



# Himalayan Echo



Vol: 121

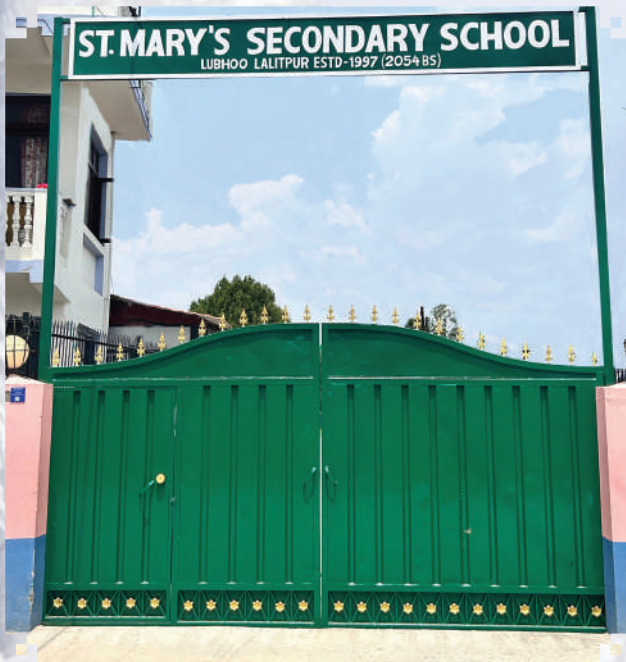
**NEPAL REGION NEWSLETTER**

March-April, 2026

**From the Desk of the Regional Superior**

## Announcement

It is with great joy that I announce the renaming of *Mary Ward School, Lubhoo* as **St. Mary's Secondary School, Lubhoo**.



This decision has been made in good faith to uphold the dignity of every child and to reflect our commitment to inclusive and quality education for all. It also brings uniformity in the naming of our schools in Nepal, as all other schools already carry the St. Mary's identity, and this step ensures a consistent and unified identity across the region.

Over the years, it has been observed that certain perceptions have labeled a few of our schools differently. With this renewed identity, we reaffirm that our schools are not defined by labels of "rich" or "poor," but are spaces where every student learns with equal dignity, opportunity, and respect. We firmly believe that education should transcend all social and economic distinctions. Every school in our network is a place where

children grow together in a spirit of equality, excellence, and shared humanity.

May this new name strengthen our identity and renew our commitment to providing holistic education for all with dignity, love, and justice. May Mother Mary and Venerable Mary Ward continue to guide, bless, and intercede for our school at Lubhoo, so that it may always remain a place of faith, learning, and service to all.

– *Sr. M. Vinita Mazhuvancherry CJ*

## Regional Events

**Safeguarding and Digital Media :** A two-day seminar on safeguarding guided by **Fr. Ravi Sagar SJ** from Kohima Jesuit Province was held at Don Bosco, Techo, from 28th February to 5th March 2026, for all the members of the Region. Fr. Ravi explained safeguarding as creating a safe and protected environment for all, especially minors and vulnerable adults, and highlighted the importance of clear systems, responsibility, and proper use of authority.



He also introduced international human rights conventions such as CRC, CEDAW, CAT, and ICMW focusing on human rights and protection. Group discussions helped identify safeguarding issues in our schools and communities and explore possible solutions. This was followed by input on safeguarding policies at different levels.

The final sessions focused on digital citizenship, digital safety, and responsible online behaviour, including digital hygiene.



### **Anchored in Christ in a Digital World: *Transformative Media & Journalism Session***

A three-day enriching session on Digital Media and Journalism was conducted from 17th to 19th April 2026 for sisters under the age of 40 in Nepal Region by Fr. Suresh Mathew, a Capuchin priest and renowned communicator. Centered on the theme “*Digital Drift - Staying Anchored in Christ in a Connected World,*” the programme offered deep insights into the challenges and opportunities of digital media in religious life. Fr. Suresh highlighted how the unmindful use of technology can affect prayer, silence, and commitment, while also encouraging sisters to harness digital media as a powerful tool for evangelization, communication, and spreading hope.



The session was made lively and practical through hands-on exercises in news writing, reporting, and communication skills. Participants gained confidence in expressing themselves clearly and creatively, while also developing a critical and responsible approach to media use.

