

THE SECULAR CITIZEN

A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

Vol.24 No.51 ■ Mumbai, December 21, 2015 ■ Rs. 20

Christmas
Special
2015

THE SECULAR CITIZEN

Team, Wishes Readers, Patrons, Friends,
Well-wishers, Contributors and Advertisers

A Merry Christmas &
A Peace Filled Happy New Year 2016

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son,
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”
(John 3:16)*



*As you celebrate Christmas...
May Christ's love fill your hearts,
His Joy dwell in your lives and
His Peace adorn your home.
May every blessing of
Christmas be yours;
and the coming year be
filled with happiness.*

**Have a Christ filled Christmas and
A Joyful New Year 2016.**



**RYAN
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL -CBSE,
MALAD**

Plot No.27, Near Navjeevan Society,
Evershine Nagar, Malad (W), Mumbai – 400 064
Email: rismaladcbse@ryangroup.org

www.ryaninternational.org

Call: 022-28886655 / 28806655

Christmas Greetings

*Wishing one and all a Merry Christmas
and a Prosperous New Year 2016*



Francis Fernandes Cascia

**Comedy King Francis Fernandes Cascia
a Star in the Konkani world
A talented Actor, Director and Writer,
He has staged shows all over the world.**

St. Mary's English High School & Junior College

K.G. to STD XII

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year



Nana Shankar Seth Road,
Garibacha Wada, Mahatma Phule Road, Dombivli West.
Mob.: 9224236368 / 9220288005



Wishing A Merry Christmas & Happy New Year - 2016

from **BENN GROUP OF COMPANIES**

MANUFACTURERS OF ELECTRICAL MACHINES AND CONTROLS



Leading Suppliers to

1. **Industrial Drives** : DC Motors for Drives (Variable Speed) to Industries like Plastic, Paper, Textile, steel/copper Rolling mills etc..
2. **Electric Vehicle Drives** : For Battery powered Pallet & Platform Trucks, Forklifts, Mining / Tunnel Locos etc..
3. **Amusement Industries** : DC Motors for Dashing Cars, Baby trains and Merry Go Rounds etc..
4. **Educational Institutes** : ITIs/ Polytechnics / Engineering Colleges / IITs - for Electrical M/c Labs.

Benn the better solution



Benn Electricals Pvt. Ltd.

A-5 MIDC Mira, Near Dahisar Check Naka,
W. Exp. Highway, Dist. Thane.
Mumbai - 401 104 (India)
Tele : 91-22-28455306 Fax : 28454105
Email : benn@vsnl.com

Benn Electricals

B-4, Vikas Udyog Nagar,
Near Railway Crossing,
Dist. Thane, Bhayandar (E).
Mumbai - 401 105 (India)
Telefax : 91-22-28192419 / 28192976
Email : bennelectricals@gmail.com

ABDEC Electricals

J-2/B, Vikas Udyog Nagar,
Near Railway Crossing,
Dist. Thane, Bhayandar (E).
Mumbai - 401 105 (India)
Telefax : 91-22-28119329

Visit us @ www.bennelec.com

1916-2016 **100** YEARS OF GROWTH

Merry Christmas



MODEL CO-OP. BANK LTD.

Your Development Partner Since a 100 years!

Amboli - 26774206, Andheri(E) - 28371714, Borivli - 28922967, CBD Belapur - 27579047, Dahisar - 28918243, Fort - 2266 0649, Ghatkopar - 2501 0354, Kanjur Marg - 2577 9672, Mahim - 2445 5600, Malad - 2861 7056, Mira Road - 2812 2638, Mulund - 2591 4677, Thane - 2534 1550, Vasai - 0250 - 3291322, Vashi - 2766 9047
website: www.modelbank.in

*Wishing You
A Merry Christmas
and
A Happy
New Year 2016*

HENRY LOBO

Heniel Pack

D-105, Ghatkopar Industrial Estate,
Lalbahadur Shastri Marg, Mumbai - 400 086
☎ : 25007173 ● 67969714 ● Fax : 25007194
Email ID : heniel@rediffmail.com



Preema Packaging

OFFSET PRINTERS

Manufacturers of Printing & Packaging Materials

A-27, Nandkishore Industrial Estate, Mahakali Caves Road,
Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400 093

☎ : 26875960 ● 26875039 ● 26875950 ● ● 65149635 Fax : 6691 5152
E-mail : preema@mtnl.net.in / preemapackaging07@yahoo.co.in

Email ID : preema@vsnl.net



Mrs. & Mr. Joseph Pereira

Mema Control Systems

B-36, William Compound, Mithchowky
Marve Road, Malad (W),
Mumbai - 400064

Tel.: 28061125 / 28885307
Email: memacon@vsnl.net / memacon@gmail.com

ALTINA ESSAY CONTEST 2015

Winners



2nd Prize
- Rs 15,000/-
Danish Zahoor, Pune



1st Prize
- Rs 25,000/-
Ratika Agarwal, Mumbai



3rd Prize
- Rs 10,000/-
Natasha Vadakedath, New Jersey, USA



SPECIAL PRIZE - Rs 3,000/-
Natasha Vadakedath, Qatar, Doha

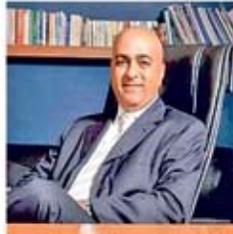
JUDGES 2015



Uma Krishnan
Executive Director
J.P.Morgan
(India) Pvt. Ltd.



Tapan Ray
Senior Partner
Price Waterhouse Coopers
(India) Pvt. Ltd.



Harish Thawani
Founder
Nimbus Communications Ltd.



Clifton DeSilva
Director
Altina Securities Pvt. Ltd.

ALTINA ENTREPRENEUR EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2015



Anthony Gomes
Furtados Music India Pvt. Ltd.



Joseph D'Souza
Alf Engineering Pvt. Ltd.



Albert D'Souza
SJCET



Edward Menezes
Rossari Biotech Ltd.



Stelson Quadros
Express Pesticides Pvt. Ltd.

***Wishing one and all
A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year 2016***

From
Johnson Therattil & Alice Johnson
M/s. Nice Printing Inks & Coatings
**Mfrs. of : Flexographic &
Rotogravure Printing Inks**



Johnson G. Therattil

Member - State Level Consultative Committee of F.C.I Govt. of India.
Union Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution
General Secretary: Pradyashil Karuna Manav Abhiyan
Maharashtra Human Rights

Alice Johnson Therattil

Member - Maharashtra State Consumer Protection Council - Govt. of Maharashtra.
Ex-Mumbai Municipal Corporator
Gen. Secretary - Mumbai Pradesh Mahila Congress Committee.
President - (Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Social Forum, Maharashtra Rajya
as Mumbai Shahar Mahila Aaghadi)
Mumbai Pradesh Congress Committee - Niradhar Nirashrit Vakti Mahila

***Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year 2016***



GABRIAL ELECTRICAL PVT. LTD.

(ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS AND GOVT. LICENSED CONTRACTORS)

Regd. Off.: 43, Kuber Complex, Link Road, Andheri (W), Mumbai - 400 053.

Admn. Off.: 209/C Wing, Neminath Apartment, Tejpal Road, Vile Parle (East), Mumbai - 400 057.

Tel.: 2612 4202 / 2615 1920 / 6693 8796 **Fax :** 2610 1867

E-mail : gabrial@vsnl.com / gabrial@hathway.com

● **EXPERIENCED IN ALL TYPES OF ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION AND ASSOCIATED WORKS**

- HAVE SUCCESSFULLY EXECUTED PRESTIGIOUS PROJECTS OF REPUTED :
- **Research & Development Labs and Institutions** ● **Banks, I.T., Investment & Financial Institutions**
- **Educational Institutions & Industrial Corporates** ● **Hospitals** ● **Commercial Offices & Establishments**
- **Shopping Malls** ● **Art Galleries** ● **Show-Rooms** ● **Hotels, Restaurants & Resorts** ● **Factories and Residential Buildings**

PRECISION ● SAFETY ● EXCELLENCE ● QUALITY ● PERFECTION



ST. JOHN TECHNICAL CAMPUS

Wishes You A Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year



MANAGEMENT MMS (MBA)



ENGINEERING

Degree - Civil / Mechanical / EXTC / Computer / I.T.
Diploma - Civil / Mechanical / EXTC



PHARMACY Degree & Diploma



HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES

B.Sc. (Hospitality Studies) B.Sc. (I.T.) B.M.S.
B.Com. B.B.I. B.A.F. B.A.

Christian Religious Minority Institutions

Approved by AICTE / PCI / DTE / University of Mumbai / MSBTE

Vevoor, Manor Road, Palghar (East), Dist. Palghar - 401 404, Maharashtra.

Mob: 07387203232 Ph: 02525 - 254846 / 256486

Ph: 022 - 28910964 / 32683292 Email: aet.office@aldel.org Website: www.aldel.in

Finding the Love of Your Life!



In its service spanning over 35 years,
ROYAL CHRISTIAN FAMILY
has helped thousands of marriageable boys and girls
in finding their suitable Life-partner
from its wide data-bank of Christian Brides and Grooms
from across India and all over the world

Royal Christian Family

99, Perin Nariman (Bazargate) Street, 1st Floor,
(Above Mahesh Paper Mart & Dr. Kothari Clinic), Nr. CST & GPO
Fort, Mumbai 400001

Tel.: 91-22-22693578, 22654924

Email: secular@vsnl.com , secular@sezariworld.com

THE SECULAR CITIZEN

A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

Vol.24 No.51 December 21, 2015 Rs.20/-

99, Perin Nariman Street, Fort, Mumbai - 400 001.
 Tel: 2269 35 78 / 2265 49 24, 2264 0996
 E-mail : secular@vsnl.com, secular@sezariworld.com
 Website: www.secularcitizen.com
 www.sezariworld.com
 Editor-in-chief : LAWRENCE COELHO
 Editor: PHILIP MYABOO

Contents

There will be no issue

SECULAR CITIZEN
 dated 28-12-2015.

Our next issue will be
 dated 04-01-2016
 (i.e. Vol.25 No.1)

—*Publisher*

THE SECULAR CITIZEN

Team
 Wishes Readers, Patrons,
 Friends, Well-wishers,
 Contributors
 and
 Advertisers

Merry Christmas
 &
 A Peace Filled Happy
 New Year 2016

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Wish you... "Merry Christmas"! | Dr. Trevor Colaso | 12 |
| Jesus, Prince of Peace | Ladislaus L. D'Souza | 13 |
| With Eyes of Mercy | Vera Alvares | 15 |
| For Peace and Mercy ... | Ella Almeida | 17 |
| Christmas Perfect TEN | Fr. George Olivera, ofm | 18 |
| The Little Baby Jesus - ... | Melville X. D'Souza | 20 |
| The Heart of Christmas | Fr. Cedric Prakash SJ | 21 |
| Beyond the Manger | Capt. John Lobo | 22 |
| Wanted: CEO for Peace Unlimited | Chhotebhai | 24 |
| Christmas' Beauty and Charm | Leon Bent | 26 |
| Mera Ghar... My Home | Adv. Aileen Marques | 27 |
| How Far to Bethlehem? | Bernie Tellis | 28 |
| Christmas 2015 will bring ... | Dr. Leo Rebello | 29 |
| Putting Christ Back into Christmas | Fr. Anil Rego | 30 |
| Jesus Christ, The prince of peace | A. F. Nazreth | 31 |
| | | |
| The Christmas Story | Don Aguiar | 32 |
| Christmas - The Season of Giving | Irwin Almeida | 35 |
| Merry Christmas | | 36 |
| The Jubilee Year of Mercy Defined | Melwyn Brown | 37 |
| O Holy Night ! | Vera Alvares | 38 |
| Christmas Carols | Peter Castellino | 40 |
| Our Rights, Our Freedoms. Always! | Fr. Cedric Prakash S.J. | 41 |
| When Magi Camped in Bethlehem | Dr. Ralph F. Wilson | 42 |
| 5 Completely different New Year's... | | 44 |
| The Gift of Forgiveness | John William Smith | 46 |
| Innocent Child | Don Aguiar | 48 |
| Season of Joy | Jubel D'Cruz | 50 |
| Climate - Out of Control | George D'Souza | 52 |
| The Fourth Wise Man | Jubel D'Cruz | 53 |
| The Light of Christmas | Denis Khan | 55 |
| Matrimonials | | 56 |
| The Jubilee and the Holy Door | Dr. Trevor Colaso | 58 |

Wish You A Biblical "Merry Christmas"!

by Dr Trevor Colaso

These Scriptural verses remind one of the Significance of Jesus Christ's Birth or Incarnation in one's daily life. All quotations are taken from the New Testament. Read them; meditate on them; and "Rejoice in the Lord always ... And the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:4 ... 7).

- "MERRY CHRISTMAS"!

M - Messiah: - "Andrew first found his brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the 'Messiah' - which is translated as 'Anointed' (Jn 1:41)".

E - Example: - "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an "Example", so that you should follow in His steps" (1Pet 2:21).

R - Ransom: - "For the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a 'Ransom' for many" (Mk 10:45).

R - Resurrection: - "I AM the 'Resurrection' and the Life. Those who believe in Me, even though they die, will live" (Jn 11:25).

Y - Yes: - "For in Christ every one of God's promises is a "Yes". For it is through Him that we say the "Amen" to the glory of God" (2 Cor 1:20).

C - Covenant: - "For this is My Blood of the new 'Covenant', which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Mt 26:28).

H - Head: - "Christ is the 'Head' of the Body the Church. He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, so that He might come to have the first place in everything" (Col 1:18).

R - Righteousness & Redemption: - "Christ is the source of your life, Who became for us wisdom from God, and 'Righteousness' and sanctification and 'Redemption' (1 Cor 1:30)"

I - Immanuel: - "Look, the virgin shall conceive a Son, and they shall name Him 'Immanuel', which means "God is with us" (Mt 1:23).

S - Son: - "For God so loved the world that he gave His only 'Son', so that every one who believes in Him may have eternal life" (Jn 3:16).

T - Teacher: - "The 'Teacher' says, "My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples" (Mt 26:18).

M - Mediator: - "For there is one God; there is also one 'Mediator' between God and humankind, Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5).

A - Advocate: - "But if any one does sin, we have an 'Advocate' with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous" (1 Jn 2:1).

S - Shepherd: - "I AM the good 'Shepherd'. The good 'Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep" (Jn 10:11).

Because of the Birth of Jesus Christ, "The Word become Flesh" (Jn 1:14), we also are born again: "You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring 'Word' of God" (1 Pet 1:23).

Jesus, Prince Of Peace

Born to be PRIEST-PROPHET-KING

Everybody loves a baby! A baby warms the cockles of one's heart like nothing else ever can! A baby may be helpless in that it is totally dependent on its mother for its sustenance. And yet there's no gainsaying the fact that a baby has everyone around its little finger, what with those concerned either hanging on to each little sound or gurgle that escapes its cherubic mouth or being kept on their toes with its weeping and whining, earning itself the title 'prince of wails'! All this is accompanied with thoughts like 'what will this li'l angel one day be?' 'after whom will this bundle of joy take, I wonder?' 'will our baby become someone important some day?' which brings us to one of the most significant Christmas carols ever, viz., "What Child Is This...?"

The carol in question, first published in 1871, is based on a poem titled "The Manger Throne" written by the ailing Englishman named William Chatterton Dix in the year 1865. At one sweep Dix takes us through the purpose for which the Christ-child came to birth and that is, to be king over fallen humankind saved by him. Scripture however is very clear about the fact that Jesus, born to be king, was born to be priest and prophet too.

Threefold office – Scriptural Roots [prophet: Deut 18:14-22; priest: Ps 110:1-4; king: Ps 2]

Known as the 'hypostatic union', there are but two natures in Jesus Christ, i.e. he is both divine and human at the same time. Further, his triple role in our redemption, known in Latin as



by Ladislaus L
D'Souza

munus triplex, isn't a figment of a believer's imagination but considered hardcore Christian doctrine rooted in both Old and New Testament teachings by most mainline churches including the Presbyterian and the Lutheran. This triple function of Jesus manifests itself in ways and means unique unto itself, not least significantly in Jesus' own words: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (Jn 14:6). As 'priest' he is the Life, as 'prophet' he is the Truth and, lastly, as 'king' he is the Way.

The Word (Logos in Greek) is Light. As the true Light (Jn 1:1-18), Jesus Christ exclusively enlightens humankind in the office of Prophet. "If thou wilt be perfect... come follow me". Thus the term

messiah, meaning "anointed one", is associated with the concept of the threefold office. While the office of king is that most frequently associated with the Messiah, the role of Jesus as priest is also prominent in the New Testament, being most fully explained in Hebrews 7 to 10.

Foundational element

If Easter is the *raison d'être* of the Christian Faith, Christmas is its foundation. For in the Incarnation the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity became man precisely so that he'd sanctify us in his Life, thus mending the broken link between divinity and humanity since Eden; envelop us in the mystery of the Truth that he is from all time and proclaims, even dying for it; and be the Way by which he'd lead us back to himself - which brings us to the significance of our baptism. Baptism is a sacrament that enjoins on us the responsibility to give flesh in and by our own lives to both the Incarnation and the Resurrection amidst the reality

of one's personal situation and in the situation of the world around. This involves the Alberionean principle of the Pauline charism, viz. to live and give to the world, Jesus Master, the Way, the Truth and the Life. In fact, Catholic theology looks at Baptism not so much as a symbolic sign of being a believer but an essential means by which a person is incorporated into Christ thereby becoming not merely a member of Christ's mystical body the Church but, with the Lord's own grace, an alter Christus – another Christ, in virtually the same way and measure as Christ himself became man at the Nativity in Bethlehem. Saint Francis d'Assisi was hailed as an alter Christus by Pope Pius XI and with good reason, too. A poor friar by choice of vocation, he was rich in the Christian life in that he gave

flesh to the Gospel in and through his own life to the point of sharing first in the stigmata of crucified King and Lord and then in his nakedness, insisting that he be laid bare on bare earth, his mission—encapsulated in his mandate to his friars: “Go preach the Gospel, if necessary use words”—as a baptized believer fully accomplished. With and to Jesus Francis could well and truly say: “I have glorified you on earth: I have finished the work you entrusted to me” (Jn 17:4).

Perfection, a Christian ideal

The parallel between Baptism and biblical anointing is striking to say the least. At baptism we are anointed with oil, just as in the Old Testament, priests, prophets, and kings were anointed with oil when assuming office. The ancient Romans considered the priest as ‘pontifex’, i.e. bridge-builder, a link between the Creator and His human creation. What Christmas celebrates in the incarnation is the opening of human entry into God’s divinity by Jesus as confirmed by the mandate he gives us in the Gospel: “Be ye perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt 4:58). Christmas thus comes through as the feast of a striving for godly perfection on the part of man, with God Himself going the whole hog of coming to earth for our sake as man. Can anything match that!

Though prone to sin as a result of being fully human and fully divine, Christ refrained from giving in to the snares of temptation demonstrating unequivocally that in him, human nature was merely assumed rather than absorbed. Hebrews puts it most succinctly: “We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin” (4:15). Thus as a priest Christ fully understands human nature and is therefore able to empathize with us, even as he serves as pontifex between falling, failing humankind and its Maker. The Church teaches that “the Son of God...worked with human hands; he thought with a human mind. He acted

with a human will, and with a human heart he loved. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like to us in all things except sin” (CCC 470).

Christmas and Baptism

The key to the renewal of human society as a whole is a recovery of the deepest meaning of Baptism: to become priestly, prophetic, and kingly people. One could dare say that in the perfection related assertion of Jesus one sees the compelling presence of the prophet and king elements as well. Jesus responded to the call of his baptism to be prophet, priest and king. What is our response as baptized Christians? Perhaps we might shy away from even thinking in terms of being referred to as prophets, imagining that a prophet is someone insane, unhinged! Or as priests or king arguing that the holy-holy priestly trait is not for us, nor are we born into royalty. Further, as prophet, Jesus could sound like a prophet of doom when he says: “Do you think I have come to bring peace to earth? No, I tell you, but division” (Lk 12:51). Insane man, this prophet named Jesus! And yet, the discerning will see in this

statement a challenge of sorts – peace is to be earned, not taken for granted. G.K. Chesterton said that in an upside-down world such as ours, the prophet is one who stands on his head so that he might see things aright! Indeed, even as Jesus says that his kingdom is not of this world, he makes a concession in terms of giving us peace on our sojourn on earth when he says, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you” (Jn 14:27). Indeed, wasn’t it peace the angels sang about when they heralded the news of Jesus’ virgin birth that holy, silent night? Emmanuel: God-with-us born to be king over all – a king whose dominion extends from the perfection of the heavenly realm to the imperfection of a world dominated by imperfect man. After all, as Saint Peter declares: “You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Pet 2:9)!

May the glow of Christ the wonderful light enlighten our minds and hearts this Christmas and always!

MATRIMONIAL

Mumbai based Mangalorean Respected, affluent catholic parents invite alliance for their handsome son 35 years, fair, tall, well built, well placed & highly qualified 1st marriage annuled by the church. Girl should be slim, fair, well educated, God fearing having good values and of a good family background and status. Please contact with photograph and all details to

Email: secular1979@gmail.com

With Eyes of Mercy

The Catholic world will celebrate one year dedicated to mercy. This jubilee year of Mercy which was announced by Pope Francis on 13 March, 2015 is about to commence on 8th December, 2015 and will come to a close on 20th November, 2016. During this year the Catholic Church will celebrate mercy through prayer, pilgrimage, Sacraments and acts of mercy.

One does not need a Retreat, or a renowned preacher to open one's eyes and see Mercy's presence in every situation in the life of a Christian- so I thought! Mercy is compassion, culminating in forgiveness and charity, as understood by an ordinary Christian like me. However, sometimes as powerful words from the pulpit greatly help the laity to identify mercy and its manifestations in their lives. Holy Father Pope Francis, feeling the need of the hour, has declared a jubilee year of mercy beginning on 8th December 2015 and ending on November 20th, 2016, the Feast of Christ the King. Pope Francis defines it as "Mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instills in us the courage to look to the future with hope." To the laity, it is a call to redefine concepts of justice and righteousness against the backdrop of mercy and in the light of the Holy Father's call to celebrate a year dedicated to mercy.

