

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd
Commission for Mission Partnership
Workshop for Mission Partnership



Theme: LISTENING TO PROMOTE HEALING AND BUILDING RELATIONSHIP

Date: 27th & 28th November 2023,

Venue: Chapter hall, Good Shepherd Community Building, Museum Road, Bangalore.

Attendees: Province Mission Partnership Animators and Partners-in-Mission

Resources Person:

1. Listening, Safeguarding & Restorative Circles : Mrs. Arlene Manoharan
2. Way Forward Discernment and Action Plans : Sr. Shalini Podimattam

1. Day One:

a. **Opening Ritual** (co-ordinated by Mr. Jason Furtado & team) :

- i. The ritual began with bible reading by Ms. Nirmala (Mission Partnership Commission Member) on the parable of the Sower (Mathew 13:1-23). The parable challenged the participants to evaluate what seeds they have brought to the meeting, and what type of soil would these seeds would fall into: Hard ground where the birds would pick them away? , Rocky ground, where plants would grow but die soon as the roots aren't deep? ,

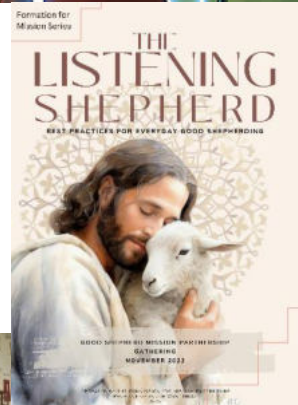
Thorny Ground, where the new saplings would be chocked in thorns and weeds? Or Rich soil that will allow new skills to thrive and blossom.



- ii. Each participants brought their ('Banner/Flag) that showed the values they represent, and placed them into the circle marked in the center of the room. All participants sat in a circle around the center piece.



- b. **Introduction and Opening the Session:** Sr. Shalini (The PLT link person for Mission Partnership) addressed the gathering, inviting all *to listen with an open heart*. She conveyed the best wishes of Sr. Lissy Chacko (Province Leader) who could not be present due to other commitments. Mr. Jason Furtado (Convener – Mission Partnership Commission) explained about the booklet released for the gathering called 'The Listening Shepherd' , and introduced the esteemed resource person (Mrs. Arlene Manoharan, Partner-in-mission & Congregational Safeguarding Trainer (English))



- c. **Introduction of Restorative Circle Practices:**

- i. Mrs. Arlene introduced the Restorative (Peacemaking) Circle as a way of bringing people together in which:
 - Everyone is respected
 - Everyone gets a chance to talk without interruption
 - Participants explain themselves by telling their stories
 - Everyone is equal- no person more important than anyone else
 - Spiritual and emotional aspects of individual experience are welcomed.



- ii. Essential Elements of Restorative Circles are:
- Seating in a circle (no tables or other furniture inside the circle)
 - Opening – deliberate marking of the space
 - Centre piece
 - Values/guidelines are decided collectively
 - Talking piece regulates the dialogue
 - Check-in
 - Guiding questions
 - Check-out
 - Closing – deliberate closing of the space

- iii. The Talking Piece used was a stone from the St Nicholas tunnel, which introduced a lot of zeal, excitement and emotions from the from which Circle values were generated, that would govern the circle proceedings.

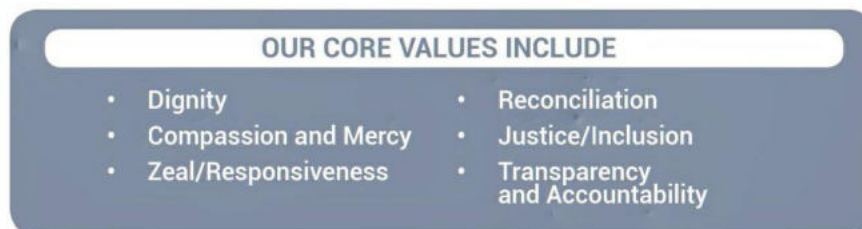
Values – foundation of the Partners in Mission Circle

