



September ~ 2011



Fr Abraham blessed few tree saplings before we planted them in our SOJASI Memorial Forest



SOJASI Tree Planting project 2011

Dear Friends:

PEACE !!



JOY !!



LOVE !!



Today is a beautiful Wednesday morning to work outside in the gardens. Our monsoon is – almost gone! I said almost. I don't know what it will be like in the afternoon. But rain or without rain Fr Abraham comes to SOJASI every Wednesdays. He used to come up here every day for so many years.

Every mid-monsoon in between, we have continual rain for five days or three days nonstop. I'm not complaining about the rain. We need water too. But the wind around SOJASI is unbelievable. And the combination of heavy rain and strong wind does the damage. Just before the monsoon we had finished putting plastic covers on all the SMVG beds and on the three green houses. The first big storm destroyed everything especially the big green house. Bed plastics were all blown & torn. Plastic of the green house was blown, shredded and the air ventilators were all cracked and scattered everywhere. The big green house was full of vegetable seedlings under it. Heavy rain killed all the tender seedlings and capsicum plants. Sad part we couldn't work in the garden nor could we do any repair work for a long time. The poor workers fourteen of them could not work and couldn't get full week's wages during heavy rain and storm.



We are turning old shed into new cow barn. Cows are an important part of organic farming. We want to start at least with two cows.



Rajesh & Niraj are repairing our backside building walls so they won't seep rainwater and let it inside.



Sharmila I, Sharmila II and Maily preparing polybags for capsicum seedlings.



Glenda Miss is teaching little ones how to draw and paint in our kitchen-cum-classroom.

It is also true that there is always silver lining on every black cloud. One of our favorite projects is tree planting project. And this activity is done during monsoon! But this year we had very few tree saplings with us. We planted our first batch of tree saplings and fodder cuttings on the 3rd August in honor of St. Ignatius, the founder of Jesuit fathers in our Memorial Forest. Fr Abraham blessed the saplings and cuttings before sta It ff and workers planted them. We are reviving our Memorial Forest by planting more trees. For this ongoing process we have turned 18 square meter vegetable beds into tree nursery beds.

There is another silver lining too which makes my heart warm. Two years ago Anita (ex-SASAC worker) and her little 5-year old daughter Neha came to us looking for work and place to live. We welcome them both in our Morningstar home. We put Neha in school and treated her tuberculoses. She had a habit of talking to herself loudly all the time. There were complaints from school because she could not listen. With little bit of love, care and tutoring from home, this year she surprised everyone including herself. She came first in class in her half yearly exams. She is sharp and learns very quickly. She is very happy. Her mother, Anita cooks for us.

At present we have 18 school-going children at home. Upashna the oldest just has joined Kurseong College for her 1st year degree course. Nigma passed his ITI first year and gone to second year. Sajan Simon passed his class ten final year and gone to class eleven. He has taken art subjects. The rest fifteen children are still in school. Another member of our family, Shanti Lucy is writing her second year board nursing exams.

Another silver lining: without your love and concern my children won't be getting an education, food and shelter and poor workers won't be planting trees and getting paid to take care of their families. Thank you so much from the bottom of my heart. May our heavenly Father always smile on all of us.

Sincerely and gratefully yours, *Cecilia George*



It's fun time: Irma, Neha, Dikila, Ishaya and Albu



MorningStar student members 2011