In 'Misericordiae Vultus' the Bill of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, the Holy Father cites the examples from the life of Jesus to emphasise that Church's mission is mercy. "Jesus, seeing the crowds of people who followed him, realized that they were

tired and exhausted, lost and without a guide, and he felt deep compassion for them (cf. Mt 9:36). On the basis of this compassionate love he healed the sick who were presented to him (cf. Mt 14:14), and with just a few loaves of bread and fish he satisfied the enormous crowd (cf. Mt 15:37). What moved Jesus in all of these situations was nothing other than mercy, with which he read the hearts of those he encountered and responded to their deepest need. When he came upon the widow of Nain taking her son out for burial, he felt great compassion for the immense suffering of this grieving mother, and he gave back her son by raising him from the dead (cf. Lk 7:15). After freeing the demoniac in the country of the Gerasenes, Jesus entrusted him with this mission: "Go



BY VERA ALVARES

home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you" (Mk 5:19). The calling of Matthew is also presented within the context of mercy. Passing by the tax collector's booth, Jesus looked intently at Matthew. It was a look full of mercy that forgave the sins of that man, a sinner and a tax collector, whom Jesus chose – against the hesitation of the disciples – to become one of the Twelve. Saint Bede the Venerable, commenting on this Gospel passage, wrote that Jesus looked upon Matthew with merciful love and chose him: miserando atque eligendo.[7] This expression impressed me so much that I chose it for my Episcopal motto."

Pope Francis has chosen the motto "Miserando atque eligendo", meaning "lowly but chosen"; literally in Latin 'by having mercy, by choosing him'. The passage chosen for the occasion "Be



merciful, just as your Father is merciful' (Lk 6:36)" sums up the Heavenly Father's love for us sinners. It is never far from the mind of any practicing Christian that it was this love for sinners that made him send his only Son Jesus to die for us. When the devotion to 'Divine Mercy' was launched most of us used it to plead for the forgiveness

of our sins, for we had discovered the close connection between forgiveness and mercy. So it is with joyful anticipation of the many new things that will be revealed to us in the coming year, that we greet the Jubilee Year of Mercy as the Father's gift to us!

The Church teaches and practises the following works of mercy and every Catholic is taught to live out these acts of mercy. To feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit prisoners and bury the dead are considered the Corporal works of mercy. The spiritual works of mercy are: teach the ignorant, Counsel the doubtful, comfort the sorrowful, bear wrongs patiently, forgive all injuries, pray for the living and the dead

Having learnt these works of mercy as children Catholics practice these unconsciously, since these acts have become part of our daily rituals. Our parishes have become hubs of this charitable works, through either individuals or organisations. But what is consciously attempted is devotion to Divine Mercy, from the time the Feast of Divine Mercy was granted to the Universal Church by Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the canonization of Sr. Faustina Kowalska on 30 April 2000. The Sunday after Easter is celebrated as Divine Mercy Sunday. For many years we in Mumbai have been celebrating the feast in our churches with Triduum, 3 to 9 days of Novena,

Eucharist and homilies by speakers well-versed with the topic. We have valued the opportunities we received to participate actively in the celebration and spared no effort to understand the implications of being at the receiving end of mercy. Despite all this, I recall the occasion when the Lord gathered his people to himself and mercy said it all.....

A month prior to the Divine Mercy Sunday on 12th April 2015, Pope Francis had announced the Extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy to commence on 8th December 2015. But, the significance of this great event would take time to sink into the conscienceless of simple ordinary lay people living in smaller towns, deeply involved in the present than in the future....

To understand this, one needs to peer into the background of these simple people's spirituality. For believers here, the day begins with the Eucharist and ends with the Rosary and a hymn to the heavenly Mother. One memory stands out. In the month of May, the lines of the hymn 'Singing hymns to our mother, tis her own month of May' emanating at various intervals from every household in the locality went on and on making it a gay medley of joyful singing! Even at other times, led by the senior family members, prologue to the Rosary include besides intercession to the Holy Family and all the heavenly hordes, prayers for family members present, absent, dead or alive! Children set a pattern by yawning, dozing and simply switching off this main line to heaven, their hungry stomachs rumbling louder than their voices. It happened to all of us, but a regimen of prayer was firmly established and lives were moulded into the ways of the Spirit without anyone realising it. All that time spent around the family altar has borne fruit and children now grown into adults are so rooted in Faith that they miss no opportunity to flock to the churches and shrines for every religious celebration. Now, on this Feast of Divine Mercy, I stood witness to this fact!

Thus on the feast of Divine Mercy in 2015, I found myself attending the Eucharist and other devotions at St. Anne's Friary which now has grown into a retreat centre in my home town, Mangalore. The invitations had gone out through word of mouth, reaching the hamlets and townships around the city. Eager to flock to the crucified Lord from whose side gushed forth the two streams of blood and water to wash away the sins of all humanity, crowds of believers thronged the open-air venue. It was estimated that nearly two and half thousand people had gathered there. Young and old in all their finery poured into the shrine using all forms of transport. Jesus had said to St. Faustina one day, "Humanity will never find peace until it turns with trust to Divine Mercy"- (from the Diary of St. Faustina). Was this the humanity seeking peace, trusting in the promise of Jesus Christ?

The proceedings commenced with the melodious singing of the Divine Mercy chaplet, followed by intercessory prayer and worship. Eucharist was a solemn celebration shared by the congregation whole-heartedly. Used to the lukewarm whispers as responses back home, I found this new experience thrilling and joined in proclaiming the unfamiliar responses- as Don Moen advises, "shout to the Lord all the Earth....!"

The devotion of 'Divine Mercy' was actively promoted by Pope John Paul II. On April 30, 2000, the Canonization of Faustina Kowalska took place and the Sunday after Easter was officially designated as the Sunday of the Divine Mercy. On April 22, 2001, which was one year after establishing Divine Mercy Sunday, Pope John Paul II re-emphasized its message in the resurrection context of Easter: Divine Mercy is the Easter gift that the Church receives from the risen Christ and offers it to humanity. The humanity assembled at this shrine that day was indeed a crowd of Paschal people, il-

luminated from within, radiating happiness. If some of them came to lay their burdens of worries and illness beneath the cross, there were no visible signs of it. Mercy saw it all...

In the throng of thousands, there were known faces and also unfamiliar strangers who became friends under the banner of mercy that flew so high! The noon sun had turned towards West by the time the service ended. Tired and hungry, the people had come to hear the Lord and could not be sent home hungry. "I have compassion on the crowd because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat...." (Mark 8: 2) Compassion of the kind Master was in evidence once again! Just as I was thinking that a miracle similar to the multiplication of fish and loaves, where Jesus feeds the multitude had to happen, a sumptuous lunch materialised from deep within the premises. The food kept coming and till every hungry soul was fed on the local favourite of chicken, pork and home-cooked Sannas. The multiplication story behind the feeding of more than two thousand faithful was revealed later- generous hearts from surrounding villages and towns and even from across the Gulf had dipped deep into their pockets to supply the best and freshest of ingredients, the Lord would have been proud of. To set in motion these two Corporal acts of mercy of feeding the hungry and giving drink to the thirsty, many people had come willingly and readily! Mercy showed it all....

Apparently such acts of mercy are a way of life with these simple people who do not aspire to be counted among the elite of the church. But moved by pity and compassion for the less fortunate brethren or simply out of a sense of charity they willingly share what little they have and the corporal acts of mercy such as feeding the hungry and thirsty, donating clothes, building homes, visiting hospitals and prisons, attending funerals are an integral part of their existence! Does it cost much to look at others with eyes of mercy?

FOR PEACE AND MERCY GET TO THE CRIB THIS CHRISTMAS



Come all ye Faithful, hear the cries of the weeping world making demands for your **HELPING HANDS, YOUR WORKS OF MERCY**. Mercy extended from you to others will be the Mercy extended from God to you.

Shunning away all forms of pride, get to the crib and stand in humility before the Holy Babe of Bethlehem. Shut your eyes and pray for Wisdom to hear and understand **HIS VOICE**. Offer to God your mind with all its faulty thinking. Offer to Him your speech that often hurts others. Then offer to Him your eyes that see what should not be seen, your ears that hear what should not be heard, your hands often used for wrong purposes and your feet often gone the wrong way. Lastly offer to Baby Jesus your heart often filled with resentment and unforgiveness. Then open your eyes and with a smile to Baby Jesus sing, 'change my heart, Dearest Babe, may I be like You'.

What a Babe of Bethlehem! What a **SHINING EXAMPLE** to this dark world! Imagine the countless bumps and tosses the Baby Jesus endured When in His Mother's womb as she travelled the 70-80 miles on donkey back on the way to Bethlehem. And His Mother tolerating all those body jerks, with no back rest during the last stages of her pregnancy. And the difference with us - murmuring and grumbling over the slightest inconvenience in our lives. discontentment personified. Are we in the world of to-day moving further and further away from Heaven by our individualism and egoism?

Lord, touch our blindness that we may see and not grope in darkness. Lord, we are sinking deeper and deeper into the pit of total darkness and groping to find a way out

Be our Way, our Truth and our Life as we cling to you and your Promises to be blessed

Now and Forever
—**Ella Almeida**

Christmas Perfect TEN

Perfect Ten score is the norm of perfection in the academics, sports and games and other allied subjects. Jesus downward mobility was the Perfect Ten in the Eyes of Abba Father – for he was well-pleased in the Eyes of the Father. Our pray-back to heavenly Father surely is a perfect Ten towards way of perfection. Why not strike a perfect Ten during a Christmastide. This is an opportune time God-given to strike a perfect Ten. After all we are heroes by the grace of God, otherwise we are just zeroes without God!

Here is a A Christmas List penned by an Anonymous: "Fear less, hope more; Eat less, chew more; Whine less, breathe more; Talk less, say more; Hate less, love more; And all good things will be yours."

Perfect Ten Christmas Acts fetch us a Perfect Ten through the Eyes of Father. Make it a Christmas Pact – an secret act known to only Abba Father not to well orchestrate to your neighbours – let is be known only to your God and to you only!

The following are the perfect Acts for a Perfect Christmas!

1.Participate in the Christmas Liturgy:-

Saint John Paul II says:"The mystery of the Holy Night, which historically happened two thousand years ago, must be lived as a spiritual event in the 'today' of the Liturgy; "The Word who found a dwelling in Mary's womb comes to knock on the heart of every person with singular intensity this Christmas."

Season of Christmas begins with the Solemn Liturgy of the Mass in a Church on a Christmas Day. It could be a Mid-night Mass or a Holy Mass during the Christmas day – well-attended, fully



Fr. George Olivera,
Mysore



participated ushers a joy-filled Season. Breaking of the Word, Breaking of the Bread and Breaking of Fellowship in a spirit of Adoration, Benediction, Celebration and Devotion is a perfect start for a Blessed Christmas. Not to miss a visit to the Christmas Crib is added incentive for a prayerful celebrations

2.Reflect on the Christmas Story

James F. Colaianni reflects on the Christmas Story in a relevant manner: "The Christmas story reminds us once again it was not man's idea that the Son of God should be born in a stable. And so the first thing we learn from Jesus' birth is that the Lord will not always be found where we expect to find Him. We tend to look for Him in the nice, the clean, the warm. We expect Him to be in churches and in the Bible and in hymns of praise and in Christmas cards which have Scripture verses on them...And if these are the only places we search for the Lord, then we're not looking in the stable.

This reality is expressed with dramatic force in these lines from Michael Quoist's book called Prayers: I am not made of plaster, nor of stone, nor of bronze. I am living flesh throbbing, suffering. I am among men [and women] and they have not recognized Me. I am poorly paid, I am unemployed, I live in a slum. I am sick, I sleep under bridges, I am in prison. I am oppressed, I am patronized. I sweat men's blood on all battlefields. I cry out in the night and die in the solitude of battle. And yet I said to them: 'Whatever you do to My brothers [or sisters], however humble, you do to Me.' That's clear! The terrible thing is that they know it, but don't take it seriously."

3.Sing a Christmas Carol:

"A noted poet was once asked in an interview if he could explain one of his poems 'in ordinary terms.' He replied with some feeling, 'If I could say what I meant in ordinary terms I would not have had to write the poem.'

From the time of Christ's birth the people of God have 'had to write a poem' to Christmas, composing a single multi-stranded paean of praise spanning the centuries, because ultimately the meaning of Christmas resists being fully spelled out 'in ordinary terms.'"

4.Make a Christmas Prayer:

Here are a few sample prayers to make your own Christmas Prayer during this Season: Frank :Borman on Apollo 8 space mission 1968 made the following Christmas Eve : "Give us, O God, the vision which can see Your love in the world in spite of human failure. Give us the faith to trust Your goodness in spite of our ignorance and weakness. Give us the knowledge that we may continue to pray with understanding hearts. And show us what each one of us can do to set forward the coming of

(Contd.. on p. 19)

(Contd.. from p. 18)

the day of universal peace."

Another Contemporary Christmas Prayer for our times: "May the forgiving spirit of Him to whom we dedicate this season prevail again on earth. May hunger disappear and terrorists cease their senseless acts. May people live in freedom, worshipping as they see fit, loving others. May the sanctity of the home be ever preserved. May peace, everlasting peace, reign supreme." It is worthwhile to make your own prayer during the Yuletide.

5. Greet a Lonely Person during Christmas Season

Mother Teresa says: Be kind and merciful. Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. In this high-tech Universe many live lonely lives. In the inner chambers of our lives – we are terribly lonely people. At times the inner contents of our lives is filled loneliness, hostilities and illusions. Best way to self-liberate from these web of fake realities to reach out to the lonely neighbours around us. Greeting the lonely with a smile and the Inner Peace begins from there. Christmas Season is a season of Reaching out from our hostilities to hospitable smiles; Reaching out from loneliness to solitude i.e., Alone with the Alone; Reaching out from the self-generative illusions to Prayer.

6. Visit the Home for the Elderly

Mother Teresa says: Keep giving Jesus to your people, not by words, but by your example, by your being in love with Jesus, by radiating holiness and spreading his fragrance of love everywhere you go. Just keep the joy of Jesus as your strength. Be happy and at peace. Visiting the Elderly in the home for the aged is your way of saying that God visits them during the Christmas Season. It is proactive gesture on your part to give meaning to Divine Mercy in your social praxis. Teresa of Avila says: Christ has no body now, but yours.

No hands, no feet on earth, but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ looks compassion into the world. Yours are the feet with which Christ walks to do good. Yours are the hands with which Christ blesses the world.

7. Gift a Present to a Poor Person

These Christmas Thoughts from an Anonymous author: "It's sharing your gifts, not purchasing gifts; It's not wrapping presents, its being present and wrapping your arms around the ones you love; It's not getting Christmas cards out on time, It's sending any card, anytime, at the right time; It's not having the biggest and best Christmas light display, It's displaying the Christ light that comes from your heart; It's not Santa coming down the chimney, It's Jesus coming down from heaven, and giving us the gift of eternal life."

8. Visit the Sick:

Martin Luther King Jr. poses a question to us: Life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others? People are fragile, handle with Care.

Each of us carry an invisible tag around our necks: Person fragile, handle with Care. Vulnerability is surname of Humanity. Visit to the Sick is true Christmas tonic for the Sick, during the Christmas Season. In Corporeal Works of Mercy, visit to the Sick is an important human exercise. A positive thought, a positive word and a positive deed has powerful healing effects. After all the Emmanuel the Prince of Peace also come to visit the Sick.

9. Tell the Story of Christmas to your Non-Christian friend

Christmas story can be told differently every year. Here is sample of William Arthur Ward who tells the Christmas Story with a difference: Christmas is more than a time of music, merriment and mirth; it is a season of meditation, managers and miracles. Christmas is more than a time of gaiety, greenery and gifts; it is a season of wonder, wor-

ship and wisdom. Christmas is more than a time of tinsel, trees and toys; it is a season of preparation, prayers and peace.

Christmas is more than a time of festivities, family and friends; it is a season of generosity, gladness and gratitude. Christmas is more than a time of carols, cards and candy; it is a season of dedication, direction and decision. Christmas is more than Santa, stockings and surprises; it is Christ, care and concern.

10. Share your Christmas Joy with a Stranger

Some Special Gifts to share is given by a Source Unknown: Here are a few suggestions for special gifts: a firm handshake to a shaky soul, a kind word to a lonely person, a warm smile to the disheartened, a sincere concern for someone troubled, a feeling of compassion for the neglected, a comforting thought for the bereaved, a respect for the dignity of others, a defense of the rights of individuals, a word of witness to help a seeking soul, a Merry Christmas to all.

These are few Christmas Bytes to celebrate Christmas with a difference to score a Perfect Ten.

Howard Thurman speaks of a never-ending Christmas. He says When the Work of Christmas Begins: "When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with the flocks, then the work of Christmas begins: to find the lost, to heal those broken in spirit, to feed the hungry, to release the oppressed, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among all peoples, to make a little music with the heart..."

Blessed Christmas to Everyone at Home and to your friends who are near and far and Wishes for a Grace-filled New Year 2016.

The Little Baby Jesus – A Gift for our troubled world !

*That "Little Babe" in the manger
– there lies our King, Prince of
Peace, the Saviour of the world !*

The birth of a little child indeed, brings about excitement, tremendous joy to the family members and friends; it's a different kind of a feeling altogether. The parents accept that little baby as a "Gift" from God, and rightly so, that little child is indeed a Gift ! That gift which will bring a smile on their faces. That Gift, which is going to bring about a big change in their lives. That's the magic of a Gift. That is a Gift they are going to remember for the rest of their lives.

More than 2000 years ago, a little baby was born in a lonely stable at Bethlehem in Judea. It was that period of time, when the Jews were being dominated by outside forces and there was unrest, and the world was living in sin. It seemed like a perfectly suitable time for Jesus to be born. Perhaps, Caesar Augustus, who called for the census at Jesus' birth, wanted to be a god.

That was more than 2000 years ago. Do we find ourselves in a similar situation today ? Are we in a troubled state of mind today ? Are we anxious with the way things are moving in our family, in society ? Are we worried about the future of our children ? Are we worried about a father who is an alcoholic and is making family life miserable ? Are we disturbed about so many other things in life – jobs, finances, rising cost of living, etc. ? Yes, of course we are indeed living in difficult times. Perhaps yes. But, can we see some glimmer of hope ?

In recent times, the world has been rocked by violence like never before. Countries at war with each other, resulting in bloodshed, loss of human life, and widespread destruction of settlements; the genocide in Syria, Israel-



Palestine standoff. We can see the number of refugees migrating to other countries in Europe.

When people started fleeing Syria, Europe opened their doors, offering Hope to the refugees. That was indeed, a Gift of mercy for them. A recent news-report says that Pope Francis opened a Homeless Shelter just a little away from St. Peter's Square, where nuns from Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity are handling the operations. Here was Hope offered by the Holy Father to the homeless. This shelter has been named "Gift of Mercy".

Closer to home, in our own country, we are witnessing persecutions, churches damaged, communal hatred. People are killing people with impunity – without a conscience. People today don't even care for their own family members, they cheat, rob them of their property and money. People are fighting against each other in society, one community against another.

The Holy Father has declared an Extraordinary Jubilee Year for the Church, calling it a "Holy Year of Mercy", beginning on December 8th, 2015. "The mercy of God is not an abstract idea, but a concrete reality through which he reveals his love as that of a father or a mother, moved to the very depths out of love for their child," the Pope says. He says further, "Mercy is the very foundation of the Church's life. The Church's very credibility is seen in how she shows merciful and compassionate love."

Man has lost his sanity – he has become insensitive to the others' needs.



BY MELVILLE X.
D'SOUZA

And we cry out in despair – what will happen tomorrow, what is our future going to be? Indeed, the world is truly in need of some corrective action, desperately.

Christmas is round the corner, and there comes baby Jesus. In the midst of this tragic situation, comes Hope – Hope in the form of a little baby Jesus; Jesus comes to show us mercy. He comes to us as a Gift – a 'Gift of Mercy', for all mankind ! He comes to bring us peace, joy, happiness, Hope.

What would be our gift to Jesus on His birthday ? No, He is not expecting gifts of Gold, Frankincense or Myrrh which the three wise men presented to Him. No, He is not expecting diamonds, or pretty clothes, nor a car, not money, or those tasty sweets. We need to give Jesus some meaningful gift on His birthday just as any of us would love to get a gift on our birthday, especially from our near and loved ones. Are we not the near and loved ones of Jesus ?

Can we show love and care for somebody who needs it? Can we help someone who is going through a difficult time in his life ? Someone who is in need of some emotional help ? Can we comfort someone in his time of grief ? This Christmas, can we make somebody happy ? What about our hearts ? Can we gift Jesus our very own hearts as a Birthday Gift ? No matter however small it may be; no matter how dusty or dirty it may be; no matter how sinful it may be. But if it is a birthday gift for Jesus, then perhaps, a little cleaning up or dry-cleaning would help ! Wouldn't that be the greatest and most fitting birthday gift we could give to Jesus on His Birthday?

The Heart Of Christmas

The heart of Christmas is Jesus! It is the celebration of his birth as Saviour of the world, bringing to all men and women the message that God is love, peace and joy! It is above all the promise of redemption: hope for all mankind!

The Christmas story is intertwined into several poignant scenes which include: the journey of Joseph and Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem to fulfil the requirements of a census; the birth of Jesus in a stable "because there was no room in the inn"; the homage of the shepherds to Jesus after receiving the tidings of the angels; the search of the wise men from the East for the Messiah as they followed a star; the flight into Egypt by the Holy Family; and the ruthlessness of King Herod in ordering the killing of innocent children. Christmas is not Christmas if the depth of each of these realities is not understood, internalised and communicated to our world of today.

Over the years, the 'Christmas season' has been hijacked by a market-driven economy which emphasises crass commercialisation. Pope Francis in 'Evangelii Gaudium' refers to this new idolatry of money as "a new tyranny is thus born, invisible and often virtual, which unilaterally and relentlessly imposes its own laws and rules". The dominant message of Christmas becomes one where Santa Claus and Christmas trees; lavish spending and merry-making; eating, drinking and dancing; decorations and illuminations; new clothes and gifts - become the focus of the festivity. Sadly, all this has nothing to do with the birth of Jesus; that historic and fundamental fact, is relegated to the background and drowned into insignificance by the cacophony of a

material and pleasure-seeking world

Christmas this year, has to be more than special for a disciple of Jesus; if one is sensitive to the fact that Jesus had to be born in a stable because there was no room for Mary and Joseph in the inns of Bethlehem that night; besides, a little after his birth Jesus became a refugee who together with his parents had to flee the wrath and jealousy of the Herod of the day.



