

***Bringing the Methodology of Don Bosco
into the teaching of Human Rights Education***

First posted: 5th January 2011

The Refresher Course for HRE teachers in Andhra Pradesh cruises through the second lap right on schedule. The enthusiasm generated by Prof. Haragopal and Mr. Sudhakar Reddy for the teaching of HRE was the momentum that was waiting to take us through the second day. But the content of the second day itself was more than exhilarating to take us forward on its own steam. The previous day's critique of the present system of education high lighted the vacuum that is there and how HRE can and should fill that vacuum. Day Two was dedicated to examining how the system of education fashioned by Don Bosco through his life experience and his ever abiding presence to his students can be a useful tool to impart HRE.

Accompanied by the rhythmic showers of rain the day began with a short video clipping of the film "Don Bosco". Don Bosco's creative and loving presence was very beautifully portrayed in the clipping.

Mr. Machi Raju and Mr.Sleevaraj presented the report on the proceedings of the previous day. The dynamic and creative Salesian that he is Bro. Gregory led the participants through the historical situations that eventually led to the pedagogical intervention of Don Bosco in support of the poor youth of the time. He briefly dwelled on the guiding principles of the Pedagogy of Presence.

Fr. John Tharakan a practising psychologist and counsellor, introduced to the participants the skills needed to make use of the Pedagogy of Presence particularly Emotional and Listening skills. The sessions were so attractive and informative, the participants kept asking for more and more of such sessions.

After a sumptuous meal served with love we began our quest for understanding what Pedagogy of Presence really is. Fr. Thomas Pallithanam S.D.B in his inimitable style re-packaged the Preventive System of Don Bosco into contemporary thought patterns drawing deeply in to the book written and illustrated by Peter Gonsalves – Growing with the Young - and his own experience in the promotion and protection of human rights. The group work that accompanied the presentation helped to internalise the concepts.

To end the day after the serious sessions involving Knowledge, Skill and Attitudinal capacity building and learning together we had an invigorating cultural-nite animated by the cultural group. It was a great gathering with lots of party games and recreation songs.

With the thanksgiving prayer by Sr. Lalitha Kumari F.M.A raising our hearts and minds to the Giver of all knowledge, Wisdom and Loving Care we ended the day with longing for the dawn which would bring us to another day of learning and companionship.

1) Human rights education in the context of plural cultures and identities in INDIA based on : -

- a. Gender*
- b. Religion*
- c. Caste*
- d. Class*
- e. Education Level*
- f. Access to Political power*
- g. Ethnicity and Regionalism*
- h. Employment opportunities and levels*
- i. Family Background*

A Teacher could have suffered human rights abuse because of his/her identity
So too a child – in and out of school

2)The Education System in INDIA and Child rights

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- a. Hijacking of Education*
- b. Commercialisation of education*
- c. Education increasingly seen as means to “**Quickly rise high in life**”*
- d. Educational Institutes – abuse of child rights – Parental sanction giving to deny child rights in pursuit of High marks in competitive Exams*

*e. Loss of childhood / Loss of Dignity/
DeHumanising and Demoralising
/Abnormal pressure to achieve/ Brokedowns
and suicides*

**3) Moving from a culture of Paying Lip Service
to human Rights to a culture of
promoting and enforcing human rights**

4) Promoting Human Rights for ALL

- a. Including rights of Parents
- b. Including rights of Teachers
- c. Creating a BELIEF in Human Rights to
ENABLE them to Promote Child Rights
- d. You cannot TEACH HUMAN RIGHTS if
YOU cannot hope to have HUMAN
RIGHTS
- e. If you cannot HAVE or HOPE to have
HUMAN RIGHTS, you cannot BELIEVE in
HUMAN RIGHTS
- f. If you do not BELIEVE in HUMAN
RIGHTS you cannot PROMOTE it