**World Braille Day Celebrations**

***EduVision* is the program of The Project Vision to provide support for the higher education of the Visually Challenged persons to empower them to be independent in life. As a part of the *EduVision* program The Project Vision observed the World Braille Day meaningfully by providing Braille equipments to about 25 college going students of Bangalore.**

Louis Braille Day celebration is a commemoration of the birth of Louis Braille, the inventor of the reading and writing system used by millions of blind and partially sighted people all over the globe. This day is celebrated in order to raise awareness about issues faced by blind and the importance of continuing to produce works in Braille, providing the blind with access to the same reading and learning opportunities as the sighted.

On 4th January, 2016 the Project Vision celebrated World Braille day at Malleswaram TPV Office. The celebration was chaired by Rev. Fr James Kannanthanam, the Provincial superior of the Province of Bangalore. The other dignitaries were Dr. Ramesh Halbhavi, former Dy. Director of Women and Child welfare department, Dr. Jayanth, an International trainer and Rev. Fr. George Kannanthanam, the director of TPV. The celebration was marked by the participation of the 25 visually challenged persons and other Volunteers of the Project Vision.

The program began with a prayer song invoking God’s presence by Mahadevamma, a visually challenged college student. The dignitaries lighted the lamp as a sign of Louis Braille becoming the light of the Blind by his invention of the Braille system. Fr. Vincent welcomed the gathering and it was followed by various cultural programs such as speech, singing and playing music instruments performed by the various visually challenged students.

Dr. Ramesh Halbhavi addressed the gathering and appreciated the talents of the performers and encouraged them to grow self-dependent and to be productive in the society. Dr. Jayanth challenged the participants through his words of encouragement and gave some tip on how to grow as an individual and as a team together and assured his help and support to the participants whichever way possible. Dr. Jayanth being a visually challenged person, his life, hard work and his achievements themselves were an inspiration for the participants.

The chief guest of the day Rev Fr. James Kannanthanam gave a beautiful message to the gathering. He stressed on the aspect of how ones limitations can become ones strengths taking the very life example of Louis Braille. He encouraged them to be productive in the society in spite of any disability and inspired them to transform their limitations into possibilities and strengths.

After this Rev Fr. James Kannanthanam distributed I P Braille Slates as a Symbolic gift to all the participants of the day. The program concluded with a tribute song to Louis Braille by the students. Ms Anitha gave the vote of thanks. After the program snacks was served to all.

Thanks for your support.

**A BRIEF HISTORY ON LOUIS BRAILLE**

Louis Braille was born on January 4, 1809, in a small village 25 miles away from Paris in France. At the age of three he lost his Sight probably in an attempt to imitate his father he picked up an awl and tried to punch holes in a piece of leather. As the result of an accident, the awl pierced Louis’ right eye, creating what was thought to be a minor injury. The wound soon became infected, however the infection spread to the other eye, by age five, Louis lost his both eyes.

Louis Braille nevertheless managed to master his disability while still a child. Despite not being able to see at all, he excelled in his education and received scholarship to France’s Royal Institute for Blind Youth. During his studies, inspired by the military cryptography of Charles Barbier of the French Army, he developed a system of tactile code that could allow the blind to read and write quickly and efficiently. Braille presented the results of his hard work to his peers for the first time in 1824 when he was just fifteen years f age. In 1829, he published his first book about the system he had created, called “Method of Writing Words, Music, and Plain Songs by Means of Dots, for Use by the Blind and Arranged for Them”. The Braille system works by representing the alphabet letters (and numbers) in a series of 6 dots paired up in 3 rows. The simplicity of his idea allowed books to start being produced on a large scale in a format that thousands of blind people can read by running their fingertips over the dots. Thanks to this, blind students have the opportunity to be educated alongside their peers as well as read for pleasure just as easily as any seeing person can.