

# SNEHA V A A N I

Voice of Children, Snehagram, Sneha Charitable Trust



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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE



I arrived to “Snehagram”, the Village of love, in the last week of May 2021. I was really happy to see the Campus as it was filled with plants, flowers, trees and fruits. In few weeks time I realized that the children in Snehagram are still more beautiful than the plants and flowers filled around the Campus. The children bear better fruits.

“By their fruits you will know them” Mt 7:20. Yes, if they are not rooted well they cannot have better fruits. I, together with Fr Sunil MI, must appreciate Rev. Fr. Johnson, Rev. Fr. Joy, Staff and well wishers of Snehagram who helped the Children to be rooted in the shadow of Sneha Charitable Trust of Camillians. The village of love was not infected by the Covid19 Viral attack but it was affected in a bad way. Most of the children left for holidays could not return and so the academic year was not begun last year. In the first week of June 2021 the Covid19 break was paused by the kick start of sports and activities and then creatively rejuvenated the academic year. The rooted plants needs pruning at times for better yield and that may be painful for the plant and at the same time for the farmer. But its always for better outcome and fruits.

The I'mPossible fellowship program empowered the fellows to impart knowledge to their young ones in a more systematic and organized way as they were trained. July, the month of St Camillus reminded each one to bring more Heart in Hands. We remain grateful to the almighty God for protecting us from pandemic diseases to this moment as Snehagram Campus remain a Covid19 free campus to this day.

**Fr. Teji Thomas MI**



## MY HOLIDAYS

During the pandemic, all my friends began to go for holidays. I never looked to go to my home then but surprisingly I found my family members the next day to take me home. I always feared COVID-19 and took the utmost precaution during the travel. This holiday was different as the regular family income was challenged due to the known situation. First few months I was very happy and my family was able to take care of me with the limited resources but my life at home became very hard once the second wave of corona started. It washed off all our income and left us with very little food which we had to consume for a very long time. I was locked up in my house not being able to travel around, work, or do anything independently outdoor. It was the worst scenario to see my family weep and struggle to get a daily meal, I call it a blessing when we got a little ration from different voluntary agencies. I only hoped that this will pass away at the earliest. My holiday usually was always filled with joy and cheerfulness but this time I really learned the life lessons and how to face the odds of life. Packing back to Snehagram was a joy that can't be expressed in mere words.

**Amar**

## FAREWELL TO FR. JOHNSON AND FR. JOY

Saying Goodbye to our dear ones are not a nice experience but at some point, in our lives, we all have to do so. Fr. Johnson and Fr. Joy had to move on with their new mission. We did have a farewell party on 29 May, for our dear director Fr. Johnson



who served for the past two years, and our administrator Fr. Joy who was part of our community for the past five and half years.



Hugs, tears, and words were not enough to express our gratitude to our fathers for their selfless services. Every person who comes into our lives leaves an imprint so did these two fathers. They could bring about a change towards life positively and they cared for all of us like their children. Dances, songs, speeches, cards, and sweets

were part of our farewell ceremony and everyone at Snehagram expressed their love and appreciation to Fr. Johnson and Fr Joy.

## WELCOME TO FR. SUNIL AND FR. TEJI

Life is a mixed bag of joys and sorrows. Most of the time; every hard or bitter experience would be followed by a sweet and lovely one. It is a great joy to have Fr. Teji as the new Director and Fr. Sunil as the new Administrator of Snehagram. The Snehagram family is happy to welcome both the fathers to be part of our lives. We hope and pray for a wonderful and color-filled time with them.



## REFRESHING EXPERIENCE

It was a new experience to walk into the 'Home of Love' in June 2019. After two wonderful years of service, as I move out of Snehagram for the new Mission, I congratulate and wish all the blessings for the new team. Life with a unique community of Children has enriched and helped me to have a new view of life. The lush campus, cheerful children, and different activities have kept me vibrant, young, and happy. Life in Snehagram has been refreshing and has been a great variety after nine years of Missionary life in Uganda.





