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THE SECULAR CITIZEN

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A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

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NM's Peacock and the Politics of the Mean World

by Don Aguiar.

Once upon a time not too long ago, and not that far away, there lived a king called Narendra. Kind Narendra was a fakir. A fakir is a simple man with no worldly possessions and a tendency to travel.

Fakir king Narendra lived very simply on a palatial 5-bungalow property spread over 12 acres in the heart of the capital city of his kingdom. Besides his fleet of BMWs, Cross pens, Bvlgari glasses, home theatre, private jet plane and 3000 changes of apparel, he had few worldly possessions.

King Narendra spent most of his time locking his people down, selling their airports and railways, demonetizing their currency, and imposing, Goods and Services tax on them. And for this, his people loved him.

(They just..... did.)

King Narendra was not just a fakir, he was also a yogi and often practiced something resembling a cross between a yoga and dandiya on his front lawns.

But the joy of his life was the majestic peacock that roamed his front lawns. But the peacock did not reciprocate the king's sentiments and often ran the other way when the king appeared.

One day, the king's security men grabbed the peacock and dragged him into the presence of the king for a photoshoot. The peacock resisted valiantly at first but soon realised that he was outnumbered by the menacing looking security men.

"Why do you run from me?" the king asked him as he settled down for the photoshoot.

The peacock replied, "Because you give me an inferiority complex, my lord."

The king was surprised and asked "Why?"

"Because I am supposed to be the vainest of all creatures but my vanity pales compared to yours, my liege."

And that was the last the poor peacock

(Contd.. on p. 4)

cock was ever seen or heard from.

I've been thinking about the two families we've encountered over the past six years. The Gandhi family (Congress) is emotionally open, rendered vulnerable by tragedy and driven by a powerful desire to connect. The Modi family (BJP) is emotionally closed, isolated by enmity and driven by the powerful desire to dominate.

This week one of the members of the Modi family struggled to stick his head above the muck of his family's values and display some humanity. But Modi, Amit Shah, and Nirmala Sitaraman showed no such impulse.

Modi family values are mean world values. Mean world syndrome was a concept conceived in the 1970s by the communications professor George Gerbner. His idea was that people who see relentless violence on television begin to perceive the world as being more dangerous than it really is.

By the 1990s it was no longer violent programming that drove mean world culture, but reality television. That's an entire industry designed to give the impression that human beings are inherently manipulative, selfish and petty. If you grow up watching those programs, or staring in them, naturally you believe that other people are fundamentally untrustworthy.

These days' mean world culture is everywhere. It's a siege mentality. Menace is everywhere. We're on the brink of the cataclysm. The BJP policies are a cavalcade of the mean world alarmism.

Mean world thrives on fear and perpetuates itself by exaggerating fear. Its rhetorical ploy is catastrophizing and its tone is apocalyptic. The Modi family are not just wrong, many are asserting, they are "subverting our republic," abolishing the suburbs, destroying western civilisation and establishing a Crasto type communist

dictatorship. Modi and family want to disarm you, fill the prisons, lock you in your homes and invite CBI, EB, other law enforcing agencies under their control to live next door.

The Modi family are the team mascots of mean world. When they see Dalit, minorities, SC & ST protesters protesting their unjust policies and behaviour they decide they're in the middle of a race war. They retaliate with police brutality, false cases, fake news and so on.

Mean world transforms people. When Nirmala Sitaraman appeared on the TV news in 2014 at the time, she seemed eminently normal and kind. But now she's playing by mean world rules and for defending the BJP policies, she seems like a bellowing lunatic.

The implicit argument of the BJP was that Sonia Gandhi is old, or soft, or compassionate to survive in mean world. She'll cower before rising crime rates. She'll get pushed around by the hard right and left. She'll get swallowed in the maelstrom. 'You won't be safe in Congress India', is how BJP puts it.

This is the BJP's strongest argument, especially if murder rates continue to soar and if UP and Bihar-style mayhem becomes commonplace. Congress have foolishly allowed themselves to be portrayed as the enemies of policing. There's a lot of fear floating around India right now, available to be exploited by someone.

But let's also be clear about what the real threats are. In many ways this is about two rival versions of threat perception. It will be won by whichever party more persuasively identifies what we should fear.

Yes, there have been disgraceful scenes of right wing physical and verbal brutality, which get magnified on Twitter. The far bigger threat, however, is that we have a prime minister too busy fighting a culture war to respond to a pandemic and an economic crisis,

or even to perform basic governance. What part of 180,000 coronavirus dead does Modi not understand?

The larger threat is that we're caught in a polarization cascade. Mean world fanatics — on the left and right — are playing a mutually beneficial game. Modi's chaos justifies and magnifies the woke mobs on the left. Right wing mobs magnify and justify Modi's authoritarianism on the right.

The upshot of the mean world war is the obliteration of normal politics, the hollowing out of the centre and the degradation of public morality. Under the cover of this souped-up, screw-or-be-screwed mentality, norms are eviscerated, truth is massacred, bigotry is justified and politics turns into a struggle to culturally obliterate the other side.

We are living a repetition of lies- malevolent lies, constructed lies, deliberate lies: blatant, unembarrassed lies. Nothing happened in 70 years. But now we've arrived at achhe din. The leader can do no wrong. Corruption has been wiped off.

Congress is going to have to take on this widespread anxiety about personal safety by insisting that the real source of danger is Modi's chaotic incompetence and that Modi's mean world extremism is corrosive to the social order. When the social order dissolves, people suffer.

Congress could point out that disorder from left and right will only accelerate so long as Modi is in power. They could make clear that compassion is not weakness, that the toughest thing is to stand in a hailstorm of hatred and insist on kindness and consideration.

In a civilized society law and order is not established with a bullying jackboot. Law and order is established through the calm, regular enforcement of decency, so people across society behave like stable, honourable human beings.



Food for thought

Was happy to read Rev Michael Gonsalves of Vasai's piece on the joy of being Christian. Readers would be interested to know St Francis of Assisi's definition of perfect joy. If after being out preaching the whole day, it is cold and wet, and you return to the friary at night, and the brother at the door abuses you and tells you to get lost, then that is perfect joy! Food for thought.

—*chhotebhai Kanpur*

Supreme Court Rupee 1?

Why the Supreme Court has fined only one rupee to advocate Prashant Bhushan for his crime of showing content to the Supreme Court? Is Supreme Court worth only rupee 1? Is the punishment given under pressure from the intellectuals of the country or the advocates of the Supreme Court? Or the Supreme Court judges have realised the foolishness of convicting advocate Prashant Bhushan? If it is so, the Supreme Court has load the dignity of the supreme court and shown contempt of itself! There should be a case filed against the Supreme Court for contempt of court!

will this letter of mine be an act of contempt of court? Because a letter to the editor is more serious than just twitting, which advocate Prashant Bhushan did. What a funny situation the Supreme Court has lead itself to!

Modiji this is happening under your directions. History is making note of all your aberrations. But you don't seem to care a foot. for you the majority in the lok sabha is what matters. How many foolish things have

we to bear with in another four years of your tenure?

God save this country!

— *Michael G., Vasai*

Don't open churches so soon

The number of Covid cases in India is rising exponentially to an alarming number and an unknown degree, that will soon put India in second place in the world, by overtaking Brazil in the next few days. As of now, there appears to be no way out of the existing crisis, as efforts by the govt in every state have failed to contain the inexorable and galloping spread of the deadly virus even after 5 months of lockdowns and containment zones. The ball is now in the public court. In this bleak scenario, it is found that a few over-enthusiastic parish priests have opened their church doors for masses and church services by overlooking some of the stipulated guidelines. This is bound to be counterproductive with the potential of proving disastrous to the health and lives of the faithful, especially the vulnerable ones. In such a grave situation it would be prudent for the church to start masses and other church services only after the situation comes back to normal. The faithful are not in a hurry as they are now comfortable with the new normal of on-line streaming of masses and novena services.

