



Report on The Annual Convention MSMHC (Social Apostolate)

Theme: "Dilexi Te - I have loved you"



VENUE: CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES (CDI), GUWAHATI
DATE: 15TH-18TH DECEMBER 2025

Introduction

The Annual Convention of the MSMHC Social Apostolate was held at the Centre for Development Initiatives (CDI), Guwahati, from 15th –18th December 2025. The gathering brought together the MSMHC Sisters, staff members, and project personnel from different provinces, cities and projects. Based on the theme “*Dilexi Te – I have loved you,*” the gathering encouraged participants to reflect deeply on God’s unconditional love as the foundation of consecrated life, the social apostolate and service to the poor and marginalized. The four days convention offered a rich blend of spiritual inputs, thematic sessions, group discussions, testimonies, cultural expressions, and project reviews. It provided opportunities for participants to reconnect with the charism of the congregation, strengthen professional and pastoral commitments, and renew their responsibility towards human dignity, family life, mental health, ecological care, and integral development. The convention fostered a spirit of unity, collaboration, and renewed zeal, reaffirming MSMHC’s mission to serve with compassion, justice, and faith in today’s complex social realities.

Day 1 (15th December 2025)

The first day of the Annual Convention commenced with a Prayer Dance performed by CDI students, setting a reflective and meaningful tone for the convention, followed by a formal welcome speech by Sr. Anima Sangma, Superior, CDI.

A moment of respect and tribute was paid to the renowned singer Zubeen Garg, during which the gathering stood in honour and sang his iconic song “*Mayabini.*” The tribute was facilitated by Mr. John Gautam Rabha, Business Planner, CDI, who briefly highlighted Zubeen Garg’s contribution and significance.

The Inauguration Message was delivered by Sr. Teresa Salemthangi, Assistant Director, CDI, who encouraged the participants to enter the convention with openness and commitment. This was followed by a video presentation on CDI project works, highlighting the organization’s ongoing initiatives and the impact of its social apostolate.

Introduction

Speaker: Sr. Lisa Elavunkal MSMHC, GC for Social Apostolate



Sr. Lisa Elavunkal, MSMHC, Director of CDI, introduced the theme of the Annual Convention, “MSMHC and Dilexi Te.” She explained the profound meaning of Dilexi Te—“I have loved you”—highlighting it as an expression of God’s unconditional and enduring love. She emphasized that this divine love is the true source of strength, inspiration, and inner energy that sustains the congregation’s mission and service.

Key Note Message: MSMHC & Dilexi Te

Speaker: Rev. Sr. Christine Mynsong (MSMHC - Superior General)

The Keynote Address on was delivered by Rev. Sr. Christine Mynsong, MSMHC, Superior General. In her message she reflected on the theme “*Dilexi Te – I have loved you,*” reminding participants that mission begins with the experience of being loved by Christ. She emphasized that this assurance is



for every human being and forms the foundation of consecration and service. Rooted in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, she affirmed that before we serve, we are first loved and sent by God.

Making a direct connection to CDI and its work, she stressed that social action is not merely about project implementation, stating, “What we are involved in is not merely social work, but our involvement is in the life of our people.” She highlighted the need to prioritise presence over performance, compassion over competence, and accompaniment over administration, challenging the participants to reflect on whether they are truly present with the people they serve.

Referring to the vision of the Founder, Bishop Stephen Ferrando’s call of “*Always More and Always Better,*” she urged sisters and collaborators to serve women, children, and the marginalized with renewed commitment. Appreciating the field work of CDI staff, she noted that their presence, listening, and accompaniment are powerful ways of proclaiming God’s love, reminding all that they are called by God for a purpose beyond projects.

Response to the Key Note Address

Speaker- Sr. Regina Mareem, Provincial Councillor, Tinsukia

Responding to the keynote address, Sr. Regina Mareem, PC-TSK, shared that Dilexi Te calls one to love Christ as Christ loved and to serve Christ as Christ served. She emphasized that discovering one’s identity in love and service is central to mission and recalled Bishop Ferrando’s reminder that even in times of conflict, peace and harmony must prevail. She reiterated that “I have loved you” remains the foundation of all mission, particularly within social apostolate.



