

April '96

PREM DAN

Registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 BOM. 232/85 G.B.B.-SD dated 15.3.85 Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950, F 10310 (BOM) dated 29.4.85
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Dear Friends,

The year 1996 will be memorable year for Prem Dan and for all who belong to the Prem Dan family, because one of our Big Dreams for our children is about to be realized, namely the construction of the Boarding for Girls, which is to be called "CLAUDINE'S HOME". after our French Foundress Claudine Thevenet. The foundation stone will be laid on the 30th. of March, which is her birth anniversary. Hopefully by the end of 1997 we should be able to have it completed.

December 1995, will be an unforgettable month in the lives of many of our children. Six of our Sponsors from Belgium, came to celebrate Christmas with the children. They organised a picnic to Khandala (a hill station) which is a three hour ride from Mumbai. For many, this was their first big outing. In this heavenly hillside they had organised games and competitions which were very original and enjoyable. There was of course delicious food. The finale was the reception of their Christmas gifts. Thank you again dear SABENA friends.

All the children had a wonderful Christmas celebration. We had the traditional Christmas Tree, with Santa Claus giving them gifts. Dominic Curran son of the Deputy High Commissioner was Santa. He really was a very good Father Christmas. We had games and snacks. I wish you could see the colorful photographs, with the children in their party dresses and caps. I thank all our sponsors who sent money to buy their children gifts for Christmas.

Many of our students have Examination Fever. The Public Examination commences this week. Four of our girls - Pratima Bahadur, Sangeetha Das, Rajeshwari Mogli and Chitra Ramalah are appearing for the High School Board Examination. We also have Manish, James, Mahadeo, Kunjumol, Thomas, and Bharati who are appearing for their Std. XI Examination. Jambaskar and Robert are appearing for the Std. XII Examination. Margaret Francis is doing her 1st. year Degree Examination in B.A., and Sajit Theophilose is completing his Final Year B.Com. Examination. We do hope that all of them will be a credit to you and to Prem Dan.

Another unique experience that many of our children had this year on the 15th. of February, was a Joy Ride by Air, organised by British Airways. This was a day full of fun, games, meeting star personalities, and the main event was a ride in the 747 aeroplane. All the children received souvenirs in the form of a personalised passport and ticket, besides British Airways T-shirts and caps.

Our bride Michelle Loynes, finally got her visa and left for the U.S.A. on the 7th. of March, to join her husband Murgesh, who is currently studying in Howard Dental College. Fancy two of our ex-students of Prem Dan being in Washington.

School closes for the Summer vacation on the 5th. April and re-opens on the 23rd. of June. Our children do not look forward to these long holidays, as it means privation from all the nutritious meals they get in school. Many go to their villages, and we always dread the news that they may not return to school.

As Easter draws near, my thoughts go to the U.N.'s decision to proclaim 1996 as the year of the struggle against Poverty. Poverty is the main cause of economic, social, and human unsteadiness. In fact, poverty is very often the consequence of various events that range from ethnic conflicts, unjust social system and distorted international trade to the unfair relations established between countries. Poverty is linked with hunger. In order to struggle against poverty, it is necessary to invest in the Poor. Here at Prem Dan all the resources from you our Friends, are invested in achieving the solidarity that exist in the poor.

I just came across this beautiful verse, that I would like to share with you.

"The Lord will not ask, Where have you succeeded?
Where have you displayed your strength, but rather -
Whom have you served, whom have you welcomed because of me?
The Lord will not ask, Where have your travelled,
What knowledge have you acquired, but rather -
What have you risked, whom have you freed because of me?"

Celebrating Easter refreshes our faith and reaffirms our service as Church. Renewing our baptismal commitment strengthens our witness to life and hope in a world often over whelmed by sin, death, and lack of hope. Marvelling at the mystery and wonder of Jesus' resurrection, we find ourselves being transformed, ever more completely, into mature companions of the Risen Christ. We have much to rejoice about.

I wish each one of you A Very Happy Easter. May the Risen Lord give you all the blessing and graces you stand in need of. I thank each one of you for being a Saviour to our children.

Yours gratefully in Jesus and Mary,

Sr. Felicity Morris
(SR. FELICITY MORRIS)