Respect	Compassion	Nurturing
Love	Empathy	Equality
Patience	Reconciliation	Inclusiveness
Joy and laughter	Forgiveness	Creativity and out of the box
Kindness	Humility to say Sorry	Perseverance
Courage	Help & Support	Non-judgemental attitude
Mercy	Encouragement	Zeal
Embracing Vulnerability	Listening	Confidentiality
Honesty	Consciousness	Commitment and Dedication



- d. The **Congregational Safeguarding Policy** was discussed and conversations were initiated and questions were clarified using the Restorative circle approach, touching on the following themes:
- What and who comes within the Good Shepherd Safe guarding Policy Scope
 - Who are considered persons in vulnerable situations?
 - What was abuse and the different types of Abuse?
 - Standards of the Congregational Safeguarding Policy
 - How to respond to Abuse?
 - How can Partners in Mission listen generatively, engage in dialogue and foster Internal Justice in a Restorative manner?
 - Address areas of internal injustice within the Congregation
 - Design and implement policies & guidelines with tools for ongoing
 - Evaluation & accountability that will:
 - Identify & dismantle systems, attitudes & practices that perpetuate cultural bias, racism & inequality, which keep privilege & relationships built on power/superiority cemented in place;
 - Promote formation, personal transformation, and a rights-based approach.

2. Create safe spaces for relevant & inclusive dialogue about the injustices we have participated in but that have never been recognized/named, the resulting loss & grief that have never been reconciled, and other issues so relevant to our desire to live our consecrated life in a prophetic way.' (*31st Congregational Chapter 2021 Direction Statement C. Universal Culture of Justice*)
 - Compliance with the Safeguarding Policy is critical in our journey towards a 'Universal Culture of Justice'
 - e. Restorative Justice Philosophy
 - i. Restorative Justice is a philosophy and approach to justice that focusses on repairing harm, fostering accountability and promoting healing.
2. **Day 2** : Questions, Deep Listening and Planning
- a. The follow questions were used for group work:
 - i. Share about a time when someone else was hurt, and you had a conversation with them. How did you show up in that conversation?
 - ii. Share about a time when you were hurt, and you had a conversation with someone about it, but didn't feel listened to. Without sharing the story of how you were hurt, explain why you felt that way then. How did that interaction make you feel?
 - iii. What are the ingredients of 'Deep listening'?
 - iv. Why is deep listening vital for developing and strengthening strong relationships?
 - v. Share some practical examples of how we can practice deep listening?
 - b. Restorative Justice Process in Conversations
 - i. The group brainstormed about: Why talk about Values before we initiate Restorative Conversations?
 - ii. The Congregational Core Values were listed which aligned perfectly with Restorative circle values.