—*A. F. Nazareth, Alto porvorim*

Flag Hoisting At Novenas In The

Latin Rite

have two specific points on which I need a clarification from Church authorities in Bombay. Firstly, there seems to be an increasing craze among the Latin Rite parishes of the Archdiocese of Bombay [as also across the country] for including a FLAG HOISTING ceremony at the commencement of the various Novenas being held from time to time, even online these days, especially in relation to Our Lady's feasts. What is bothersome is that the trend is fully backed by the parish clergy wearing stoles and praying over and incensing the flag and blessing it (in some instances a banner!) as well as the people gathered around to watch the oohing, the aahing and the swooning that accompany the exercise at the very sight of the flag rising up its post, as though what one was witnessing was some sort of a combination of the Transfiguration, the Ascension, the Assumption and the Coronation! In some places there's a mad scramble to grab or collect what falls from the folds of the flag/banner as it unfurls! If I may ask, **what exactly is the basis of this trend and why is it permitted at all when it clearly lacks Liturgical mandate in the Latin Rite?**

Secondly, the **Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary** in Bombay has had an age-old association with Mount Mary's Basilica, with the Archdiocese officially observing a thematic Novena [at the said Basilica] followed by a festive Octave. However, the feast day proper, i.e. **8 September, is celebrated in several parishes as that of Our Lady of Vailankanni rather than as the feast of Mary's Nativity.** Why this anomaly?

Would that the Church in Bombay took quick remedial measures so as to keep our liturgies, whether live or virtual, from becoming spectacles that are best avoided in keeping with the dignity of Sacred Liturgy per se.

—*Ladislaus Louis D'Souza - Malad*

Social networks can facilitate relationships and promote the good of society, but they can also lead to further polarization and division between individuals and groups," he said. Modern communications were "a gift of God which involves a great responsibility," he said. (Jan 22, 2016)

Evaluating Facebook-Whatsapp, The Giant Media!

Social media are wonderful! It is Jadui duniya! It is in our hands. Even an eighty year old woman or a child of one; in city, village or in slum, can handle it. It is God's Marvel discovered by man! We can communicate with anyone in any corner of the world, instantly, showing our face and surrounding too! Even transferring money is done by a domestic servant with a click on the mobile at a minimum cost! The Wi-Fi in is a ghost-like power that fills the house and works invisibly! "The Internet, in particular, offers immense possibilities for encounter and solidarity. This is something truly good, a gift from God. ... We should not overlook the fact that those who for whatever reason lack access to social media run the risk of being left behind," (-Pope Francis). Pope means that social media, and the other tools of the Internet, can be one of the means to unite the world and perhaps rectify the gap between the rich and poor. But the time has come to question: Is the media building our life or destroying? What are we going to do with it? Spread truth, justice and peace or vitiate the society with misinformation, hatred and lies? The time has come to sit back and reorganise.



Fr. Michael G. Vasai

FACEBOOK-WHATSAPP, GIANT MEDIA!

Even if we think of our third world country, social media are giants! Facebook has 290 million users in India. According to July numbers by Statista. Indian users on WhatsApp, number more than 400 million. The Church has been always positive on the use of social media. Pope Francis even twits. He is the

most-followed world leader on Twitter in 2013, 2014 and 2015, according to the social media analytics group Twiplomacy. In 2016, he came down to number four, with former President Obama and then-candidate Donald J.



Trump rising above him. Now the pope and the President continue to battle for supremacy. Pope's English- and Spanish-language accounts are his most popular; each has more than 15 million followers. The others are Italian (4.8 million); Portuguese (3.4 million); French (1 million); and Polish, Latin, German and Arabic, each with under a million followers. Pope Francis has more than 43 million Twitter followers in nine languages.

What does he twit? Pope Francis at the Western Wall in Jerusalem was one of the most-liked images on his Instagram account in 2017. In 2017 "welcome migrants and foreigners," In 2015 about the earth looking like "an immense pile of filth" and an exhortation to young people from last fall to "dream big," were highly retweeted! The fifth anniversary of @Pontifex, the papal twitter account was marked decisively. Pope Francis' wish then was: "May social media always be spaces that are rich in humanity!" why? Precisely because Twitter is known more

for its harassment, bullying and general abuse than for being a space "rich in humanity." In fact, Twitter itself acknowledged this evil and took steps to banish a number of accounts tied to hate groups, including one that was recently shared by President Trump's personal account. (Cfr. The pope's social media ministry, by Michael J. O'Loughlin December 29, 2017)

BRAZEN ASSAULT' ON DEMOCRACY AND PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE

Recently in India we have sadly realised the evil use of the media at its worst! The recent event at the Supreme Court when Ad. Prashant Bhushan was convicted for contempt of court, revealed that all democratic institutions in the country are subservient to the BJP government! Who brought BJP to power for two terms? Now it is revealed that Facebook made Modi win elections inspite of his poor performance on all fronts. There are proofs internal and external galore to show that Media brought the monster to power! Addressing the Bharatiya Janata Party's social media workers in Rajasthan in September 2018, Amit Shah made startling revelations about how the party's social media machine operates. "We are capable of delivering any message we want to the public, whether sweet or sour, true or fake," he claimed. He ashamedly spoke of an instance where a BJP worker had made a fake story go viral in the run-up to the Uttar Pradesh assembly elections in 2017. The story claimed that Akhilesh Yadav of the Samajwadi Party who was chief minister at the



(Contd.. from p. 6)

time had slapped his father, Mulayam Singh. "We were able to do this only because we had 32 lakh people in our What's App groups," boasted Shah. In 2018, Mr. Modi asked each Bharatiya Janata Party MP to get at least 300,000 likes on their Facebook page. The BJP's election backbone is built on WhatsApp, with the party building up an elaborate system of groups in order to push both ideological as well as electoral messages. Several of the stories are fake yet some even find a way into mainstream news outlets.

The Wall Street Journal alleged that Facebook, the largest social media company in the world, which also owns WhatsApp, the most popular social messaging app in India, had gone to the extent of ignoring hate speech by party leaders. In the run-up to the 2019 Lok Sabha election, Ankhil Das, its public policy director for India, South and Central Asia, had kept under wraps the fact that Facebook had deleted fake news pages tied to the BJP. Even more troubling was that Facebook kept allowing hate speech by BJP politicians on its platform, for the fear of the ruling party hurting its business prospects in India! A BJP MLA in Telangana, T Raja Singh, was flagged by Facebook's internal mechanisms for pushing ideas that included calls for killing Muslims for eating beef, demolishing mosques and even having Rohingya Muslims shot dead. This meant that T. Raja Singh was not only guilty of hate speech but by Facebook's own internal standards tagged as a "dangerous individual" – a category that took into account the ability to spark real-world violence! Facebook did not bring a ban on Singh. Singh is still on Facebook.

In June, in a video call with 25,000 Facebook employees, CEO Mark Zuckerberg spoke about BJP politician Kapil Mishra's February speech in Delhi threatening violence against people protesting India's new citizenship law. Within hours of the speech, deadly violence broke out. Facebook took down the video of Mishra making the threat but he was not banned from

Facebook. He still operates a verified page on the platform! The third and most senior politician mentioned by the Wall Street Journal is former Union minister and MP Anantkumar Hegde, who had posted misinformation about Muslims spreading about Covid-19.

In 2017, Bloomberg published a report saying, Facebook employees had become "de facto BJP campaign workers". Facebook "helped develop the online presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi", it claimed. His followers increasingly turned to Facebook and WhatsApp to organise harassment campaigns against his political rivals. Hindu extremists who back Modi's party have used social media to issue death threats against Muslims or critics of the government." The Guardian too has exposed Facebook.

Thus the world media has borne witness to the disastrous work done by Facebook. The connections between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg are seen at a Town Hall meeting at Facebook headquarters in Menlo Park, California, on September 27, 2015.

In the Indian media, Caravan magazine in 2018 reported that allegations of corruption against Amit Shah's son Jay Shah had been throttled by Facebook. The Newsclick published a five-part investigation showing how "senior employees of Facebook in India have in the past worked, and continue to work, very closely with the country's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party and Narendra Modi since 2011".