BY FR. CEDRIC PRAKASH
SJ

Christmas is above all a moment of



Christmas is about the courage and compassion to reach out to the other: to make our hearts a home where the other can find acceptance and warmth; it is about the joy we experience when we try to lessen the hardships of internally displaced people who live on our pavements and on the margins of our society; it is the ability to transcend the comfort of our own selfishness and to seek Jesus in the poverty, grime and dust of today; it is the openness we need to realise that the refugee crisis in this world is created by the greed and power of vested interests who, do all they can to deny others of their rightful place in society.

grace when we celebrate the mercy of God to every single human on this earth. It is a call for each one to profoundly experience this mercy and to share it with others in tangible ways.

We certainly do need some of the materiality of this world, but unless we touch, experience and communicate the heart of Christmas, we surely would have missed the bus!

**(Fr. Cedric Prakash SJ is the Director of PRASHANT, the Ahmedabad-based Jesuit Centre for Human Rights, Justice and Peace.)*

Beyond The Manger

by *Captain John Lobo*

A look at who Jesus is and the miracle of His incarnation:

The Bible is a storehouse of true wisdom and knowledge and if more people read it and believed what it said, the world wouldn't be in such horrific condition. Even at this time of year, when we celebrate Jesus' birth most people don't know who Jesus is. The Bible has much to say about the One who was born in a manger in Bethlehem.

His Arrival – Prophesied. From Genesis to Malachi, the Hebrew Scriptures point to this specific Person and His First Advent as the suffering Messiah of Israel.

Genesis 3:15 is the first proclamation that God would do something unique to combat the sin that polluted His creation: "And I will put enmity between you [the serpent] and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed: He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise His heel." This verse means the woman's "seed" (a man born with no human father) would crush the head of the "serpent" (Satan, God's enemy), destroying him for rebelling against God, deceiving Eve, and bringing sin into the world. This prophecy was fulfilled at the cross, when Jesus delivered the death-blow to Satan and his evil rule over lost humanity. Today, through faith in Christ, God pulls people out of Satan's kingdom one at a time (Col. 1:13) until the day when He will throw the "serpent" into the Lake of Fire forever (Rev. 20:1-3, 10).

His Pedigree – Royal. The Hebrew Scriptures teach that the King Messiah would be a descendant of Shem (Gen. 9:26); Abraham (12:1-3); Isaac (26:24); Jacob (29:13-15); Judah (49:10); and of course, King David (2 Sam. 7:12-16). Jesus was



a direct descendant of David through both His mother, Mary (Hebrew, Miriam; Lk. 3:23-38) and foster father, Joseph (Mt. 1:1-17).

His Nature – Divine. Although Jesus was born like everyone else, He was not like anyone else. The prophet Micah revealed Jesus' eternity 700 years before His birth: "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One of the Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting" (Mic. 5:2).

Jesus existed and was active before He was born because He is God. The apostle Paul told believers in Colossae, "For by Him all things were created that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him" (col.1:16).

The prophet Isaiah also revealed the Messiah's eternity: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder.

And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6).

The term Everlasting Father literally means the "Father of Eternity" and applies to God alone. Hence, Jesus was and is "Emmanuel," "God with us" (Isa. 7:14).

Jesus spoke of His eternity many times, perhaps none clearer than when He prayed, "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was" (Jn. 17:5).

His Being – Holy. The Bible also explains that Jesus was born of a Jewish virgin. This truth is critical because if Jesus had had an earthly father, He would have had a sin nature like everyone else. The sin nature is passed through the male's seed. By being virgin born, Jesus circumvented the sin nature. He was perfect, sinless, and holy.

Many people find this fact difficult to believe. But it is no more incredible than

Sarah giving birth to Isaac when she was 90 or God tormenting Egypt with 10 plagues prior to the Exodus. As God told Abraham, "Is anything too hard for the LORD?" (Gen. 18:14).

When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, he told her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS" (Lk. 1:30-31). She replied, with obvious surprise, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" (v.34). The angel told Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. For with God nothing will be impossible" (vv. 35, 37). The virgin birth declared Jesus' holiness, allowing for His once-for-all, perfect sacrifice for sin.

His Birthplace – Humble. The Hebrew Scriptures teach that the Messiah must be born in Bethlehem (Mic.5:2). Mary and Joseph lived in Galilee. God brought them to the right place using the Roman Census:

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. So all went to be registered everyone to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child (Lk. 2:1, 3-5).

As the weary couple arrived in Bethlehem, "the days were completed for [Mary] to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn" (vv. 6-7). So the eternal God, "whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting", was born in a humble stable devoid of all royal trappings.

His Arrival – Proclaimed. It appeared that this monumental event would go unno-

ticed. But God had another plan. He sent an angel and then a multitude of angels to announce that He was fulfilling a promise He had made to the Jewish people hundreds of years earlier.

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" (Lk. 2:8-14).

The angels could have visited the high priest or someone of prominence in Jerusalem. Instead, God sent them to lowly shepherds. Shepherding has always seemed important to God. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David all were shepherds; and Jesus would later tell His disciples, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep" (Jn. 10:11).

Giving His life for His "sheep" was His destiny at His First Coming. The prophet Isaiah stated,

But He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all (Isa. 53-5-6).

Joseph probably recalled Isaiah's prophecy when an angel told him in a dream, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS [Hebrew, Ye-

shua], for He will save [Hebrew, Yosheea] His people from the sins" (Mt. 1:20-21). The only way to remove sin is by blood sacrifice, something Joseph no doubt understood (see Leviticus 17:11).

His Destiny – Glorious. Ruling as King of Israel is Jesus' destiny at His Second Coming. To confirm that fact, God used the magi:

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him" (Mt. 2:1-2). The magi came to the capital city of the Jewish people, looking for the One who was "born King." Traditionally, an heir is born with the right to rule. Jesus was born King. This phrase looks to the future, when He will rule as King over Israel and ultimately over all the earth. The magi confirmed what Gabriel had told Mary.

Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son and shall call His name YESHUA. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Highest and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end (Lk. 1:31-33).

Isaiah saw this future day: "He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness the belt of His waist" (Isa. 11:4-5). One day, the Bible declares, Jesus will return to Earth as King of kings and Lord of Lords. Joseph learned of the First Advent; Mary learned of the Second.

The Bible communicates both. The first time Jesus came quietly, as the Lamb of God; but the second time, He will come as the Lion of Judah, with great fanfare, majesty, and power (Zech. 14:3-5; Mt. 24:29-30). What a glorious day that will be!

Wanted: CEO For Peace Unlimited



by chhotebhai *

Shortly after the Paris carnage I, perchance, read a column in The Times of India, by Jug Suraiya, an avowed agnostic/ atheist. He asserted that such turmoil could never end because it was caused by religion, that had a powerful CEO – God!

Coming from an agnostic, such an accusation was not surprising. But publishing such views in a widely circulated daily could mould gullible readers into believing that indeed God is the author of all the bloodshed and mayhem in the world. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Let me be quite frank. Most of us mortals are not mystics like Francis of Assisi, Theresa of Avilla, John of the Cross or Angela Merici, who had direct experiences of God. Most followers of various religions would also have little or no knowledge of their own sacred texts. Hence their experience and understanding of God would be largely determined by the godmen/ women whom they encounter. Such religious leaders would probably propound their own pet theories, and possibly convey a terribly distorted image of the very nature of God. Since most of us do not have the stamina for individual search and study, we end up seeing God as portrayed in popular religion, religious events and practices, or even calendar art! We may even manufacture a god



of our own liking. That is the real meaning of idolatry, worshipping that which we ourselves have made. The golden calf was but a symbol.

This is so much more possible in today's era of mass media, and the resultant mass hysteria. Actors who portray gods/ goddesses in movies or TV serials become identified with the deity itself; blurring fact and fiction, reel and real life. They even win elections based on such populist religiosity! A strange case of Bollywood manufacturing a "god" is that of Santoshi Mata. It is a purely filmi creation, not part of the Hindu pantheon! Another instance is the objection of various Shankaracharyas to Sai worship, temples and devotions. They aver that Sai Baba was not a god of the Hindus.

Religion, by its very nature, is a sensitive issue and highly inflammable. Here comes the rider. Most popular religion is a gross distortion, or out-of-the-context presentation, of what the sacred religious texts say. Jihad is a case in point. Islamic scholars are at

pains to say Jihad cannot be used as a cover for political warfare or communal violence. But who cares to listen to the voice of reason if there is treason in the mind and hatred in the heart?

I myself am a practicing member of the Catholic Church. I have held national and international positions in the community, where I am both respected and feared. The common believer respects me, but the religious (ordained) leaders often feel threatened by my independent views, writings and autonomous acts; more so because I am not intellectually, socially or financially dependent on them. I believe that the dichotomy between their orthodoxy and orthopraxis is the greatest stumbling block to the common believer experiencing God. Recall what Jesus said, "You lock the door to the kingdom of heaven in peoples' faces, and you yourselves don't go in, nor do you allow in those who are trying to enter" (Mat 23:13). This is not because they are bad, but rather because they are not good enough. They have not been able to rise above pious devotions, pilgrimages and processions to "be perfect, just as your father in heaven is perfect" (Mat 5:48).

We Christians are also largely influenced by the Indian psyche. Touch the feet of the Brahmin, and you will find Brahma. So too, a heavily clericalised Church is saying, "Follow the rules laid down by us and you will attain salvation. Don't bother to look for answers. We have them all". And we laity, the cattle class, the sheep, are more than willing to play ball. Never mind what Jesus had said about seeking and finding!

(Contd.. on p. 25)

(Contd.. from p. 24)

This is a gross distortion of truth. Truth! Aha, a key word. When Pontius Pilate was about to condemn Jesus to death he asked him, "What is truth?" Fortunately, Jesus did not answer. Any definition of truth would have been restrictive. In Christianity much emphasis is laid on love and service. Yet the great apostle St Paul could not define love. He ended up describing all that it was not (cf 1Cor 13:1-13); which isn't quite the same thing.

When Christian children are given religious instructions they are taught that God is Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent etc. In the Old Testament, God comes across as jealous, angry and vengeful, besides being distant and hidden. Fortunately, with the advent of Jesus, God is revealed, and such false or dated perceptions have been jettisoned as extra baggage, by his life and teachings.

Interestingly, Jesus always referred

to himself as the "son of man", bar-nasa in his native Aramaic dialect. This term could be loosely translated today to "aam aadmi". He did not claim to be God up there; but wanted his disciples to experience him as a human being down here. By his death, life and resurrection, he allowed others to gradually discover his divinity and subsequently address him as "Son of God". Christologists would agree with me when I say that Jesus himself grew in his own self-understanding from his experience of the "Father" when Joseph and Mary found him at the temple, then the declaration at his baptism and a further confirmation at the transfiguration. Then came the final act of surrender "It is accomplished. Into your hands I commend my spirit". At the Annunciation the divine was incarnated in the human; and on the cross the human was fused with the divine. Not by nails, but by a supreme act of will, that we mere mortals cannot even begin to comprehend; that agony in the garden that said, not my will but thy will be

done. Here again, a word of caution: human language and terminology are woefully inadequate to express the fullness of truth or love found in Jesus.

Whether Jesus was son of man, Son of God, or both fused into one, is not the subject of my discourse. His life and teachings are. When he was born in Bethlehem, the heavenly epiphany was of peace. In his final discourse to his disciples he promised them peace. After his resurrection, the first word he uttered to them again was – Peace.

Jesus lived and breathed peace, love, truth and service. He didn't just preach it. This is the "God" that I believe in, and seek to follow; devoid of human labels and deft definitions. I don't believe in Santa Claus, but I do believe in Jesus Christ. I look forward to welcoming him again as a babe in the manger this Christmas. He is my CEO for Peace Unlimited.

* The writer is the President of the Kanpur Catholic Association, and a Gandhian activist.



INSPIRATIONS The Bridal Studio

- High-end Bridal Gowns
- Glamorous Headwear
- Gorgeous Flowers
- Bridal Accessories

Call for appointments or visit us at 45, Rita Villa, Caesar Road, Near St. Blaise Church & High School, Andheri West, Mumbai 400058.

Tel: 26783375 & 9833152478. Monday thru Saturday 11.00am – 8.00pm. Email: evegomesalmeida@gmail.com

Christmas' Beauty And Charm

by *Leon Bent*

Christmas is the drama of undreamed of divinity, launching, exploding into humanity, with the festivity, fantasy and wonder such a "redemptive and sanctifying" (Ad Gentes no.1) entry calls for.

The mysteries of the Annunciation and Visitation in Mary's Canticle The Magnificat (Lk.1:26-55); Zechariah's Spirit-filled praise of the Messiah, in the Benedictus (1:68-79); the mystery of Christmas in the Angels lyrical, Gloria in Excelsis Deo [(Lk. 2:14); "the most awesome song of praise



This is how God speaks to us about the meaning and truth of the Incarnation: a divine Babe of Davidic lineage, wrapped in swaddling clothes, an ordinary stable, a comforting Crib, a "Eucharistic" manger, a Spirit-filled Mother (Mary), a humble, God-fearing Joseph, nonchalant, participant animals, lowly Shepherds (the first Missionaries), a brilliantly-lit-starry, cool night, with a touch of mystique, a revelatory, guiding Star, crude straw, a trillion-strong Choir of Angels and their messianic Song, the visionary, radical Canticles, meandering, green meadows, rolling hills, sleep (evocative of Dreams and promptings of the Holy Spirit), the Magi [(Mt.2:1-12; salvation for all Peoples] and their highly prophetic, symbolic Gifts – Gold (Royalty), Frankincense (Divinity) and Myrrh (Passion). Wow!

ever," Rabbi Abraham Heschel]; aged Simeon's sweet melody, the Nunc Dimittis (Lk.2:29-32). The exuberant, extravagant, magnificent Choir of Angels, a scintillating spectacle, is lost in perpetual contemplation of a heaven-sent Infant. It sings, with gusto, in polyphonic unison, "the briefest, the greatest Intercessory Prayer of all time" (Rabbi Abraham Heschel). "This is the dew, the sweetness that, drops from heaven" (Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa).

The Season of Christmas is a kairos time, an event of grace and a divine gift to the Church, the "at-oneness" of the Cosmos, the Eco-System and "all humanity in God, who constitute the one people of God" (Ad Gentes no 1), from Creation (Genesis) till the Second Coming of Jesus (Revelation).

MATRIMONIAL

USA : Mangalorean RC Bachelor aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.E. (I.T.), working as a Software Consultant. Currently in Mumbai. Contact immediately Email : rahul.ferns@gmail.com OR 9833932407 (Regd. No. 6463)



Helen's Bridal Gallery

- ▲ Bridal Gowns Tailored to perfection
- ▲ Bridal Gowns available on hire
- ▲ Bridesmaid & Flower Girl Dresses
- ▲ Western Formals & Evening Wear
- ▲ Bridal Make-up & Bridal Accessories
- ▲ Flower Packages & Table Pieces

ASK FOR SPECIAL BRIDAL PAKAGES

9821309931 | 9820309319

MICHELLE RODRIGUES
bridals

For your special day,
you deserve
personalized attention.

Get yourself a
WEDDING GOWN
designed and made
just for YOU.

Made-to-order
wedding dresses to
suit your theme, your
taste and your budget.

michellerodrigues co
michellerodrigues@gmail.com
7710990757



Mera Ghar... My home



An expression by Advocate Aileen Marques

Since about few years, some people comment “Oh.. Long distance marriage... Sad na”. The next question I am posed with is “where is your house? Where do you stay?”

These questions when repeatedly asked imply that society has imposed certain norms on us which teach us to live life revolving around those norms. A girl stays with her parents, a married woman stays with her husband and in-laws, a widow may stay with her in-laws or then live off the mercy of her parents and children. A married man who lives with his in-laws is called “ghar jamai” but a married woman who lives with her in-laws is not called “ghar bahu”; I have always wondered why.

I am fortunate to have been blessed with many houses- i) parental house, ii) husband provided house, iii) matrimonial house, iv) ancestral houses and v) self-acquired house. Interestingly the Catholic Church does not specify that you must belong to one parish. You may belong to a parish where you have a place of residence and so factually I belong to about 5-6 parishes spread across India. And my service to humanity and society also extends to these parishes that I belong to.

During my trainings, I ask the participants, “according to you, which is your house?” Most of them, most of the times say “Sasural or matrimonial house”. However many are unaware that married women continue to have rights in their parental and ancestral property depending on their personal laws. Secondly the Protection of Women From Domestic Violence Act 2005 provides a right to residence to every woman. This clearly indicates that the social norms are contrary to the laws of the country.

It is pertinent to note that very few women invest in a house. Most of the girl’s earnings are saved for her marriage expenses and for the dowry or the earnings are forcefully taken by the elders in the house. On the contrary, men and young earning boys are encouraged to invest in a house.

“Atleast have a house, so you can get a good match for marriage”, is what I have heard boys being told.

The sad reality is that men get a house and wait for marriage, when the parents of their bride will buy furniture, electronic goods, crockery etc for the house. Finally it is shown as if the girl needs these things, so her parents are obligated to provide these house accessories along with a vehicle. I have asked many parents, “What is the need to provide all these things? Have you not groomed your daughter to be competent and skilled to provide for her needs?” The answer is shocking “Society will ask us what we gave our daughter, so we have to give her all this”.

Isn’t it wise to raise your daughter with self-worth and human dignity, rather than dumping her in a house where not she but the things she bought along in marriage will be valued?

Isn’t it worth that you encourage your daughter to own a house, rather than furnish the house of a man who waited to cash-in-on-marriage?

Isn’t it sensible that women raise their voice against social norms that belittle them on the pretext of marriage and social customs and traditions.

Your home... Your house is your space to relax and unwind,
Your home... Your house is a place you choose
Your home... Your house is yours with memories you may wish to rewind,
Your home... Your house is where you express your views.
Your home... Your house is where you live life to the fullest and have fun unlimited.

If you cant do any of this in your house, then that is not your house.

Go find a place for solace.

Go find a place for peace and grace.

Go find a place you can call house and create a home that is not bound by societal norms.

How Far To Bethlehem ?

by **Bernie Tellis**

The lepers of the colony in the distant suburbs of Mumbai were ecstatic. There was to be a `Kismis` play enacted by them for an audience which included, besides themselves and their families, sponsors of their rehab project, social workers, observer-invitees and other guests.

They were up early that day, bathed, bandaged and outfitted in clothes presented by generous anonymous donors. The play was the story of Christmas as seen through their eyes, in a modern Indian setting. There was an air of hushed expectancy all around.

Mariam, padded up to look heavily pregnant and dressed in a faded shalwar kameez, was helped along by her husband Yusuf, in crumpled kurta pyjamas, as they looked for lodgings in the city to which they'd migrated in search of work.

Their first halt was at a swanky hotel whose liveried door-man shooed them away mistaking them for beggars. Rs. 5000/- per person, per day was an amount beyond their comprehension. Did people really spend that much money in one day ?

They trudged on, criss-crossing vehicles and pedestrians and sneaked into the darkened entrance of an ancient building to take some rest beneath the creaky staircase ; but the ancient watch-man chased them away with his stick and some cuss words in a language they, fortunately, did not speak.

The way dragged on, the sun grew hot and hunger pangs assailed them. Yusuf stopped at a roadside cart and bought one batata vada – all he could afford with the few coins he had. A customer



very kindly bought him some tea which came in a tiny disposable cup. He offered both to Mariam but she insisted they share it.

After resting on the footpath for a while, they pressed on as in December darkness falls early and they just had to find some place, any place, because Mariam's time was near. They plodded on having lost all sense of direction, and after an hour – or was it two- came to a row of hutments with habitants who looked a lot like them. Their hopes quickly evaporated, however, when the `dada` asked them to pay to stay. Even chawls didn't come cheap, definitely not free.

By now Mariam was wilting and Yusuf was getting desperate. Would all the exertion and stress cause her to deliver on the street with no medical assistance around ? He put his arm around her and half carrying her, hurried in the direction of a faint light visible in an open dump dotted with tattered tents.

" Please, could you help us – my wife is very near her time, we've had little to eat all day and no place to lay our heads" Curious creatures hobbled out of the tents and stared at the exhausted, young couple. Eyes misted over with compassion and understanding. The women folk took charge of Mariam.

She and Yusuf had finally found shelter – in a leper colony. Who better than lepers knew what it was to be rejected and shunned. All castes and communities were represented in that colony, but only one creed : Love.

Amitabai was hesitantly giving her testimony in halting Hindustani, timidly covering her paan-stained teeth, at frequent intervals, with the edge of her `pallau`. The audience listened with rapt attention. " I was brought here, many years ago – don't remember exactly when – by a man who came to our village and `married` me, promising my parents who were poor, that he would look after me well, in the city. Instead, he sold me to a `gharwali` here and I became a sex-worker. But I would get sick often, so they threw me out. I had no place to go. I had no `izzat`, no savings to return to my village, so I continued to ply my trade on the streets where I have a `palang` in the corner of a bylane." Her eyes light up as she continues : " I have a little girl now and I want better things for her. Luckily for people like us, help has come from an NGO which looks after our children, runs a school nearby for them. My little one is happy and studying well there; soon she'll be enrolled in a boarding school else where. I will miss her but her future is more important than my loneliness and pain at this

impending separation. I am grateful to God and to the `Tais ` who have been so protective of her and so good to us..." There are tears in her eyes and in ours, too. A seed of hope growing to improve the lot of the hapless offspring of sex-workers ,in one of Mumbai`s sleaziest red-light areas.

There was a knock on Dr. Arun`s dispensary door, just as he was readying to leave for the day. Could it be an extortionist demanding his money or his life ? Caution advised him against responding but the good doctor decided to ignore it. After all, life offers no guarantees of security ,permanent or temporary. It turned out to be the neighbourhood rag-picker ,high on drugs, with a wound in his leg festering with muck and maggots. The doctor took him in, cleaned and dressed the wound, gave him some antibiotics - all free of charge- then scrubbed the clinic clean for the morrow`s patients. He told no one of this. But the grateful rag-picker did .

To have Hope for tomorrow, Humanity needs Help, today. We live in turbulent, heartless times. On one side ,there`s the leprosy of the soul disfigured by greed, avarice, hate, anger, pride ; on the other, the prostitution of principles, ethics, values and morality for filthy lucre and selfish gain.

