



Children's Day Celebration at Maria Bhavan

BANGALORE, India - *"Children are the most beautiful gifts and blessings that the creator has given to man and woman. Children are never a mistake,"* Pope Francis said.

India began celebrating Children's Day since 1959. Children's Day is celebrated across India on November 14th, the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru. He was popular among children and was fondly called by children as Chacha Nehru. He said, *"Children are buds in a garden and should be carefully and lovingly nurtured as they are the future of the nations and the citizens of tomorrow"*.

The Maria Bhavan community celebrates Children's Day in their campus every year. The occasion was celebrated this year on the 17th of November 2019 according to the children's convenient time. These children are mainly from the orphanages under the care of the religious and by the lay people as well. This year, a total of 106 children participated and the community was immensely happy to organise the programme for them. The program started with a prayer and it was followed by the inaugural address of Father Selva Kumar, SMM. After which, the organizers divided the participants into different groups and conducted group games till noon.

After lunch, the children who came from the different orphanages were directed to the auditorium for the cultural program. The activity started with the lighting of the lamp by the special invitees and children. The purpose of this program is to give the children an opportunity to exhibit their talents, to empower and encourage them and to show love and care for them. The activity was concluded with the awarding of prizes by the Superior, Fr. Joseph Joseph, SMM together with the special invitees. The cultural program was excellent as everyone enjoyed the activity.

Moreover, the following were instrumental for the success of the program, namely Father Joseph, Montfort Lay Associates, Montfort Fathers from different communities and volunteers. The Maria Bhavan community was very grateful for the help and support they received most especially from the generous sponsors who supported the event financially. The community, particularly the brothers who were in charge of this activity showed their hard work, dedication and commitment that contributed to the success of the event.

In conclusion, Pope Francis said "*Every child has the face of the Lord, lover of life, a gift for families and society.*" Hence, let us all love our children and let us continue to pray for them.

Fr. Selva Kumar, SMM