How did the opposition parties react to the misuse by the BJP? In fact to some extent they too misuse media for their propaganda. After the BJP's thumping win in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the matter was even raised in Parliament. Trinamool's Derek O'Brien claimed in June 2020, "Facebook censored anti-BJP news and put other parties at jeopardy and I say this with all responsibility..." Facebook's largest market in terms of users. Therefore, in July last, Facebook invested Rs 43,574 crore in Reliance's telecom-

munications company Jio. The study was conducted with the help of an algorithm. It started by identifying around 4 lakh Twitter accounts with a clear political leaning. Around 1.2 lakh of these accounts were identified as pro-Congress and 2.7 lakh as pro-BJP. Out of them nearly 18,000 Twitter accounts spread 'fake news' for BJP, 147 do it for Congress. (According to the research published by The Print)

DILEMMA BEFORE DESHBHAKT CITIZEN:

Facebook has shown the capacity to affect religious and social harmony in the country and provoke riots. The Congress has termed it 'brazen assault' on democracy and peaceful co-existence of people. The Facebook officials before the Delhi Assembly's Peace and Harmony Committee declared, "Facebook remains committed to be an open and transparent platform!" Will the international company honour its commitment? Who will discipline them, if the ruling party itself becomes their beneficiary? Taking into consideration the contagious viciousness of the media, the common man will certainly say, who will save the truth and justice? Unknowingly all of us can get involved into the racket and contribute to the ruining of values in society. Many of us may be spreading fake news as we handle the media innocently. Who knows who is a paid IT man in our WhatsApp group? Who knows some of our youth may be employed by political leaders in their IT section. Maybe some of our close friends are tricked into the same dirty business!

God fearing religious minded common man may even be tempted to give up the use of it all together! God forbid! Committed citizens have to do a double job: combat the misuse and use it to spread truth, justice and peace! Jesus asks us to Proclaim from the house top his peace we have 'heard in whisper!' (Cfr. Mt 10.27, Lk 15.8). Pope Francis does it resolutely. We follow.

SATYAMEV JAYATE!

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Thanksgiving



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

—Ms Annie Maria Fernandes, Mahim

Remembrance for Aborted Children!

On 12 September 2020, Citizens for a Pro-life Society, Priests for Life and Pro-Life Action League, will co-sponsor the 8th-annual National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children! The Mexican Pro-Life Association Los Inocentende Maria (Mary's Innocent Ones) have dedicated a shrine, Rachel's Grotto; which also serves as a place for reconciliation between parents and their deceased babies. Rachel's Grotto takes its name from: "A cry was heard in Ramah, of wailing and loud lamentation – Rachel weeping for her children; and refused to be consoled, because they were no more" (Matthew 2:18).

Solemn prayer vigils will be conducted at these grave sites of which there are 54 across the USA. In St. Andrew's Church compound at Hill Road, Bandra (W), Mumbai we have a Memorial dedicated to the "Un-born"!

The First National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children was held on 12 September 2013, on the 25th-anniversary of the solemn burial of the earthly remains of some 1,500 aborted victims in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA. Over 100 memorial services were held across the USA; and thus it became clear that this should be an annual event.

Pictures and videos from past Days of Remembrances could be found on the National Day of Remembrance Facebook Page. An efficacious Prayer written by Pro-Life Fr. Frank Pavone of EWTN could be found here.

Touching this brute reality of abortion happens in various ways – Hearing a woman's testimony; leaving a vivid description of the procedure; and seeing images of aborted fetuses. One particular graphic account showed a fetus resisting the instrument of torture used to abort it!!

—Dr. Trevor Colaso,
Bandra (W), Mumbai.

**We have
not missed
even a single issue
during the
Lockdown Period**

Patience And Perseverance Pays During Pandemic

Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish and it is true to the present situation. Patience, frankly, can be hard to come by under the most perfect of circumstances, let alone in the pressure cooker of COVID-19. We have been living in the midst of this global COVID-19 pandemic for quite some time now, something never experienced before.

In the active society in which we live, to be confined and have our livelihoods so interrupted truly tests our patience. Families being forced to spend far more time together than they are accustomed to can be something very positive. But it may also require great adjustment to family dynamics. Yes, it seems to be a trial for everyone. This is patient endurance. God patiently bore our sins, even until death and it is a blessing in disguise. Our children suffer the most from studying angle and from educational career in particular.

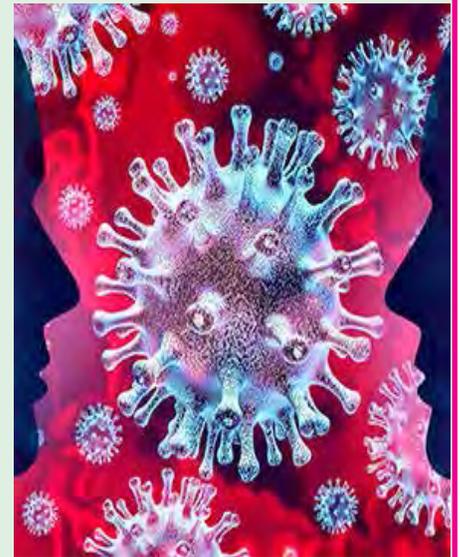
Without a willingness to succeed, patience is of no use. Otherwise it just becomes an act of "sitting it out" and simply hoping that the problems will solve themselves. This is not what patience entails, patience is rather an active commitment to the implementation of long-term projects. Various studies show that perseverance is made easier if there are reliable framework conditions, since there is a sufficiently high probability that the effort will pay off, even if difficult problems have to be overcome. In addition, frustration tolerance is of course important, as there are always phases of failure in larger projects.

It is indeed a crucial period for both the students and parents to overcome a testing period with a single mind and an aim for a bright future. Anxiety exists at every level of edu-

cation and it is the time for the parents or the caretakers to raise the morale of their wards to come good out of a ticklish and tight situation. The results are out and it is time to prefer a course or a subject of your choice. Admission process is an ongoing one but for the newcomer calling shots for a college admission or to a professional course seat, the anxiety and excitement reach a new level and it is time to apply patience and succeed in life.

The present pandemic position puts pressure on parents. Examination tension is putting stress on children. And for higher studies and going to an overseas country of education it is another ordeal. It is better to take up the first choice admission to avoid tension. The mainstream of admission helps one to get a reasonable course of your choice and then one can look out for a better option in case of need. One should not have a double mind and the first one is the best one. Time is changing and our children are undergoing an outdated academic system and we are nearly 20 years back on the educational front.

Having an old school of thought even



parents, guardians and care takers are not able to function as a guiding force and thereby balancing act could not be completed in a planned way and the youngsters are put in a pressure cooker situation throughout their academic years. The students lack both social and creative skills and become more or less book worms to get into IIT level of education. Let us step up our educational system and provide a better future to the Indian students. It is time to be patient and wait for the pandemic position to ease out somewhat and the way things are moving we love our children to get a big break as early as possible.

C.K. SUBRAMANIAM

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Lockdown period**

RIP RASHTRAPATIJI

The end of a long walk

The legend of Indian politics and ex President Pranab Mukherjee is no more. He has left behind great leadership qualities in his political career and is liked by all of us. Pranab Mukherjee entered politics in 1969 when late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi made him a Rajya Sabha MP. His first stint as Finance Minister was between 1982 and 1984. He was also the leader of the Rajya Sabha from 1980 to 1985. After the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime Minister Narasimha Rao made him Planning Commission Deputy Chairman in 1991 and eventually External Affairs Minister in 1995. He was instrumental in the ascension of Sonia Gandhi as party president in 1998.

Having traversed the deceitful maze that New Delhi is since 1969, Mr. Mukherjee knew where power flowed from. He became the 13th President of India in 2012. And the long walks continued even after he left office in 2017, as he walked 8 km, four in the morning, four in the evening. He also wrote his diary as he had done every day for decades. The journey to his long walk is over. RIP. Late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi made him a Rajya Sabha MP. His first stint as Finance Minister was between 1982 and 1984. He was also the leader of the Rajya Sabha from 1980 to 1985.

After the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime Minister Narasimha Rao made him Planning Commission Deputy Chairman in 1991 and eventually External Affairs Minister in 1995. He was instrumental in the ascension of Sonia Gandhi as party president in 1998. Mr. Mukherjee was the Finance Minister in the early 1980s, and the grip over economic actors that he gained would remain handy for the rest of his life. He held the three of the four big portfolios —



Defence, Finance and External Affairs. He signed the nuclear agreement with the United States in 2008. As the key interlocutor of the UPA with its allies on the issue, he carried the Left along until the last milestone. After the Left withdrew support to the government, the Samajwadi Party came to its rescue.