– *Sr. Divya Kalamparambil*

### **Juniors’ Meet, 2026**

The Juniors’ Meeting was held on April 20, 2026, at St. Mary’s, Jawalakhel Region House, with five Juniors. Sr. Polrani was absent due to her board examinations. The day began with a prayerful hymn to the Holy Spirit, creating a calm and reflective atmosphere. The meeting focused on the theme “*Religious Life in the Digital Age: From External Silence to Interior Freedom,*” guided by Srs. Vinita and Karuna.

The session helped the sisters reflect on the changing nature of religious life before and after the Second Vatican Council. It highlighted how earlier religious life depended on external discipline and silence, while today it calls for greater personal responsibility, inner discipline, and commitment. Practical guidelines were shared on religious discipline, healthy relationships with family members and friends, active participation in community life, and the importance of personal and communal prayer.

Case studies and group discussions enabled the sisters to share ideas and find possible practical solutions. Sr. Karuna, spoke on personal responsibility, relationships, and commitment to religious life. The meeting was an enriching experience, renewing the Juniors’ commitment to live their vocation with authenticity, balance, and inner freedom, rooted in Christ.

–*Sr. Charlie Ezung*

### **Cherished Visitors**

We were deeply privileged to welcome Mr. Michael Penzkofer and his family from Germany, his wife Galende, daughter Francisca, and granddaughter Emily, our long-standing benefactors. Mr. Micheal is the nephew of late Sr. Francis Pastorfer. Their visit to Nepal was a special and grace-filled occasion for all of us in Nepal.

During their stay, the family visited six communities, including St. Mary’s Jawalakhel, Pokhara, Gorkha, Mary Ward Jhamsikhel, Lubhoo, and Snehajali Godawari, where they were warmly received with khadas and heartfelt hospitality. Their presence brought great joy,

gratitude, and renewed encouragement to all the communities. We remain deeply thankful for their friendship, kindness, and continued generosity, which have been a true blessing to our mission in Nepal.



Sr. Martina experienced a truly special and joy-filled week as she was visited by her brother Joy and his wife Betty, her sister Philomina, and her sister's granddaughter Andrea and grandson Benedict. The family spent ample cherished moments with her, strengthening bonds of love and togetherness. During their stay, they also visited Gorkha and Pokhara and enjoyed sightseeing around the Kathmandu Valley. Adding to the warmth, Sr. Martina's sister lovingly prepared and brought homemade sweet dishes and snacks, which were joyfully shared with the community.

It was a deeply memorable and grace-filled visit, especially for Sr. Martina, leaving behind moments of joy, gratitude, and togetherness.

– *Sr. Prathibha Palissery*

### Empowering the Teachers in CJ Schools

A series of Teachers' Orientation Programmes was organized across all six schools, as part of the ongoing effort to renew and strengthen teaching, learning, and assessment practices for the new generation. Faculty development sessions were facilitated by Dr. Minu A. and Dr. Saranya Narayanan from Kristu Jayanti University, Bangalore, focusing on the evolving role of teachers as facilitators, student-centered learning, classroom management, emotional intelligence, compassion, and conflict resolution.

Additional inputs were provided on AI-integrated classrooms by Mr. Anush Chandra, highlighting



the effective use of technology in education. We are deeply grateful to Fr. Deepu Parayil CMI for arranging this programme for us in Nepal.

– *Sr. Jessy Puliyanthuruthel*

### St. Mary's, Jawalakhel

International Women's Day was observed under the theme "Give to Gain," beginning with a prayer, followed by talks from alumni guest speakers on elderly care, violence against women, and the rights and dignity of widows, and it concluded with the school donating food items to *Aamako Ghar* and *Snehi Kaakha*, NGOs in Nepal supporting vulnerable groups.

A thanksgiving farewell for the outgoing Classes X and XII students was organized at the school's Mary Ward Auditorium, filled with joy, gratitude, and warm wishes as juniors expressed their love and appreciation for their seniors.

Under the theme "Together in Joy, United in Purpose," a Joint School Teachers' Gathering brought educators together in prayer, followed by cultural programme, games, and fellowship that fostered joy, teamwork, and unity, and it concluded with prize distribution and the handing over of the Joint Schools flag to Nepal Don Bosco School as the next host school, strengthening collaboration among all schools.



As a dream project of the 70th Platinum Jubilee, this year's SMS Fete collection was used to support the construction of houses for seven families in Lele village, Kathmandu Valley, with funds handed over and work now in progress as a simple yet meaningful gesture of sharing and solidarity.