The programme continued with the distribution of vocational tailoring certificates to the trainees, presented by Rev. Sr. Christine Mynsong, followed by the release of CDI’s publication, “*Untold Stories,*” which showcased narratives from the field and amplified unheard voices. This session concluded with the distribution of training kits by the CDI Administrative Staff.



The inaugural session concluded with a Vote of Thanks proposed by Sr. Prema Tirkey, CDI, expressing gratitude to all dignitaries, organizers, staff and participants for their contributions and presence.

The day concluded with dinner, marking the end of the first day of the Annual Convention in a spirit of fellowship and gratitude.

Day 2 (16th December 2025)

The second day of the Annual Convention began early in the morning with a spirit of prayer, reflection and shared responsibility. The day's programme was coordinated by the Guwahati Province in the morning and the Shillong Province in the afternoon, ensuring smooth flow and active participation.

Session I – MSMHC's Commitment to Persons and Society

Resource Person: Rev. Sr. Mary Thadavanal, MSMHC, Assistant General

Rev. Sr. Mary Thadavanal delivered an inspiring session on MSMHC's commitment to persons and society, emphasising responsible living, human dignity, and a mission of love rooted in God. She invited participants to recognise that "every person encountered in daily life is part of one's mission," especially those ignored or marginalised. Drawing from her personal journey and vocation, she reminded participants that humanity first existed "in the heart of God," and that each person's face is "engraved in God's heart." Responsible living, she stressed, is a grateful response to God's love and a call to promote justice, peace, and dignity.



Reflecting on eternity, she explained the human person as body, mind, and soul, noting that while the body perishes, the soul lives on. She highlighted the need to care for the mind, which shapes attitudes and actions, linking mental well-being to Christ's healing mission. At the heart of social service, she said, lies God's unconditional love. Quoting scripture — "Even if a mother forgets her child, I will never forget you" and "I have engraved you on the palms of my hands" — she affirmed God's abiding presence and urged participants to carry this message to others.

She highlighted role models like Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and Mother Teresa, noting that lives rooted in compassion continue to inspire. With an example of Sr. Mary Sebastian smiling at a shopkeeper in Hatigaon, she illustrated how small gestures can restore dignity. Sr. Mary underlined holistic formation and self-care, stating that one must first secure one's own oxygen mask before serving others. She called for justice, peace, harmony, ecological responsibility, and respect for all cultures and communities.

The session also included group sharing on dignity, ecology, and working with vulnerable groups. Participants like Sr. Delina Lyngdoh, Sr. Caroline Hembrom, and Sr. Brinda Marwein shared commitments to waste reduction, caring for plants, and supporting people living with HIV/AIDS.

The session concluded with a reminder that everyone is called to love, appreciate, and accompany others so that no one feels alone, and to build a compassionate and hope-filled society through God's love.

A short refreshment break at 10:50 a.m. allowed participants time for interaction and reflection.

Session II: Family – The Need to Safeguard It

Resource Person- Sr. Dr. Brigida Diengdo, MSMHC, GC Evangelisation

Sr. Dr. Brigida Diengdo led the second session by asking participants to reflect on the meaning, identity, and purpose of the family, beginning with the question: *What comes to your mind when you think of family?* The sharing revealed that family is central to human life, providing love, responsibility, emotional support, protection, and belonging. She affirmed that the family is the foundation of society and plays a critical role in shaping individuals into responsible and compassionate human beings.

She described the family as “the first school of love,” where unconditional and self-giving love is learned. It is within the family that children first encounter care, discipline, respect, and values. What children see, hear, and experience at home is deeply recorded in their minds and influences their behaviour in society, contributing to social harmony or social breakdown. Therefore, safeguarding family life requires conscious effort to nurture relationships, communication, and shared responsibilities.

Sr. Brigida stressed that a strong family does not happen automatically and no external force can create one; rather, it depends on the commitment of its members. Unity between parents, mutual respect, willingness to listen, forgiveness, and shared decision-making are essential for a healthy family environment. She also highlighted that money alone cannot create a happy family; true joy comes from love, sacrifice, care, and the daily choice to value one another.



Addressing contemporary challenges, she cautioned that digital distractions and busy lifestyles are weakening relationships. Families may be physically present in the same space but emotionally disconnected due to excessive reliance on mobile phones, television, and online entertainment. She stressed that technology should not replace meaningful conversations, shared meals, play, or prayer, as these are what strengthen bonds and build trust.

