

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2025

Visit of Mr. Samuel to SIGN: Mr. Samuel, a senior staff member from Fratelli Dimenticati, made a personal visit to SIGN from 3rd March to 5th March. Accompanied by Fr. Bipin and Ms. Chanchal, this visit provided an important



opportunity to witness firsthand the ongoing work and progress of SIGN's educational initiatives and community support projects.

The visit began on 3rd March with a warm welcome from the children of R.C. Middle School in Jitutoli. The children greeted Mr. Samuel with cheerful songs and handmade cards, expressing their gratitude for the support they have received through SIGN's Sponsorship Programs, which are supported by Fratelli Dimenticati.

The school plays a central role in the community, offering education to children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and Mr. Samuel was heartened to see the children's enthusiasm for learning.

A major highlight of Mr. Samuel's visit was his tour of the ongoing construction of the new school building at Jitutoli. He was pleased to see the significant progress made in creating a better and more spacious environment for the students. The new school building will provide additional classrooms and enhanced facilities, which are crucial to accommodate the growing number of students in the area. Mr. Samuel expressed his satisfaction with the construction



work and was optimistic that the new building will greatly enhance the educational experience for the children. This project is a vital part of SIGN's long-term commitment to improving educational infrastructure in rural areas.

On 4th March, Mr. Samuel visited four education centers operated by REDS (Rural Education Development Society): Mausibari, Dornada,

Argora, and Hatma. These centers are critical in providing education and midday meals to children from impoverished backgrounds. The centers serve as lifelines for many children from families of rag pickers, rickshaw pullers, coal pickers, and

daily wage earners in Ranchi—children who would otherwise have little to no access to education.

At each center, Mr. Samuel had the opportunity to interact with both the children



and the teachers. He was deeply impressed by the staff's dedication and the children's eagerness to learn, despite the challenges they face. The midday meal program, which provides essential nutrition, was also particularly appreciated, as it encourages school attendance and supports the children's overall health and well-being.

On 5th March, Mr. Samuel met

with the staff of SIGN, where he spent time reviewing the organization's financial records, including the books of accounts and sponsored records. He was impressed by the transparency and accuracy with which the accounts were

maintained. It was evident that SIGN places a strong emphasis on financial integrity and accountability, ensuring that resources are effectively utilized. Mr. Samuel commended the team for their meticulous work in keeping sponsorship records up to date and for their dedication in ensuring the smooth operation of the organization. Mr. Samuel's visit to SIGN was a great success,



providing an invaluable opportunity to witness first-hand the impact of the work being done in the region. It also allowed him to meet the children and staff who benefit from these initiatives. We are grateful for his continued support and look forward to further strengthening our partnership with Fratelli Dimenticati to bring about lasting positive change in the communities we serve.

Lenten Campaign 2025: Pilgrims of Hope: The season of Lent is a time for prayer, reflection, and acts of charity. This year, on Ash Wednesday, 5th March,



SIGN, in collaboration with Caritas India, launched the Lenten Campaign on the theme **"Pilgrims of Hope"** at **St. Mary's Cathedral, Ranchi** during the third Mass. The campaign aimed to inspire the faithful to walk the path of hope and extend their generosity towards the differently-abled community. The event was graced by **Fr. Bipin Pani, the Director of SIGN**, and **Mr. Walter Kerketta, the Regional Coordinator of SIGN**, who joined hands with **Fr. Antony Fernandes,**

the Executive Director of Caritas India, and his team to inaugurate this noble initiative. Addressing the congregation, they emphasized the importance of Lent as a time for self-giving and encouraged everyone to contribute wholeheartedly to support differently-abled individuals, ensuring their dignity and inclusion in society. The Eucharistic celebration was a moment of spiritual renewal, where the



faithful gathered in deep prayer and commitment to the Lenten call of charity and compassion. The homily delivered during the Mass underscored the significance of **faith in action**, urging everyone to become instruments of God's love through acts of kindness. The campaign was

further enriched by the presence of several religious leaders and social activists who pledged their support for the cause. Following the Mass, a **photo session** took place, capturing the essence of solidarity and shared responsibility among the leaders and the community. The gathering also served as a platform for discussions on future collaborative efforts to uplift the marginalized and differently-abled individuals in the region. As the campaign unfolds throughout Lent, SIGN remains committed to raising awareness and mobilizing resources to uplift the marginalized. Various parishes and institutions have already shown their enthusiasm by organizing prayer services, fundraising events, and community outreach programs to support the campaign. Through this initiative, we all are invited to become **“Pilgrims of Hope”**, walking together in faith and service towards a more inclusive and compassionate society. Let us all embrace the Lenten spirit by contributing generously and making a difference in the lives of our differently-abled brothers and sisters. May this journey of hope bring light into their lives and strengthen our collective commitment to social justice and love.