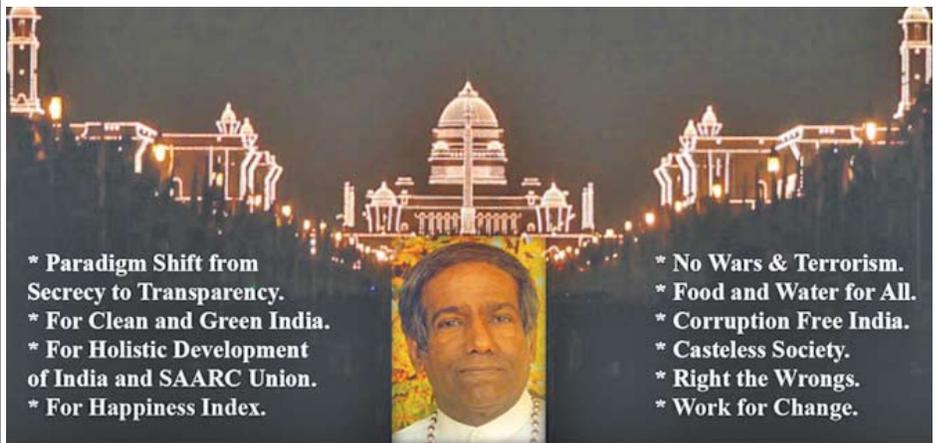
How far, then, to Bethlehem and is the road long and impossible for seekers? It isn`t far, really. Bethlehem is anywhere Christ comes down and finds in a friendly face, a welcome, abiding place to dwell and a hand stretched out to help.

The road to Bethlehem runs through your home and mine. May the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, the Good Shepherd who comes in search of the lost sheep, the Saviour who`s waiting to enter our hearts, find a dwelling place there this Christmas and throughout the New Year.

Christmas 2015 Will Bring 7 Changes In Christmas Week Await a Bright, Radiant New Year 2016 and no looking back.

- * Clean free-energy technology is rapidly going into mass production worldwide. Coal and Oil driven polluting technologies are on the way out.
- * Net based universal communication technologies are replacing Jewish manipulative media. It is 99% v/s 1% fight now.
- * From Competition among few manipulators to Cooperation of the World Family. From National Rights to Universal Rights, the World is Uniting.
- * Holistic Healing is going mainstream, emerging into Internet social networks such as Global TeLeCare.
- * Platform for Social Networking will progress further to Heartware.
- * East will meet West and work together. And common sense will turn into cosmic sense, leading to collective conscious evolution and WWII or Armageddon will be avoided by the New Born King.
- * Language of Light of Love, World Family (Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam -- India's 5000 year old vision), Caring and Sharing (Ubuntu/African teaching) will become a Reality.

Hark the Herald, Angels Sing, Glory be to the New Born King. Believe ye that the saviour is coming to Save India and the World.



- * Paradigm Shift from Secrecy to Transparency.
- * For Clean and Green India.
- * For Holistic Development of India and SAARC Union.
- * For Happiness Index.

- * No Wars & Terrorism.
- * Food and Water for All.
- * Corruption Free India.
- * Casteless Society.
- * Right the Wrongs.
- * Work for Change.

**DR. LEO REBELLO AS PRESIDENT OF INDIA IN 2017
FOR RULE OF 'WE, THE PEOPLE'**

*Joyous Christmas and all that very best, safe, secular, peaceful new year.
From The President of India, in Waiting, Dr. Leo Rebello*

Putting Christ Back Into Christmas

Fr. Anil Rego

Parish Priest
Nativity of Our Lord Church
Kandivli(E)

Some year back, in the first year of my priesthood, on my visit home, my Mum handed me a package. The package contained the old statues of our family crib.

She told me to give it to some poor parishioner who would find good use for it.

When I reached my room in the parish, I opened the package and all the statues of shepherds, sheep, camel, kings, angel, Joseph, Mary & the child Jesus tumbled out. And with it, memories of the many Christmases spent at home flooded my mind in a flash. Memories of bringing out the statues from the loft, wiping the statues together and setting up the crib together on Christmas eve every year. Not to forget praying before the crib as one family every morning & night before going to bed during the Christmas octave.

Those were the days when, with all the trappings of Christmas, Christ was most central to the season. I must confess that I just was not ready to part with the statues that embodied the very best memories of Christmas. I was tempted to retain them and make a crib in my room with them. But constraints for space in my room compelled me to retain only the child Jesus, which I kept in a prominent place in my room and prayed before it in the morning & night without fail during the Christmas octave, in keeping with my family tradition. It is something that I follow religiously every Christmas.

When I became Principal of a school,

in my interaction with the juniors at school, I ask them as Christmas approaches, what Christmas means to them. And invariably the responses are (surprisingly from even a few catholic kids as well): 'Santa Clause, gifts, parties, sweets,'...etc. Where is the Christ child???? - THE REAL REASON FOR THE SEASON. These children of course cannot be blamed for such a perception. Because these are the motifs that are dominantly prevalent all around them... in the malls, shops and at all parties & Christmas galas.

The time is come for us Christians to start a concerted campaign to put Christ back into Christmas against the onslaught of the campaign of the business and the commercial world that seeks only to derive maximum profit from the season.

HOW TO PUT CHRIST BACK INTO CHRISTMAS (some practical steps):

1. **BUYING CHRISTMAS CARDS ONLY WITH THE CHRIST CHILD OR NATIVITY SCENE AS THE THEME:** You will notice that most of the cards sold before Christmas in the stores are with motifs that are far removed from the Christ child – Santa Claus, Christmas Trees, bells, snowmen, candles, sceneries of snow, etc. You have to literally go searching for a card that has the theme of Christ. As Christians when we shop for cards, we could insist that we buy only cards that depict the Nativity scene. This will force the distributors to convey this to the suppliers who in turn will be compelled to settle for a change in emphasis.

2. **PUT UP A CRIB IN A PROMINENT**



PLACE IN THE HOUSE: While the trend today is to give the Christmas tree a prominent place in the House, it would be only proper if this place was given to the crib. The crib should be the focal point during the Christmas season and also the focus of all our devotions & prayers during the season.

3. **PUT UP A STAR (WITH A CHRISTIAN THEME) & A CRIB IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD:** This is a powerful way of sharing the true message of Christmas with our brothers & sister of other faiths. At the Parish – level an inter-community star & crib competition could be held to foster this.

4. **REVIVE THE GOOD TRADITION OF GOING ROUND CAROLING:** This again can be organized at the small Christian community level where each community organizes a group and covers the areas in their respective localities. Once again the carols should be Christ-centric and the true message of Christmas could be conveyed in creative ways e.g. with a live tableau accompanying the carols or placards with meaningful messages.

5. **READ THE BIBLE (LUKE CH.2):** The Infancy narrative on Christmas eve & on Christmas day. Read it out loud to your entire family. Have everybody **REFLECT ON** what was read. And pray over it.

6. **GIVE GIFTS:** to the needy, and be charitable to other people. Do this in the gift giving spirit OF GOD WHO

GAVE HIS ONLY SON AT CHRISTMAS and as the 3 kings set for our example.

7. Be sure to sing Christ orientated songs and play Christian Christmas CDs. Leave out the silly Christmas songs and listen to songs about Jesus Christ & his birth. Let us all resolve to make CHRIST THE CENTRAL FOCUS in our celebration of Christmas this year. While we may indulge in all the other frills that go with the season, may we never lose sight of the real focus i.e. the Christ – child. The true presence of Christmas is found in Jesus. Let the celebration of His birth touch our hearts in a new way this year.

Finally I would like to conclude with the words of a song 'Let's Put Christ Back Into Christmas (This Year)' by Tammy Wynette

Let's Put Christ Back Into Christmas (This Year)

*Unto you is born this day a Savior
A baby boy was found there in a manger
The blessed truth of Christmas let us hear
Let's put Christ back into Christmas this year*

*Christmas is the Birthday of our King
The greatest gift of all He came to bring
He's the Prince of Peace
Let's show Him that we care
Let's put Christ back into Christmas this year*

*On this day three wise men saw a star
They followed it with gifts and traveled far
And praised the baby Jesus lying there
So let's put Christ back into Christmas this year*

*Let within your heart His praises ring
And celebrate the day our Savior came
May peace on earth at Christmas time appear
Let's put Christ back into Christmas this year*

Let's put Christ back into Christmas this year

Jesus Christ, the prince of peace.

Christianity identifies three great events in history, Viz, creation, the Christ event, and His second coming. The first coming of Christ into the world 2000 years ago was his physical coming which we Christians celebrate on Christmas day as the "Word made flesh". On his day we are also called to experience Christ in our daily lives by spreading his message of love and peace among the people of the world. This peace was also heralded at the time of his birth by the angel and a "multitude of the host, praising God and saying " Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of goodwill" (Lk. 2:14).



BY A. F. NAZARETH

The birth of Jesus is the good news of great joy for people, as it fulfils God's promise of sending his only son to reveal Himself and to establish His kingdom of peace love, equality and justice. Jesus is the prince of peace who told his disciples " peace I leave with you, my peace I give you, which I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (Jn 14: 27). This then is the true peace which consists of love, compassion and mercy, and solidarity with suffering humanity which is contrary to the peace brought about

by waging wars for political domination. Jesus' sermon on the mount in the form of beatitudes invites us to experience God's peace in our hearts

by working for peace in the world and growing in the attitude of tolerance, understanding and harmony.

So, as we prepare ourselves to celebrate Christmas in this year of mercy, amidst the growing culture of hate, intolerance and killings the world over, let us resolve to put into practice what Jesus taught his disciples to " Love one another as I have loved you" Only then we will really enjoy the peace within us and experience the true joys and happiness of this great Christmas event and transform people's lives.

The Christmas Story

by Don Aguiar



The Christmas story is one of good news and great joy, but it is also quite a short one. There are 27 books in the New Testament part of the bible, but the story is only told in the books written by Matthew and Luke, two of Jesus' followers and friends. In Matthew, the story is told in two out of the 28 chapters and in Luke, it is told in two chapters out of 24.

Both Matthew and Luke finish their telling of the story with Joseph, Mary and Jesus returning to Nazareth to live. But Christians believe that Christmas was only the beginning of the amazing life of Jesus.

To Christians, one of the most important things about Christmas is what 'Christmas' really means - the Mass of Christ (or Jesus). Mass (or Communion) is a Christian act of worship when Christians remember that Jesus was not only born, as told in the Christmas story, but that, when he became a man, Jesus willingly died to take away all of our wrongdoings and bring us closer to God. Then he came back to life three days later. Christians celebrate this throughout the year, but especially on Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

Nothing has ever been the same since the first Christmas and you can find out more about Jesus' life in the Bible.

Mary was probably about 14 to 16 years of age when she gave birth to Jesus. This was a very common age for young women to be engaged and marry in biblical times. So the son of God was the son of a teenage mother. Joseph was probably slightly older,

around 30.

Joseph and Mary was a very average couple in Israel at that time. They would have been quite poor. Joseph was a carpenter and this job was seen by some religious leaders as a religious duty rather than a profession. Both Joseph and Mary were descendants of King David of Israel, but at this time his family was in the poorest state it had ever been. Mary was also related to the traditional Priest families of Israel through her cousin Elizabeth.

Nazareth, the town where they both lived, was a small hill town on a caravan route through the country. It also had a centre for the temple priests, in which they could come and pray and fast when they were not on duty at the temple. So a wide range of people would travel and visit a town like Nazareth.

Under Jewish law, an engagement like Joseph and Mary's was treated almost like a marriage and could only be broken by an official divorce.

The angel Gabriel, who visited Mary, is God's chief messenger angel and only appears to very important people in the Bible. The first words that Gabriel spoke to Mary 'Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.' are very important words. 'Highly favored' means 'God's holy grace is upon you' and is a divine blessing from God - something that would have never normally been said to a peasant girl like Mary! She would have been very scared by this and that is why Gabriel said 'Do not be afraid'.

The name Jesus (or Jeshua as it would have been said then) was a very common name in Israel at that time. If you had gone down a normal street and called 'JESHUA' to some children playing, it is more than likely that a couple of them would be called Jeshua! The name Jesus means 'Savior' and has a very important meaning in the story.

Mary would have been very surprised with the angel Gabriel saying that the Holy Spirit would be in her, because in the old Jewish stories, only the very important people had the Holy Spirit come into them. She might not have even believed that it is going to happen, so she went to see her cousin Elizabeth, who Gabriel said would have a baby, to see if it was really true. She did this even before she told Joseph about Gabriel and Jesus.

When Joseph found out about Mary's pregnancy, he must not have believed that she was pregnant by the Holy Spirit but that she had been unfaithful to him. Even though they were engaged and not married, to break up the relationship, Joseph would have had to divorce Mary.

In fact, adultery in engagement was even punishable by death in some cases! Joseph did not want to disgrace Mary, so he planned to divorce her in private. This only needed two witnesses rather than going through the Jewish courts and no formal grounds needed to be given for the divorce.

(Contd.. on p. 33)

(Contd.. from p. 32)

But in a dream, an angel appeared to Joseph and told him to trust Mary. The angel also told Joseph that the child should be called Jesus. Having a vision in a dream from God was a sign of God's approval, so this would have made Joseph pay attention and do what the angel had said!

We're not told who the angel was, but it could well have been Gabriel, who is God's chief messenger angel

That is why, when the holy family returned to Judea, they went back to their old town of Nazareth rather than returning to Bethlehem. Nazareth had a different ruler to Bethlehem because it was in the kingdom of Galilee not Judea.

Joseph, Mary and Jesus lived in Nazareth until Jesus started his teachings. This fulfilled another prophesy in the Old Testament of the Bible

Over the years we come across many instances like the Holy Night when Jesus was born which has had effects on the hearts of unfriendly and heard hearted people changing to that of mercy just like this beautiful instance -

There was a man who went out in the dark night to borrow live coals to kindle a fire. He went from hut to hut and knocked. "Dear friends, help me!" said he. "My wife has just given birth to a child, and I must make a fire to warm her and the little one."

But it was way in the night, and all the people were asleep. No one replied.

The man walked and walked. At last he saw the gleam of a fire a long way off. Then he went in that direction and saw that the fire was burning in the open. A lot of sheep were sleeping around the fire, and an old shepherd sat and watched over the flock.

When the man who wanted to borrow fire came up to the sheep, he saw that

three big dogs lay asleep at the shepherd's feet.

All three awoke when the man approached and opened their great jaws, as though they wanted to bark; but not a sound was heard. The man noticed that the hair on their backs stood up and that their sharp, white teeth glistened in the firelight. They dashed toward him.

He felt that one of them bit at his leg and one at this hand and that one clung to this throat. But their jaws and teeth wouldn't obey them, and the man didn't suffer the least harm.

Now the man wished to go farther, to get what he needed. But the sheep lay back to back and so close to one another that he couldn't pass them. Then the man stepped upon their backs and walked over them and up to the fire. And not one of the animals awoke or moved.

When the man had almost reached the fire, the shepherd looked up. He was a surly old man, who was unfriendly and harsh toward human beings. And when he saw the strange man coming, he seized the long, spiked staff, which he always held in his hand when he tended his flock, and threw it at him. The staff came right toward the man, but, before it reached him, it turned off to one side and whizzed past him, far out in the meadow.

Now the man came up to the shepherd

and said to him: "Good man, help me, and lend me a little fire! My wife has just given birth to a child, and I must make a fire to warm her and the little one."

The shepherd would rather have said no, but when he pondered that the dogs couldn't hurt the man, and the sheep had not run from him, and that the staff had not wished to strike him, he was a little afraid, and dared not deny the man that which he asked.

"Take as much as you need!" he said to the man.

But then the fire was nearly burnt out. There were no logs or branches left, only a big heap of live coals, and the stranger had neither spade nor shovel wherein he could carry the red-hot coals.

When the shepherd saw this, he said again: "Take as much as you need!" And he was glad that the man wouldn't be able to take away any coals.

But the man stopped and picked coals from the ashes with his bare hands, and laid them in his mantle. And he didn't burn his hands when he touched them, nor did the coals scorch his mantle; but he carried them away as if they had been nuts or apples.

And when the shepherd, who was such a cruel and hardhearted man, saw all this, he began to wonder to himself. What kind of a night is this, when the



The only baker in Mumbai who opens the kitchen on your special request to serve you fresh! During this Christmas Season we bring you the best.

MKD's Christmas Scones: all come with a Difference

* MKD's Plum Cakes * MKD's Christmas Fruit Cake * Gourmet Chocolates * Wedding Cakes * Ginger Bread House and Cookies * Panettone * Christmas Cookies * Christmas Stollen Bread * Cinnamon Breads and rolls * Buche de Noel - The Log Cake

For our detailed list of Artisan Breads and Specialized Cakes :

Give Mama a call on 022 65074929 / 9987021690 or

mail us mkd.artisan@gmail.com (Delivery all over Mumbai)

dogs do not bite, the sheep are not scared, the staff does not kill, or the fire scorch? He called the stranger back and said to him: "What kind of a night is this? And how does it happen that all things show you compassion?"

Then said the man: "I cannot tell you if you yourself do not see it." And he wished to go his way, that he might soon make a fire and warm his wife and child.

But the shepherd did not wish to lose sight of the man before he had found out what all this might portend. He got up and followed the man till they came to the place where he lived.

Then the shepherd saw the man didn't have so much as a hut to dwell in, but that his wife and babe were lying in a mountain grotto, where there was nothing except the cold and naked stone walls.

But the shepherd thought that perhaps the poor innocent child might freeze to

death there in the grotto; and, although he was a hard man, he was touched, and thought he would like to help it. And he loosened the knapsack from his shoulder, took from it a soft white sheepskin, gave it to the strange man, and said that he should let the child sleep on it.

But just as soon as he showed that he, too, could be merciful, his eyes were opened, and he saw what he had not been able to see before, and heard what he could not have heard before.

He saw that all around him stood a ring of little silver-winged angels, and each held a stringed instrument, and all sang in loud tones that tonight the Savior was born who should redeem the world from its sins.

Then he understood how all things were so happy this night that they didn't want to do anything wrong. And it was not only around the shepherd that there were angels, but he saw

them everywhere. They sat inside the grotto, they sat outside on the mountain, and they flew under the heavens. They came marching in great companies, and, as they passed, they paused and cast a glance at the child.

There was such jubilation and such gladness and songs and play! And all this he saw in the dark night whereas before he could not have made out anything. He was so happy because his eyes had been opened that he fell upon his knees and thanked God.

What that shepherd saw, we might also see, for the angels fly down from heaven every Christmas Eve, if we could only see them.

You must remember this, for it is as true, as true as that I see you and you see me. It is not revealed by the light of lamps or candles, and it does not depend upon sun and moon; but that which is needful is that we have such eyes as can see God's glory.

Your perfect printing partner...

Your quest for perfection ends here. At Printania Offset Pvt. Ltd., we are committed to creating lasting impressions for 33 years. Our State-Of-the-Art machinery ensures top notch products.

*Our versatility enables us to deal with all types of **Printing - Digital / Offset / Screen** along with **Designing, Processing and CTP**. Consistent quality is the norm - with continuous monitoring of parameters throughout the production process.*

We are comprehensive service providers with the best cost-effectiveness and are ready to meet deadlines.



PRINTANIA
OFFSET PVT. LTD.

Head Office : D 20-21, 4th floor, Shalimar Industrial Estate, Matunga, Mumbai - 400 019.
Tel. : +91-22-2407 4899 / 2403 7850 / 2402 4463 / 2402 4704 ● Fax : +91-22- 2402 4703

Branch Office : 213-216, New Sonal Link Heavy Indl. Estate, Bldg. No.1, Kanchpada, Link Road, Malad (W), Mumbai - 400 064.
Tel. : +91-22-2888 8062 / 2888 8064 ● Fax : +91-22- 2882 4792

Email : printania@rediffmail.com, printania@gmail.com, printpromatunga@gmail.com, printaniamalad@gmail.com, pds6@rediffmail.com

Christmas – The Season of Giving

by Irwin Almeida

One of the most delightful of festivals is the Christmas Season which brings with it a feeling of harmony, fellowship and peace. Truly, it is a gift in itself from God to all mankind. Now, universally celebrated, it is attended by several attractive customs. Such is the Yuletide Season that it releases the springs of purest joy and brings to the surface the kindest qualities of human nature.

In fact, the very greeting “A Merry Christmas” has no echoes like it. It heralds a season when all rancour is forgotten, when it is a shame to harbour ill-will or to nurse even a spirit of resentment. It is the festival when the traditions of good feeling all over the world proclaim the ennobling gospel of peace on earth and goodwill to men.

And one of the oldest and nicest Christmas traditions still in vogue and practised almost internationally, is the exchange of gifts between family and friends on Christmas Day. However, history reminds us that the giving of gifts is a borrowed tradition believed to be even older than Christmas itself!

More than 2000 years ago there seems to have been a tradition to give presents in the last week of the year. The Egyptians exchanged gifts on a day that they celebrated as a special feast, but the gifts were of one kind and all gave and received the same kind of present.

But the presentation of gifts can often have a lighter and humorous side, which history has supposedly recorded. Like when Charles I summoned his favourite jester on Christmas Day and presented him with a few gold coins. The jester, expecting a much bigger amount, looked disappointed and commented:

“They are extremely light, Sire.”

“Are they,” exclaimed the King. “Let me see them again.”

The jester returned the coins and the King immediately pocketed them saying, “I put my valuable money into the hands of a fool who didn’t have the wit to keep it. A happy Christmas to you.”

Everyone likes to receive gifts or at least greetings at Christmas time, but not all are fortunate to be so blessed.

Which brings to mind, A. A. Milne’s “King John’s Christmas” – a remarkable work of poetry that brought amusement to many of us in our school days. In this poem, Milne recounts John’s little ways:

“King John was not a good mam – no good friends had he, he had his hopes and fears and lived his life aloof. Yet, around December there were cards upon his shelf, which wished him lots of Christmas cheer, and fortune in the coming year. But these were never from his near and dear, but only from himself.”

King John did not receive any presents either for years and years, although he yearned for them. Yet, every Christmas he hung “a hopeful stocking out”, and while people had their stockings filled with gifts, on Christmas morn King John said grimly, “As I feared, nothing again for me!”

Gifts can also be fabulously overwhelming sometimes. Like when a filthy rich oil magnate presented his fiancée with an oil tanker. The tank being filled with her favourite perfume.

On the other hand, gifts sacrificed at the altar of love are rendered futile by a mysterious twist of fate. This is beautifully narrated by O. Henry, the master story teller, in his short story ‘The Gift



of the Magi”:

A devoted young couple, very much in love, were very dejected as Christmas approached. Being very poor, they lived a meagre existence and could barely make ends meet. Yet, each of them yearned to express love and affection at Christmas morning by way of a surprise gift.

He was already cutting down expenses to keep pace with the cost of living, and possessed nothing of value except an inherited gold pocket watch, a family heirloom.. The watch didn’t even have a chain as he couldn’t afford to replace the old broken one; and so it was kept in a box in his cupboard, and brought out only once a day to be wound up.