She also reminded participants that every family has struggles, but difficulties are not signs of failure. Even pain and suffering can strengthen bonds when faced together with faith and patience. She emphasised that God must remain at the center of family life, guiding decisions, healing wounds, and sustaining hope.

At the end of the session, she offered practical guidance for strengthening family life, which are:

- Placing God at the center
- Praying together
- Making time for one another
- Practicing faithfulness rather than perfection
- Showing mutual respect
- Speaking kind words
- Affirming and encouraging one another
- Sharing meals
- Being present through meaningful communication

She emphasized that when love and faith guide family life, homes become spaces of safety, growth, and hope, and strong families lead to a stronger and more compassionate society.

After the session, the participants dispersed for a lunch break. The afternoon sessions were taken up under the responsibility of the Shillong Province.

Session III: Becoming and Being Professional in-Service Delivery

Resource Person: Mr. Nirmal Singha, Program Lead, CDI

Mr. Nirmal Singha facilitated a practical and reflective session on “Becoming and Being Professional in Service Delivery,” emphasizing that social sector work involves people’s lives and dignity, not products. He highlighted that professionalism builds trust with communities and stakeholders, ensures ethical and accountable use of resources, strengthens credibility with donors, and improves the quality and effectiveness

of services. The session also underlined how professional conduct contributes to a respectful work culture and supports long-term sustainability and impact.



Through clear comparisons, the session explained the difference between professional and non-professional behaviour, focusing on respect for rules, ethics, time, and commitments. Participants were reminded that professionalism includes accuracy in work, polite and clear communication, accountability, integrity, and a service-oriented approach rather than personal convenience. The discussion helped participants reflect on how everyday attitudes and work habits directly affect the credibility and impact of CDI's social apostolate.

The session further addressed confusing project concepts such as output, outcome, and impact, using simple explanations to clarify their differences. Emphasis was placed on the importance of accurate data management, as data represents real people and real situations and is crucial for reporting, decision-making, research, donor compliance, and case follow-up. Ethical data practices, including confidentiality, consent, correct data entry, and avoiding common errors, were strongly stressed. The session concluded by reinforcing that professionalism in service delivery is essential for protecting dignity, ensuring accountability, and strengthening the mission of CDI in the field.

Session IV: Care for Creation is Care for the Poor

Resource Person: Rev. Fr. Maria Nimala, Secretary, Archbishop's House

This session was guided by the fundamental principle articulated by Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*—that care for the environment is inseparable from care for the poor. Rev. Fr. Maria Nimala, Secretary, Archbishop's House, led the session by highlighting the deep connection between ecological destruction and social injustice, emphasizing that 'The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor' are one and the same. Grounded in biblical teachings, he reminded participants that creation is God's gift and that human beings are entrusted as stewards, not owners, called to 'till and keep' the earth. Drawing from Scripture, he noted that harm to creation ultimately wounds human dignity, especially that of the weakest and most excluded.



The session further explored the interconnectedness between environmental degradation and poverty, describing a vicious cycle driven by greed, deforestation, and exploitative practices. These lead to ecological crises such as floods, droughts, and landslides, which disproportionately affect poor and marginalized communities, particularly in the Indian and Northeast context. Situating these realities within the Church's teaching on integral ecology rooted in *Laudato Si'*, Fr. Nimala emphasized that environmental, social, economic, and spiritual dimensions are inseparable. Healing the earth, he noted, requires healing broken human relationships and reaffirming the Church's preferential option for the poor, with communities playing a vital role.

The session emphasized that caring for the environment is a concrete way of caring for the poor, as protecting ecosystems, ensuring clean water, and safeguarding land directly defend the rights and livelihoods of vulnerable communities. Participants were encouraged to respond at personal, parish, and institutional levels through sustainable practices, “Green Parish” initiatives, and advocacy for just policies. Highlighting the role of youth and the responsibility towards future generations, the session concluded on a note of hope, calling all to move beyond indifference and commit to building a just, sustainable, and compassionate world where ecology, justice, peace, and human dignity are upheld together.

A tea break at 4:40 p.m. made a brief pause before the evening meetings.