The Basic Level Examination (BLE) 2082 results for class VIII at St. Mary's Secondary School, Jawalakhel, were excellent, with four students achieving a perfect GPA of 4.0.

Our community was blessed to welcome His Excellency Leopoldo Girelli, the Apostolic Nuncio to India and Nepal, accompanied by Rev. Fr. Silas Bogati, Apostolic Administrator of the Nepal Vicariate, as we gathered to bid him farewell on his new mission in Croatia. The sisters shared tea and spent meaningful time listening to his inspiring words and in fellowship with him. We remain deeply grateful for his many visits to our community and for the opportunity to serve and care for his needs during his stays. We sincerely appreciate his loving service, guidance, and support to the Vicariate of Nepal over the past five years, making his farewell a memorable moment for all.



During Holy Week, the Sisters actively participated in the Parish Church and helped in decorating it, contributing to the solemn and prayerful atmosphere of the celebrations. Srs. Divya and Charlie visited Tipling to meet the aspiring girls. Srs. Karuna and Charlie attended a Vocation Camp in Shillong, India.

**- Sr. Divya Kalamparbil**

### St. Mary's, Pokhara

March arrives not with fanfare, but with focus - ushering in the season of examinations while gently drawing the curtains on the academic year 2025/26. The month began with a meaningful gratitude prayer assembly conducted by Class VI students, where they lovingly acknowledged everyone from teachers to the gate guard, setting a tone of thankfulness as students prepared for their final and send-up examinations, including the Board exams of Classes VIII and X.

Another significant highlight of March was the much-awaited parliament election. Amid the anticipation of the election results, we also marked International Women's Day through a commendable cleaning campaign carried out by both teaching and non-teaching staff at Fewa Lakeside.



Following the examinations, the probable student leaders for the academic year 2026/27 participated in a two-day Leadership Training Programme. The programme was enriched by the participation of students from St. Mary's School, Gorkha, and St. Francis School, fostering collaboration and shared learning. Sr. Jessy conducted a one-day orientation programme for the teachers of Amarjyoti School (Holy Cross Sisters) in Bhairahawa.



The month of April brought further blessings to our community through the visits of Sr. Vinita, Fr. Victor, Provincial of the Pillar Fathers, relatives of Sr. Martina from Kerala, and our guests from Germany, Michael and his family.

Srs. Neena and Jessy travelled to East Nepal to attend the National Assembly of the Conference of Religious, Nepal (CRN). We also hosted the CRN Pokhara Unit Lenten Gathering at our residence, which included a meaningful penitential service and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, enriching the spiritual life of the community.

**-Sr. Jessy Puliyanthuruthel**

### St. Mary's, Gorkha

During the months of March and April, we experienced a series of enriching activities and events that contributed to both the academic and community life. The sisters, along with the teaching staff, organized an outing to *Sirandada* and *Ajarkot*. The hills were adorned with blooming rhododendrons, the national flower of Nepal offering a captivating and refreshing experience for all. Later, Sr. Catherine took the non-teaching staff to the same locations, where they too enjoyed the scenic beauty and tranquility of the season.



An Orientation Programme was conducted for new parents, during which they were introduced to the school's rules, regulations, and academic expectations. At the end of the session, admit cards for their children were distributed.

During the Holy Week celebrations, the community joined the neighboring parish of Chyangli, fostering a spirit of unity and faith. The visit of the Regional Superior, Sr. Vinita, along with Srs. Deepa and Charlie, brought great joy and encouragement to the community.

Sr. Celine, along with some teachers, attended a Teachers' Orientation Programme at St. Mary's School, Pokhara in preparation for the new academic year. A staff meeting was subsequently held to discuss plans and responsibilities before the commencement of new academic year. Due to government-related uncertainties, the school remained closed until 20th April 2026. Following official instructions from the local authorities, the new academic year began on 21st April 2026.

Sr. Catherine made a valuable contribution to maintaining a pleasant and vibrant school environment by cultivating a variety of vegetables and flowers within the compound.

**- Sr. Amrita Francis**

### Mary Ward School, Jhamsikhel

The long-awaited Marian Grotto at Mary Ward, Jhamsikhel, became a reality with the arrival of the statue of Our Lady, generously brought and donated by Mrs. Kamal Kesari Tuladhar, former President of ASMAN. The newly constructed grotto was solemnly blessed by Rev. Fr. Paul K. C., S.J. We express our heartfelt gratitude to all who contributed towards the construction of the grotto, making this beautiful space of prayer and devotion possible.