All she had was her astounding beauty with warm brown eyes that reflected tenderly her deep love for him. There was nothing of value that she owned which could be pawned or sold in case the need arose. Yes, but she did possess one blessing -- it was a crown of beautiful long hair that glistened brightly without any artificial aids. She didn’t even have a set of side combs to keep the hair in place when exposed to a playful wind. Yet, it held a magic charm of its own, and indeed attracted praise and envy.

Then fate intervened to play a cruel hand. On Christmas Day, he discovers that she has cut her luxurious tresses and sold it to buy him a new chain for his watch. He, in turn, has pawned the heirloom watch for cash to buy her a beautiful set of combs for her hair.

Yes, indeed, Christmas is the Season of Giving....

Merry Christmas

These days, it's common practice to wish "Merry Christmas" to one another around the 25th of December, the day of Christmas. The origin of this practice is a little obscure. However, it's believed that an English admiral first used the term Merry Christmas in an informal letter, way back in 1699. In 1843, Charles Dickens used the same phrase in "A Christmas Carol." However, notwithstanding the veracity of its origin, "Merry Christmas" has become a sort of universal term to communicate joy and good wishes.

The term Merry Christmas doesn't have any religious bias and is often used by people of all races and religious backgrounds, during Christmas time. It reflects that messages of love, joy and well wishes can be communicated irrespective of belief systems. It's a greeting that makes total strangers make instant connection. It's a message that dissolves anger. It's a message that evaporates misunderstanding between loved ones and creates a bridge to the beginning of a new relationship. It's amazing that these two simple words "Merry Christmas" can have this profound effect.

In some places, people use a slight variation of the term "Merry Christmas." In Ireland and Great Britain, some people prefer using "Happy Christmas" instead. However, the power and significance of the phrase is not diminished at all because of a difference in phraseology, because the intent of love and well being remains the same, no matter which phrase is used.

The phrase "Happy Christmas" was used by Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain and proceeded to gain popularity in that part of the world. In fact, in the concluding lines of his now famous "A visit from St. Nicholas", Clement Moore actually used "Happy



Christmas." However, in later reincarnations of it, "Merry Christmas" can be found.

There are many holiday greeting terms used across the world. But "Merry Christmas" remains a very popular term in countries with large Christian population, like the United States, Great Britain, Canada and Australia. Other terms that are used around the same time of the year as a means of greeting are "Happy holidays", "Seasons Greetings" and, of course, "Happy Christmas."

There are groups of people who are opposed to the use of "Merry Christmas" and would prefer something more general term like the "Happy Christmas." However, it's interesting to note that in 2005 a survey discovered that more consumers used "Merry Christmas" than "Happy Christmas", primarily in the message of greeting cards.

The fact remains that no matter what term you use, it's the intent that matters. Use of words is merely an audible method of sending a message. Words have no meaning in themselves, other than the one perceived by the person who hears it. And when we are using something like "Merry Christmas", is there any doubt about our intentions?

FERNANDES PROPERTY SOLUTIONS UNDER CONSTRUCTION PROJECT DAHISAR(W)



2BHK-90Lacs
MIRA ROAD



1BHK / 2BHK
@6500 Per.Sqft.
VASAI



1BHK / 2BHK
@5500 Per.Sqft.

Head office: A/16, Shanti Shopping centre, opp. Rly Station, Mira Road(E)
Branch: Shop no.7, Mukti Kamal Bldg, Nr. Jain Mandir, L.T.Road, Dahisar(W)
Cont: -9322632712, 9920258471, 022-28123473



The Jubilee Year Of Mercy Defined



BY MELVYN BROWN

The challenge the world faces today is to build a campaign that can harness evil effectively.

Pope Francis had foreseen this world crisis much earlier, warning nations to implement measures for rapprochement. His papacy has been credited with spiritual, if not divine inspiration. The inspired light was seen in early 2015 when the pontiff convoked the Papal Bull calling for the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, December 2015 – November 2016.

The Bull of Indiction “Misericordias Vultus” is composed of 25 Sections. The theme of mercy is focused on the light of Christ’s face. The credibility of Pope Francis radiated a spiritual shield for all the faithful and the inner courage to face the pain of an unruly world.

Acts of violence, terror, murder, defiance and cruelty in barbaric operations have been the seeds of evil to drive hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants from their homeland, leaving behind a foul stench in the civilized world.

In section 4 of the Bull it is stated, “... the time has come to proclaim the Gospel in a new way.” In this respect the pontiff’s activism was shown on his journey to America. He went into high level talks, and his climate encyclical against global warming pleased many from not taking aggressive action. In a brave strategy Pope Francis prepared the world stage for the U.N. Conference on Climate Change in Paris (November 30 – 11 December).

For the 31st World Youth Day the theme is from the Beatitudes, “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain



mercy.” Youth from across the globe will gather in the Polish city of Krakow, July 2016. Pope Francis made it clear that the context for the coming Youth Day would be within the theme of the Jubilee Year of Mercy. The venue for the meet at Krakow will celebrate the two great ‘apostles of mercy’, St. John Paul II and St. Faustina.

The motto for the Holy Year is, “Merciful like the Father”. The Holy Door in the Vatican was opened by the pontiff on 8th December, 2015. The Year will end with the liturgical solemnity of Christ the King on 20th November 2016. “On that day the Holy Door will be sealed.” (section 5).

The Papal Bull states that the “Medicine of Mercy”, which St. John XXIII had spoken about, will be resumed. The medicine of Mercy has a reach-out to those wounded and hurt in spiritual, mental and physical conflicts.

To forgive as Jesus did from his cross. To suffer in silence when one is in harm’s way. To assist the poor, the disabled and the old. To use the medicine of prayer for all calamities, and show mercy for those who blindly shift the templates of hate towards the insanity of devil worship X-Spam-Subject: YES X-Spam-Subject: YES and the illusion of having sex In heaven.

The Holy Father, Pope Francis has expressed his desire to expose the remains of St. Padre Pio for veneration in St. Peter’s Basilica during the

Jubilee Year from 8th – 14th February 2016. On this day the pope will send “Missionaries of Mercy” throughout the earth giving them a special mandate to preach and confess as a sign that the Heavenly Father welcomes all who seek pardon – especially the Islamic militants.

Riveted by the Pope’s challenges given to the world and unbending in his diplomacy and confrontation, world leaders and the Vatican have taken seriously sections 20-21 of the Papal Bull, “...the relationship between justice and mercy should make a path to merciful love.” This Holy Year will be celebrated throughout the dioceses in the world, not only in Rome.

It is providential that the Jubilee Year rises in the midst of blood-bath and misery this century – “for mercy is the very foundation of the Church’s life.” (section 10).

O Holy Night!



Reva had risen early that morning to help her husband Tolmai to prepare for the arrival of their guests who would stay with them for at least two days. Reva, good-natured though she was, had become garrulous lately, getting irritated at the smallest excuse. Well, who could blame her? She was heavily pregnant and tending to her two-year old twins, Leah and Leanna kept her on her toes most of the day, not to speak of the baking and cleaning!

Now that the guests from Jerusalem had arrived, the upper room was full and noisy. She fed the twins and laid them in their cribs, softly singing the only lullaby they loved, as she began rolling out the dough in preparation for the evening meal. Tolmai had gone to the animals, to tend and secure them for the night, before he could get rid of the day's dirt with a wash.

Dusk was falling and Reva could hear the shouts and screams of children playing outside. The sound of the bleating of sheep being driven back into the village, voices of strangers walking down the hillside, low murmurs as women herded their children into homes, filled the air. In every abode



BY VERA ALVARES

flickering lights came on as women cleaned and cooked. Naomi was seen fetching that last jug of water, carrying it on her shoulder. A mother and her daughters were finishing weaving the fabric on the loom. Every household was busy and the streets were still crowded with the outsiders.

Earlier Reva had heard the men speaking outside as they drove the animals into the shelter for the night. It seemed a counting of people called census was being done. It had been ordered by Emperor Caesar Augustus as he wanted to make sure that everyone in the empire was paying taxes without fail. It was being carried out in the Jewish way, rather than the Roman way. It meant that families had to register in the original town of their tribes, not where they lived. Hence the crowds and noise -people had travelled to their

ancestral town to register themselves.

Reva understood that the guests in her humble home were in town to register themselves for the Census. Any other time but not now, she told herself miserably. She had tossed and turned last night as she had had an agonizing dream. She saw another pregnant girl like herself on a donkey, clinging to the animal, struggling to keep herself in her seat. The young face reflected her own anguish and pain. Was it herself that she was seeing in her dream?

As a result Reva had been disturbed that day, exhausted mentally and physically. But the daily chores had to be accomplished and with guests in her home, she was expected to prepare a vast though simple evening meal for all of them. The young face in her dream flashed before her eyes and tears once again welled up drenching the front of her woven robe. Wearily she continued her chores as Tolmai came into view and began to light the candles.

Just then, disturbing the stillness in her open kitchen, Reva heard a faint knock on the door leading to the animal pen. Was it the wind... she heard it again,

louder this time. A loud chortle from the upper room seemed to drown the sound of knocking. But when it sounded again Tolmai heard it too and looked questioningly at Reva.... who could it be ...all their relatives had come in and the house was full. Hesitating only for a moment, he rushed to check the origin of the sound.

By now darkness had descended and the night sky was filled with bright stars. Reva looked up and noticed that the star above the hillside seemed to be bigger and brighter than all others! From behind the fabric that shielded the cooking fire, she peeped to see Tolmai shaking his head vigorously at the visitors. Her heart missed a beat as one of the faces at the door was the same face of her dream! She was shocked to see the same donkey with the same young girl from her dream drooping over the side. She was heavy with child, her eyes were closed, face drained of all colour and her features contoured in pain as though her hour was near. She heard the man in dusty brown robes pleading with her husband for a corner in their home to rest their weary backs. Pointing at the girl on the animal, he explained that her time had come.....

With sorrow, Reva retreated behind the fabric; she knew they had not an inch of privacy which they could offer to this soon-to-be mother and her companion. The thought wrenched her guts. But wait... wasn't the face familiar? She stood still as she realised that she had had close encounters with this young girl of her own agebut where? If only she could remember, if only she had some space in her small abode, if only

Then it struck her like lightning- this was Mary, whom she had met often at Aunt Elizabeth's home on the hillside close to the town of Hebron! Before her marriage to Tolmai at a very young age, Reva lived with her parents in their home close to Zechariah and Elizabeth's house. Mary as a young girl had

often accompanied her mother on her visits to Elizabeth. The two girls came to like one another and had developed a close friendship only to lose touch after marriage. And now Reva had no place to accommodate her good friend Mary at this crucial hour of her need.... By the time Reva rushed to join Tolmai, the small group at the door had already departed. Distraught with pain and sorrow Reva withdrew into herself reliving her dream and pining for Mary...where was she?

Looking at the sky Reva noticed that somehow the bright star on the hillside had grown brighter and seemed to have developed a tail of light. She watched it in awe and in her heart of hearts felt that her dream last night and Mary's arrival at her door had some connection to the bright light on the hillside. Reva went into labour that night and brought into the world a bonny boy whom they named Bartholomew, son of Tolmai.

As Reva could not get over this distressing incident and fell sick often, Tolmai decided to shift himself and his family to Cana in Galilee. Though she seemed to have recovered, Reva nursed her hurt secretly. All this while,

under the watchful eye of his parents Bartholomew, their son grew up into a learned young man. Watching her son born on that fateful night, Reva prayed that someday if not herself, at least her son would encounter Mary and the baby she had brought into this world.....

In Cana as Bartholomew grew up, he came to be known as Nathanael. From being Tolmai's son he became an Apostle of Jesus, the son of Mary! Jesus saw him sitting under the fig tree and asked him to follow him. Nathanael walked in the Lord's footsteps and proclaimed the Good Word to the world after the Resurrection of Christ.

Church tradition says Nathanael carried a translation of Matthew's Gospel to northern India. Legend claims he was crucified upside down in Albania. If only Reva could foresee how her prayers had been answered in the manifestation of a close relationship between her son and Mary's, before she died....!

Wishing you all a happy Christmas and the joy and peace the Good Word has promised!

Advertisement. Tariff

| | | |
|---|--------------------------------|------------|
| Over all size 21.5 cms x 27cms | ● Print area 18 cms x 25.5 cms | |
| Full pg. back Colour (19 cms x 24 cms) | | Rs. 15,000 |
| Center spread colour(39 cms x 23.5 cms) | | Rs. 15,000 |
| Full pg. inside Cover colour(18 cms x 24 cms) | | Rs. 10,000 |
| Full pg. inner colour (18 cms x 24 cms) | | Rs. 8,000 |
| Half pg. Colour (18 cms x 12 cms) | | Rs. 5,000 |
| Full page B/W (18 cms x 24 cms) | | Rs. 5,000 |
| Half page B/W (18 cms x 12 cms) | | Rs, 3,000 |

Small Size Ads B/W

| | | | | |
|------------|----------|---|-----------|----------|
| 12 x 12cms | Rs. 2000 | ● | 6 x 24cms | Rs. 2000 |
| 18 x 6cms | Rs. 1500 | ● | 6 x 12cms | Rs. 1000 |
| | | | 6 x 6cms | Rs. 500 |

Matrimonial Classifieds:

- Rs. 500 per insertion (for 35 words) (includes box no.)
- Rs. 1500 for 12 insertions. (1 year The Secular Citizen FREE)

'Christmas Carols'

by Peter Castellino

Carol or carole is a medieval French word and Anglo-Norman origin meaning a dance song or a circle dance with singing -thus denoting religious joy connected to the Christmas season and they portrait medieval English songs on various subjects with a verse and refrain/burden alternatives.-thus these lyrics are a subset of the broader category of Christmas music.

The first carol was written from circa 1350 to 1550- the golden age of English carols with a verse refrain pattern but the origin is also 4th century Rome with Latin hymns like Veni redemptor genium by Ambrose - Archbishop of Milan austere theological doctrine statements of the Incarnation opposed to Arianism and Corde natus ex Parentis-Of the Father's love begotten by Spanish poet - Prudentius-d.413 is still sung in some churches-the early history lies in books like Noel: The History and Traditional Behind Christmas Carols- 2010 Halifax Press.

In the 14th century carols became a popular religious song with a theme around a saint, a Christ child or the Virgin Mary blending two languages like English and Latin.



9th and 10th centuries had the Christmas Sequence or Prose in Northern European monasteries under Bernard of Clairvaux rhymed into rhymed stanzas.

In the 12th century Parisian monk Adam of St Victor derived music from popular songs-closer to the Christmas carol.

In 13th century in France, Germany and Italy under St Francis of Assisi Christmas songs in native languages developed.

English Christmas carols appeared in the 1426 work of John Awdlay, a Shropshire chaplain lists twenty five carols of Christmas sung by groups of wassailers who went from house to house.

Songs called carols were originally communal songs sung during harvest tide and Christmas and only later carols were sung in churches -specially for Christmas.

Carols gained popularity after the Reformation in countries

where Protestant churches gained prominence and Martin Luther authored carols and encouraged their use for worship-the Lutheran reformation warmly welcomed music.

In the 15th century the carol was considered art music with elaborate arrangements made and carols were a vital contribution to English medieval music.

The Fayrfax Manuscript a court song book featuring carols was written at the end of the 15th century with songs for 3 or 4 voices and themes mostly on the Passion of Christ.

In the 16th century carols almost disappeared but were revived in the 18th century when most carols were written.

Shortly before 1857 the Salvation Army under Charles Fry started playing Christmas Carols using a brass band.

Carols are sung by individuals, larger groups of professionally trained choirs-most churches have special services with carols sung along with readings about Christ's birth based on the famous Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at King's College, Cambridge.

Thus we see the importance of Christmas Carols.

Our Rights. Our Freedoms. Always!



BY FR. CEDRIC PRAKASH
SJ

On December 16th 1966, the United Nations General Assembly adopted two significant International Covenants on Human Rights: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International

Bill of Human Rights. From an Indian perspective the mainstreaming of these rights are not merely relevant but also extremely urgent, in the context of the growing intolerance all over.

Freedom of speech: never before has this right been subject to such attack. On January 29th 2015, in its world report for the year, the internationally acclaimed 'Human Rights Watch' highlighted the way freedom of speech is systematically being curtailed and curbed in India. Rationalists like Kalburgi and Dabholkar, among others, are killed because they had the cour-

jarat Freedom of Religion Law' which prevents anyone accepting another religion without the written permission of the Collector.

Freedom from want: we only need to look around - to see the growing gap between the rich and the poor; millions of our sisters and brothers are condemned to an inhuman existence; they lack a square meal a day and clean drinking water; they have no decent shelter; education and employment for many are a far cry - need we say more?

Freedom from fear: there are several segments of society in India which seem to be caught up in the web of fear; fringe groups violently dictate to others what they should eat and drink, see and read; doing otherwise, merits threats, violence and even death. Several of the media houses seem to toe a scripted line for fear or favour; and those who take a stand on critical issues are intimidated, harassed and subject to all kinds of pressures.

India has a long way to go if she is serious about truly celebrating these two important Covenants. The United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon reminds us "On Human Rights Day, let us recommit to guaranteeing the fundamental freedoms and protecting the human rights of all."

(* Fr. Cedric Prakash SJ is the Director of PRASHANT, the Ahmedabad-based Jesuit Centre for Human Rights, Justice and Peace)



Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. These two Covenants, together with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), form the International Bill of Human Rights, setting out the civil, political, cultural, economic and social rights that are the birth right of all human beings.

As we observe December 10th, the anniversary of the UDHR once again, the United Nations has invited everyone to enter a year-long campaign on the golden jubilee of the two international Covenants on Human Rights.

The theme this year is 'Our Rights. Our Freedoms. Always!' which aims to promote and raise awareness of the two Covenants. The campaign revolves around key rights and freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear which underpin the International

age to dare the right-wing elements of the country. Those who take a stand for truth and justice are lampooned, trolled and denigrated; the perpetrators of such heinous crimes apparently have the tacit approval of the rulers of the country.

Freedom of worship: the minorities of the country are at the receiving end from those who want to establish a 'majoritarian' culture and who care two hoots for what is enshrined in the Constitution of India. The attacks on Churches and Church personnel; the attempt to substitute Christmas with 'Good Governance Day'; the 'ghar wapsi' programmes; the consistent denigration of the Muslims are all sure indicators that freedom of worship is under severe threat. To top it all, when Narendra Modi was the Chief Minister of Gujarat, he piloted one of the most draconian laws in the history of the country innocuously called 'the Gu-

Konkani Lovers Read 
online at:
www.sezariworld.com/the-secular-citizen-and-divo-issues.html
or
www.issuu.com/divowebly

When Magi Camped In Bethlehem

by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson

"Could I rent that little house in the back for my family?" Joseph inquired at our door. "We've just moved to Bethlehem from Nazareth."

"And how do you plan to pay for it," my husband Jacob retorted. He didn't trust outsiders, you know. Mercy! If we had just known who they were, we'd have given it to them. But no one knew. Not then.

Joseph held out his hands. Strong, big hands, callused from hard labor. "I'd work for you. Help with the livestock, harvest in the summer, whatever you need," he said. His eyes were pleading. "I ... we just had a little baby last week...."

"Oh, was that your baby born in the stable behind the inn?" said Jacob.

"You know about it?" Joseph was amazed, but continued, "When I can get some carpenter jobs I can pay you cash money."

I could see Jacob weakening. He looked at me, and I smiled. "Yeah, you can take it," he said gruffly. "But I'll expect to see you first thing in the morning. We've got wood to cut in the hills."

They moved in that afternoon, and Mary and I became fast friends. She reminded me of my own daughter.

Two years later about midnight, a caravan lumbered into Bethlehem and halted right in front of our house. Camels were kneeling, riders climbing down from their mounts. Easterners, they were, and rich. There were three of them in all, the rich ones I mean. You don't count servants, I'm told.

They were looking beyond us to the little house where Mary and Joseph and Jesus lived. It was bathed in a gentle, ethereal light. I looked up, then and saw the star--I guess that was what it was--shedding its clear light on the house. The rich men--Magi you call them--didn't seem afraid. They moved toward the little house, with their retinue of servants behind.

Through the open door we could see them kneeling on the dirt floor before the sleeping Jesus.

"We saw the child's star in the East. We knew that it meant a great king had been born among the Jews, greater than any on earth," Balthazar was saying. "We came to do homage to such a great king."

I could see tears flowing down Mary's cheeks. The man continued. "We went

to Jerusalem, but they knew of no baby kings."

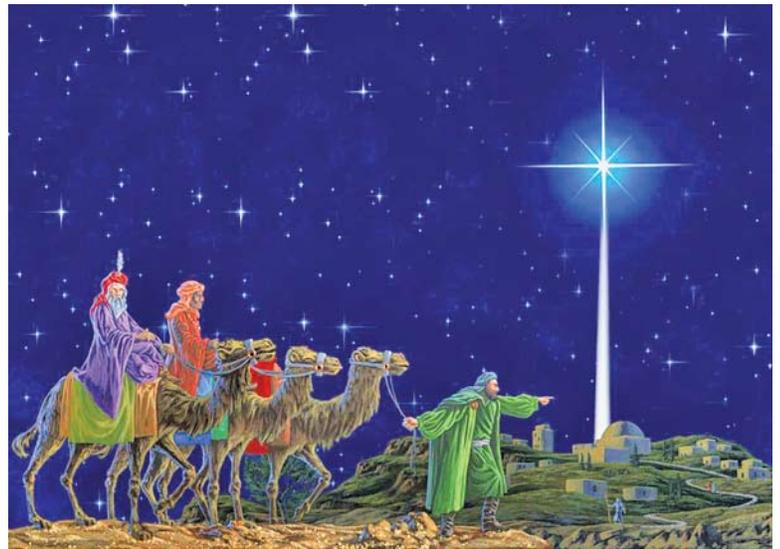
Jesus, a king? How could it be? The family was so poor, Joseph just a farmer-carpenter, Mary a peasant girl.

"We had an audience with King Herod," he went on. "His scholars said the Messiah-king was to be born here, in Bethlehem of Judah. King Herod seemed troubled." He paused, and murmured something to the others in their strange Eastern tongue. You could tell they didn't trust Herod.

The Magi motioned for their gifts to be brought in. The first fumbled with the latches on a strongbox, and then pushed up the lid. Gold! Under the light from the flickering lamp coins and ingots sparkled. "For the King," he said simply, and then prostrated himself before the toddler. Little Jesus, beginning to wake up now, just sat there, watching intently.

The second visitor opened his chest. Ah ... the fragrance of exotic spices flooded the room. Jesus sniffed and peered into the box, and then the second visitor prostrated himself before the child.