Session V: Project / Province Meeting

The Project Meetings were held as per the revised evening schedule. Session V, Missio, took place simultaneously at different venues: New Hope and GFW met in the Conference Room on the 3rd floor, the Shelter team met in the parlour, while Province-level discussions were conducted in the main hall. During the project meetings, participants identified three actionable strategies in their respective project areas and communities to ensure dignity for the poor, safeguard families, and care for creation, integrating these priorities into ongoing and future project activities.



Separate, in-depth reviews were also conducted by respective project leads.

1. MISSIO
2. New Hope
3. Global Fund for Women.
4. SHELTER

Day 3 (17th December 2025)

The day began with a warm introductory note by Sr. Margaret Sekhose, who introduced the first speaker of the day, Sr. Lisa Elavunkal. She highlighted Sr. Lisa’s remarkable experience of over 32 years in mission and service, setting a reflective and inspiring tone for the session.

Session VI - Together in our Call to Care for the World

Resource Person- Sr. Lisa MSMHC, General Councilor for Social Apostolate

Sr. Lisa began the programme with an energizing warm-up dance titled “*The Great King of the Universe,*” creating a lively, joyful, and participatory atmosphere among the participants. She outlined the purpose of the gathering, emphasizing unity, togetherness, and collective responsibility rooted in shared principles and guidelines. She reaffirmed the mission of MSMHC—to care for the poor, sick, and downtrodden—as the guiding force behind all activities.



During her reflections, Sr. Lisa stressed the importance of identifying real needs within communities and responding through meaningful action, especially by empowering uneducated women through education. She emphasized that effective social work cannot be carried out in isolation, but requires collaboration with groups such as women’s collectives, AAASA, and Adivasi women’s groups. She also underlined that service becomes impactful only when rooted in love and compassion, inspired by the life and mission of Jesus.

She further reflected on social responsibility and community life, reminding participants that human beings cannot grow in isolation. Through the example of Mowgli, she highlighted the role of socialization in shaping humanity. She distinguished between general social work and social apostolate, stating that any work done with genuine care and love becomes a true expression of social apostolate.

Participants were also invited to share personal experiences of touching the lives of others. A deeply moving testimony was shared by Sr. Margarate from Myanmar, who recalled how Mother Teresa’s sisters once conducted a dignified funeral by offering the only sari a sister owned, which was originally saved for Christmas. This powerful story reinforced the values of empathy, sacrifice, and selfless service.

Reflecting on experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, Sr. Lisa highlighted how teamwork among donors and social workers made it possible to respond more effectively to crisis situations. She emphasized that collective action always leads to greater impact. Drawing from the *Parable of the Good Samaritan*, Sr. Lisa explained that a true neighbour is anyone in need, irrespective of identity. She encouraged participants to reflect on their lives and recognise moments when they themselves acted as neighbours to others. She also reminded the gathering that service to the needy is service to God, and such acts promote humanity rather than religious propagation.

The session concluded with the affirmation that doing good brings spiritual fulfilment and collective growth. Sr. Margarate expressed gratitude to Sr. Lisa and closed the session with an inspiring message: “TEAM – Together Each Can Achieve More; Together Each Achieves Much.”

Session VII- Living in Freedom (Letting Peace Reign)

Resource Person: Rev. Sr. Sisily Cherian MSMHC, General Councilor for Formation



Sr. Sisily began her session by explaining the meaning of *Dilexi Te*—“I have loved you”—inviting participants to contemplate God’s unconditional love. Quoting John 8:36, she shared that true freedom does not lie in doing whatever one pleases, but in fulfilling one’s purpose. She emphasized that peace begins within the individual and can be nurtured through simple gestures, such as beginning the day with a smile. She encouraged everyone to start their mornings with the Word of God rather than with mobile phones, suggesting that keeping the Bible beside the bed can help cultivate inner

peace. She reminded the gathering that peace must first be rooted within oneself before it can be shared with others.