Often the world looks at the children with HIV pitifully and considers them as less fortunate. As we live with them we see altogether a unique and vibrant group of dynamic children who are far capable and motivated than the so-called fortunate.

Generally, a family with two or three children talks about the difficulty in handling the kids, Snehagram comfortably enabling to live a harmonious life with more than sixty children owes to the responsible and well-disciplined little buds here. The ability to rise up to the situations against all odds of life and live with a positive attitude is something commendable.

As the mission continues I do wish and pray for all those taken the pain of shedding more light into the lives of very many children and those who continue in leading and supporting this noble mission.

**Fr. Johnson Vellachira MI**

## CAMP RRR

We had a sports camp for 5 days held in the first week of June 2021 under the name Camp RRR (Rebuild, Relax, and Reinvent). The main motto of the camp was to rebuild the lost stamina and strength, relax with enough fun-filled activities, and reinvent so as to make things new. The complete camp was organized by the mentors of Snehagram.



The students were divided into four groups to bring about the team spirit and for easy handling of the activities. The camp mainly focused on sports development and introduced students to the different pieces of training namely speed, endurance, strength, and flexibility training.



We also brought in Aerobic, Zumba, Yoga, dance, and meditation adding variety to the camp activities. Futsal, Basketball, and Throw ball found their places in the evening hours. In the mornings we focused on learning some theories relating to sports such as the Importance of drinking water, the sustenance of different muscles, major aches and pains, teamwork, and related skills.



it was a unique experience for all the students and their feedback has been very positive. 'I have never attained such a special camp filled with lively activities and fun-filled learning, I have learned more than learning from the books' says Vijay

**Vinay**

## ACADEMIC YEAR OPENING 2021-22

After the season of Corona it was hard to hear that our academic year was about to open. I dreamt the times I will have to sit and listen to the dragging lessons and complete the bulky home works and stick to a routine time table. I was the happiest being promoted directly to the 12th standard due to COVID -19. With prayers and blessing the academic year was officially opened.



To complete my senior secondary under NIOS I had to choose five subjects, they are Environmental science, Business, English, Psychology, Data entry. Out of that I was interested in Psychology and not in Environment science, having no option I am growing my interest on the subject. Due to the pandemic all teachers were covering their portions very fast and I am working double the time to catch up. The saddest part was we have to share the textbook due to the storage of text books as they are not delivered in time.



Making short notes and involving actively in the group studies will surely help me get through the examination with decent marks. I look forward to studying hard and being a good student.

**Sudeep**



## PARLIAMENT ELECTION EXPERIENCE



On 5th June we had our child parliament election. Including me we are four nominees for Prime minister. Just like the normal parliamentary election we had to do the campaign and earn the trust of our friends. Once that is over all of us must prepare inspiring speech and explain the promises that one would be up-taking if elected as Prime Minister. I only wondered if at all I will win the election, after rounds of voting there was very less hope for me to shine as the prime minister of Snehagram.

None of us got the majority but finally the last round made is more complex and I had goosebumps hearing every number while the count was going on. Tears shed out of my eyes when I heard that I was the Prime Minister of Snehagram for the academic year 2021-22. I was really grateful for all those who you trusted me and I never wanted to break their expectations.



I formed my cabinet team and allocated specific responsibilities and charges to take over. After the oath taking me and my cabinet team was functional. Our only intention is to make Snehagram a happy, Healthy and Responsible place to stay and contribute. I look forward to support and contribute as much as I can in all the required areas.

**Suhas**



## PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS



It is a piece of happy news... we above 18years including staff at Snehagram got the first dose of vaccination against COVID-19 on June 16th, 2021. We all know that vaccination is only protection and not a complete cure for this deadly disease.

We have been continuing to take the required precautions. After the vaccination, a few of us faced mild pains on the shoulder, a slight headache and a few had a fever for a single day. We were well told about all these side effects by the doctors and the nurses who injected the vaccine into us. This is a great way to protect oneself and others from coronavirus. Having all the staff and mentors vaccinated makes us proud and protected, I am eagerly waiting for my turn as I am only 17 years old. I am certain that soon there will be vaccines even for our age categories.