C.K. Subramaniam

His knowledge and short temper intimidated all his interlocutors. He managed the two critical relationships, with Ms. Gandhi and Manmohan Singh, with sagacity and sensitivity. As Finance Minister, he signed the appointment of Dr. Singh as RBI Governor in 1982. But unlike Natwar Singh, who could never achieve a working relationship with the accidental Prime Minister and burned his own career in the process, Mr. Mukherjee put on the act of being the constant number two until he seized the title of the First Citizen. But he completely messed up one relationship that is with Cabinet colleague P. Chidambaram. By then he was a prisoner of his own advisers.

In 2018, the Government of India an-

nounced Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian honour of the country, for him. Around the same time, he addressed a gathering of the RSS in Nagpur, in a stunning reincarnation of a man who had never let his intense religiosity impede his secular vision. RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat had pleaded with him to address the organisation's conclave as President, but Mr. Mukherjee waited until after he left the office. He made a speech to RSS volunteers on nationalism that had a Rashomon effect on listeners — it was an endorsement of Hindutva nationalism and a critique of it at once. One could take what one wants.

His picture on the RSS stage, flanked by its leaders in uniform will remain part of his legacy and the history of India's evolution. He had walked far. He was an outstanding personality who devoted his entire life for the welfare of the nation. My heartfelt condolences to his whole family. He was a Prime Minister in waiting for a couple of times and the present government made him the President of India to recognise his good work. RIP Rashtrapati.

The Congress mess

The grand old party of India – The Indian National Congress or the Indira Congress as it was then known post the split is in a big mess today. This political party which ultimately secured independence from the oppressive British rule has been at the forefront of the free India movement. Many stalwarts have headed this party some of whom have been non Indians as well. The Nehru family first took charge of this party sometime in 1919 when Motilal Nehru held the reins as party president. Years later Jawaharlal Nehru arrived on the scene and ultimately became the first Prime Minister of independent under the leadership of none other than Mahatma Gandhi supported by very eminent and tall leaders.

Jawaharlal Nehru continued to lead the country till his death. With his contribution to the Non-aligned Movement [NAM] his stature on the global arena rose very high. This group remained away from the two Super Powers of the USA and USSR. He adopted the Socialist path for this country considering the social and income disparity in India. With his famous Five Year Plans he took India on the path of development; something that has been a debatable point. Nehru's leadership was considered indispensable for this country and many asked "After Nehru who"? Congress was the only party that mattered in the country and therefore the successor had to come from within. On his death the little known Lal Bahadur Shastri – the man with a small stature took over and led the country to victory against Pakistan but died under mysterious circumstances in the Russia.

Thereafter Indira Gandhi took over as the Prime Minister and ruled the country with an iron hand. She showed remarkable courage and determination in the war against Pakistan which resulted in the creation of Bangladesh. With this victory she became more powerful and authoritarian which saw the imposition of the emergency – a dark period in Indian history. On her tragic death her son a political greenhorn took over with the sympathy of grieving Indians but the Sikh riots marred the atmosphere. Again the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi saw a big void in Congress. Ultimately they had to beg and plead of a reluctant Sonia Gandhi to lead – an accidental Congress Presi-

VIEWS on NEWS



by Marshall Sequeira

dent. Considering her limitations she did a fairly good job and brought Congress back to power in 2004 and 2009. Her refusing Prime Minister-ship was hailed as a supreme sacrifice but the corruption issues saw the government losing its way. Once the party lost to charismatic Narendra Modi of the BJP the grand old party is on the decline, a few wins in States notwithstanding. Narendra Modi soon positioned himself as the savior of the country and in a short span is recognized as a global Statesman. India's stock under his leadership went up.

Since then, the Congress Party is struggling to find a leader of substance. The only choice was Rahul Gandhi and legitimate heir to the Congress throne failed miserably. His challenge to Narendra Modi came to naught in 2014 and the performance in 2019 was worse. His leadership came under scrutiny and he resigned as Party President leaving a big void once again. By then the old guard and the new guard took positions and neither wanted to cede the ground to the other forcing Sonia Gandhi to become an interim President. The rot in the party worsened with infighting for supremacy and the divide became wider with the old remaining loyal to Sonia while the young turks favouring Rahul. With prominent young leaders deserting the party, the GOP of India looks to be heading for self destruction. 23 prominent leaders [with only 3 of them in the CWC] wrote to Sonia for restructuring and overhauling faced flak from Gandhi siblings at the CWC. They are demoralized but not out as yet. The next few months will show which way the GOP is heading – for better or for worse.

A very 'fine' punishment

Activist and Supreme Court Advocate Prashant Bhushan had put the three member bench headed by Arun Mishra in a tight spot by vehemently refusing to tender any apology or withdraw his controversial comment on the probity of the last four CJIs of the Apex Court. The Apex Court felt that letting him go scot free would send wrong message to other Advocates and litigants. The bench did not want to be harsh [keeping in mind the AG's recommendation that he be let off with a strong admonition].

The Court had already held Bhushan guilty of Contempt of Court – which has never been clearly defined anyway. Having held him guilty it would have been naïve to let him go without some punishment. By imposing a fine of Rs 1 the Court turned the tables on the defendant accused. A fine is a fine howsoever small the amount. In our younger days we were told that ultra rich during the British rule were not fined huge sums because they would pay willingly. In one such case, we were told, a very rich man was fined one pie [smallest coin those days]. "Ek pai dund, pudja darwaja bund" meaning – one pie fine and the main door/gate of the bungalow to remain sealed for a specified period. It was a shame for the rich man because all his guests had to enter through the backdoor. It may not be a bad idea for Courts to consider such verdicts in India since the ultra rich reside in bungalows.

Prashant Bhushant, reading the judgement, must have found himself in a piquant situation. If he refuses to pay Re 1, he has to undergo 3 months imprisonment and forfeit his right to practice in the Supreme Court for 3 years. A very cleverly worded verdict! This is something Bhushan can ill afford to accept and has decided to pay the fine of Re 1 and and may file a review petition. Payment of fine amounts to admitting his guilt – not a happy feeling for him. Has he sobered down? Perhaps! He declared in a television interview that henceforth he will have to be more circumspect and careful. That by itself is admitting he was reckless in his now famous tweet. There is bound to be a national debate on the issue of what really constitutes Contempt of Court. Indian Judiciary is the last hope and maligning it would undermine the goodwill it enjoys. Freedom of expression, like any other freedom, cannot be absolute. It is good to remember that.

From 'Warpath' to 'Kandhamal Massacre': The Journey of a Film Maker and Actor

By Fr Tom Mangattuthazhe &
Vergheese V Joseph –

Dr. Graham Staines, an Australian Christian missionary, at the age of 22, left Australia and came to India and served the people with leprosy for nearly 30 years. Tragically, on the midnight of 22nd January 1999 he was cold-bloodedly killed along with his seven-year-old son Philip and nine-year-old son Timothy. After the death of Dr. Graham and his children, his wife Mrs. Gladys Staines — keeping true to the teachings of her faith — magnanimously forgave those who killed her husband and children.

The life of Dr. Graham Staines made a deep impression on Dr. Dilip Wagh a struggling film maker from Nashik in Maharashtra state. He decided to showcase Dr. Graham Steins' life and work through a movie. After much study and research, he began shooting the movie in 2003. The title of the movie originally was "Balidhan Ek Sachayi". After 10 days of shooting, the



entire shooting was stopped by those opposed to humanity and he lost more than Rs. 30 lakh in the process. Dr_Dilip Wagh

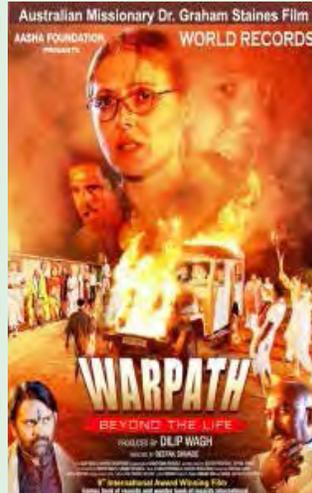
Dr. Dilip waited for eight long years, earned resources and started shooting the movie again. During this time, the name of the movie was changed to "Warpath". Again disturbance hap-

pened, the shooting was stopped midway and there was a loss of another Rs 22 lakh. People who were opposed to the idea lashed out at Dr. Dilip, "Why are you working on a film which people will not watch and it will not do sell".