Then Balthazar brought the final box containing a fragile alabaster flask. He pulled the stopper and a new smell



struck us--heavy and rich, the smell of death--myrrh, used to anoint the bodies of the dead. Strange gift for a toddler, I thought, even a royal one. He replaced the stopper, and then he, too, knelt with his forehead to the ground before the child.

Finally, the three excused themselves, and sort of backed out of the tiny room. Joseph reached out to Mary, who took Jesus in her arms. They just sat there, holding each other, trying to understand.

Now Balthazar spoke to Jacob. "Could we encamp in your pasture tonight?" Jacob nodded.

The man signaled, and the servants began unpacking tents. By now, half the town was standing on the road in front of our house watching, faces lit by sputtering torches. Servants trekked back and forth from the donkeys and camels to the three great pavilions they had set up, carrying all sorts of things. Finally, people drifted off to their homes, but I must confess, I didn't sleep much.

Next morning the servants were up early reloading the animals, and finally striking the grand tents. The Magi had been over to Joseph and Mary's house several times to see the child, and then they were gone, camel bells tinkling in the distance.

The next night, however, we were awakened by someone beating on our door. It was Joseph. Outside I could see Mary with little Jesus. Joseph was as white as a sheet.

"Come in man," said Jacob, "You look like you've seen a ghost."

"An angel," Joseph replied. "An angel appeared to me in a dream. He told me, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and escape, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.'" Mary was shaking so I went over and held her. "Jacob," Joseph asked, "may I buy one of your donkeys for the journey?"

"Of course."

Joseph removed a single gold coin from the folds of his robe. "That ought to cover it," he said, placing it firmly in Jacob's palm.

My husband's eyes lit up, his fingers closed over it, and he was just about to tuck it away when he stopped, and then handed the coin back to Joseph. "No," he said, "I want to give you the donkey, and wish you Godspeed." (I was so proud of Jacob in that moment.) "It's the least we can do," he said, "for you ... and for the Christ-child."

I bustled about, heart in my throat, putting together some food for the family, while Jacob and Joseph tied the heavy treasure boxes on Joseph's donkey. Then Joseph helped Mary and the child up onto the other donkey--our donkey--and embraced Jacob. "I don't know how we can thank you for what you have done for us these past couple of

years," he was saying. "You've made us feel at home, and now ... and now we must leave you in the night. Thanks." Then he whispered, "You won't tell anyone where we went, will you?"

"Where are you going? Back to Nazareth?"

"It's best you didn't know," Joseph said, "but we'll see you again. I'm sure we'll see you again." And with that, he led the animals to the road, south towards Egypt. I waved, and little Jesus waved back at me.

"Jacob, do you think they'll be all right by themselves with all that treasure?" I asked.

He looked at me with a tenderness and wonder I only saw in him now and again. "The God who summoned the Magi and sent the angel is right there with them. They're not alone, Rebecca. How could they be alone?"

Wish You Happy X'Mas And New Year



Mr. Steven Crasto

TRU-FIT AUTO WORKS

Automobile Specialist In Repairs Of All Kinds.
(Approved by the govt of Maharashtra)

22, Police Court Lane, Behind Bank of India,
D.N. Road Br., Fort, Mumbai-400001.

Off. 4002 9914/15/16/17 .
Telefax : 22625508 .
Mob : 9820071528

Email : stevencrasto2112@yahoo.co.in / stevencrasto@tru.fitauto.com

celebrations happen as the people celebrate this spring festival. Some cities have spectacular religious celebrations although it is not exclusively a religious holiday.

Christian New Year

Christian or Gregorian New Year falls on January 1st. Countries following the Gregorian Calendar celebrate the New Year on this date. Gregorian Calendar is a modification of the Julian Calendar established by the Roman Emperor, Julius Caesar in 46 BC. In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII of Rome, abolished Julian Calendar as it was slightly long and caused vernal equinox to drift backwards in the calendar year (January 1 to December 31). Gradually Gregorian Calendar gained acceptance in several countries across the world as it created a balance between seasons and calendar.

Hindu New Year

Hindu New Year is celebrated according to the Hindu Lunar Calendar- Panchanga. The popular name of the Hindu New Year is Vikram Samvat. In the Indian Calendar, seasons follow the sun, months follow the moon and days both sun and moon. This era of Vikram Samvat began in 57 BC. To correspond with the solar calendar, 57 years are subtracted from the Hindu Year. Thus, the New Year begins with the first day of Kartik Maas following Deepawali Amaavasya.

Punjab : New year starts on 13th April.

Assam : New year starts on 14th or 15th of April.

Bengal : New year starts on 14th or 15th April.

Gujarat : New Year starts on Karthik Shukla Pratipada.

Kerala : New year starts in the month of Medam (on the day when the Sun enters in the constellation Leo).

Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka : New Year falls on Chaitra Shuddha Prathipade.

Sikkim : New Year starts on 18th day of the 10th month of the Tibetan Lunar Calendar.

Maharashtra : New Year starts in the month of Chaitra

Tamil Nadu : New year starts on 13th or 14th of April.

Parsi New Year

Jamshedi Navroz is the Parsi New Year. It usually falls on 21st March. Parsi New Year was named after the legendary King of Persia, Jamshed who started the Parsi Calendar. As per the Parsi mythology, universe is recreated on this day and life with all its glory is cherished. Navroz means spring and is believed Mother Nature casts her spell by dressing up like a young bride. Thus, Navroz gives a new vision to everyone's life. Parsis celebrate the day with jollity and mirth.

Celtic New Year

Celt is a community of people in European countries speaking Celtic languages (mainly Indo-

Europeans languages). These people celebrated various festivals and the most important amongst them was Samhain, the Celtic New Year. 'Samhain' is the word for November in the Irish language. November 1 is the Celtic feast of Samhain. This Celtic New Year is named after Sama - the Aryan God of Dead. Samhain in Gaelic (Scottish language) means "summer's end". Samhain begins with An Geamhradh (the beginning of the dark winter) and ends with Am Foghar (the Celtic harvest).

Bahai New Year

Bahai New Year occurs on the date of vernal equinox. It is usually celebrated on 21st March every year. Bahai people have their own nine months calendar of nineteen days. Naw Ruz is also called 'The Day of God', 'Yawmu'llah' or 'the Day of the Point'. This day begins at the sunset rather than midnight. So, New Year celebrations also began on the evening of March 20th. This festival is most popularly celebrated by the Iranians and Zoroastrian community.

Naw-Ruz falls in the month of Bahá. It is also associated with, 'Him Whom God shall make manifest, the Promised One of the Bab'. The remaining 18 days of the month are associated with eighteen Letters of the Living. This indicated that the Bab wanted Naw Ruz festivities to

The Gift of Forgiveness

by John William Smith

The Christmas of 1949 we didn't have a tree.

My dad had as much pride as anybody, I suppose, so he wouldn't just say that we couldn't afford one.

When I mentioned it, my mother said that we weren't going to have one this year, that we couldn't afford one, and even if we could – it was stupid to clutter up your house with a dead tree.

I wanted a tree badly though, and I thought – in my naïve way – that if we had one, everybody would feel better.

Taking Matters into my Own Hands
About three days before Christmas, I was out collecting for my paper route.

It was fairly late – long after dark – it was snowing and very cold.

I went to the apartment building to try to catch a customer who hadn't paid me for nearly two months – she owed me seven dollars.

Much to my surprise, she was home.

She invited me in and not only did she pay me, she gave me a dollar tip!

It was a windfall for me – I now had eight whole dollars.

What happened next was totally unplanned.

On the way home, I walked past a Christmas tree lot and the idea hit me.

The selection wasn't very good because it was so close to the holiday, but there was this one real nice tree.

It had been a very expensive tree and no one had bought it; now it was so close to



Christmas that the man was afraid no one would.

He wanted ten dollars for it, but when I – in my gullible innocence – told him I only had eight, he said he might sell it for that.

I really didn't want to spend the whole eight dollars on the tree, but it was so pretty that I finally agreed.

I dragged it all the way home – about a mile, I think – and I tried hard not to damage it or break off any limbs.

The snow helped to cushion it, and it was still in pretty good shape when I got home.

You can't imagine how proud and excited I was.

I propped it up against the railing on our front porch and went in.

My heart was bursting as I announced that I had a surprise.

I got Mom and Dad to come to the front door and then I switched on the porch

light.

Surprise!!

"Where did you get that tree?" my mother exclaimed.

But it wasn't the kind of exclamation that indicates pleasure.

"I bought it up on Main Street. Isn't it just the most perfect tree you ever saw?" I said, trying to maintain my enthusiasm.

"Where did you get the money?" Her tone was accusing and it began to dawn on me that this wasn't going to turn out as I had planned.

"From my paper route." I explained about the customer who had paid me.

"And you spent the whole eight dollars on this tree?" she exclaimed.

She went into a tirade about how stupid it was to spend my money on a dumb tree that would be thrown out and burned in a few days.

She told me how irresponsible I was and how I was just like my dad with all those foolish, romantic, noble notions about fairy tales and happy endings and that it was about time I grew up and learned some sense about the realities of life and how to take care of money and spend it on things that were needed and not on silly things.

She said that I was going to end up in the poorhouse because I believe in stupid things like Christmas trees, things that didn't amount to anything.

I Just Stood There

My mother had never talked to me like that before and I couldn't believe what I was hearing.

I felt awful and I began to cry.

Finally, she reached out and snapped off the porch light.

"Leave it there," she said. "Leave that tree there till it rots, so every time we see it, we'll all be reminded of how stupid the men in this family are."

Then she stormed up the stairs to her bedroom and we didn't see her until the next day.

Dad and I brought the tree in and we made a stand for it.

He got out the box of ornaments and we decorated it as best as we could; but men aren't too good at things like that, and besides, it wasn't the same without mom.

There were a few presents under it by Christmas day – although I can't remember a single one of them – but Mom wouldn't have anything to do with it.

It was the worst Christmas I ever had.

Fast Forward to Today

Judi and I married in August of 1963, and dad died on October 10 of that year. Over the next eight years, we lived in many places. Mom sort of divided up the year – either living with my sister Jary or with us.

In 1971 we were living in Wichita, Kansas – Lincoln was about seven, Brendan was three and Kristen was a baby. Mom was staying with us during the holidays. On Christmas Eve I stayed up very late. I was totally alone with my thoughts, alternating between joy and melancholy, and I got to thinking about my paper route, that tree, what my mother had said to me and how Dad had tried to make things better.

I heard a noise in the kitchen and discovered that it was mom. She couldn't sleep either and had gotten up to make herself a cup of hot tea – which was her remedy for just about everything. As she waited for the water to boil, she walked into the living room and discovered me there. She saw my open Bible and asked me what I was reading. When I told her, she asked if I would read it to her and I did.

The Truth Comes Out

When the kettle began to whistle, she went and made her tea. She came back, and we started to visit. I told her how happy I was that she was with us for Christmas and how I wished that Dad could have lived to see his grandchildren and to enjoy this time because he always loved Christmas so. It got very quiet for a moment and then she said, "Do you remember that time on Twelve Mile Road when you bought that tree with your paper route money?"

"Yes," I said, "I've just been thinking about it you know."

She hesitated for a long moment, as though she were on the verge of something that was bottled up so deeply inside her soul that it might take surgery to get it out. Finally, great tears started down her face and she cried, "Oh, son, please forgive me."

"That time and that Christmas have been a burden on my heart for twenty-five years. I wish your dad were here so I could tell him how sorry I am for what I said. Your dad was a good man and it hurts me to know that he went to his grave without ever hearing me say that I was sorry for that night. Nothing will ever make what I said right, but you need to know that your dad never did have any money sense (which was all too true).

We were fighting all the time - though not in front of you - we were two months behind in our house payments, we had no money for groceries, your dad was talking about going back to Arkansas and that tree was the last straw. I took it all out on you. It doesn't make what I did right, but I hoped that someday, when you were older, you would understand. I've wanted to say something for ever so long and I'm so glad it's finally out."

Well, we both cried a little and held each other and I forgave her – it wasn't hard, you know.

Then we talked for a long time, and I did understand; I saw what I had never seen and the bitterness and sadness that had gathered up in me for all those years gradually washed away.

It was marvelously simple.

The great gifts of this season – or any season – can't be put under the tree; you can't wear them or eat them or drive them or play with them. We spend so much time on the lesser gifts – toys, sweaters, jewelry, the mint, anise and dill of Christmas – and so little on the great gifts – understanding, grace, peace and forgiveness. It's no wonder that the holiday leaves us empty, because when it's over, the only reminders we have are the dirty dishes and the January bills.

The Great Gift

The great gifts are like the one gift – the gift that began it all back there in Bethlehem of Judea. You can't buy them, and they're not on anybody's shopping list. They come as He came – quietly, freely, unexpectedly – and if you're not careful, you'll miss them entirely.

Read **THE SECULAR CITIZEN**

Online at:

www.sezariworld.com/the-secular-citizen-and-divo-issues.html

or

www.issuu.com/secularcitizen

Innocent Child

by Don Aguiar

There is a Dutch proverb which says, Children and Fools say the truth. The proverb has great wisdom in it. The moment one comes to know the truth, he becomes both – a child on his part, a fool in the eyes of others. They are not two things.

A man who has seen the light starts behaving so innocently that he can only be called reborn. But because of his innocence, because his purity is like a child's, he can be deceived, cheated or exploited; hence, in the eyes of others he looks like a fool. The fact is, he is the only one who is not the fool; everybody else is. But the fools are in the majority and the man of truth is alone. This man's name is Jesus who spent His entire life from cradle to the grave in all innocence, we adore Him, and we celebrate His birth (Christmas), mourn His death (Good Friday) and celebrate His resurrection (Easter)

When Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote a book about the man of truth, a man of silence and innocence, he named the book *THE IDIOT*. He will appear to be a fool: to be a child is the greatest risk in this insane world. That is the greatest risk Jesus faced but turned this adversity into advantage resulting in more than half the world becoming His followers.

First, He set the church to be the community of the reign of God, "a distinctive community spawned by God's reign to show forth its tangible character in human, social form." When people wonder what the reconciling,



boundary-breaking, compassionate, forgiving reign of God looks like on this earth, they should be able to look at Christian communities and see a sign of that reign come to life. They should see a body made up of many cultures and expressions, groups once divided by oppression and violence now reconciled and unselfishly seeking each other's well-being, living into the dream God longs to make real throughout the whole creation.

The church is also the messenger of the reign of God, "announcing the reign of God ... as a spontaneous expression of gratitude, humility, and joy" and leaving no ambiguity about the identity of the God who is moving all of life toward divine shalom. To ensure this good news is compelling and palpable, it must be

translated for the local culture. The gospel Jesus preached and manifested in first-century Palestine should come alive, not merely in forms generated in sixth-century Italy or sixteenth-century England or twentieth-century suburban America, but in the gritty, broken, beloved world we are blessed to walk in today.

Finally, the church is the servant of the reign of God. Jesus' ministry was an active one marked by healing the sick, liberating captives, facing down demons, standing with the least of these, going forth with compassion to actively heal all signs of brokenness. As his followers, our hands and our hearts and our resources simply must be devoted to action that participates in the justice and wholeness of God's reign. While the final realization of the reign of God may not depend solely on our limited efforts, God still needs us, as church, to offer our lives in the service of God's dream....

To continue from where Jesus left and to bring focus of what the Church stands for and of the priorities of Jesus example and teachings, Pope Francis wants a church that is on mission, reaching out to others and accompanying them, especially those on the peripheries; a merciful church that is a field hospital for the many wounded of this world; a church that builds bridges, not walls. He wants a church that is poor and for the poor, one that rejects careerism; a church that is committed to encounter, inclusion and reconciliation, not one that is confrontational, self-referential or judgmental. He wants a synodal church, in which the bishops and faithful people walk together and authority is understood as service.

This Christmas we are at the begin-

ning of the year of Mercy which opens on December 08, 2015 where Catholics are encouraged to bring about a "mercy revolution" by undertaking daily almsgiving, caring for the needy and forgiving as a way to meaningfully observe the Year of Mercy called by Pope Francis. The year is an opportunity to transform "our church into a more compassionate and merciful" one. Catholics are asked to "rediscover" works of mercy, such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, helping the needy and visiting the sick and imprisoned.

We are also called to go out and serve others, not live a sheltered, comfortable life just serving ourselves. When the church is lukewarm, closed up inside itself, even many times a wheeler-dealer, then that church is no longer one that ministers, that serves, but rather uses others. Instead, Jesus and the Gospel call on people to serve, to be at the service of, not to come to a halt, always to go further, forgetting about themselves.

However, it's so easy to be tempted to take advantage of the comforts that come with status and to start living

Thanksgiving



Thanks to Sacred Heart of Jesus & St. Jude for the favours granted

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, loved, glorified & praised throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. Sacred Heart of Jesus, Thy kingdom come. St. Jude worker of miracles pray for us. St. Jude helper of the hopeless pray for us. Amen, Say this prayer nine times a day for nine days.

— Norbart Pereira. Vasai

comfortably without honesty, like those Pharisees Jesus talks about, who stroll in the squares, making sure they are seen.

Let us celebrate this Christmas and be much more in contact with the Gospel, with the living out of the Gospel. Not just the articulation of the Gospel, the voicing of the Gospel, the proclaiming of the Gospel, but the personal living of it, and that seems to be what is the most attractive aspect and why so many people are coming back to the practice of the faith.

Let us also celebrate Christmas in the Missionary spirit which is manifested by preaching love, humanity and faith through one's witness and not through proselytism. Faith in Jesus Christ is shared first through witness then with words and then to protect the gift of hope and seek to live according to the Gospel and not according to the world; going against the current.

We need to ask that God "save us from temptations," which in the end is the temptation to live "a double life: I show myself off as a minister, one who serves, but deep down, I use others."

The fact is we can freely discuss the proclamation of the Gospel, or the personal living of it. That a billion plus people with tremendous differences in culture go about their lives on a daily basis articulating, voicing, proclaiming or practicing the Gospel shows that the Gospel in fact, shows us the way to practice mercy.

Should we label the Gospel the path that leads us to be 'merciful'? Or should we blindly defend ourselves as already being merciful despite knowing that unsavory things are happening? Or should we simply call ourselves a real community where all shades exist, and that could work on being better? It is funny how none of us want to come to a real conclusion.

When practicing mercy what shouldn't bother us are people whose belief sys-

tems are different – those who don't believe in your religion, politics, culture or beliefs. You don't have to love them. However, you have to learn to live and let live. If our differences didn't bother us so much in the first place, intolerance would be nipped in the bud which will lead to the Christmas proclamation which proclaims peace, joy and mercy - peace on earth and goodwill to all men remembering the birth and living the life of the innocent child. Then the spirit of Christmas will come into its real meaning as one small act of mercy daily will bring about a mercy revolution in India, Catholics are also urged to forgive to help find "strength to embrace God's mercy

The only way this can happen, however, is the long process of educating and exposing society to various belief systems and cultures of the world. While that is happening in India with increased media exposure and people migration, change will be slow.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT



"Holy Spirit, thou who makes me see everything and shows me the way to reach the ideal. You who gives me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and are in all instances in my life with me. I, in this short dialogue want to thank you and confirm from you once more that never want to be separated from you, no matter how great the material desire may be. I want to be with you and my loved ones in your perpetual glory. Amen".

— A Devotee



The very mention of Christmas evokes emotions of joy and celebration within us. Whether we are young or old, we cannot think of Christmas without Santa Claus, cribs, stars, a neatly decorated Christmas tree, homemade sweets and loads of fun. Did you ever think about the origin of this festival? Let us take a glance into this through history to see how the season of Christmas and its festivities developed. Have you ever wondered whether Jesus Christ was really born on December 25th? The answer is No! Because no one knows the exact date of the Messiah's birth. The Holy Bible too does not provide us with any particular date. So why do Christians celebrate Christmas on December 25th?

The early Christians certainly had many arguments regarding this. The first recorded date of Christmas being celebrated on December 25th was in 336 A.D during the reign of the Roman Emperor, Constantine. A few years later Pope Julius I officially declared that the birth of Jesus Christ would be celebrated on December 25th. Among the many different traditions and theories, a very early Christian tradition says that the day when Mary was told that she would have a very special baby, Jesus (called the Annunciation) was on March 25th – and it's still celebrated today on the 25th March in some countries of the world. Nine months after March 25th is December 25th. December 25 may have been chosen because the birth-

day of the Pagan Sun God, Mithra was celebrated on this day. The early Christians might have given this festival a new meaning — to celebrate the birth of the Son of God, 'the unconquered Son'!

What was the Star of Bethlehem and what did the three wise men actually see? Well, to be honest no one really knows. But there are many theories including comets, super novas', a conjunction of planets or something entirely supernatural! There are only 12 verses in the Holy Bible about the wise men and the star (Matthew, Chapter 2, Verses 1 to 12). They're often called the 'Three Kings', but the Holy Bible does not mention how many men were there, or that they were kings. They had seen an unusual new star in the sky and knew that it mentioned about the birth of the Messiah, as foretold in Isaiah, Chapter 7, Verse 14. The Holy Bible tells us that they first



BY JUBEL D'CRUZ

saw the star in the east and then again when they were in Jerusalem, it went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the Christ child was born. The stars that we see lit up during Christmas are associated with this 'Star of Bethlehem'.

Christmas would certainly be boring without nativity plays and carols being sung which breathe life into the season. The first Nativity play was performed by the monks in a cave in Italy. St. Francis of Assisi and his followers acted in the first play in 1223 A.D. to remind the local people of the region that

Jesus Christ was born for them, as He was born into a poor family like theirs. St. Francis of Assisi narrated the part of each character in the story himself using wooden figures in the play. A few years later, the play had become very popular that real people played the part of the characters in the story. Songs were sung by the people taking part in the play and they soon became what we call as Christmas carols today.

A Christmas party is definitely not complete without the appearance of Santa Claus and the gifts and sweets distributed by him. Now from where did Santa Claus appear? The idea of Santa Claus began with St. Nicholas, a patron saint of children, who was a Bishop. He lived in the 4th century A.D. in a place called Myra in Asia Minor (now called Turkey). Nicholas was a rich and kind person. He had a reputation for helping the poor and offering secret gifts to the people who needed them. There are several legends about St. Nicholas which portrays him distributing gifts to people.

So friends, as we celebrate Christmas this month, let us focus on the real meaning behind this jingly season and its traditions. Christmas is a time to celebrate the incarnation of the Son of God, Jesus Christ who was a generous and gratuitous gift from God, the Almighty Father who created heaven and earth. It is a time of great happiness for God who left the confines of His divinity to enter into humanity forever. It also invites us to spread this joy to the people around us, to do for them something that shows your love and appreciation. Following the examples of the three wise men from the east and St. Nicholas, let us learn to be generous towards others, a generosity that is not just limited to material gifts, but also with our time.