The community made a short visit to one of its earliest co-workers who was unwell, spending time with the family, praying for a speedy recovery, and offering some provisions. In another outreach, Sr. Asha and Miss Nima Yonjan visited communities near the Bagmati River affected by seasonal floods. Despite their hardship and poverty, the people were found to be joyful in spirit, and time was spent with them in conversation and support. **- Sr. Asha Singh**

### Mary Ward, Lubhoo

As spring arrived, the community celebrated the season with a series of meaningful activities focused on spiritual growth, education, and unity. The period was characterized by active participation, reflection, and a renewed commitment to mission.

Despite the busy examination period, students remained energetic and motivated. Following the exams, hostel students returned home for the holidays. Meanwhile, teachers took part in a recreational outing, enjoying a picnic at the scenic hilltop destination of *Pharping*, located beyond *Chobar*. The group explored monasteries known for their large Buddha's statues and spent the day walking, singing, and engaging in leisure activities. A visit to a nearby lake further enriched the experience.



The month concluded with the distribution of report cards, marking an important academic milestone. Staff members also participated in professional meetings aimed at strengthening educational practices.

The local parish community observed Holy Week with deep devotion. It began with a recollection and prayer service at St. Xavier's, Jawalakhel. The Holy Thursday Mass was led by the Apostolic Nuncio and followed by a short farewell programme. On Good Friday, many faithful joined the Way of the Cross from Mary Ward School to the Parish Church. The celebration ended on Easter Sunday with a solemn Mass of the Resurrection. The church was beautifully

decorated by Srs. Daisy and Daina, adding joy to the celebration.



Mrs. Bhagawati, a dedicated and committed teacher of Mary Ward, was honored with the title of *Best Teacher* in recognition of her outstanding service and contribution during a felicitation program held at West Wing School, Lubhoo. Sr. Amita represented the school and participated in the event, celebrating this well-deserved achievement.



In preparation for the new academic year, classroom painting and hall renovations continue, along with significant work in the outdoor garden. We are reminded of the beauty and growth surrounding us, much like the vibrant roses blooming in our garden under the guidance of Sr. Shobha.

- Sr. Amita Alex

### St. Mary's, Biratnagar

We had the joy of spending some time with our sisters from Dharan, Siluguri and Kolkata along with a few educationists from Loreto College

Kolkata. This was an initial study of the situation in Nepal before they begin running a school in Dharan.

Sr. Neelu and Fr. Benjamin visited one of the Catholics admitted in the Koshi hospital. Two of our coworkers had to undergo serious surgeries and we visited them and prayed for them. Sr. Neelu went to Prayagraj to attend the funeral of Sr. Celine Pediekal. She managed to reach there just in time for the funeral. She had a very adventurous journey to and fro and reached back safely.

The Award Ceremony marking the closing of the Academic Year 2025/26 was held for both the Primary and Senior Schools, celebrating student achievements and the successful completion of the year. Parents of the recipients and all the sponsors were invited to witness the function.

At the end of the Academic session we had a few farewells. A few teachers were getting married and leaving us and a few others were leaving us due to other personal reasons. With the Report distribution, the school was officially closed. Our community also hosted a farewell lunch for the Bethany Sisters who left Nepal for good. Sisters from Sircia also joined us.

Sr. Vinita our Regional Superior came for Visitation and spent some quality time with the community. Sr. Polrani has completed her final exam of the second year BA/B.Ed.

New admissions, registrations, entrance exams, interviews, reopening for the new session were all put on halt with the new Government's education policy. The rising temperature of Biratnagar sucks away the energy and freshness from all of us. In spite of the heat we had a day out to enjoy the company of one another and have a special ice-cream.



We had Fr. Lawrence Maniyar SJ, for two days training the teachers on various useful classroom techniques to make teaching and learning more joyful. We enjoyed a day out with our coworkers in Hasina Park, a very lovely place to rest and relax. Lots of fun, games, prizes and lunch.

- *Sr. Margaret Mary Vettickapallil*

### Snehanjali, Godavari

On 18th March, the newly constructed grotto at Godavari was solemnly blessed by Fr. Robin Rai, Parish Priest, in a joyful and grace-filled celebration. The occasion was made more special by the presence of Sr. Vinita along with sisters from the valley communities. With hearts full of joy and devotion, the community rejoiced as the statue of Mother Mary was installed, making the grotto a serene space of prayer and blessing within the compound.