However, Dr. Dilip had only one determination — to demonstrate to the world the martyrdom of Dr. Graham Staines and his Christian life. Initially, his family, relatives and friends were all against his plan to make this movie. But then, one of his friends Satish Pardesi, was an exception and encouraged Dr. Dillip. In the year 2017, despite lack of sufficient resources, he again started filming. This time the name of the movie was changed to "Warpath Beyond The Life".

Dr. Dilip's wife Rohini inquired, "You started shooting the film, and how much money do you have"? Dilip replied, "I have nothing". Mrs. Rohini gave away her gold jewellery, weighing 1.5 kg. Shooting for film restarted with great enthusiasm. Dr. Dilip's sister also chipped in with cash and jewellery. With hard work, this film was completed and his big dream was fulfilled. By this time the film had a cost overrun of Rs 2.5 crore!

The film was released in Nasik in April 2017. The original is in Hindi language and the dubbed versions are available in English, Malayalam and Tamil languages. The film produced by Dr Dilip and directed by Deepak Shivade



pened, the shooting was stopped midway and there was a loss of another Rs 22 lakh. People who were opposed to the idea lashed out at Dr. Dilip, "Why are you working on a film which people will not watch and it will not do sell".

went on to fetch over 50 National and international awards besides gaining an entry into the Guinness Book of Records for successfully completing 500 shows in 600 days in open theaters! Despite all these achievements the movie suffered an 80 per cent loss, however that has not deterred Dr Dilip in spreading the message of Christ!

Fr. C M Paul, SDB, a former member of the Central Board of Film Certification (Gol, MIB) says, "The film Warpath is a bold expose of the events that led to the gruesome murder of Australian missionary and his children. The missionary dedicated his life to serving poor people affected by leprosy. This black spot on Indian democracy masterminded by fanatical mob brainwashed by right-wing ideologies is fearlessly decried by filmmaker Dr. Dilip Wagh".

The film went through all certification procedures but had no resources to show in the theatres. Here the Christian Churches came forward and the movie was shown on Christian premises.

*Excerpts from the interview with
Dr. Dilip Wagh.*



Corona Care- Catch 22 Situation

In order to break the chain of transmission and close the Covid-19 tap, the only way is to have an alert, well behaved citizenry with a hyper vigilant public health system in each city, town and village of one of the most densely populated countries on planet earth. As the Covid-19 enters the 9th month, even today Coronavirus is predictably unpredictable, both in its virology and the human immune system response it evokes.

India has rapidly peaked at more than three million cases, though the disease has been asymptomatic or mild in most cases. Most Indians have recovered due to their strong immunity level but there is no letting our guard down. Conquering of Covid-19 needs a close follow up, testing and the most important treatment. Let us hope to break the ice with an Indian vaccine coming in the near future.



Jayanthy Subramaniam

In the most vulnerable sections of our population, elderly or those with comorbidities like diabetes hypertension, strict vigil must be. India has lower case fatality and better recovery rates. Independent of all the advances in the medical treatment of Covid, which include access to the latest antivirals, steroids or immunologic, plasma, nasal oxygen in prone position as well as advanced critical care facilities, for the most need we still need to close the tap at the base of the pandemic, which is to break the chain of transmission.

In order to break the chain of transmission and close the Covid-19 tap, the only way is to have an alert, well

behaved citizenry with a hyper vigilant public health system in each city, town and village of one of the most densely populated countries on Planet Earth. In order to close Covid-19 tap, at first suspicion of disease, we need to aggressively test, test and test. The test has to be preferably be the RT-PCR but usually takes a day before results are available. The rapid antigen test is good to detect and diagnose Covid in a few hours but unfortunately, a negative test must merit an RT-PCR test or a close follow up with isolation till we prove that the suspected case will not progress into Covid-19.

Currently, there are no vaccines or treatments approved by the Indian government specifically for the COVID-19 virus. Efforts are underway to develop a vaccine and to identify antiviral treatments for the coronavirus. Creating a vaccine requires six stages of development, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Those stages include discovering a potential vaccine; testing in cell cultures and in animal models; clinical testing in humans for safety, effectiveness and dosage; applying for approval; manufacturing and quality control. A clinical trial recently began in various centres of an investigational vaccine for COVID-19 but no ultimate solution to the present pandemic. Several other organizations around the world are working to develop coronavirus vaccines, with additional clinical trials expected before the year end.

No specific treatment for coronavirus



is currently available. Care includes supportive management of symptoms and complications including pneumonia, acute respiratory distress syndrome and advanced organ support, if needed. It is better to monitor your symptoms and stay in touch with your doctor if you feel worse. Call before you go to any health care setting. Corona vaccine will provide the much needed confidence and there is no doubt about it.

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He Came After All

A Short Story



The grandfather wall-clock was softly chiming. It was 3 a.m. Outside the sharp winter breeze blew in through the open window circled the bedroom and vanished. Anna shuddered for a second and drew up the blanket to the length of her smooth white shoulder. There was an hour left to go, she told herself, remembering what Roger told her with his last dying breath.

"Darling, I'll come to you, don't cry, remember, two years from today, at 4 a.m. the same place, my love, where we first met. I love you....". Anna felt the grip of his hand tightened. At that moment Roger Hart passed away from this pandemic world.

The pain was unbearable. The shock that he had died was unbelievable, they were both young and he had a whole life ahead of him, Roger was twenty-eight, and she was three years younger.

Roger had become an orphan when his parents died in a big fire in the tea gardens at Assam. He was adopted by the Manager of the tea gardens ever since. The Manager had no children of his own even after ten years of marriage. The couple took great

care of him and gave him a good university education.

When Roger passed away he held the post of a civil engineer, sent to Darjeeling to build a bridge.

"Well, that's the story of my life," Roger smiled at Anna on their first date.

They had been madly in love from the first moment they met, as if they had known each other for many years. They were soon engaged and were to get married on the 25 December the following year.



BY MELVYN BROWN

Anna held the sub-editor's post for the Simla Daily News. She lived alone in a working girls' hostel, while her parents owned a beautiful flat in Calcutta. The year flew by and they were married at Calcutta. They made their marriage memorial with a grand reception at the famous Taj Bengal.

A month after the wedding Roger received the assignment to build the Darjeeling bridge. He worked closely with the construction crew, the contractors and the men who created the blueprint for the big project. Although Anna kept a close watch to keep Roger physically fit, he got infected by the Covid-19 virus.

Time raced ahead and the day arrived when Roger knew the end had arrived.

"Darling, I'll come to you, don't cry, remember two years from today at 4 a.m.. The same place Anna, where we first met. I love you..."

The grandfather clock was showing 3.15 a.m. Anna sprang out of the bed took her warm shawl, her sheep-skin sling bag and ran out of the working girls' hostel, took her car from the garage and in ten minutes arrived at the Punjabi Dhaba. The shop was closed, so she stood in the freezing cold looking all around her. No signs of life anywhere.

"Sweetheart, you came."

Anna spun around and faced Roger, who stood in the center of a very bright light.

"My darling, Roger." She tried to reach out and embrace him, but she could not, he seemed to be inside the bright light.

"Don't worry, my love I am all right; I'll be waiting for you – go, make the best of this earth life. Promise me, you will be happy. Go! I must return, my love."

Anna stood breathless not knowing how to react. A sharp gust of cold wind made her shudder as the light vanished into the distance.

"Anna, Anna, get up it's time for you to go," her roommate shook her by the shoulder. "Get up, you'll miss your appointment."

Suddenly, Anna woke up with a startled look on her glowing face. She realized in that split second she had been dreaming.

"It's all right," She smiled at her friend, saying, "He came, after all. We met – I am so happy for him and for myself. He told me not to worry, he'll be waiting for me."

Home Is Where The Faith Grows

By Melvyn Brown

In a Christian home children are expected to follow the faith of the family, and parents have a duty to enrich their children's trust and devotion to Christian values and Catholic beliefs.

Prayers before and after meals are always the mark of a true Christian family, the unflinching attendance at Mass on Sunday and, on days of obligation are a true sign of proper upbringing.