Sr. Sisily then elaborated on the interwoven themes of peace, justice, and compassion. Peace, she explained, involves inner tranquillity, harmony within families, and the absence of conflict in the world. Justice, she noted, is inseparable from compassion and becomes visible when the hungry are fed, the suffering supported, and the oppressed defended. To illustrate this, she encouraged treating domestic workers with dignity and recognising them as valued members of the community. Her reflections were enriched with moving stories. One narrated the struggle of a poor child who wished to buy a gold chain for his sister, and the compassion of a shopkeeper who gifted it to him. Another recounted the deep sorrow of a woman who could not receive her loved one’s remains, highlighting the need for emotional healing and faith. A powerful testimony was also shared about a child who swallowed a nail and survived through prayer and timely medical care, reinforcing trust in God’s providence.

She also expressed concern regarding children’s increasing dependency on mobile phones. Recalling the biblical story of Zacchaeus, she emphasized the vital role of mentors and leaders in helping others encounter God and grow spiritually. Reflecting on freedom and faith, Sr. Sisily stated that true freedom is found in sharing, letting go, and accepting oneself. She reminded participants that fear restricts freedom, and overcoming fear leads to inner peace. Acknowledging human imperfection, she stressed that self-acceptance is essential for living peacefully.

The session concluded with a reminder that peace and freedom are conscious daily choices, and that individuals who nurture inner peace contribute to building peaceful families and communities. The reflective song, “Do Not Fear, for I Am With You,” brought the session to a prayerful and uplifting close.

Session VIII- Financial Literacy

Resource Person: Mr Ajit Kumar, Senior Manager, Branch Head Federal Bank & Mr Prateek Kumar Mishra.

Mr. Ajit Kumar and Mr. Prateek Mishra began the session by underlining the growing importance of



financial awareness in today’s digital economy and pointed out that many people still lack knowledge of basic financial practices, which often makes them vulnerable to misinformation and fraud.

They stressed that financial literacy strengthens individual confidence, helps avoid financial traps, and supports long-term economic stability.

Mr. Mishra then spoke about key aspects of money management, highlighting the need for budgeting, monthly savings, and proper planning to face emergencies and secure one's future. Participants were introduced to essential banking products and services such as savings and current accounts, fixed and recurring deposits, UPI and mobile banking facilities, debit and credit cards, loans, and insurance. The features and advantages of FD and RD accounts were explained, along with clarification that small amounts are sufficient to begin saving and investing.

The session also touched upon the importance of government schemes and insurance benefits that promote financial security, including life and health coverage. Mr. Ajit further emphasized the nomination facility, explaining how it ensures smooth transfer of funds after the account holder's death.

A major portion of the session focused on digital safety and cyber frauds. Participants were made aware of common online threats such as phishing messages, ATM skimming, fake phone calls, and digital arrest scams. Mr. Ajit stressed the importance of protecting personal banking information like PINs and OTPs and encouraged everyone to immediately report suspicious activity or fraud to their bank or by calling the national cybercrime helpline 1930. Through videos, real examples, interactive discussions, and a question-answer segment, the session made complex financial concepts easy to understand.

Session IX- Safeguarding the Dignity of Persons & Relationships in our life and mission

Resource Person: Sr. Teresa Salemthangi, Asst. Director - CDI

Sr. Teresa Salemthangi in her session emphasized that safeguarding is the need of the hour and asked the participants to reflect on their own understanding of the term. Through active interaction, participants shared



that safeguarding means protecting human dignity, identity, rights, well-being, and ensuring safety from physical, emotional, psychological, and social harm- especially for children and vulnerable persons. Affirming these reflections, Sr. Teresa explained that safeguarding involves enabling people to live free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and that it is the responsibility of everyone. She stressed that safeguarding must begin with oneself before extending care to others. Citing the principle that “the dignity of every human person demands urgent respect today, not tomorrow,” she highlighted safeguarding

as an immediate and non-negotiable responsibility.

Drawing from her ten years of experience working in shelter homes for children in Shillong, Sr. Teresa shared powerful personal experiences that underscored the consequences of neglect and lack of care. She narrated an incident involving a child who had grown up without love or protection, illustrating how the absence of safeguarding deeply impacts a person's life and behaviour. These reflections reinforced the urgent need for responsible care, especially in today's complex and challenging social context.

She further explained that safeguarding is critical in all workplaces and ministries, as it upholds human rights and contributes to creating a safe and supportive environment for all. Special emphasis was placed on the changing realities of working with children today, noting that care and protection now require greater sensitivity, caution, and professionalism.

