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LOUISE JOSEPHINE NATIONAL AWARDS FOR THE BEST PRINCIPAL & THE BEST TEACHER



A teacher is like a candle. It consumes itself to become the light for the way, but very often it disappears into anonymity. Realising this lack of recognition what teachers do in our society, the Universal Solidarity Movement has instituted the “Best Principal Award” and “Best Teacher Award” to be given every year on Teachers’ Day, Sept. 5, in honour of Sr Louise Josephine, a committed and visionary teacher who selflessly dedicated her life also for USM activities.

This year, on Sept. 5, Sr Doreen CJ from Jeolikote (Uttarakhand) received the Best Principal Award and Shri Virendra Singh Thakur from BMC school, Ganjbasoda received the Best Teacher Award at a public function in Indore witnessed by university vice-chancellors, school principals, teachers, dignitaries and many students. The Chief Guest, Dr Narendra P. Jain (IFS Retd), former UN diplomat, gave away the awards.

The Chief Guest, in his speech, extolled the greatness of the teachers. He said that a teacher does not merely teaches from text books, but shows “the way” of life, and they make a difference in society. Admiring the work of USM, he said that its service is at the grass-root level— to the needy and the marginalized in the transformation of society.

Dr. Narindra Virmani (IPS Retd), President of USM, who is also the Vice-Chancellor of Paramand University, Indore, highlighted in his speech the dignity of the teachers and said that they should uphold their self-respect and should be impartial in dealing with children.

Prof. A.A. Abbasi and Prof. Umrao Singh Choudhari, both former vice-chancellors of Indore University, and many principals and heads of various schools from Indore and other cities were honoured with a sapling and gift packet of books during the function.

Sr Doreen who won the Best Principal Award, is a teacher for the last 30 years, and is the principal of St Antony’s School, Jeolikote for the last 12 years. Born in Punjab, and educated in the same school, she has dedicated her life in the service of humanity especially for the youth in the rural areas.



Shri Virendra Singh who won the Best Teacher Award is a maths teacher from Bharatmata Convent School, Ganjbasoda, MP. As a talented and dedicated teacher, he organises various

programmes in the school to promote peace and inter-religious harmony. He believes in the transformation of India by his students as he says, "I want to motivate them to choose the right path and become good citizens of India."

TEEN OF THE YEAR 2011 - ZONALS AT INDORE



The annual feature of Teen of the Year--Indore Zonal was held at St Raphael's School Auditorium in Indore on October 3, 2011 supported by USM. The participants were sixteen students were shortlisted from entries from MP-Gujarat-Rajasthan Zone.

After several personality & talent tests, the judges declared Shraddha Gome from St Raphael's Convent School as the Teen of Year of Indore Zonal. Aditi Tiwari and Jaya Sisodia were adjudged as the First Runner Up and the Second Runner Up respectively. These winners will participate in the

Finals at National level in Mumbai on 11th Nov., 2011.

Shri Pannalal IPS (Retd), graced the function as the Chief Guest and honoured the winners with certificates and gifts. He also gave away the certificates to all the participants. The three judges, Dr KC George, Rtn Sarjeev Patel, Mr Gyanendra Purohit were also felicitated. The Chief Guest in his speech extolled the role of USM and The Teenager Magazine in the personality growth & value education of teens in India.



-USM Correspondent

Education on Gender Sensitization

SAHODAYA group of CBSC schools of Nagpur region organized 3 day orientation for teachers, principals and students from Sept 8 to 10, 2011 in Nagpur. Over 80 CBSC schools participated in this program.

The first day was meant for the principals of all the schools. Next two days were for two groups of students from all the 70 schools. A total of 1400 students participated in the orientation and became aware of various dimensions of gender sensitization. After the orientation all the principals were happy about the orientation and that their students and teachers also benefit from such an important and urgent issue.