I wish to quote from a teaching in the Second Vatican Council (Gaudium et Spes): "Undeniably those who willfully shut out God from their hearts and try to dodge religious questions are not following the dictates of their consciences. Hence they are not free of blame." (19).

The sin against the First Commandment is when the person ignores or refutes the existence of God. In the long run it divides the family, the children react according to their nature and this would lead to a future generation of godless and helpless people with no hope or vision.

The true worship of God is the belief that there is only one God to adore.

Let us always give God that which is of God. Do not get involved in taking the sacraments which need the love of God, with any doubt. In the gospel of John we hear the voice of Jesus: "If you love me.... Obey the commands I give you." (Jn.14:15).

When Catholics fail to give total witness to our Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah and the one true God, those who ignore their faith in Jesus at parties or functions because they wish to please others, are breaking the law of God in the First Commandment: "I, the Lord, am your God. You shall not have other gods beside me." (ex. 20: 2- 3).

From very young children should be taught to respect the routine of prayers for doing well in studies, to pray for the sick, the old and the helpless. At home, the child must learn to share, to care, to make small sacrifices, to assist those in need. Above all, the child must be taught never to lie, as one lie leads to another.

Always keep a large image of the Sacred Heart or Divine Mercy in the hall room, or the dining room.

The Family Rosary is a good Catholic habit in keeping the love and trust of the faith. The Rosary teaches the story of the Savior. It is the weapon to

drive away the devil. Have children to understand the great value in saying the Rosary.

I have met people who take a substitute for god, and chase after the accumulation of wealth, or pretend to be atheists seeking provisions of power in order to ignore our one true living God. Many become unbelievers because of what science and technology is creating.

Some Catholics have lost their faith by mixing with the wrong type of people with warped ideas of god, prayers and works of Christian charity and love. One elderly man asked a woman friend, "If God is everywhere, what need to go to church?"

The lady's reply was quite simple. The presence of God is always in his home on earth, the church. At the same time the Spirit of God is in every corner of this earth and even with you at this moment.

Teach children to love God. The future is in their hands, and God is ever ready to hear our prayers. Remember, Home is where the Faith grows.

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Urgently required

Here is a Whatsapp message which I received this morning.

"Urgently needed not blood but an electrician to restore the current between people who do not speak to each other anymore".

"An optician to change the outlook of people".

"An artist to draw a smile on everyone's faces".

"A construction worker to build a bridge between neighbours".

"A gardener to cultivate good thoughts".

"A plumber to clear the choked and blocked mindsets of people".

"A scientist to rediscover compassion".

"A language teacher for better communication with each other".

"A maths teacher for all of us to re-learn how to count on each other".

*Contributed by Jubel D'Cruz,
Dombivli, Mumbai*

Dentist : "Why is one of your teeth broken?"

Me : "Because the roti my wife made last night was very hard.."

Dentist : "If it was so hard, why didn't you refuse to eat it?"

Me : "That's exactly what I did..."

Three friends go for a haircut.

The white guy tells the barber to cut it short and at the back he must trim it to look like a tv screen. The barber finishes and says R100.

The black guy tells the barber to cut it short and at the back he must trim it to look like a tv screen. The barber finishes and says R100.

The colored guy tells the barber to cut it short and at the back he must trim it to look like a tv screen. The barber finishes and says R600.

He jumps up and says, what the hell, they pay R100 and mine is R600? The barber replied, a colored tv is more expensive.

Q: What is the difference between George Washington, Richard Nixon,



and your Mother-in-Law?

A: Washington couldn't tell a lie, Nixon couldn't tell the truth, your Mother-in-Law doesn't know the difference..

A man was on trial for bigamy, and after the judge passed sentence he asked the defendant if he'd learned what made having more than one wife a bad thing. "Yes, your honor, I have," he replied. "What is the reason?" the judge asked. "Having two wives means having two mothers-in-law, and that, in itself, should be grounds enough to support assisted suicide."

Q. Why did the man put his money in the freezer?

A. He wanted cold hard cash!

Q. What did the porcupine say to the cactus?

A. "Is that you mommy?"

Q. What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?

A. Frostbite.

Q. How do crazy people go through the forest?

A. They take the psycho path.

Q. What do prisoners use to call each other?

A. Cell phones.

Adam and Eve

Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, and Eve had not been there long and Adam was trying to get a grasp on the female thing, so he asked God if they could have a talk. God replied, sure your my son and I love you can ask me anything.

So Adam asked, God you have given me the beautiful flowers and

the sunset....But I look at Eve and she is so beautiful it takes my breath away... Why God, did you make Eve so beautiful? God replied, my son that is easy, I made her that way so you would love her, Adam replied well, it worked but I have another question... I touch the cool water and rub the furry animals and they feel so good to me but I touch Eve and it is so wonderful my heart almost stops... God, why did you make her that way?

God replied well Adam that is easy I made her that way so you'd love her...well Adam replied, it worked, I do, but God I have one more question and I don't mean to question your wisdom or anything, but God she is stupid, why did you make her stupid? God replied my son that is easy I made her that way so she would love you.

Cheap Husband

After being away on business, Tim thought it would be nice to bring his wife a little gift. "How about some perfume?" he asked the cosmetics clerk. She showed him a \$50.00 bottle.

"That's a bit much," said Tim, so she returned with a smaller bottle for \$30.00. "That's still quite a bit," Tim complained.

Growing annoyed, the clerk brought out a tiny \$15.00 bottle. "What I mean," said Tim, "is I'd like to see something really cheap."

The clerk handed him a mirror.

Eighteen

A 54 year old mathematician left his wife a note that said, "When you get this message, I'll be at the Grand Hotel with my 18 year old secretary."

The wife faxed him at the hotel with the following message, "When you get this your 54 year old wife will be at home with an 18 year old boy toy. Being a mathematician you know that 18 will go into 54 a whole lot more than 54 will go into 18."

Bottoms Up! Be Honest!

Below is a pragmatic message! It fits perfectly in our present scenario! No hard feelings except, "Killing me (us) softly with HIS Song!"

Leader: Yes! Now is the right time to serve you! Public: But will you loot the nation? Leader: Only for your sake! Public: Will you work for us? Leader: Yes, a little at a time! Public: Will you increase prices and cost of living? Leader: Don't ever think about that now! Public: Will you provide us jobs and livelihood? Leader: Surely, I will do that for your good! Public: Will you indulge in scams and misappropriation? Leader: Are you mad to think of that! Public: Can we believe and trust you! Leader: Certainly yes! Public: Oh! Our Leader! (Now Read This From Bottom Up)!

Be Honest! Honesty is marked by being free from deceit. Christian life should be identified with righteousness and incorruptibility! Jesus reveals: "Every good tree bears good fruit ... So you will know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:17; 20).

"Whoever walks in integrity walks securely; but whoever takes crooked paths will surely be exposed. // The integrity of anyone is destroyed by duplicity! // Thus doing what is right and just is more acceptable to the Lord than any sacrifice" (Proverbs 10:9 // 11:3 // 21:3).

Therefore put off falsehood and speak truthfully, for we are all members of one body. // So dear children, let us not love with words, but with actions and truth - So that we abide in Christ Jesus, and He in us" (1 John 3:18; 24).

—Dr. Hazel Colaso,
Bandra (W), Mumbai.



Ingredients:

Part A:

400 gms papaya
300 gms carrot
100 gms ginger
1 tsp salt
1 tsp turmeric powder

Part B:

14 cloves of garlic
200 gms big fat green chilies
100 gms dry dates
20 gms mustard dal
1 tsp sugar
1 tsp chili powder
1 tsp turmeric powder
2 cups vinegar (apple cider)

Note:

1. Vegetables can be cut into thin slices instead of strips.
2. Dates can be kept whole.

Pre-Preparation:

1. Peel and cut the papaya, carrots, and ginger into thin strips.
2. Apply turmeric powder and salt to the cut vegetables as mentioned in Part A.
3. Spread this over a big thali/platter and let it dry under the sun for 3-4 hours (mix it once in between).
4. Soak the dates in ½ cup of vinegar for 1 hour.
5. If the chilies are big, then cut them into quarters.