Sr. Teresa outlined key dimensions of safeguarding, beginning with physical safeguarding, which includes setting clear personal boundaries, maintaining safe environments, practicing professionalism, and being vigilant in daily routines. She highlighted the importance of safeguarding one's health through responsible self-care. She then addressed emotional and mental safeguarding, emphasizing the need to respect one's own dignity and that of others through mindful communication, maintaining confidentiality, and preserving personal identity. She reminded participants that the way one speaks, dresses, and conducts oneself reflects dignity and earns respect, especially in leadership and caregiving roles.

The session also touched upon digital safeguarding, drawing attention to responsible use of mobile phones, social media, photographs, and online platforms. Sr. Teresa cautioned participants to be mindful of what they post, share and they post, share, and circulate, as digital behaviour also reflects personal and institutional dignity.

Concluding the session, Sr. Teresa reiterated that safeguarding is not merely a policy or procedure, but a way of life. It requires constant awareness, responsibility, and commitment to protecting oneself and others, thereby ensuring that dignity remains central to all aspects of life and mission.

Session X- Mental Health Challenges among our beneficiaries

Resource Person: Rev. Fr. Esack Rayappan - Director - NECHA

Fr. Rayappan spoke on the growing concerns around mental health in today's society, highlighting how emotional suffering, depression, stress, and anxiety are increasingly affecting communities, particularly in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. He emphasized that mental health challenges are not signs of weakness or shame, but human realities that call for empathy, understanding, and timely support.



He also introduced the work of the Catholic Mental Health Ministry, a national initiative under the CBCI, which focuses on suicide prevention, awareness-building, and early intervention. Drawing from real-life experiences, he illustrated how unaddressed emotional pain can lead to deeper suffering for individuals and families.

Addressing the participants as social workers, sisters, teachers, and field staff, Fr. Rayappan encouraged them to listen with compassion, observe sensitively, respond without judgement, and guide those in need towards appropriate professional support. He further reminded caregivers of the importance of attending to their own emotional wellbeing, noting that one cannot serve others effectively without first caring for oneself.

After the sessions, the participants gathered for the Christmas Evening Celebration

The Pre-Christmas Celebration was organized in a spirit of gratitude, joy, and reflection, bringing together Sisters, staff, trainees, students, and invited dignitaries. The programme was compered by Ms. Bokali Kasho and began with warm opening remarks, followed by a welcome address by Sr. Lisa Elavunkal, General Councillor for Social Apostolate, who set the tone for the celebration by highlighting the significance of coming together in faith, service, and thanksgiving. A graceful welcome song presented by the students and trainees added vibrancy and festivity to the occasion.

Award Distribution

An important highlight of the celebration was the Award Distribution Ceremony, during which Ms. Pratibha Das and Mr. Patrick Kujur were honored for their outstanding excellence in Micro Entrepreneurship Development under Income Generation Activities (IGA). The awards recognized their dedication, initiative, and impactful contributions towards promoting sustainable livelihoods and community empowerment.



Message

Speaker: Most Rev. John Moolachira, Archbishop of Guwahati Diocese

During his address, the Most Rev. Archbishop John Moolachera shared a moving personal story to highlight the depth of faith that sustains people in moments of loss and hardship. He narrated the experience of a man who was travelling alone in a train and was approached by the Ticket Examiner (TT) for verification of his ticket. When the man was asked to show his purse, it was found that he had no ticket, money, or identification documents. Instead, the purse contained only a small photograph of Jesus, carefully kept. When questioned about this, the man explained that he had once travelled with photographs of his family. However, due to painful circumstances, he had been separated from them and had lost all contact. In the midst of this separation and suffering, Jesus became his only source of strength and hope. Through this story, the Archbishop emphasized that when human relationships and material support fail, faith in God often becomes the sole anchor that gives meaning, courage, and direction in life.



The celebration continued with a Christmas Musical presented by the Sisters and staff of CDI, along with performances by the trainees, capturing the true spirit of Christmas through song, movement, and reflection.



