



“Covid-19 has made clear how interdependent and interconnected we are in the web of life, and the need to find ways that we can work together as one Earth community. It is a time of pruning, a time for discernment to allow new growth, to allow God to take over. These moments will help us start anew and to look beyond our fears. We have the free will to choose it and to let go of whatever stands in the way. We see the continued breakdown of old systems and structures on Earth to make way for the new. This is a turning point for the rising of consciousness on Earth. We belong to something bigger, something greater than ourselves.”

- Sister Irene Fernandez, Society Leadership Team

Sr. Dr. Birgit Weiler, a German MMS living in Peru is a theological advisor on issues of environmental justice, helping to generate criteria to guide the position and action of the Church in socio-economic conflicts. In 2019 she participated in the Synod Pope Francis held on the Amazon region; she describes the power and beauty of one day’s opening prayer in Rome, led by indigenous people of Peru. With everyone seated in a circle, the worship leaders brought symbols of the Amazon into the center and led the service with respectful slow steps of liturgical dance, singing their sacred songs. Sr. Birgit shared that for the first time in the hall of St. Peter, the Amazon was present and became part of the world-wide church.

“There is much to learn from people who live so close to the Earth,” Sr. Birgit shares, “about not seeing the natural world as a source of commodities, but instead entering into a relationship in which creation can speak to me and I place myself within creation, seeing it as a gift from God, entrusted to me. Earth and humanity cannot be separated – what heals one heals the other.”

Front Cover Photo: *Sr. Josephine Nafula checks the corn in the MMS garden in Uganda.*

Medical Mission Sisters is an international religious community of Catholic women who commit ourselves to promote healing and wholeness in all aspects of life. Founded in 1925, our Sisters and Associates continue our healing mission in 17 countries on five continents.



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Our call and mission is to be one with all that has life.

Part II



Radiating Light

Nearly 70 years ago, Anna Dengel purchased property on a barren hillside in Pune, North India, with a dream of building a medical and healing facility. In the evolution of time, needs and awareness, the medical mission Anna Dengel had dreamed of, shifted to a different avenue of healing. Over the decades Sisters had, with great care and determination, broken through rock and rubble to green the whole slope, calling it ‘Sandipani’ which means ‘radiating light.’ There are now around 3000 trees living on the property; it is a place of quiet, peace and healing away from the bustle of an ever busier and noisier city.

It is on this treasured property, now referred to as one of the Green Lungs of Pune, where MMS opened the Eco Healing and Health Centre (EHHC) on April 17, 2021 (the anniversary of Mother Dengel’s death). The mission statement reads: “To promote care of the earth and healing and health for all persons, and to provide space and an environment in which persons can touch the divine in themselves and all of creation through quiet reflection, commune with nature, and sessions.”

The center is built with renewable energy systems – solar water heating and solar lighting, recycling of wastewater, rainwater harvesting, vermiculture, organic manure pits and garbage segregation and recycling. The goal is to use no plastic, and to make the place a pollution free zone. It has been named Samanvaya (pronounced as Samanvay), a Sanskrit word meaning harmony, integration, coordination. The logo depicts humans and nature co-existing in harmony.



The center is open to all persons irrespective of caste, creed, gender or status. Close to 1000 visitors are expected every year for whom they hope to promote a more harmonious living with all of creation.

Space is available for individuals and groups seeking some quiet time, retreat, and to commune with nature. Awareness sessions are offered as well as programs on eco healing and health, learning from nature, promoting renewable energy. Working in collaboration with the existing MMS holistic health center nearby, those who desire healing can receive various forms of nature cure and herbal remedies. Guests can stay in a hermitage and are invited to walk the labyrinth, spend time in the meditation hall, participate in yoga classes and other training sessions, and enjoy the nature paths.

Although the buildings are all ready and most of them set up for use, establishing the herbal garden and plant nursery, lining of the pool to retain rain water, drip irrigation and planting of many more trees will be completed as funds are received.



An outside seating area is blessed on opening day of the Eco Healing and Health Centre.

MMS living in Sandipani assist the gardeners in building a labyrinth.