A team consisting of Dr. K.C. George, Varghese Alengaden and Advocate Ms. Aileen Marques conducted the three day event. Principals Ms. Neeru Kapai, Ms. Reena Dargan and Ms. Bharti Bijve took the initiative to organize this innovative program.

- USM Correspondent

When will we learn to be Critical Consumers of the Media?



Fasting as a weapon was systematically used to initiate the legislation against systemic corruption in the country. Corruption had been eating through the entrails of the collective Indian society; and the nation as a whole was looking for radical surgery to rectify the health of the nation. Ordinary people felt helpless. Those with money and political influence had a field day to get anything done in the country.

Despite dethroning the License system, transparency and accountability were found lacking in all types of laws and rules that govern the country. In most cases, even legitimate permissions required palm off! Bureaucrats and politicians were comfortably making more through their discretionary powers than through their known sources of income. Lately, there was a general dissatisfaction with the governance when one scam after another came tumbling out of the cupboards!

This general dissatisfaction of the people against the state of affairs in the country where corruption had become a way of life was taken up by a crusading and aggressive media. In fact, the agenda was set by the electronic and print media. Anna Hazare and his team became the focal point of anti-establishment rhetoric that media played up cashing on the public discontent. In the process, they bent over all the rules of fair game and overlooked many of the nitty-gritty aspects of “Civil Society’s” proposals. The freedom that media exercised in this democratic set-up even could be easily compromised if such processes have the field day. Such scenes are enacted in so called Khap Panchayats!

One of the new phenomena in the electronic media is the focus on prominent personalities and issues that are of interest to the middle class, especially when they are on trial for some alleged crimes. The channels are vying with each other to be the first to carry a scoop or anticipate the progress in these matters for gaining more viewers. The problem with such trials is that they encroach on the possibility of having a fair trial since emotions and public opinions can be brought out in favour of a stand taken by a particular channel. In a way this undermines one of the basic democratic rights of the citizens for a fair trial.

Similarly, when issues are discussed, if all the points of view are not given a fair hearing, and discussions are guided editorially by those who aggressively or subtly compeer them, public opinions are created in favour of something that would have done eventually more harm than good!

There is no doubt that media set the agenda for today’s middle class and for the intelligentsia. What is not in the media are of no significance. They do set the agenda based on the silent or latent ‘wishes’ of their stake-holders. There is a difference between the coverage of hard news and views. In recent times, there have been lots of over lapping in these two areas. Editorial intentions based on the values and ideologies are emotionally played up to attract more viewers or readers as the case may be. Rational arguments do not hold water in such discussions. The way different channels give prominence, invite panelists and play up issues, show clearly their own likes and dislikes. One can notice a powerful-tacit alliance among business interests, industrialists, political masters and middle class in these endeavors. There may be a shift from time to time regarding political masters and individuals representing the other sectors, but on the whole, media owned and operated by these forces generally side with the wider interests.

To illustrate, take the ten-year long fast of Ms Irom Sharmila campaigning “for the repeal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) that enables security forces to shoot on sight and arrest anybody without warrant” both in Northeastern states and Jammu and Kashmir. Once a while, the media sheds crocodile tears for the likes of Ms Irom Sharmila and keep alive the issue

because the media are not sure how would the middle class and the intelligentsia would respond if they take up issue with the powerful security force.

Therefore, if democracy and democratic institutions have to survive, eternal vigilance is called for especially on what have been happening in the media. Never allow the media to hijack your freedom of thought and thinking! Instead, be a leader by consuming critically what is offered by the media and challenge the media to be fair to people and institutions for the welfare of all.