Message

Speaker: Fr. Rev. Fr. G. P. Amalraj, Deputy Secretary, N.E.I. R.B.C

Rev. Fr. Amalraj shared a touching reflection on the spirit of Christmas, drawing inspiration from the well-known story often connected with “The Gift of the Magi.” He explained how love becomes meaningful only when it is expressed through sacrifice. Just as in the story where the man sells his watch to buy combs for his beloved, and she sacrifices her hair to buy him a chain, true love is proved through giving, not through feelings alone. Fr. Amalraj connected this story to the Christian faith, stating that God the Father gave his only son to humanity as the greatest gift, and Jesus completed that gift through His sacrifice on the cross. He reminded everyone that genuine love must touch our lives, our hearts, and even our resources. Giving, he said, becomes meaningful when it demands sacrifice and generosity.



Acknowledgement of Veteran Missionaries in the Field of Social Work

Sr. Teresa Salemtangi, Assistant Director of CDI, led the segment with words of deep appreciation for the Sisters whose years of dedicated service in social apostolate have been extraordinary. Their lifelong commitment to healing, empowerment and service was recognised as a blessing to the congregation and the wider community.

Honoured Missionaries:

- **Sr. Rosie Paul** – Honoured for 44 years of compassionate service in the healing ministry. Her journey reflects commitment, flexibility, and an unwavering dedication to humanity.
- **Sr. Marietta Joseph** – Acknowledged for 40 years of service as a nurse, community leader, and organiser, particularly in the Garo Hills region.
- **Sr. Rose Alex** – Recognised for 44 years of continuous service in the healing apostolate with exceptional commitment.
- **Sr. Anna Minj** – Celebrated for over 30 years of work among marginalised communities, even after her golden jubilee profession.
- **Sr. Daisy Mathew** – Honoured for 35 years of service in healthcare, especially in remote and challenging areas.
- **Sr. Mary Jacob** – Recognised for 35 years of dedicated missionary work in the healing ministry.



Special Awardees: The ceremony also celebrated the outstanding achievements of two Sisters whose contributions have brought pride to the congregation:

- **Sr. Merli Tom** – Honoured for receiving a National Award from the Institute of Agricultural Governance for her entrepreneurial excellence in Meghalaya.
- **Sr. Rose Paite** – Recipient of the *Janama Bhama Mental Health Impact Award – CMHM 2025* for her transformative service among migrant and underserved communities in Northeast India.

A heartfelt interaction followed as Sr. Rose Paite addressed the gathering virtually, expressing gratitude for the love, support, and recognition she received from CDI and the congregation.

Message

Speaker: Sr. Christine Mynsong, Superior General, MSMHC

As the programme continued, Rev. Sr. Christine Mynsong, Mother General – MSMHC, delivered her



Christmas message. She spoke with depth and warmth about the true meaning of Christmas, emphasising that it is not merely a festival of lights and celebration, but a profound reminder of God’s love becoming human in vulnerability and humility. She reflected on the challenges faced in the world today, poverty, displacement, violence, addiction, unemployment, and uncertainty, especially in Northeast India. Yet, she reminded everyone that Christ continues to be born in these very spaces of struggle and hope.

She encouraged Sisters, staff, and collaborators to continue embodying love through compassionate service:

- to stand with the poor and forgotten,
- to believe in the dignity of every child,
- to remain committed to mission,
- and to serve with courage, tenderness, and faith.

Her message beautifully captured the heart of the celebration, *“Love must become action; faith must become service; and Christmas must be lived through compassion.”*

The event concluded with a heartfelt Vote of Thanks by Ms. Chihanphi Ruth Luiram, acknowledging all dignitaries, performers, organisers, benefactors, and participants who made the Christmas Evening celebration a success.

The evening then continued with a festive Christmas dinner shared by all, offering a warm space for fellowship, meaningful conversations, and joyful interaction.

After dinner, the participants gathered once again in the hall for a delightful Christmas gift exchange ceremony. The atmosphere was filled with excitement and laughter as gifts were shared with affection and festive cheer. The staff further enlivened the celebration by performing energetic Christmas dances, to which many joyfully joined in, creating moments of togetherness and pure happiness.

