the villages. It's an English medium school. The school is set within a beautifully natural area, making it a very happy learning environment for the students.

The Christmas party was organised for all the students on 16th December 2022. The school Annual Day celebration was organised on 28th February 2023. It was a wonderful fusion of art and achievements by the students.

The school achieved 100% results last year in the school final year exam conducted by the State Government of Maharashtra. In spite of very basic infrastructure the Head Mistress and the staff are making a positive impact on the children.



St. Michael's Hostel

The hostel nurtures 190 girls in the age group of 5 to 16 years. They are children at high risk, coming from underprivileged and difficult family backgrounds. The girls' holistic development is a priority. They receive all the required care for their physical, mental, social and emotional growth. Many different activities are organised for the girls to take part in.

- 1- **Cooking to learn:** Rubana and her team from Rainbow Foundation taught the girls to prepare healthy food using local ingredients. They also taught them to prepare their favourite cakes and chocolates.
- 2- **Speech competition:** One student, Anjali, received a prize for her speech given in the Church for the celebration of India's Independence Day, on 15th August. Her speech about 'Freedom' was much appreciated.
- 3- **General Medical Camp:** A general medical check-up camp was organized in collaboration with the local Political Party Bharati Janata Party (BJP) medical team. They undertook dental, eye, haemoglobin, glucose and a general health check-up. Medicine for iron deficiency were distributed. A lecture on dental hygiene and care was delivered too.
- 4- **Career Guidance:** Every year professionals help children to prepare in selecting suitable careers in different fields. Students from 8th to 10th grade participated. This year Mrs Gitanjali was invited to deliver a lecture. Mrs Hema, a trained Counsellor conducted an aptitude test.
- 5- **Children helped in care home:** The girls visited St. John's Home for elderly women in February. The girls had a joyful time with the residents. It was an emotional meeting for both the residents and girls. The girls helped them in arranging their rooms and garden.
- 6- **Distribution of educational material:** At the beginning of the school year 180 girls from kindergarten to 10th grade received school kits, which including school bags, notebooks, geometry box, text box, school uniform and shoes, making them ready for their new higher classes.
- 7- **Drawing Competition:** On Children's Day on 14th November, the birthday of first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, students from the World Peace University conducted a drawing competition. All the children participated and enjoyed drawing different pictures. It was an enjoyable day with sweets and chocolates shared in celebration.



St. John's Home

St. John's Home is a home for elderly ladies from economically and under privileged backgrounds. The residents are provided with all the facilities to make their life comfortable and happy.

We provide them with all the basic facilities including physiotherapy and health care services. The Help Age India Medical team provides medical care to the senior citizens in the home and community in Punch Howd. The Indian Festival, 'Diwali' and Christmas is always celebrated with lots of joy and happiness. The care home is a happy home for ten ladies.



In conclusion, we are achieving the task of caring for underprivileged elderly women and educating children, providing them with a positive and nurturing environment which enables them to live life in all its fullness. Dr Mary Samuel our chairperson, Rev Sushil Khillare our secretary, and Mr Nilkanth-Waikar our treasurer are always our pillar of support and strength. The management and staff stand together in the faith of Our Lord Saviour and Liberator Jesus Christ. He leads us in our mission and vision.

Our prayers for all the sisters and staff of the Wantage Community. May God bless each one in the Mission.