- *Clarence Srambical*

Creating direction in the future of the youth

Enlighten Leadership Training programme is being continued in USM, Indore. In the last six months 456 students participated in this programme. The participants were from various schools belonging to five states: Maharashtra, U. P., Uttrakhand, M. P., and Haryana. The names of the schools are: Durelo Convent School--Mumbai, Sophia School--Mt Abu, St.Anthony's Inter College--Joelikoat, Nirmala Convent School, Bhulandshahr, Prerana Service Society Bhopal, Stella Maris Convent School, Rajaura, St.Mary's Inter College Allahabad. Nirmala school Kathgodam, Ursulines school, Greater Noida, St.Anthony's convent school Faridabad, St.Raphael's School Indore, Vandana Convent School Guna, St.Anthony's Inter college Agra, St.Joseph's convent school Varanasi, St. Francis Convent School Raisen, Fatima School Bhav Nagar Gujarat, Dilasa Gram Ballarshah, B.M.C. School Ganjbasoda (MP). S.M.C Asha Deep Allahabad. St. Anthony's Convent School, Allahabad and Thanmai School Bhopal.

This seminar was conducted for seven days for these students. During the Training Program they were exposed to and given awareness on various religious, social and political issues in the country. To understand their responsibility of being citizens of India, they were shown various types of movies based on the socio-political situations in the country. It was a golden opportunity for them to have an exposure in the slums and shopping malls, to gain a clear understanding of the present situations and experience the reality of our country .

At the end of the seminar they presented their personal reports and it gave affirmation to all those who listened to them. We believe that these young people will bring changes in society and country. As they completed the course they were awarded with the Certificate by outstanding personalities of Indore.

- *USM Correspondent*

THRESIAMA MATHEW RECEIVES SHIRLEY RANJI BEST NURSE AWARD 2011



The prestigious Shirley Ranji Best Nurse Award 2011 was awarded to Ms Thresiamma Mathew of Bombay Hospital, Indore at a public meeting held at Rachana Hall USM, Indore on Aug 25, 2011. It was presided over by Dr Narindra Virmani (IPS Rtd), the President of USM. The Chief Guest, Dr Savita Inamdar, former chairperson of State Commission for Women, gave away the award. Dr Inamdar in her address reminded the large gathering of doctors, nursing superintendants, nurses and many well wishes, on the need of increasing sensitivity and professional efficiency which are great concerns in the present nursing department. Dr Usha Mullick the Principal of Choithram Nursing College, Indore, was the Guest of Honour. She explained about her initiative in forming an association of nurses in Indore. On receiving the award, Ms Mathew said that she was grateful to Bombay Hospital and other hospitals which gave her the opportunity to serve humanity through her profession. Many nurses and friends from Indore, and Ujjain where she worked formerly had come to witness the ceremony.

Shirley Ranji Nurses Award was instituted to honour the memory of Mrs Shirley Ranji who was the nursing superintendent of Bombay Hospitals well-known for her selfless services and uncompromising commitment to her duties, but died in an accident in 2007.

- USM Correspondent

TRAINING FOR PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS

A four-day intensive training program for school principal and teachers was organised from Oct 4-7 afternoon. Altogether 21 principals and teachers from various schools Chattisgarh, Indore, Bhopal, Raisen, Sagar, Sonkatch, Khandwa, Khargone(MP) etc, attended the program. The sessions were led by Varghese Alengaden and Ms Neetu Joshi.

The sessions were supported by films, case studies, stories and games, and so the participants were fully interested and involved in them. On the final day, all the participants were awarded with certificates of participation during a public function. Dr Rajiv Samuel was the Chief Guest on the occasion. The participants felt, after attending the programme, a new enthusiasm, conviction and motivation in their teaching carrier.

Hearty Congratulations & Best Wishes

to

Dr Narindra Virmani IPS (Retd), the President of USM,

who is being appointed as the

Vice-Chancellor of the Oriental University of MP Government, and being promoted to the position of President of Hindu University of America—Florida, USA.

Mr Virmani was the former Vice-Chancellor of Chitrakoot University, M.P. He is also the Chairman of S.O.F., New Delhi.