(The writer is a freelance journalist and the author of several children's books. He also works full time for 'Amar Chitra Katha Pvt. Ltd)

Wish You Happy X'Mas And New Year



Tiny Parties Or Lavish Weddings
-----Take Care Of Them All.

**For All Your Family / Office Get Together
(Food Orders = Food In KGS)**

H/O, Shop No.1 , Sai Complex, Off Link Road, IC Colony Extn
Mumbai-400068. Tel No 28949812 / 28932497

www.theexpresscaterers.com

[f /theexpresscaterers](https://www.facebook.com/theexpresscaterers), [t / theexpresscaterers](https://twitter.com/theexpresscaterers)

Email : theexpresscaterers@gmail.com
Brazil - 9820124036 Deepak - 9769646910

BCS “POWER OF ONE” AWARDS - Nominations Invited

The Annual SABHA DAY of The Bombay Catholic Sabha is on Sunday, 24 January 2016 and as in previous years the Sabha will honour individuals who have excelled in any particular field of activity, career, profession, service, etc with the “POWER OF ONE AWARD”.

The Sabha invites nominations for “Power of One” Awards with full particulars of the person nominated and details with attachments of the work or achievements of the individual. Kindly send the same to the office of The Bombay Catholic Sabha, St. Michael’s Church Annexe Building 1st Floor, Mahim, Mumbai 400016 before 10th January 2015

MALAD (W) - ORLEM

- 1-BHK 697 sq.ft. Rs. 59,24,500/-
- 2-BHK 923 sq.ft. Rs. 78,45,500/-
- 2-BHK 1200 sq.ft. Rs. 1,26,00,000/-
- 3-BHK 1600 sq.ft. Rs. 1,68,00,000/-

Under construction projects. Loans approved by the banks. All modern amenities. Podium Parking. Possession by March - 2018.

BORIVALI (W) - I.C. COLONY

- 1-BHK 560 sq.ft. Rs.85,00,000/-
- 2-BHK 1050 sq.ft. Rs.1,20,00,000/-
- 2-BHK 1140 sq.ft. Rs.1,50,00,000/- (NEW)
- 3-BHK 1140 sq.ft. Rs.1,90,00,000/-

Resale Flats.

**VINOD GUPTA
9820045619**

Wilfy's

Wilfred & Wendy Fernandes
98207 07209
90299 14156



Great Food, Better Prices, Best Service !!

Caterers for all Occasions

C / 311, Rajesh Park Co-Op. Hsg. Society, Opp. St. Anthony's Church, Vakola, Santacruz (E), Mumbai - 400 055. Tel.: 98205 82944

Climate - Out of Control

These days everyone is talking about the 'Climate' of our dear earth- since the nature is in retaliation mode. Our generation is reaping the fruits of abuse; of what we did to the nature decades back. Our greed for overconsumption, comfort and quick-rich ideas have resulted into dangerous and altered climate scenario. Recent floods, earthquakes and forest fires, landslides around the world signal toward a point of no return due to the magnitude of devastation and destruction-humankind has done to mother-nature. For us, birds, animals, insects and trees have no place in our lives. Only man has the right to live.

If we look back in time- decades back it used to flood in villages and rivers, where we enjoyed swimming and boating; these days they do it in city roads. We used to hunt animals in jungles and now animals are visiting our dwellings. We enjoyed rains and cool breeze under the trees; now we escape the heat in our air-conditioned cars and houses. Then the seasons were in perfect harmony; now it rains anytime and anywhere and even in desert.

We used to bathe and fish in streams with clean water; now they are clogged with refuse and dirty black water with all infections. Green coverage gave into buildings and we dig bore wells in every possible way to suck out



ground water levels. Vegetables and fruits are grown and ripened with every possible way through chemicals and pesticides that harmed the nature, creatures and us. We have polluted the air, soil and water in every way. Our habits and reluctance has done a grave damage to climate.

The land has now shrunk and barren due to pumping of ground water and reduced rain water absorption. This sea cannot hold this excess water but throw it into the atmosphere and submerge low level islands. These flash floods are the results and this will accelerate in the coming years.

With all that knowledge and wisdom we may not be in a position to reverse what Shanghai, New Delhi and Mumbai are going through. Chennai is a horrible example of nature's retaliation. We need to wake up and act voluntarily and strictly to save our planet from doom.

—George D'Souza

MATRIMONIAL

MUMBAI: R.C. Spinster, E.I. aged 49 years, Ht. 5'2", Edn. B.A., Sincere, homely, seeks a well settled, suitable match, sincere, working and supportive. Only interested persons send SMS (Your name, Age, Address, Mobile No.) to 9967073165 (Regd. 5662)

Subscriptions for The Secular Citizen

Renewal as well as New, can be sent through Bank Fund Transfer to any one of the following banks:

Bank: HDFC Bank
Branch : CST - Mumbai VT
Account Name: The Secular Citizen
Account No. 0355200006744
ISFC code: HDFC0000355

or

Bank: Citizen Credit Co-op Bank Ltd.,
Branch : Colaba, Mumbai
Account Name: The Secular Citizen
Account No. 00000000100489
ISFC code: CCBL0209003

Please inform us through email: secular@vsnl.com or through phone: 22693578 after transferring the same.

TULIP LAWNS

Elegant Occasions
Memorable Events

Available for Weddings,
Engagement Corporate
Events, Film Shoot
Birthday Party

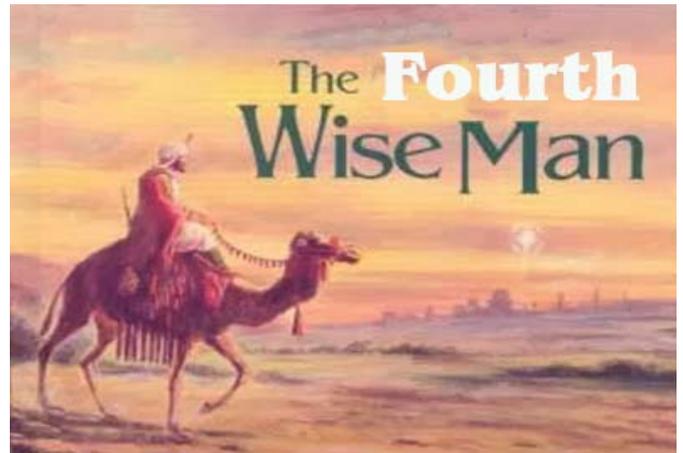
Grounds Andheri (East) &
(West), Malad West
Capacity - 200 -1500

Rs. 700 Package
(Minimum 400 Crowd)
Mr. Karuna - 9930112795,
9004911115
8108325553

Email :
crystalcreation537@gmail.com

The Fourth

Wise Man



After Adam and Eve were cast out from the Garden of Eden, they were distraught and sorry for their sin. They fasted and prayed and asked God for forgiveness. And as they moved in the wilderness, they saw a mighty rock and the voice of God spoke to them from it telling them that he will appear again to their generation to redeem them from their sin. He told them that three things will signify his entry into the world - gold, frankincense and myrrh.

We all know the biblical account of the three wise men. But they were actually four. The fourth wise man carried on doing other things and was left behind by the other three. It took the three wise men two years to get to the Christ Child where they presented Him their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Each of these gifts have spiritual significance.

Gold represents His Kingship.

Frankincense represents absolute authority

Myrrh represents the eternity of His reign, from everlasting to everlasting. Note that myrrh is a preservative, used to preserve corpses.

The feast of the Epiphany, celebrated on January 6 is one of the most important feasts of the Catholic Church in which we celebrate the Manifestation of Our Lord Jesus Christ to the Gentiles through His manifestation to the three wise men — Magi (Matthew, Chapter 2, verses 1-12). Epiphany is also the last day of Christmas when the three wise men presented their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the infant Jesus.

This episode from the Gospel of St. Matthew speaks of only three wise men who brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the infant Jesus in the manger. But there is an addiction for this episode to give a specific mes-

sage to Christians all over the world in the form of the fourth Magi.

When those three wise men travelled from the east under the guidance of the star, they met together and proceeded to meet the Messiah. The fourth wise man whose name was Artaban also joined them. While they were on their journey with their respective gifts, Artaban stopped halfway to assist a man who had been robbed and left half-dead by dacoits. The other three men did not wait for him but continued their journey.

When Artaban finished dressing up the wounds of the victim by taking him to a nearby inn, it was already dawn and the star which guided them all through the night disappeared from the sky.

Unfortunately, it did not appear or it was not visible due to a cloud cover on the following night and the night after that. Since the other three men had already crossed some distance, it was not a problem for them. Artaban lost his way and he did not know what to do. But, he continued his journey hoping to find the Child Jesus in Bethlehem. As Jesus was taken to Egypt by then, for 33 long years he kept on searching for Him. Artaban became naturally quite old and weary by then.

One day, he saw a huge crowd of people in Jerusalem and enquired what was going on and they replied, "Jesus of Nazareth is being put to death."

"Jesus!" Artaban was astonished to hear it and said, "It is for Him whom I've been searching for all these years." Artaban made his way through the large crowd of people and at last found that Jesus was hanging on the Cross in between two thieves. Artaban was in tears. "Lord," he said, "I've been searching for you all these years and now that I've found you, you have been nailed on the Cross."

"But you had already found me 33 years ago," said Jesus.

The wise man was confused! "How is it possible?" he asked. "I've been searching for you all these years and you say I've found you?"

"Didn't you stop in between your journey 33 years ago to help a man when he was cruelly beaten up by thieves and lying bruised by the roadside?" said Jesus. Artaban then remembered the incident and was amazed! "Were you the same man, Lord," he asked.

"Yes," said Jesus. "Verily I say unto thee, inasmuch as thou hast done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, thou hast done it unto me." (Matthew Chapter 25, verse 40). Artaban's journey had ended. His treasures were accepted. He had indeed found the Lord.

— Jubel D'Cruz, Dombivili

(The writer is a freelance journalist and the author of several children's books. He also works full time for 'Amar Chitra Katha Pvt. Ltd)

MATRIMONIAL

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 39 years, Ht. 6', Wt. 80 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. HSC., Dip. in A.C. Mechanic, working as a AC Technician in Muscat. Contact Email : suaresroshan@gmail.com OR Tel.: 23733750 Or 968-99694267 (Regd. No. 6113)

Thanksgiving



Thanks to Divine Mercy, Our Lady of Vailankani, Our Lady of perpetual Succor and St. Anthony

—Ms Annie M. Fernandes,
Mahim

With Best Compliments from
POP'S CLASSES

**COMPUTERS MS-OFFICE
 INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION
 TO COMPUTER STUDENTS
 SHORTHAND / TYPING
 SMALL BATCHES
 MOB.: 9029981260**

With Best Compliments from

S. K. International Couriers

G-4, Bldg. No. 3,
 Ekdant CHSL.,
 Shambhji Nagar, Sahar Road,
 Andheri (E),
 Mumbai - 400069

Tel.: 2683 4240

The Light Of Christmas

by Denis Khan

The Light atop the Luxor Hotel Casino, is the most powerful Light in the world, shining up to 250 miles away, and is visible to an airplane at about cruising altitude. The light attracts hordes of bugs and beetles, which form a banqueting food chain for the birds and vampire bats from Red Rock Canyon, about 20 miles away.

The aerial carnage is symptomatic of the world around us at Christmas.

In his trilogy, 'Future Shock', Alvin Toffler predicted that, with the fall of the Communist regime, the remaining Super Power, the US, would be the lone Policeman patrolling the globe against the unseen enemy, the Fundamentalist Religionist. As the Specter of Terrorism stalks the Globe, the world is plunged in horrific incidents of the massacring of innocent victims, around the world.

Many of us, who are engulfed in sadness, grief, and failure, are unable to celebrate the Christmas festivities of Malls and glitzy Materialism.

Yet the Savior's Birth, and Life at the base of the Maslow Pyramid, is also tinged with grief and loss.

His Crucifixion and Resurrection Has paid the Price for all mankind.

The Angelic hymn of 'Peace on Earth and Good Will to Men' was followed by the wailing of the mothers bemoan-

ing the horrific slaughter of about ten thousand innocent boys. As Jeremiah prophesied, "A voice was heard in Rama sobbing in bitter grief; it was Ra-

Sadly, many of us do not follow His example of Tolerance and Love. "In truth, there was only one Christian and He Died on the cross." - □ Friedrich Nietzsche

After His Discourse with the Disciples who were fleeing Jerusalem for Emmaus, He Was about to leave. The disciples said 'Stay with us for the evening approaches, and the day is almost over. So He Went in to stay with them.' (Luke 24:29).

As many of our lives are plunged in darkness, loss and failure, let us invite the Christmas Babe into our Brokenness.

"For The Foolishness of God is Wiser than human wisdom and the weakness of God Stronger than Human Strength.' (1Corinthians 1:25)



chel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted, because they were no more." (Matthew 2:18).

Jesus Christ was Born, Lived and Was Crucified for us, at the base of the Maslow Pyramid, spreading the Message of Peace and God's Eternal Love for us.



Grooms



MATRIMONIALS

USA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.E. (I.T.), working as a Software Consultant. Currently in Mumbai, Contact immediately Email : rahul.ferns@gmail.com O R 9833932407 **(Regd. No. 6463)**

KOLAPUR : Roman Catholic, Goan, 31 years, Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 75 kgs, Fair Complexion, Studing M.D., General Medicine. Seeks a suitable match. Contact email : boom_anup_41@yahoo.com OR 9422628636 / 9273337666 **(Regd. No. 6407)**

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 38 years, Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 78 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. BBA, working as an Asst. Manager. Contact email : johnpereira.pereira@gmail.com OR 9820304069 **(Regd. No. 6399)**

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 39 years, Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 75 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a Senior Clerical in well known Hospital. Contact email : ajw2512@gmail.com OR 9920611659 **(Regd. No. 6398)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 30 years, Ht. 5' 9", Fair Complexion, Handsome, Edn. B.Com., working as CEO in Family Business. Seeks a good looking, smart, stylish girl. Contact email : mail2marg@gmail.com OR 9821556409 **(Regd. No. 6396)**

AUSTRIA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 33 years, Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 80 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA, Computer Science, working as a Software Consultant. Looking for a educated girl. Contact email : victorlobo82@gmail.com OR 9819755238 **(Regd. No. 6395)**

MUMBAI: Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 37 years, Ht. 5' 6", good looking XII Pass, presently working as Share Broker having own

bungalow accommodation at Bandra Mumbai also getting good regular monthly rent seeks a goodlooking RC Spinster. Call 9167372840 Contact email : pintolazarus2012@gmail.com **(Regd. No. 6393)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 39 years, Ht. 6', Wt. 80 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. HSC., Dip. in A.C. Mechanic, working as a AC Technician in Muscat. Contact Email : suaresroshan@gmail.com OR Tel.: 23733750 Or 968-99694267 **(Regd. No. 6113)**

MUMBAI : Tamilian Roman Catholic bachelor, aged 32 years, Ht. 165 cms, Wt. 67 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn.B.E. (Civil), working as a Structural Engineer (Associate). Contact email : winall2891@gmail.com OR 9920045798 / 9167710057 **(Regd. No. 6222)**

MUMBAI : Goan RC Bachelor 58 years, looks young, 5' 7", slim, wheatish, B.Com., own flats financially very well settled in Mumbai. Seeks educated, presentable lady upto 50 years. No. Bars. Email : gerryc1956@gmail.com OR 09820636316. **(Regd. No. 6301)**

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 30 years, Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 62 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Sc. B.Ed., Teacher by profession. Only Child. Seeks preferably Goan teacher with B.Ed., qualification. Contact email : agnesmenezes107@gmail.com OR 9821315887 **(Regd. No. 6419)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 32 years, Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 90 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., (Chemistry), working as a Deputy Manager. Contact email : pradeep.bashyal@gmail.com OR 9819733872 **(Regd. No. 6418)**

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic

Members are requested to inform us when they are settled, so that publication of their details can be discontinued.

Bachelor, aged 33 years, Ht. 5' 5", Wheatish Complexion, Edn. HSC / Diploma in Optometry, working as a Sales Professional. Contact email : picardosimon@gmail.com OR 9819403252 **(Regd. No. 6404)**

MUMBAI : RC Goan Bachelor, fair, 40, Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 74 kgs, B.Sc., Post Graduation in Chemistry from St. Xavier's Mumbai, having own accommodation, working for a reputed company in Mumbai as a section Head, seeks alliance from RC Goan graduate spinsters upto 36 years with good family background and christian values. Pls. reply with details and latest photo to monty_017@rediffmail.com OR 9930904563 / 9619925304 **(Regd. No. 6401)**

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 35 years, Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 75 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Graduate, working as a Manager in Cruise Line. Contact email : oszy_2001@yahoo.com OR 9833944206 **(Regd. No. 6385)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 34 years, Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 64 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. HSC, working as a Script Writer. Seeks a suitable match. Contact email : roydandsilva@gmail.com OR 28815914 **(Regd. No. 6384)**

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 42 years, Ht. 6' 4", Wt. 98 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. HSC., working as a Steward in Oil Tanker - Foreign Ship. Contact email : 285victor@gmail.com OR 7798325784 **(Regd. No. 6380)**

Address your replies to :

Regd. No.
ROYAL CHRISTIAN FAMILY,
99, Perin Nariman Street, 1st
Floor, Fort, Mumbai - 400 001.

To Place Your Matrimonial Advertisement Call:
2269 3578 OR 2265 4924



MATRIMONIALS

MUMBAI : Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 61 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Sc. working for Govt. Firm. Contact email : graciav765@gmail.com OR 9987890858 **(Regd. No. 6423)**

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 46 years, Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 56 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, looks much younger to her age, Edn. HSC., working as admin. Executive. Contact email : marthapereira2000@gmail.com OR 9870367090 **(Regd. No. 6422)**

MUMBAI : Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 26 years, Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 64 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Sc. Computer, working as a Graphic Designer. Contact email : kgfrancis@rediffmail.com OR 9820326609 **(Regd. No. 6421)**

MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 30 years, Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 54 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MA (Pol.Sc.), working as an Admin., Contact email : crystalpereira2012@gmail.com OR 9867563488 **(Regd. No. 6397)**

MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 30 years, Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 56 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., CS., LLB., working as a Manager. Contact email : ifaroz@gmail.com OR 9819824865 **(Regd. No. 6394)**

MUMBAI : Maharashtra Protestant spinster, aged 23 years, Beautiful, Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 52 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Tech. Seeks a well educated and well settled bachelor below 26 years. Contact email : rohitkhare1997@gmail.com OR 9881441774 / 9969227598 **(Regd. No. 6313)**

MUMBAI : Karnataka Methodist Protestant Spinster, aged 29 years, Ht. 4' 8", Wt. 55 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Tech, working as a Deputy Manager in HDFC - IT Industries. Contact email : gmshilesh@gmail.com OR 9765361362. **(Regd. No. 6312)**

BAHRAIN : Born and brought up in Bahrain Keralite Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 25 years, Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 56 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Holding Master Degree Seeks

Royal Christian Family
Helps In Choosing
The Right Life-Partner
Serving Since 35 Years

a professionals like Engineer, C.A., etc or Professionals NRI Indians. Contact email : rajanvs1234@gmail.com / maryrajan66@gmail.com OR 973-3960881 **(Regd. No. 6311)**

MUMBAI : Karwari Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 41 years, looks young, Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 59 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA, working as a Manager in Petroleum Company. Contact email : carolng@hpcl.co.in OR 022-25542147 **(Regd. No. 6302)**

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, simple and decent, aged 30 years, Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 62 kgs, wheatish complexion, Edn. M.Sc., B.Ed., Teacher by profession. Seeks a well educated and well settled bachelor. Contact email : fritzydsouza@gmail.com OR 9833952113 / 8976343556 **(Regd. No. 6295)**

MUMBAI : Tamilian Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 26 years, Ht. 5', Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., Working in Hospital in Administrative. Contact email : anharichard@gmail.com OR 9769277062 / 9819315925 **(Regd. No. 6291)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 26 years, Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 54 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.A., working as a HR & Admin., Contact email : pearlcfri@gmail.com OR 9867118077 **(Regd. No. 6288)**

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 26 years, Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 57 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.A., working in Private Firm. Contact email : jmae26@yahoo.co.in OR 9819440647 **(Regd. No. 6269)**

MUMBAI : Maharashtra Protestant Spinster, aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 4", Fair Complexion, good looking, Edn. B.A. LL.B., Advocate by profession. Contact email : ruch_20jan@yahoo.in OR 7738674508 **(Regd. No. 6268)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 25 years, Ht. 5' 6", Fair Complexion, Edn. BMS, working as a Sr. Associate. Contact email : laurentiaf@yahoo.com / laveenafernandes@rediffmail.com OR 9870036325 **(Regd. No. 6266)**

DUBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 26 years, Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. BMS, MBA Finance, working as a Bank Officer in Dubai, Contact email : pdsouza.acb@gmail.com OR 08970986766 **(Regd. No. 6256)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 32 years, Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 70 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., work-

ing for a Bank as a Team Leader. Contact email : diana_lobo10@hotmail.com OR 9870111964 **(Regd. No. 6252)**

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, Only Child, aged 34 years, Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 57 kgs, Fair and good looking, Edn. B.Com., working for Banking Organisation in Fraud Dept., Contact email : anmmsouza09@gmail.com OR 8983236758 **(Regd. No. 6249)**

MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 64 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working, Contact email : mariashgo24@gmail.com OR 9819524367 / 9920102623 **(Regd. No. 6246)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 24 years, Ht. 5', Wt. 45 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., working as a HR. Contact email : andrewvds1972@gmail.com OR 9821639989 **(Regd. No. 6245)**

MUMBAI : Punjabi CNI Protestant Spinster, aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 54 kgs, Fair complexion, Edn., B.Com., working as a FM Team Co-ordinator. Contact email : minti_masih@yahoo.co.in OR 9665169956 **(Regd. No. 6244)**

MUMBAI : Tamilian Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 47 years, Ht. 5', Wt. 42 kgs, fair and beautiful, Edn. SSC., working as a Beautician. Contact email : pmsmarshall1937@gmail.com OR 9167912492 / 9637129065 **(Regd. No. 6243)**

MUMBAI : Maharashtra Protestant Spinster, aged 24 years, Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 53 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Diploma in Journalism, working as a Journalist. Contact email : sathapanvel@gmail.com OR 9004684468 **(Regd. No. 6242)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean RC parents invite alliance for their daughter 28 years, 5' 4", B.Tech (Computer Engineer) Working for MNC. Contact email : dmaryln@ymail.com OR 09916087940 **(Regd. No. 6223)**

Address your replies to :

Regd. No.
ROYAL CHRISTIAN FAMILY,
99, Perin Nariman Street, 1st
Floor, Fort, Mumbai - 400 001.