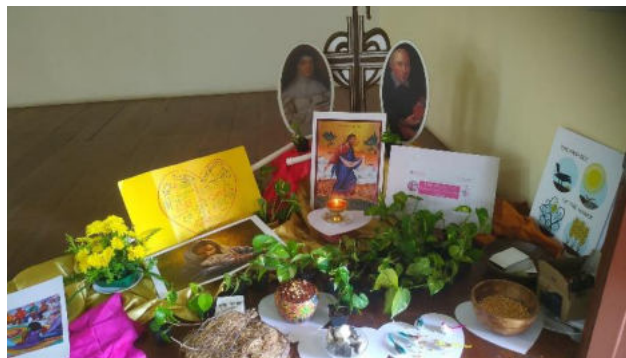


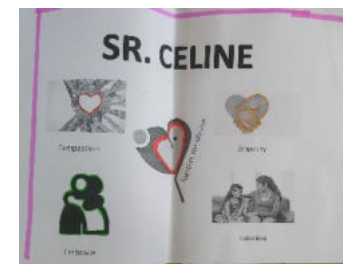
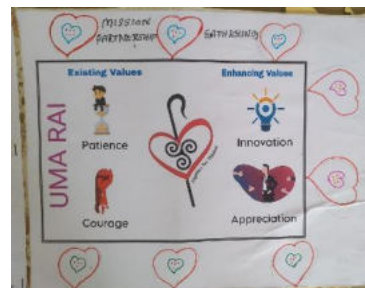
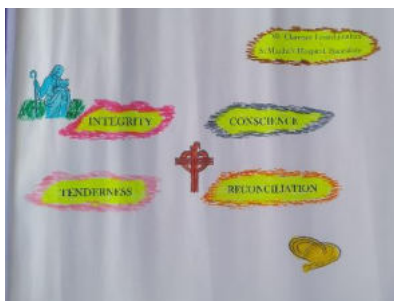
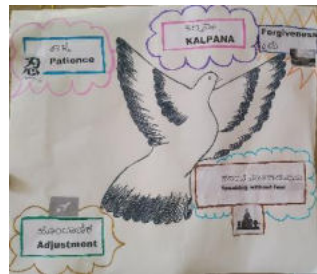
- iii. 'Restorative values guide restorative conversations. Grounding in these values and our own values will help us ask questions that reflect these values, and respond according to that person's needs, not ours.'
- iv. Restorative Questions were dwelt on like :
 1. What (trauma) happened?
 2. How has it affected you? Who else has been affected and how?
 3. What were you thinking at the time?
 4. What have you thought about since?
 5. What is needed to make things as right as possible?
- c. After Morning tea, Sr. Shalini facilitated the group into a profound and inspiring session on being '*wounded healers*' and community building, after which the participants planed the way-forward for the next month's till February 2024.
 - i. The Action Plan listed till February 2024 is as follows:

1. **Improve our service by deeper listening, with love and patience. And making sure our core values (Dignity, Compassion, Mercy, Justice, Inclusiveness, Zeal, Transparency, and Accountability) are a part of our lives.**
 2. **Mission Partnership Animators should be more vocal about the Mission to better animate Partners-in-Mission effectively, using 'The Listening Shepherd' booklet.**
 3. **Have orientation programs for new and senior Partners-in-Mission.**
 4. **Translate relevant documents into regional languages.**
 5. **Begin Contemplative Mission Partnership with Contemplative Sisters through spiritual sessions.**
 6. **Start Local Mission Partnership Restorative Circle sessions facilitated by Mrs. Arlene and local Animator. Local Leader can join.**
 7. **Increase involvement of Partners-in-Mission in local ministry activities.**
 8. **Strengthen the Home Group with regular Whatsapp communication and circle meetings.**
 9. **Actively promote Mission Partnership across Good Shepherd Ministries.**
 10. **Create opportunities for fundraising and local financial support, maintaining proper records.**
 11. **Improve communication and networking between community partnership groups, sharing events, support, and resources. Network with other Provinces.**
 12. **Start community projects on Eco-Projects, safeguarding awareness, Mission Partnership Promotion, fundraising, etc.**
- d. The next Mission Partnership Gathering would be on 20th & 21st February 2024. Dated to be blocked.

3. **Closing Ritual** :

- a. The Gathering closed with a profound spiritual ritual:
 - i. Animators were blessed and missioned into renewed authentic Mission Partnership by Sr. Shalini who in-turn, blessed and missioned their local Partners-in-Mission, with a sapling and investiture of the Mission Partnership lapel pin.
 - ii. Each Mission Partner also received a candle of another Mission Partner, for whom they were to pray for and send positive vibrations for Mission.
 - iii. The gathering came to a close by reading of the Mission Partners' Prayer, vote of thanks by Mr. Jason and Sr. Bridget Paily .
- b. Special thanks to Sr. Lissy Chacko and team for their support for Mission Partnership and Sr. Shantha Selvaraj and her team for their hospitality and accommodation.





Banner / Flag of each Mission Partner representing what they stand for in Mission

