From the Director’s Desk...

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)**

No one has the right to be happy alone. The only way of procuring happiness for oneself is to think of the happiness of others. Love one another or perish; there is no other choice. Indeed God has been so generous in giving us life freely, we need to be generous in loving and giving, extending our help to others... then SDGs will become a reality….

Fr. P. Arul Das sdb
Executive Director

Emerging strong from the depths of despair

**N Mary Kamala** lives in Khajipalem village of Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh. In 2000, at a young age, she was married off to her maternal uncle. They made a living through field labour. They had two daughters.

In the year 2010, Kamala lost one of her legs in a road accident, following which she was hospitalized for close to a year. This was just a beginning of a series of tests life had in store for Kamala. Her husband deserted her and the children, not wanting to take responsibility of a handicapped wife. She was left under the care of her mother. Kamala's depression grew as she saw her mother toil everyday to keep a household with four dependants running. Her children had to drop out of school as she could no longer afford the fees. Her despair knew no bounds when her younger daughter was detected with a heart condition that needed surgery.

When she lost her daughter due to the illness, she lost all meaning in life and decided to end her life that she felt was nothing but a burden.

It was at this moment of total despair that a team from Chaitanya MACS intervened. They counseled her, sharing stories of hundreds of women who have gained self-reliance through thrift and credit. Kamala saw the first ray of hope in many years. She joined the MACS and soon got a loan which she invested in setting up a small eatery or ‘Tiffin Centre’. She has never looked back.

Kamala has shown total commitment to build a bright future for what is left of her family – she, her mother and daughter. First her daughter resumed schooling. She improved the eatery by procuring a grinder, which has increased the sales. Encouraged by the returns and the savings she is able to make, she set up a Grocery Store for her mother to run. This is also doing well. Kamala says, “I will be eternally grateful to Chaitanya MACS for reviving hope in me. It is only through their support that my family is happy today. I would like to thank them on behalf of all helpless women like me who have got a new lease of life.”
A special program to mark the International Women’s Day was organized at BIRD, Guntur on 08 March, 2016. Ms.Sk. Johny Moon, Chairperson, Zilla Praja Parishad - Guntur, attended as a Chief Guest.

Fr.Arul Das, Director of BSK, welcomed the Chief Guest, the guests of honor and the women members to the event and wished everyone on the occasion of International Women’s Day. Chief Guest Ms. Sk. Johny Moon, Chairperson, Zilla Praja Parishad-Guntur spoke about the importance of girl child education and explained about the various government schemes that encourage education and other facilities like “Chandranna Cheyutha” etc.

MACS (Mutually Aided Cooperative Society) staff Ms.Mary and team presented a skit on “Drunkard husband and distressed wife” to educate the women on how bad habits affect families.

Fr.Thathireddy Vijaya Bhaskar, Provincial, Hyderabad gave a message on importance of education, if any child (boy or girl) educated and got the job, and settled in life, then generations subsequently will get the benefit of education and discipline. He commended the work of MACS saying, “If I concentrate on Don Bosco School, 100 students will get education in a year per section per tutor. Suppose one teacher works for 25 years, it means 2500 students will be educated in 25 years of service. Through BSK, within 10 years of service 26,000 families have benefitted from income generation activities, trainings and credit support. I appreciate Fr’s and staff services in this program.”

Sr.Ratna Mary, Provincial, St.Ann's Provincialate, Guntur addressed the 2016 year theme “Pledge of Parity”. “Recently I read a survey that said male and female will get equality of rights and opportunities after 105 years; ‘Is this real?’” she asked the participants. “Do we have to wait for such a long time to get equality in gender? To get equality what do we have to do in our families?” she questioned the participants. She cited examples of how parents had a differential outlook towards education of sons and daughters – sending the former to a good school and the latter to a mediocre centre to save money. She stressed on the need to start bring parity from home first for a change in society.

Rev.Fr.Louis Babu, President, St.Michael's Boys Home, Guntur gave a message of family growth and importance of coordination between wife and husband towards children's growth and discipline.

Ms.Sivakumari and team sang a song to educate the members on women empowerment.

Fr.Arul Das and Fr.Thathireddy Vijaya Bhaskar distributed prizes to winners, who win the games and best performers as a Group leader, Board of Director, etc.

Sr.Ratna Mary honored the members of staff who completed 10 years of service in Bosco Seva Kendra.

Mr.S.Chandrasekhar State Coordinator, MACS, gave the vote of thanks and concluded the program.
Chodipilli Jaya Lakshmi is a student of Hospitality domain in DB Tech Vizag City. Resident of a small slum in old Vizag, she lived with her parents and a brother. The family’s source of living is from fishing. Jaya had finished her S.S.C from a nearby Government School. Even though she had an immense interest in studies she could not afford further studies due to unstable financial assistance.

Jaya gave up her studies and made her way towards a new beginning. She prepared herself to work in order to achieve a better livelihood for herself and for the family. Unfortunately all her attempts at finding employment failed.

“I was very depressed and discouraged at that stage. Then one day, I came to know about the training program offered by Don Bosco Tech Society. When I learnt that the three month training program will lead me to be a working member of the family, I firmly decided that I would not let this opportunity go” says Jaya remembering the day her life took a positive turn.

Jaya is a modern thinking girl and is very courageous. Highly dedicated to learn everything that the course offered, she was prepared to migrate for employment, if it meant better prospects. This determination to work hard and succeed is perhaps what brought her success in her interview with Hotel Green Park, Hyderabad. She is today placed at Hotel Green Park, Indian School of Business, Gachibowli, Hyderabad. She earns a salary of Rs. 9000/- per month and also receives privileges like free food and accommodation. Her parents are very happy at this success. She stands as an inspiration for many underprivileged youth. “I am no more a discouraged human being. DB tech has taught me to survive independently. I am very grateful to this prestigious Organization” a beaming Jaya says.

Workshop on Sustainable Development Goal 16

A consultation workshop was organized by the Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (‘Don’t Break the Promise’ Movement) on Friday, 18th March 2016. The program held at Satyodayam, Tarnaka in Hyderabad had representatives of human rights organizations from the southern region – Telangana, A.P., Tamilnadu and Karnataka deliberated on the issues around the sustainable development goal 16.

SDG 16 deals with promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provision of access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Heads of organisations spoke of different kinds of violations they encounter at various levels. Prominent members from the state executive – Retd. IG, Chief Secretary, etc shared important anecdotes of how corruption must be countered to realize a just society. The program was moderated by Thomas Pallithanam, sdb. At the end of the day’s discussions, a need for concerted action emerged. Organisations working for a cause have to share knowledge and experience to cut down on learning time and help realize the goals set for building stronger institutions.

Ms. Deepa Xavier represented BSK at the consultation.

2nd Annual National Seminar on Youth Development

2nd Annual National Seminar on Youth Development was held on 30-31 March, 2016 in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu. The theme of the year was “Youth and Inclusive Development: Evolving Eclectic Approaches.”

Mr. K Satyanand, Program Manager represented BSK at the seminar. There were a total of 189 participants from across the globe. 170 youth participated from various parts of India.

There was a review of the progress of events during the past year that was undertaken on the basis of the action plan chalked out. Further plan for the coming year was done based on lessons learnt. Representatives of various organizations and institutions presented papers on the theme of youth towards inclusive and sustainable development.