Preparation:

1. Add 2 cup of vinegar into the kadai.

2. Now add the vinegar in which the dates are soaked.
3. Bring this to a boil.
4. Add garlic and green chilies and stir for 15 seconds, then switch off the stove/gas.
5. Add the dates, chili powder, sugar, turmeric powder and half the quantity of mustard dal and stir.
6. Now add the sun dried vegetables and the remaining mustard dal and give it a stir.
7. Transfer the pickle into a glass/ceramic bowl or container (wide mouth).
8. Cover and set it aside for 3 days.
9. Every 12 hours stir it once so that the vinegar mixture coats all the vegetables.
10. Now your pickle is almost done. Transfer this into a pickle jar and set it aside for 2 days to mature.
11. Your East Indian style wedding pickle is ready.

(The East Indians are a community of Catholics who are the original inhabitants of Mumbai).



Shirley D'Cruz

Season Of Creation -

1st September To 4th October 2020

Week 1 - Saving the Environment

Introduction: There is a global environmental crisis. The Gulf Stream is threatened, the Greenland Icecap is melting faster than predicted, the last decade was the warmest for the last millennium and the world's oceans are warming at a dangerous rate. The Tsunami of 2004 was a grim reminder. The good news is that 150 nations signed an Agreement at the **Montreal Conference on Climate Change** to cut down emissions of poisonous gases which have been making the world unlivable.

I. What is Environment/Ecology?

Panch Mahabhuta or the five elements of nature-land, water, fire, air and sky, provide the world of human beings, the flora and fauna, living in and around; with the daily needs of life. Nature has enough for our needs but not enough for our insatiable greed. Most economic development is fossil-based; which is the major source of pollution of water and air, whose benefits are reaped by the rich and the industrially developed countries, while the consequences of pollution are borne by the poor and the developing countries leading to ecological degradation. From the academic year **2004-05 Environmental Studies was made compulsory at all levels of education** (School, University and Professional). Thanks to the grass-roots level movements like *Chipko*, *Narmada Bachao Andolan* and the like.

Human beings and the environment are inseparable. **Rachel Carson** in her famous book, ***Silent Spring*** told us this in 1962. *The history of life on earth has been a history of interaction between living things and their surroundings.* The environment is made up of biotic (living) and abiotic (non living) things. The study of interactions between these two is the Science of Environment /Ecology.



II. The Significance and Importance of Environment/Ecology:

The futurologist **Sir Aldous Huxley** rightly said that quality of life can be radically changed only by means of the sciences of life; and ecology is a branch of the sciences of life. Environment or Ecology is a complex and an interrelated subject. It is not just about tree-plantation, waste management, water pollution, conservation of flora and fauna but also inter-related challenges like demographic changes, availability of food, fodder, energy, raw material, costs and consequences of economic development, utilization of new technologies etc. which affect the livelihood systems of people. To understand the environment one needs to be an activist who learns by doing. One needs to change one's mind-set e.g. the success story of the **Plachimada Panchayat** functionaries in Palakkad district of Kerala who dared a multinational corporation (the **Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages Pvt. Limited**) and stopped the latter from pumping water for commercial use. Since 2005, the company has

stopped its operations at Plachimada. **Natural resources like air, sea, waters and forests cannot be privatized. It is the duty of the Central government to protect and improve the environment which is a fundamental duty under the Constitution.**

III. What Environmental Reform Initiatives has the Government of India taken?

The life style of Indians is environment-friendly e.g. non-killing of animals among the *Bishnois* or worshipping the *Peepal* tree or the cow as *gomata* etc. **The United Nations Conference on Human Environment was convened at Stockholm in 1972**, which laid down the basics of environmental reform to be followed in signatory countries including India.

a) Human beings have the fundamental right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life in an environment of quality that permits a life of dignity and well being.



(Contd.. from p. 18)

b) Human beings bear a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations.

The Stockholm Declaration (15 Dec, 1972) designated, June 5 as **World Environment Day**, when they would reaffirm their pledge to conserve and improve the environment. Mrs. Indira Gandhi participated in this Conference, and incorporated it into the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act, passed in 1976 (Article 48-A) the Directive Principles of State Policy. The Wildlife Protection Act was followed by the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1974, Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 and the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1981.

Sadly, the implementation of legislation provisions, are often slow; and sometimes not implemented at all e.g. The **Bhopal Gas Tragedy** on the night of 2-3 Dec. 1984 which killed 3,500 people and injured 2 lakh victims who have to date, received very little or no health care facilities, nor adequate compensation. This and earlier tragedies precipitated the **Environment (Protection) Act in 1986**. This Act too found it difficult to provide relief to victims. However, the Indian Judiciary managed to order the closure of dangerous lime-stone quarries, tanneries, shifted hazardous industries etc. operating in residential areas of Delhi.

IV. An Appraisal of the Rio/Earth Summit in 1992: The Stockholm Resolutions were confirmed by the Rio de Janeiro /Earth Summit which adopted the famous Rio Declaration and its plan of Action popularly known as Agenda 21; and the Declaration on Principles of Forests. The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held at Johannesburg in 2002 reviewed the Post Rio Program. **The Rio/Earth Summit was a failure** due to the conflict of interests between the rich industrial countries of the North and natural resources rich countries of the South. The best

intentions as outlined, in these treaties and conventions were defeated by a defiant USA and other rich countries taking shelter behind it, in order to safeguard their industrial elites.

Global warming is a dangerously increasing phenomenon. Burning of fossil fuels like coal is the major source of emissions. This has resulted in severe incidents of drought and flood, rise in the sea level submerging a good part of low-lying countries. To avert this, the famous **Kyoto Protocol was signed by 154 countries but NOT by USA and Australia**. Similarly the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was not signed by President (senior) George Bush** at the Rio Summit.

80 percent of the world's biological resources exist in the forests of the South (i.e. the developing countries) and the North (industrially rich countries) want unrestricted access to these forests for raw materials for their drug production leading to tropical deforestation.

The UN Convention to combat **Desertification** was adopted by the Rio Summit in 1992 but the Northern countries were unwilling to accept desertification and falsely put the blame on population pressures. **However, the hole in the ozone layer causing cancer particularly to the white skin and persistent organic pollutants (POPs) travelling to the Arctic was dealt with full force by the Montreal Protocol and stopped.**

V. Why is India in an Ecological Crisis today? What are the Challenges ahead? The inaction of the governments has led to *Governmentalism* of the Environmental Agenda, as it has become a cause without a concern. Agenda 21-Rio's Plan of Action has almost become a dead document. Governments need to be kept accountable and responsive. **The Brundtland Commission Report** can become workable only when **Development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.** Active and conscious citi-

zens of the world need to ask for an equal share in the per capita entitlements of the global commons (like the resources of atmosphere and ocean). **The next war will be a war for water that is becoming scarce. Any Answers????**

1. **ing materials from the natural environment is reported to be more than three times the world average. Is there a North/South hemisphere divide today? If so, what are the reasons for the same and its effects on India, on you as an individual and as a community?**

2. **Do you think COVID-19 and the pandemic are connected to Environmental degradation? If so, how and why? During the lockdown, air pollution over most cities came down drastically e.g. the Air Quality Index in Delhi was between 30 to 40 in late March and early April this year, as compared to around 180 to 200 at this time last year.**

3. **A simple habit of putting off lights and fans when not needed is a green good deed. Make a list of simple doable green good deeds or small positive actions that could perhaps change your mind-set, your life-style and your spirituality.**

Sr Mudita Sodder RSCJ

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7157. PUNE : Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1990) Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 75 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA (Marketing) & M.Com., working as a Senior Executive, Sales and Development. Contact email : amlahenry11@gmail.com

7155. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in March 1980) Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 67 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. 12th std., having own business asm well settled. Contact email : mendoncajason@gmail.com

7152. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in December 1989) Ht. 6', Wt. 70 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., having business. Contact email : emi_dalmeida@yahoo.com

7151. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in May 1990) Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Masters in Marketing, Working as a Asst. Marketing Executive. Contact email : emanuelfindz90@gmail.com

7150. POONA : East Indian RC Divorcee, (Born in November 1960) Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 69 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Graduate Engineer from CWIT University of Pune, working as an Engineer. Contact email : joeskf@gmail.com

