

PREM DAN,
Convent of Jesus & Mary,
15, N. Parekh Marg,
BOMBAY - 400 039.

November 30, 1982.

Dear Friends,

Greetings from PREM DAN, and from each and every one of your children of the GARDEN SCHOOL. This year's Greeting card bears a special message. If you study the card the message comes through the words PREM DAN and PREM DAN means 'a Gift of love' --- your gift of love to us.

I would like to begin my NEWS LETTER with a few thoughts on Christmas and end with news about the School and our various projects.

Christmas is about peace and giving and love -- God's love for us and our love for Him, and for each other.

The Word of God, Jesus Christ, on account of His great love for mankind became what we are -- in order to make us what He is Himself.

This Christmas.....Give Time
Give Hope
Give Peace
Give Them ... Remember an old friend.
Share a meal with someone lonely.
Today Eternity enters into Time
and Time, sanctified is caught
up into Eternity.

Give Hope ... Live joyfully.
Raise the spirit of a child.

Give Peace... Forgive an enemy,
Set differences aside.

Give of yourself... Perform acts of Kindness,
Give love,
And Christmas will be forever.

I said a prayer for you today
And know God must have heard
I felt the answer in my heart
Although He spoke no word!
I didn't ask wealth or fame
(I knew you wouldn't mind)
I asked Him to send treasures
Of a far more lasting kind!
I asked that He'd be near you
At the start of each new day
To grant you health and blessings
And friends to share your way!
I asked for happiness for you
In all things great and small
But it was for His loving care
I prayed the most of all!

This year we had the joy of sending seven of our children to the neighbouring Convent Schools and Parochial School. Our children had to compete in the Entrance examination with children coming from schools of a very high standard. We are surprised with the results. Two of them were outstanding. The only difficulty they experienced was conversing in English they were not fluent. But now after six months, they are doing well.

I thought you would like to know something about our system of education - the division of the School Year, Holidays etc.

Our scholastic year begins in the month of June. The FIRST TERM ends in October with a TERMINAL EXAMINATION. Then we have a Three Weeks holidays. The SECOND TERM commences in November and ends in December with a week's Christmas holidays. The THIRD TERM begins in January and ends in April with the FINAL EXAMINATION. School closes for the SUMMER vacation in May.

The medium of instruction is mainly English, but the children also learn to read and write the Regional language, Marathi. So they are burdened with TWO new languages, because their Mother tongue is either TAMIL, MALAYALAM or HINDI.

The size of our Classes is very small : we admit children of any age up to TWELVE years. They begin with the KINDERGARTEN, learn the 3 R's and are promoted to the next class as soon as they are ready. This gives them the opportunity to bridge the gap they missed by coming late to school. Thus an EIGHT year old child, could in one year, reach GRADE III.

We have six Teachers, all very dedicated to this noble task of up-lifting the poor.

This year we opened another Kindergarten Class in a Slum called GITA NAGAR. Sixty two children, between the ages of 4 and 5 are enrolled here. At present we are extending all this building to house another class of 50 pupils.

These two classrooms are used after school hours as WORK CENTRES for women and school drop outs. They are taught SEWING, DRESS MAKING, and HANDICRAFTS. At present there are 28 women and 30 girls. Besides GITA NAGAR, we also run a SEWING CLASS for women at SUNDER NAGAR - a very big slum near our school. There are 20 women attending this class.

So, as you can see, PREM DAN has become indeed a "Gift of Love" to many. All this has been made possible by your generous and loving collaboration.

I take this opportunity to wish each one of you a VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS, and GOD'S CHOICEST BLESSINGS on you and your family for 1983.

Yours gratefully,

SR. FELICITY MORRIS R.J.