Please renew your membership
at least a month in advance be-
fore its expiration date.

The Jubilee And The Holy Door !

**Dr. Trevor Colaso,
Bandra (West)
(Now at Memphis, TN, USA).**

Introduction: The Jubilee Year!

In Judaism and in Christianity, the concept of a 'Jubilee' is a special year of remission of sins and universal pardon. In the Book of Leviticus, a Jubilee Year occurs every 50th year, during which slaves and prisoners would be freed, debts would be overlooked, and the 'mercies of God' would be manifest (Lev 25:8-13).

The modern tradition dates back to 1300, when Pope Boniface VIII convoked a Holy Year for Christians visiting the Basilicas of Saints Peter and Paul. Following this example, Jubilees have been celebrated every 25 or 50 years as the need be.

The last 'Great Jubilee of 2000' was commemorated with an official logo and motto: "Christ: Yesterday, Today, Forever" (Hebrews 13 :8). The current Special Jubilee is dedicated to the theme of 'Mercy', through the Papal Bull, *Misericordia Vultus* (April 13, 2015) – The Face of Mercy! Its motto: "Be Merciful Like The Father" (Luke 6:36).

Christ, The Holy Door!

In his Bull, *IncararnationisMysterium* (1998), proclaiming the Holy year, St John Paul 11 revealed that the 'Holy Door' evokes the passage from sin to grace which every Christian is called to accomplish. Jesus confirmed : "I AM the Door Who saves and pastures" (cf. John 10:9). Thus, it is clear that no one can come to the Father except through Jesus, Who is the "Way, Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6). These Titles which applies to Himself, testifies that He alone is the Savior sent by the Father. There is only one way that opens wide the entrance or (Door) to abundant life in communion with God (cf. John 10:10). To Jesus the words of the Psalmist is



truthfully applied: "This is the Door of the Lord, wherein the just may enter" (Psalm 118:20).

This is portrayed in the old Temple of Jerusalem, wherein the High Priest on the holiest day of 'Yom Kippur' (Day of Atonement) passed through the veil covering the 'Doorway' of the Holy of Holies to enter into the very presence of Yahweh to offer the sacrifice for the atonement of sins.

Nowadays, national Cathedrals and Churches have been given this privilege through their local Bishops to open 'Holy Doors'!

Striking the 'Holy Door'!

In opening the 'Holy Door', the Holy Father strikes the 'Door' of St Peter's Basilica three times with a silver hammer. This triple striking has rich symbolic significances. Moses struck the rock so that water would gush out miraculously to quench the thirst of the people (Numbers 20:6ff). It signifies that in the 'Holy Year', Christ the "Supernatural Rock" (1 Cor10:4), pours forth abundant graces to satiate the yearnings of our souls. God struck the earth to free St Paul and Silas from prison; which resulted in the jailor and his family asking for Baptism.

On the Cross, a soldier pierced Jesus' most Sacred Heart; and out flowed Blood and Water (John 19:31), sym-

bols of the most Blessed Eucharist and the Holy Spirit! Also, when the 'Door' is struck open, the obstacles of passage to our Lord in our hearts are removed through the 'Door' of repentance in the Sacrament of Reconciliation!

Mary Assists the Holy Door:

The construction and architecture of the 'Holy Door' reminds us of our Redemption! Each Door consists of sixteen panels, four panels grouped into four rows, each depicting our 'Salvation History'! Conspicuously, the inscription covering both panels reads: "Quod Hevatristisabslulit; tureddisal-mogermine"- What sad Eve took away (paradise), you (Mary) give back with life-giving child. The Church also invokes Mary as "Mother of Mercy"!

Conclusion - 'Doors' to our hearts!

We have to keep the 'door' of our hearts continually open, so as to live up to the motto, to "be merciful as the heavenly Father" (Luke 6:36). This is kept most accessible, through the 'seven spiritual acts, and seven corporal deeds of mercy'! If we keep our 'doors' shut to what is holy and noble, we will fail to hear or answer our Lord silently tapping: "Behold, I stand at your 'door' and knock. If you listen to My voice and open the 'door', I will come in and join you for supper" (Revelation 3:20).

Change of Heart?

It was really heartening to hear Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaking in Parliament a couple of weeks back to celebrate the Constitution day. Then he spoke in the same conciliatory tone in the Upper House. His speech was a welcome departure from his usual caustic barbs at the Opposition, particularly the Congress ever since he took over. He had been going out of his way till now to point out the flaws of his principal rival.

On both occasions, he was conciliatory and it seemed that he was keen to take everybody along in his mission. While he sounded honest, such an exercise could have started from the day he took office as the Prime Minister. By not doing so, he has wasted precious time [30%] but there is always a scope to make a new beginning. Everybody applauded his speech though most of those present in Parliament and millions who watched him on television did not understand a word of his concluding part which was in Sanskrit. Perhaps, it would have been better if he had to translate that part in English / Hindi.

While one does not like to doubt the sincerity of the Prime Minister, one cannot help referring to the speeches of the Home Minister in the Lower House and that of the Finance Minister in the Upper House. Both these important leaders did not spare any opportunity to highlight the acts of intolerance of the previous regimes with particular reference to the emergency. Not that they said anything that was incorrect, but one wonders, on hindsight, if such a frontal attack was at all necessary if the Prime Minister had decided to reach out to all segments on the political firmament. Comparing the emergency in India with Hitler was a little far fetched – something that could have been avoided. The Ministers [senior ones mind you] took the Congress head-on for every 'sin' in the public domain and embarrassed the main Opposition party. These same ministers have been commenting on the uncalled for utterances by the government ministers and party men in the BJP. The strategy was clear. The PM probably did not dwell on those specific issues which embarrassed the government and the party because he would have to tell the na-

VIEWS on NEWS

tion what he has done about it. The next best thing was a whole new approach by reaching out to the opposition. If there was change of heart, then it cannot be only at the PM level – it should have been across the board.

The Congress read the situation well and Rahul Gandhi took the PM head-on asking him repeatedly why he had not touched on those issues which have divided the country and protests by politicians, academicians, scientists etc. He came down heavily on the term 'manufactured protest' which he said was an insult to the intellectuals. As things pan out, it will be interesting to see what will be the approach of the opposition towards the pending bills in Parliament. Was the reaching out to the opposition by the PM, have a limited agenda to get the pending bills passed?

One thing is clear. The issue of intolerance [factual or otherwise] albeit unwittingly, has spread far beyond the Indian shores and for this the government has to take the blame. Had it acted swiftly the opposition's tirade could have been diluted but the government brazened it out and paid the price for it even in local body elections in Gujarat soon after Bihar. Commenting on Swatcha Bharat, the President was candid enough to say that the real dirt is in 'our' minds and one wonders whom he was targeting. On a day when the whole debate came to a close, a BJP MLA in Telangana said he is prepared to kill any one if beef is served at a college fest. Someone wants to hold a port festival in retaliation. That is intolerance at its worst.

Chennai's woes

It was heart rendering to see thousands of marooned residents of Chennai going through harrowing times. This was particularly true of people coming from the lower strata of society, as usual. Elderly people, children and even invalids facing the harsh realities of what can be termed as the worst disaster. One could see babes being transported in small tubs to keep them afloat, while the elderly were moved to safety on floating drums.

In a disaster of this dimension and ferocity, due credit must be given to the



by Marshall Sequeira

government for putting its best foot forward with attendant constraints in such a situation. Everybody cannot be reached and understandably, those left out, cried foul. The army and navy must be complimented for their selfless service even at the cost of their own safety. You could see a jawan carrying a fairly big lady on his shoulders wading through waist deep waters. Sometimes you wonder how the country could have coped without their help. The Defense Services are always ready to take up challenging assignments.

The PM was quick to visit the State with an ad-hoc assistance of 1000 crores. He did an aerial survey as well. The State can expect huge financial help from the centre. The National Disaster teams, NGOs as well as other good Samaritans came forward in large numbers to give a helping hand. Commendable! Some of these people put their lives at risk in their efforts to provide assistance to the hapless people.

The airport was the worst affected and arrangements were made to transfer passengers to Bangalore by road so they could take flights from there. It is unfortunate that the airlines saw in this tragedy a golden opportunity to fleece those who wanted to reach their destinations. A Bangalore – Delhi ticket could cost as much as Rs 28,000 while to Mumbai it was Rs 19,000. This is what can be termed as greed to exploit the situation in the face of grave tragedy. We tend to blame the taxi / auto drivers during in monsoons for doing so but these airlines take the cake. When airlines, including Air India, indulge in this, it is a sad situation. Even Banks are waiving penalties for EMI defaulters. Some hotels are providing free food. The Government should see how such exploitation can be avoided in future. This exploitation has occurred in the past also. Finally, here's wishing all readers of Secular Citizen, a Merry X'mas and a Prosperous New Year 2016!



Vio's Sweet Designs



Designer Cakes made with Sugar & Spice to add a sparkle on your special day. Choose from a Traditional Rich Fruit Cake, Rich Plum Cake, Premium Chocolate Cakes, Red Velvet, Caramel and many more exciting flavors.

All Cakes made with premium quality ingredients and adorned with Sugarcraft Creations designed to fit your Celebration.

For amazing Wedding, Anniversary, Baptism, Holy Communion, Birthday Themed cakes & Special Occasions Cakes.

Contact *Violet D'costa* - 9821440228

022 28218153

www.facebook.com/ViosSweetDesigns

**Save Rs 115/- per day & get Rs. 10 lacs lumpsum TAX FREE for self needs and
Rs. 1 lac pension p.a for life time and 25 lacs Life Insurance for entire life.**

For further details contact:-

Mr. JOHN FERNANDES

(Member of MDRT – The Premier Association of Financial Professionals)

(Award in Financial Planning – India thru CII – U.K)

(Member of the Corporate Club for agents - LIC)

Mobile No:- 9820253459 / 9820608034

Tel. No:- 25773458/59

Email: johnzeena@gmail.com



**You can contact for FREE POLICY SERVICING /DEATH CLAIMS /
HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY**

We Wish all our Customers & Well-Wishers A Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year

On 27th November 2015 we completed 15 years

On this occasion our sincere Thanks to All

Celebrating
15 YEARS OF TRUST & EXCELLENCE

WELCOME TO
15th
ANNIVERSARY
FAN & LED MELA
 23-11-2015 to 30-01-2016



Be Sure
 Be Smart
 Buy @
Lowest Rates

Special
 Discount
 upto
40%*
 for Decorative Lights
 *MSD Extra



| LED BULBS | | | |
|-----------|------------------------|-------|----------------------------|
| S.No. | Description | M.R.P | Sale Price (Tax Inclusive) |
| 1. | 3 WATTS LED BULB B-22 | 250 | 135 |
| 2. | 5 WATTS LED BULB B-22 | 375 | 175 |
| 3. | 7 WATTS LED BULB B-22 | 450 | 200 |
| 4. | 9 WATTS LED BULB B-22 | 550 | 270 |
| 5. | 12 WATTS LED BULB B-22 | 750 | 350 |
| 6. | 15 WATTS LED BULB B-22 | 850 | 430 |



| CEILING FAN | | | | |
|-------------|----------|-----------------|-------|----------------------------|
| S.No. | Company | Model | M.R.P | Sale Price (Tax Inclusive) |
| 1. | ANCHOR | FLOW - GS | 1,500 | |
| 2. | BAJAJ | PENTA TURBO | 1,650 | L |
| | | SPEEDSTER | 1,900 | O |
| | | EURO | 2,600 | W |
| 3. | CROMPTON | HIGH SPEED | 1,930 | E |
| | | AVANCER | 2,570 | S |
| 4. | HAVELLS | SS 390 | 2,230 | T |
| | | SPARTZ | 3,150 | |
| 5. | STANDARD | SAILOR | 2,180 | PRICE |
| | | CRUISER PREMIUM | 2,955 | |

| LED PANEL LIGHTS | | |
|------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| S.No. | Description | Sale Price (Tax Inclusive) |
| 1. | 3 WATTS | 225 |
| 2. | 6 WATTS | 375 |
| 3. | 12 WATTS | 630 |
| 4. | 18 WATTS | 980 |



| LED TUBE | | |
|----------|----------------|----------------------------|
| S.No. | Company | Sale Price (Tax Inclusive) |
| 1. | HAVELLS - 18 W | 675 |
| 2. | PHILIPS - 18 W | 775 |
| 3. | HALONIX - 16 W | 675 |
| 4. | VIVA - 18 W | 700 |
| 5. | VIVA - 24 W | 980 |
| 6. | G-LIGHT - 22 W | 950 |



*conditions apply

Major Credit Cards Accepted
 Time: 9am - 8pm Sunday Holiday

► Prices are inclusive of all taxes ► Offer Valid till stocks last ► Offer Valid for both for Mangalore & Udupi Showrooms



Electrical Point

Exclusive Showrooms for Decorative Lights & Electrical Accessories

Electrical Point Complex, Near Bunts Hostel
 Kadri Road (Opp. C.V. Nayak Hall), MANGALORE - 575 003

Regal Entry, Near Karavali Circle
 UDUPI - 576 103

E-mail: electricalpoint@gmail.com

www.electricalpoint.in

With Best Compliments

from



AdLife Healthcare Pvt. Ltd.,

In Collaboration with
Nu-Link Corp. Ltd., Japan

An ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company.

2B-002 N. G. Sun City Phase I,
Thakur Village, Kandivali (E)
Mumbai 400001

Tel.: +91 22 2886 7744 / 55

PRECISION MACHINISTS
Prop. Patil Machines Pvt. Ltd.

**Precision Quality
And Reliability**

Plant and Equipment for:
Toilet / Laundry Soap
Fatty Acid
Detergents Cake / Powder
Sulphonation

36-D, Kandivali Co-op. Incl. Estate, Kandivali (West),
Mumbai - 400 067, INDIA.
Tel.: +91(22) 2869 7865/66, 2868 3991 • Fax: +91(22) 2868 6175
www.precisionmachinists.co.in • email: info@patilmachines.com

CAWASJI BEHRAMJI SCORES A HAT TRICK



Cawasji Behramji Catering Services Ltd
a market leader in the Indian Offshore Catering industry
controlling more than 50% market share
is a member of the Arambhan Group of Companies
and has recently created history of sorts.

Key Highlights

1. **First Company** from the Christian Community to get listed on the BSE SME Platform.
2. **First Company** from the Catering Services sector to get listed on the BSE SME Platform.
3. **First Company** to be awarded the best performing stock on the BSE SME Platform. *(Investors wealth doubled in a span of a fortnight)*

The Company is honoured to be the first in the above three categories and stands motivated to score many more milestones in the years ahead.

The Company is poised for takeoff to scale greater heights and create huge wealth for all its stakeholders.

**The Unlocking of Value through Listing
on the
Small and Medium Exchange (SME)
is mentored and supported by
Altina Securities Pvt. Ltd.
under its initiative
“Promoting Entrepreneurship”**



ARAMBHAN GROUP
Ethically Forward



CAWASJI BEHRAMJI CATERING SERVICES LTD.



An ISO 9001:2008 + HACCP &
ISO 22000:2005 Certified Company.

201-202 Benston Building, Near Rizvi College,
Shery Rajan Road, Bandra (west) Mumbai – 4000 050

Tel: 02265650232,
E- mail- cbc@arambhanguroup.com
Website: www.cbcspl.com

17, Bahubali Building,
Cawasji Patel Street, Fort,
Mumbai - 400 001
P: +91 22 2204 / 05 / 06 | F: +91 22 22 04 2080
www.arambhanguroup.com



Studio fernandes
CUSTOM DESIGN
MEN'S APPAREL, FORMALS & ETHNICS

Shop No. 1, Harmony CHSL, I. C. Colony,
Holy Cross Road, Borivali (West), Mumbai - 103
Tel.: 022 - 2894 0451 | Cell: +91 - 96643 04393



**J. A. Fernandes
& Sons**
MENS WEAR

2, Hirabaug, C. P. Tank Circle, Mumbai - 400 004.
Tel.: 022 - 2382 2592 | Cell: 88791 53423

Readymade Wedding Gowns,
Christening Sets, First Holy
Communion Dresses & All
other Wedding Accessories
and Thermocole Decoration, also
Available at

White Rose

Sharaf Manzil, 1st Floor, 650, J.S.S. Rd,
2nd Dhobitalao Lane, Mumbai 400002
Tel.: 2207 4223

Emails: davidprinters@gmail.com /
www.davidcompany.com

HOLY FAMILY COLD STORAGE

John Rodrigues., House, Chakala,
Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400099
Located on the way to International Airport,
Nr Cigarette Factory. Convenient for the
Passengers carrying the stocks abroad.

Try our Fresh Pork Meat; Fresh Real Good
Chicken; Cold Cuts; Ready to eat items;
Goan Sausages; Goan, Mangalorean and
East Indian variety of Masalas.

Note: We provide **FREE HOME DELIVERY**
to our most valuable customers.

Phone : 2827 0498 Mobile: 99695 73121

Advertise

in this space

@ Rs. 2000

only

Size 6 x 6 cms

Thanksgiving



Heartful thanks
to
St. Jude
for the special
favours granted

—Robert D'Silva,
Andheri

JACK OF ALL STALL

Reliable House for
Religious Goods

Gloria Church Bldg.,
263, Dr. Ambedkar Rd.,
Byculla, Mumbai - 400027
Tel.: 23725963, 23749358

Estd: 1951

Prop. B. D'Souza

Kiyaraa Beauty

at home

Skin - Hair - Makeup

- Professional bridal makeup & hair style
- Facials according to skin
- Hair Spa
- Body polishing
- Nail Art
- Gift A Service

Only original & genuine products used.

Contact : +91 9820360534 / 08055199699
kiyaraa.beauty@gmail.com

Wedding Invitation, Christening,
First Holy Communion, Mortuary
Cards & Religious Goods

Contact:

David & Company

Sharaf Manzil, 1st Floor, 650,
J.S.S. Road, 2nd Dhobitalao Lane,
Mumbai 400002

Tel.: 22019010 / 2205 7394

Fax: 2206 0344

Emails: davidprinters@gmail.com
www.davidcompany.com

PAMELA WADIA

Meet Pamela Wadia for designs fitted to perfection-
from simple A-line styles to fabulous Ball Gowns
Excellent bead work & Embroidery -- Any Size or
Shape, as per your budget.

BRIDAL GOWN BRIDES MAIDS DRESSES
FLOWER GIRLS DRESSES COMMUNION
DRESSES WESTERN FORMAL WEAR READY
WEDDING GOWNS ALSO AVAILABLE
Mob: 9322277790, 66959482
www.ready2wed.in

This size is

6 x 4 cms

for

Rs. 1500

only



For Designer Wedding, Christening,
Communion, Chocolate Cakes,
Easter Eggs and Christmas Sweets

Contact:

Mrs. H. D'Souza on 9819826077

To us a saviour is born...



HMA/CCCB/56/15

 **CITIZENCREDIT**
CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD
(A Scheduled Multi-State Bank)
your dreams, our wings

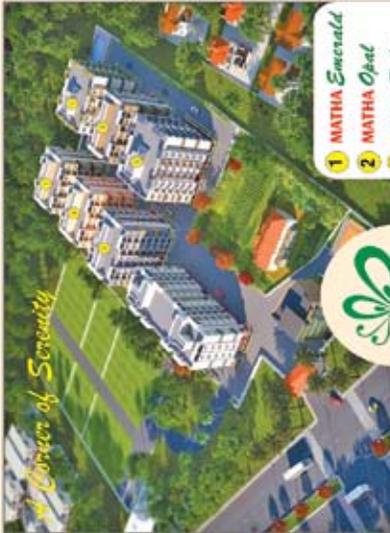


MATHA Residency, Maryhill

Opp. to Mount Carmel Central School Airport Road, Maryhill, Mangaluru

Locality Highlight & Key Distance :

- International Airport Road Bajpe - 7 km
- Vikas PU College - 500 m
- Diya System (IT Company) - 800 m
- Helipad - 500 m



SAL MATHA GARDEN

Near Railway Station, International Airport Road, Surathkal

Locality Highlight & Key Distance :

- Surathkal Railway Station - 500 m
- International Airport Road Bajpe - 11 km
- Surathkal Beach & Resort - 3 km
- NITK Campus - Srinivas Institute of Technology, Dental College, Medical Science & Research centre - 4 km



MATHA Residency, Mukka

Opp. Srinivas Institute of Technology Near NITK Engineering College Mukka, Surathkal

Locality Highlight & Key Distance :

- International Airport Road Bajpe - 21 km
- Surathkal Railway Station - 5 km
- Srinivas Institute of Technology, Dental College, Medical Science & Research centre - 100 m
- Red Rock Residency Beach Resort - 1 km
- NITK Campus - 1 km

Home Loans @ 8.85% Rate of Interest

MATHA PANCHADURGA RESIDENCY
Near Bappanadu Shree Durgaparameshwari Temple

MATHA Residency, ಪಳೇಬಾಗಿಲೆ
Nh-66, Near to Mulky Railway Station, Haleyangady

MATHA MOOKAMBIKA Residency,
ಪೊನ್ನಲೆ
Near Railway Station, Surathkal, Mangaluru

MATHA Residency, ಪೊನ್ನಲೆ
Kaup, N.H 66, Udupi

MATHA Builders & Developers
Developers Pvt. Ltd.
Mangaluru

mathadevelopers108@gmail.com
www.mathadevelopers.com

Best Investment with Assured Rental Return

CREDAI Home for All

Mangaluru : # 01, First Floor, Divya Enclave, M.G. Road, Mangaluru-575003.

Surathkal : Thara Towers, Airport Road, Surathkal, Mangaluru - 575014

Mumbai : Shop No. 8, Anand Nagar B, Vimal Dairy Lane, Near Radha Complex, Kashinagar, Bhayandar (E)

9591677966
7022481666

9880279966
9980711966

9740390966
7259269966 (Mumbai)



HARRY REBELLO

Managing Director



Fleet Owners & Transport Contractors

**214, Shrikant Chambers, Beside R.K. Studios,
Sion-Trombay Road, Chembur,
Mumbai-400 071.**

Works :

**Mars Garage, Opp. R.K. Studios,
Sion-Trombay Road, Chembur, Mumbai - 400 071**

A song was heard at Christmas. To wake the midnight sky.
A Saviour's birth, and peace on earth and praise to God on high.

Wishing you a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



EARNEST JOHN
Group of Companies