Training on Lowland and Upland cultivation: A two-day state-level training session on the use of upland and lowland farming techniques was organized for the farmers of Lali and Rajaulhatu Panchayat. The training took place on March



11 and 12, 2025, in Jharna, Namkum, Ranchi, with 43 participants, including two staff members from SIGN. Fr. Bipin Pani, the Director of SIGN, outlined the objectives of the project, emphasizing the financial support from MANOS UNIDAS aimed at promoting economic growth for every family through climate-adaptive agriculture. He highlighted the numerous training sessions planned under this

project to strengthen farmers' skills and knowledge. Fr. Pani also assured that



SIGN would work to help farmers access government agricultural schemes. He expressed concern about the young people who have just completed their 10th or 12th grade but are currently not engaged in productive activities. He suggested that these students could enhance their skills through development programs in three key sectors: nursing, ITI (Industrial Training Institute), and hotel

management. At the end of his session, Fr. Pani proposed the idea of setting up

a suggestion box, allowing participants to provide feedback on both the positive initiatives and areas needing improvement for the community and staff's overall development. At the beginning of the training program, participants were asked about their expectations, and these were clarified one by one. The resource persons, Mr. Sujit Kumar and Mr. Walter Kerketta, focused on several



key topics, including the use of upland and lowland areas, their types, the various crops cultivated, the factors contributing to soil erosion, proper soil erosion management techniques, the role of organic manure and fertilizers in maintaining



soil fertility, the importance of soil, and methods for raising water levels to enable year-round crop cultivation. The resource persons

helped participants understand these

topics in depth. As a result, the farmers agreed to maximize the use of their land: 16 farmers committed to planting fruit saplings during the rainy season, 24 farmers prepared to cultivate ragi, and all participants pledged to make organic manure and fertilizers to support organic farming practices. A new concept introduced during the training was the making of kitchen waste compost within the village. Additionally, participants had the opportunity to perform a

demonstration class on organic fertilizers, including Rhizobium culture, Azotobacter culture, and Phosphate Solubilizing Bacteria (PSB). This session helped participants gain a better understanding of these concepts and their application for seed treatment.

World Forest Day Celebrated with Mango Plantation at Serengtoli:



On March 28, 2025, World Forest Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm at Serengtoli, where 50 mango saplings were planted as a symbol of commitment to environmental conservation. The event brought together the villagers and the team

from SIGN, fostering a shared sense of responsibility toward preserving nature. The plantation drive not only strengthened environmental awareness but also deepened the bond between the organization and the local community.

The villagers extended a warm welcome to Fr. Bipin Pani, Director of SIGN, along with Mr. Walter Kerketta, Project Coordinator, and other SIGN staff members. Following the rich tribal tradition of hospitality, the villagers washed the hands of the guests, signifying purity and respect. This heartfelt gesture highlighted the deep-rooted cultural values of the community. The event commenced with a prayer led by Mr. Albert Runda,



the President of the Gram Sabha, upon the request of Mr. Sanjay Toppo. This spiritual beginning set the tone for a meaningful and inspiring plantation drive, reminding everyone of the divine connection between humanity and nature.



Before the plantation, each member of the SIGN team introduced themselves, strengthening trust and camaraderie. Fr. Bipin Pani, in his address, emphasized the importance of self-identity and the need to preserve language, culture, and traditional practices. He pointed out that environmental conservation is not just an individual effort but a collective responsibility that

requires commitment from all members of society.

Quoting Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Fr. Bipin reminded the gathering of the urgent need to protect our common home—Mother Earth—through sustainable practices such as afforestation. He elaborated on the multiple benefits of tree plantation, including reducing carbon footprints, improving biodiversity,

and fostering a healthier ecosystem. Furthermore, he highlighted how trees contribute to social well-being by providing food, shade, and economic opportunities for communities. He encouraged the villagers to take pride in their efforts, emphasizing that the trees they plant today will serve as a lasting legacy for future generations.

With this inspiring message, the plantation drive was officially initiated by Mr. Albert, Fr. Bipin Pani, and Ms Phulkumari Xalxo, the President of the Self-Help Group. Their actions inspired the entire community, and soon, people of all ages—from small children to elders—enthusiastically joined in. Within a short span of time, 50 mango saplings were planted, symbolizing hope, sustainability, and a greener future.



To ensure the survival of the saplings, a protective fence was erected around them



to safeguard them from animals. The villagers, realizing the long-term benefits of the plantation drive, pledged to nurture and care for the saplings. They expressed their commitment by stating that these trees would bear fruit for their children and future generations. This heartfelt pledge underscored the deep connection between nature and the community, reinforcing their dedication to environmental stewardship.

The event concluded with light refreshments, providing an opportunity for further interaction and celebration. The atmosphere was filled with joy and satisfaction as everyone appreciated the collective effort and its meaningful impact. The success of the World Forest Day celebration at Serengtoli was a testament to the power of community-driven environmental action. By



uniting to plant trees, the villagers and SIGN reaffirmed their commitment to protecting nature and fostering a sustainable future. SIGN continues to uphold its mission of promoting environmental conservation and sustainable development. This plantation drive serves as a reminder that small actions, when taken collectively, can lead to significant positive changes. As we move forward, let us all remember our duty to protect and nurture the environment, ensuring a healthier and greener world for future generations