At the end, Sr. Lisa Elavunkal, the Director of CDI, expressed her gratitude to God for the learnings, sharings, new friendships, and meaningful experiences of the day. She encouraged everyone to remain united and continue working sincerely for the cause of the poor. She reminded the gathering that true joy is complete only when shared with those who are less privileged, and she challenged each person to share something tangible with someone in need this Christmas season, inspiring others through their example. She then asked the participants for a moment of silence, seeking forgiveness for any shortcomings and resolving to be more generous in the days ahead. Sr. Lisa concluded the day with the prayer of the three Hail Mary's, invoking God's blessings and the protection of guardian angels over all, before ending with a call for silence and rest.

Day 4 (18th December 2025)

Day 4: Session XI - Safeguarding the Earth

Resource Person: Rev. Sr. Katharine Joseph, MSMHC, GC, Education

On the fourth day of the convention, Rev. Sr. Katharine Joseph led a meaningful session on safeguarding the Earth, based on Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*. She reminded everyone that the Earth is our common home and caring for creation is not optional, but a moral duty linked to human rights.

Sr. Katharine explained three core principles from *Laudato Si'*:

- **Stewardship:** Human beings are caretakers of the world, responsible for protecting natural resources like air, water, soil, forests, and living beings. We are called to use creation wisely rather than exploit it.
- **Interdependence:** All elements of creation are interconnected. Every species and resource has value and purpose, and human convenience should not decide what to preserve or destroy.
- **Moral Responsibility:** Real change begins with simple and steady efforts—reducing waste, planting trees, saving water and electricity, and making mindful lifestyle choices.

The session highlighted urgent environmental concerns such as pollution, climate change, deforestation, soil degradation, and rising plastic waste. Sr. Katharine shared a personal example from Delhi, where severe air pollution disrupted education and daily life, showing how environmental damage affects communities, especially the poor.



She also stressed that increasing industrial growth, urbanisation, and consumerism are harming nature and threatening future generations. To address this, the session encouraged participants to adopt eco-friendly habits and follow the principles of reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover. At the community and institutional level, she encouraged organising clean-up drives, protecting common resources, and practicing waste segregation. She also underlined the role of environmental laws and policies, reminding everyone that rules alone are not enough- public awareness, commitment, and collective participation are essential.

Participants were asked to reflect and call to action on key questions:

- What is God calling me to protect today?
- What touched me most during the session?

- What new responsibility do I feel called to take?
- What will I change in my lifestyle from tomorrow?
- One prayer intention for the healing of creation.

The session concluded with a prayer intention for the healing of creation and a call to create awareness, especially among the poor and vulnerable, who suffer most from environmental degradation. Participants were encouraged to cultivate habits such as listening to nature, observing sunrises and sunsets, and fostering a deep connection with creation.

Valedictory Session

The Valedictory Session was compered by Sr. Delina Lyngdoh and marked the formal conclusion of the Annual Convention. The session opened with cultural dance performances by the Shelter staff, the MISSIO project team, and the Sisters, creating a joyful and celebratory atmosphere.



A few participants briefly shared their reflections on the programme. Mr. Albinus Tigga described the convention as informative, reflective, and well-organized, highlighting its contribution to ethical living, professionalism in service, and environmental responsibility. Ms. Juliet Baxla, drawing from her experience



in a tea garden community, reflected on the importance of safeguarding families and nurturing mutual care between parents and children. Sr. Marieta Joseph, Sr. Margareth Sekhose, and Mr. Richard Tirkey expressed their gratitude to CDI for organizing an enriching programme that would support them in their continued work with the poor and vulnerable.



During the session, the Provincial Councillors felicitated the Sisters of the CDI community in recognition of their dedication, service, and committed contribution to the mission and the successful organization of the convention.

The concluding address was made by Sr. Lisa Elavunkal, Director of CDI where she expressed appreciation for the active participation of all and noted that the convention had renewed faith and clarified the shared mission. She emphasized that safeguarding dignity is foundational to social

mission work and reflected on safeguarding families, promoting healing, and caring for creation as integral to

safeguarding life itself. She also reminded participants that true freedom lies not in doing anything, but in choosing responsibly.

She concluded by encouraging participants to carry the spirit of the convention into their daily lives, communities, and ministries, affirming that the convention continues through the values and choices lived each day, especially in service of the poor, vulnerable, and broken.

The Annual Convention concluded successfully with active participation from all. The sessions helped strengthen understanding, reflection, and commitment towards the mission and social apostolate.

SNAPSHOTS OF THE CONVENTION



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