**Manoj**

## BLESSING OF THE HOUSE IN SNEHADAARA FARM



Our wellwisher Gerald Manoharan has built a small and beautiful house in the campus of Snehadaara Farm. The house was inaugurated on the 14 of June 2021. It was blessed by our Rev. Fr. Teji and Rev. Fr. Sunil, in the presence of Snehagram staff and children. Wishing goodness and happiness to continue filling the family and the home, we shared the delicious meal together.

## BLISS OF GARDENING



We buy less but grow more in Snehagram. Despite the changes in seasons, and the recurrent adverse conditions we always have few vegetables to grow. The last few weeks have been the finest weeks of the year with enough rains and conducive weather for gardening. The earth once again reclaimed its richness and the all-around Snehagram campus was teeming with lush life.

These pretty good conditions helped us enormously in growing vegetables and fruits as we had scarcely planted any before the rains. It was joy everywhere around the campus as soon as we received the showers, and all of us rejoiced plunging into the fields, to prepare the land and to sow the seeds. The joy of watching the seeds sprout breaking the earth is indescribable. The farmer knows the feeling deep down his or her heart and perhaps one of the ways to experience this joy is to become a farmer in our own little ways.

**Sachin**

## REFRESHING RAINS

The clouds gathered and blackened the bright sky, I rushed to take off my clothes expecting for a heavy downpour, but saddened it was only a shadowed clouds. The following day it was the same story but this time it really began to shower. I can't forget the sweet smell of the mud and the soft cold breezes pass by my senses. It was a marvelous to see water breaking through the cannels and flooding into pond.



The trees rejoiced and the land was happy again to be moisture and cool after the heavy burning heat of the sun. The joy didn't last long, the rains continued for days which now became a disturbance to our regular life. I only looked for dry places and waited for the sunshine to dry my malodorous clothes and specially my socks. We all know that nothing lasts long, the sun shined it rays again and made the weather balanced. I learned that too much of anything is bad or too little anything is not enough, there must be balance in everything thing we do.

**Harish**



## THOUGH WORKS TRAINING

“I believe that I can make the camps a great experience for the adolescents and youth, whom I follow up. I had great learnings and I am confident of leading the camps when I go back to my district. We can also share and learn a lot from each other.” – shared by Ramya



The primary objective of this workshop was to facilitate the peer leaders and the team in order to help them understand the challenges which would be handled through one-to-one discussions and a monthly monitoring system.

One of the points that came up in the training regarding the peer leaders was about reviewing the information they can use during the one-to-one interactions as well as identifying the critical issues which need attention during the camps. The primary message during the training was about finding meaning and strength through the pandemic COVID-19 has posed a lot of challenges for everyone. As a matter of fact, challenges are part of our everyday life even before the arrival of COVID.



However, amidst all these difficulties we can find a way to lead a healthy and meaningful life if we take care of ourselves and our friends. The four-day workshop was an opportunity for the peer leaders to come together as they could share their experiences and it was heartening to see how they affirmed each other and supported others taking up the responsibility to reach out to their peers in their respective districts. The key areas of learning were Health, Education, Livelihoods, and critical life skills.

**Siddaramu**

## RUNNING CAN BECOME A PASSION

Ultra-runners or endurance runners are crazy they complete unimaginable distances with amazing timings. When I was informed that few of such runners would be coming to Snehagram, I was pleased to meet them and I don't know if they were troubled with my silly question as I was loaded with so many questions for them. It was again the honour for me and my friends to run with them.



Dr. Henry and his team was pleased with our strength and passion for running, he was excited to start some training programs for all of us in Snehagram. They became an inspiration for many of us to continue running and maintain the fitness of ourselves. After hearing their crazy goal of doing 21kms daily for 400days and that day I was their 142 day, I learnt that nothing will stop me when I am committed and fixed to do an activity; it is all the matter of ones minds set in achieving the impossible. From then I desire to never want to lose my physical fitness. I am glad that this day has been my turning point.