Seminar on Education for Social Change

Over 130 committed personnel who were engaged in educating thousands of young students in forty schools of Varansi diocese gathered for an education seminar on Aug 27. The participants included principals and teachers. Varghese Alengaden from USM, Indore was invited to address the participants.

“Schools are still the most powerful instruments in shaping the vision and values of the young generation. Value based education can bring social transformation” , said Alengaden. Quoting Swami Vivekanand, he explained the purpose of education as “ building character, increasing the strength of will, expanding intellect to make a person stand on his/her feet”.

The highlight of the seminar was the panel session by four students of St. Joseph’s Varanasi who had attended the leadership training in USM at Indore. They inspired all the teachers and principals by their conviction and commitment to make a difference in the world. Augustine D’Souza, Secretary of Education welcomed and introduced the resource person.

MIRACLE OF A ‘THANK YOU’ CARD



I have received ‘thank you’ cards from different groups after conducting seminars and orientations. Some friends send ‘thank you’ cards in return to the birthday greetings which I send regularly. All these were ready made cards with routine printed words. There was no personal touch in any of these ‘thank you’ cards. So all of them found their way to the dustbin.

For the first time I realized the magic of ‘thank you’ cards when I received a hand-made card with multi colour graphics and hand written

words which came from the personal experience of students of St. Antony's Inter College, Agra, who participated in a week long leadership training in USM community. All the students had signed their names inside the card. I thought it a routine activity of the children until I realized that they had made separate colourful cards for each of the community members: the girls who cooked food for them, the woman who was sweeping and cleaning the house, the driver, the office staff and even the watchman at the gate received personal 'thank you' cards. All the cards had separate pictures with different colours and words of appreciation and gratitude related to each one of them. All of them were receiving such a card with words of gratitude and appreciation of their service for the first time. One of the workers was illiterate and wept when someone read the words to her.

I was filled with emotion when I came to know what the children had done for every member in our community. They had done it in the midst of their busy schedule sacrificing their sleep in the night. All who received these personal cards, especially our domestic staff have kept it as a rare, precious gift. This gesture of the students increased the commitment of the staff and workers of our community. They understood and affirmed the value of our mission with the young people. This gesture of students had greater impact since it came from students of an elite school with a wealthy family background.

What was remarkable in the gesture of the young students was their attitude of honouring the workers in the kitchen, peons in the office, sweepers and the security at the gate. During the course of their stay in the community they had seen how these were honoured as partners in the mission. They understood beyond doubt that each one of them was a facilitator of their training session in a different capacity. They ate with all on the same table, spoke freely with all and laughed heartily. This inclusiveness taught them lessons of equality and they treated every one as unique and important. Hence, they took time and trouble to make beautiful cards writing very personal words of gratitude to each one.

"Children from each group used to thank us very personally. These children were extraordinary. I never got a thank you card from any one in my life", said Renu who cooked food for the participants. *"For the first time I felt that our work has dignity,"* remarked another domestic staff Sushma who is deaf and dumb. The watchman, Tiwari was overwhelmed when he got a card with words of appreciation from the children. With feelings he said, *'I do not get this kind of love and respect from anywhere. Hence, I work here with greater loyalty'*.

Each group of students who pass out after the training increased our trust in the youth and affirmed our belief that the youth will change society. Their enthusiasm, commitment to the promises they make and their spirit of sacrifice have increased our confidence in our mission. Despite their affluent background this group of students had a magical touch on each and everyone in the community, especially on our domestic staff. In fact, they taught us many noble lessons of positive beliefs with altruistic attitude. They challenged me and inspired me to be more personal in my dealings with the cooks, peons and watchmen. They taught me to express my appreciation and thanks in more concrete ways. These school children have challenged me, 'if they can do it, why can't I?' The first thing I did was to go out and buy some hand-made cards to keep them in my bag to be presented to persons whenever the need arose! A 'thank you' card with a few loving words worked miracles in the lives of many! It increased self-esteem, motivation and loyalty of several persons in their work.

-Varghese Alengaden