We also warmly welcomed Salina Ghale and Shristi Ghale from Tipling, who have come to stay with us as they discern this way of life. Their presence brings hope, joy, and a renewed sense of blessing to our community. Lalita Soren, our candidate preparing for her final Plus Two examinations, has been busy studying and working hard. We wish her God's choicest

blessings as she prepares for this important milestone.



Our other candidates, too, are engaged in their daily classes and activities, growing and learning with dedication. We continue to keep them all in our prayers and support.



Sr. Karuna assisted the parish youth for the prayerful enactment of the Way of the Cross. It was a joyful and grace-filled moment, as it was the first time Assumption Church had witnessed such an enactment. The parishioners deeply appreciated the youth for their prayerful presentation, which brought a spirit of reflection and devotion to the whole community.

- *Sr. Karuna Shrestha*

### Mary Ward, Sircia

The community at Sircia had a meaningful and productive period marked by formation, celebrations, and academic preparation. We joyfully welcomed our newly professed member, Sr. Sarita Murmu, who joined after her home visit.

During the election holidays, the boarders went home to spend time with their families and returned refreshed. After coming back, they resumed their studies with focus and determination for the final

examinations. Sr. Monica was actively engaged at school, preparing question papers and handling exam corrections, while Sr. Mariette guided and supported the boarders in their preparation.

We were delighted to receive our Regional Superior, Sr. Vinita on her official visit to our community. Her presence provided an opportunity for meaningful interaction and shared moments as a community.

During the Holy Week, Srs. Monica and Sarita devoted much of their time to preparing the altar of the Parish Church for the daily liturgical services. On Easter Monday, we joined the Biratnagar sisters for a lunch get-together and later accompanied the community and our co-workers for a picnic at Itahari.

We express our deep gratitude to God for the abundant harvest of mustard and wheat. Our Poultry farm too provides us with sufficient eggs for our daily needs. Adding to this, our cow gave birth to a healthy male calf, and our goat also delivered a male kid increasing the supply of milk. There is eager anticipation as the corn crop ripens in the fields, soon to be harvested. We remain thankful for these signs of growth and providence, which continue to sustain our daily life and work.



The informal evening school has seen a steady increase in the number of students, reflecting

the growing need for academic support in the area. To ensure effective learning, the students have been organized into four groups based on their class levels and the schools they attend. Regular tuition is provided to help them improve their performance and successfully pass their examinations. The students were especially delighted to receive new uniforms generously gifted by Uniform Tailors, a thoughtful gesture that brought them great joy, encouragement, and a stronger sense of confidence and belonging.



Renovation work on the house is currently in full swing. Taking advantage of the time when the boarders are away, significant repairs and improvements are being carried out in the hostel dormitory and toilets. New tiles have been laid, and painting of the rooms has already begun, giving the space a fresh and renewed appearance. The workers are diligently striving to complete the renovation on time, ensuring that all facilities are ready and welcoming before the students return for the new academic session.

- *Sr. Mariette Pinto*

### JPIC Nepal

The JPIC Unit in Pokhara organized a heartfelt initiative where students wrote gratitude notes expressing their love, respect, and appreciation to the teachers and parents. A Peace Walk was conducted in the streets of Pokhara, with the participation of JPIC students, teachers, along with Sr. Jessy. The walk conveyed messages of love, peace, and goodwill, along with best wishes to the nation's leaders for the upcoming election.



St. Mary's, Jawalakhel, marked International Women's Day by honoring former students who are serving the nation in diverse professional fields such as medicine, aviation, engineering, education, and the armed forces, making significant contributions to society. On the same occasion, the founders of various social service organizations were also recognized for their dedication and selfless service to destitute and homeless women and children.



In Biratnagar, the JPIC Unit conducted outreach programmes for both students and teachers. As part of their social service efforts, they donated clothes and food to beneficiaries associated with the Sircia social service initiative.



Similarly, JPIC Gorkha celebrated International Women's Day by honoring teachers and co-workers within their institution. Senior students delivered an awareness speech on HIV/AIDS to educate their peers. Fundraising activities were also conducted as part of their outreach efforts.

- *Sr. Amrita Francis*

**Thank You**