**Prashanth**

## NEW FRIENDS

Every year we have new friends joining our large family but this year the number of friends were more as none joined us last year. On hearing the news I couldn't wait for their arrival, there was a mixed feeling of happiness, tension, joy and excitement. As soon as they arrived it was me who rejoiced the most and jumped to help them with their luggage's. Snehagram as a community welcomed them whole heartedly with songs, and flowers.



I always wanted to be the best senior to the freshers, making friends and guiding them in all the day-to-day activities. It was so soothing to hear them call me brother, this only increased love and care towards them. None of my friends ever ragged newcomers as we had been always like brothers and sisters in the same family. Adding more friends means adding more life to all of us. I am so exultant to have 13 new friends join my life journey.

**Shamu**



## LIFE IN SNEHAGRAM

On July 10th I came to Snehagram. The rumours that I heard about Snehagram were very scary especially regarding the rules and strictness in regulations. Being a fresher I was more feared about the ragging and teasing. When I came to Snehagram I was warmly welcomed with flowers and sweets, later taken to room with my seniors who were so kind in helping and making me feel at home. The seniors were behaving with us really like won elder brothers and sister; we also addressed them as Anna and Akka.



I was shocked when I learnt that the rules were created and abided by us through the child parliament system. The staff least interfered the children's decision unless it had to; This made feel free and comfortable but seeing the seniors taking up roles and responsibilities it only created an instinct to follow them. I am happier to take on the responsibilities as I really don't feel it as burden but a privilege to contribute and learn from the same.

Here I realized that don't judge a book by its cover. I only was scared of Snehagram only because of false rumors'; I feel it is the best place for me after my home. I now want to stay here and build my life systematically.

**Asif**

## FRISBEE A NEW GAME TO US



Mr. Tariq Tekekara profession Frisbee coach had come down to Snehagram in the month of July. In the interaction with him I learnt the major rules and details of the Frisbee game, literally I never even knew if this game existed. It was very interesting to know that Frisbee was invented by a high school student named Joel Silver in 1968 as a joke that took on a life of its own. To play, two teams of seven players head out to a field and stand in their end zones.



This game was different and unique from other games and my urge to learn increased and craved to game the game at least once. Seeing mine and my friends interest Mr. Tariq agree to introduce and train us on the game and eventually to compete with the official teams across the country.

Being highly excited I did never want to miss this opportunity at any cost and enrolled my name at the first. Eagerly waiting for the coaching and playing the game soon. It was a privilege for me to know this game and happy that now I have developed passion and love for the game.

**Ramu**

## 8TH ANNIVERSARY 2021



Celebrating Anniversary was the most exciting thing in the month of July, I was participating in the fashion show. My team didn't cooperate to come up with a theme, the days went by and I became tensed and worried regarding the show. On the day of the program MC called our team to perform and after show the complete audience jumped up and clapped with shouts and 'vessels'. We did the show on human cycle from birth to death, depleting each stages of life with it's specifications.

I, my team and all the members of Snehagram specially the staff were glad of our performance, only I knew the hard times of running around with my team in the last days and making it happen. With satisfaction I was happy and proud of myself. We did see that the audience were less due to the present situation, we had respected Camillian Fathers, staff from Sneha family, nearby neighbors and ourselves made that evening colorful and remarkable. I always acknowledge our level of standard in our program, in terms of timings, performances and food it never slips easily as lot of background work goes into it. It was a short and sweet celebration.

**Mallikarjun**



## DR. HENRY WITH US



Dr. Henry Prakash who is a professor in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, in Christian Medical College Vellore Tamilnadu and a passionate runner joined us in Snehagram for the Run. It was an honor to have him with us besides Raja and Dhayanithi the ultra-runners who have completed major marathons in the country. It was motivating to hear that Raja and Dhayanithi have been doing the 21km run every day for 400 days towards

a social cause and it was their 197th day when they had come over to Snehagram. At Snehagram Dr. Henry and his team ran a 5km with students in the morning, during which he observed the physical fitness level of the students and provided few suggestions for our further improvements. We are grateful to Dr. Henry and the team for their visit which indeed has helped us in a tremendous way.

**Satish**





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