7146. MUMBAI : East Indian RC Bachelor, (Born in July 1988) Ht. 5'

10", Wt. 79 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. (Mech), + PG course in Finance, working as a Asst. Manager in MNC. Contact email : lenin.pdsouza@gmail.com

7144. POONA: Goan RC Bachelor, (Born in October 1985) Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 60 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Hotel Management Graduate, working as an Executive. Contact email : merrolmenezes@gmail.com

7136. HYDERABAD: Anglo Indian RC Bachelor, (Born in July 1988) Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 80 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Post Graduate, having own business. Contact email : phillipctoher@gmail.com

7135. U.S.A. : Mangalorean RC Bachelor, (Born in June 1990) Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.E. in Electronics & Telecommunication (EXTC), working as a Senior Software Engineer. Contact email : ryandcunha01@gmail.com

7133. MUMBAI : Goan RC Handsome Bachelor, (Born in February 1977) Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 78 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., PG, MBA, working as a Sr. Manager in US IT Company. Contact email : trinidadfranco@gmail.com

7132. MUMBAI : Goan RC Bachelor, (Born in January 1987) Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 72 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.A., PG in Advy. / Graphics & Animation, working as a Graphic Designer. Contact email : dcostastephen03@gmail.com

7130. DUBAI : Mangalorean RC Divorcee, (Born in July 1972) Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 80 kgs, air Complexion, handsome, simple down to earth,

Edn. B.E. (Mech.), Working as an Engineer. Contact email : francisdouza472@gmail.com OR 00971501532702

7129. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in June 1987 1989), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working in Back Office. Contact email : roshan7687@gmail.com

7119. KUWAIT : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in November 1989), Ht. 6', Wt. 78 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. F.Y. B.Com. + 2 yrs Hotel Management Diploma. working in Kuwait. Contact email : fernandes.clayton@rocketmail.com

7118. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in January 1981), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 87 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Graduate, working in Doha Metro, in Doha Qatar. Contact email : josephfernandes10@yahoo.com

7034. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in June 1988), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 80 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.C.A., Software Engineer, working as an Software Engineer, Asst. Manager (IT), Only Son seeks alliance from Mangalorean RC Spinster, educated, working in Mumbai. Reply with full details & photofraph to email : ID : vivian1548@gmail.com Mobile : 9096141335

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7162 MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1993), Ht. 5'5", Wt. 58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., working as a Secretary. Contact email : t.banze@rediffmail.com

7161 MUMBAI : Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in July 1986), Ht. 5'6", Wt. 62 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc. Science, Masters in Mass Media, working as a Asst. Accounts Director. Contact email : padmarrao@gmail.com

7160. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1988), Ht. 5'7", Fair Complexion, Edn. BMS, working as a Senior Merchandiser in a Global Retail Company in Dubai. She was born in Mumbai, schooled in Kuwait and last 5 years settled in Dubai. Seeks a tall, well spoken, independent man, with a good sense of humor, preferably based **ABROAD**. Contact email : prislobo10@gmail.com

7147 MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in July 1992), Ht. 5'4", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA Finance, working as a Fund Accountant. Contact email : stefasha09@gmail.com

7126. U.S.A. : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in

January 1992) from Mumbai, Ht. 5'7", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. (Computers) from Mumbai, M.S. (Information Systems) from US. Possesses H1B visa and is working as a Technical Analyst with an MNC in USA. Contact email : wilfyjoy1315@gmail.com or call +91 98603 02527 / + 91 9970172527

7128. MUMBAI : Affluent business family R.C. East Indian Spinster, (Born in 12-04-1988), Ht. 5' 2", very beautiful and pretty. Edn. MS General Surgeon, Doctor by profession. Contact email : drvd2019@gmail.com

7066. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in June 1987), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 78 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E., (EXTC) M.S. (International Business Management), working as a Consulting Manager. Contact email : l2018anselm@yahoo.com

7143. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1987), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 75 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.A. (Literature) working as a Sales & Marketing Manager. Contact email : irisedsouza@gmail.com

6741. MANGALORE : Mangalorean RC spinster, 26 years, 5' 3", Doctor, Qualification : MD. Very fair and beautiful. Belongings to an affluent business family. Email : sona68500@gmail.com

7145 MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1992), Ht. 4'11", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., Lecturer by profession. Contact email : andrea210358@gmail.com

7142. MUMBAI : Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1981), Ht. 5'3", Wt. 62 kgs, Very Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA (HR) working as a HR Associate. Contact email : sunrays1227@gmail.com

7141. MUMBAI : Affluent business family Protestant Spinster, (Born in November 1995), Ht. 5', Wt. 55 kgs., Fair complexion, good looking, Edn., M. Pharma, Student. Contact email : saloni.1995naik@gmail.com

7069. MUMBAI : Tamilian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1992), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., Nursing, Staff Nurse. Contact email : mpchandran68@gmail.com Mobile : 9820041633

7123. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1987), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., CS., M.Sc., working as a Sr. Manager Programmer. Contact email : r.douza.co@gmail.com

7139. MUMBAI : Maharashtrian Protestant Spinster, (Born in May 1993), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 47 kgs, Fair Complexion, good looking, Edn. B.Com., working as a Sr. Advisor in MNC. Contact email : shirley.jadhav@gmail.com

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Vatican ambassador to India moved to Brazil

Pope Francis on August 29 transferred Apostolic Nuncio (Ambassador) to India and Nepal Archbishop Giambattista Diquattro to Brazil, South America. A successor to Archbishop Diquattro has not been announced said the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) headquarters in New Delhi. The Italian prelate came to India after serving as the apostolic nuncio to Bolivia, also in South America, for nine years. He succeeded Archbishop Salvatore Pennacchio, who was the Apostolic Nuncio to India and Nepal for six years. Archbishop Diquattro's tenure has been a turbulent period for the Church in India. He was criticized for inaction in dealing with scandals involving bishops and priests in India. Laity groups had demanded his resignation.



tion." Speaking of the nuncio's transfer, AOCCs Fernandes said that the decision came late and it was too late to undo the damage.

With rising knowledge and understanding of common people now, and post Covid 19 exposures, it is evident the church and other faiths too will need to be more sincere and 'God worship' centric, giving up the exploitation of the common man. Showmanship, rhetoric, ritual proliferation, nepotism, mumbo-jumbo, routine recitation of prayers, loud music and jumping around - the old tricks are not going to work easy and a genuine God centered personal prayer form will be only accepted. Fervent Catholics, the world over are upset to note regarding the vows : Obedience is now a form of superior sycophancy, Poverty is five star culture above the glass ceiling and Celibacy, God knows. It is pertinent to know, Cardinal Tong of Hong Kong recently warned that all clergy should be well aware that the faithful are all the time listening to what is said and watching what is done. Therefore, it time to be prudent and attentive to what is preached and done.

In general the voice of people says : "The Church's reputation in India is already damaged by the Mysore kidnappings and murders, sexual scams, and the high-profile Kerala nun rape case. The Indian Catholic community has ended up losing faith in clergy. The nuncio is the Vatican's ambassador to India. He is also the Pope's representative to India on all matters religious. He, therefore, serves in a dual capacity. Given that the nuncio does not handle visas to the Vatican and that there is no trade between India and the Vatican, the question is what does the nuncio do for the good of India, it's people and in particular the Roman Catholics and their church."

*- Compiled from Media reports .
By Ivan Saldanha-Shet.*

retary of AOCC, Melwyn Fernandes, alleged that the papal nuncio was rumoured to have collected 'huge amounts of money from criminal bishops' as bribe money, for NOT initiating action against bishops accused of sexual misconduct and corruption i.e. Bishop K A William of Mysore and Bishop Franco Mullakal of Jalandhar (now charged by a Kerala Court) .

The AOCC letter reads, " It is in the interest of the Catholics of India that you resign as you do not acknowledge any letters written to you about criminal bishops, more so in the light of rumours of corruption by you. You are of little or no use to the Catholic community of India and as a diplomat, you have failed in your duty, so resign at the earliest as you have failed in discharging your duties." Indeed it is a mockery of diplomacy.

Many revealing Letters : Recently, the AOCC and Justice M F Saldhana and the Indian Catholic Union wrote over 20 letters collectively to various authorities such as the Pope, and the CBCI President and so on. Asked why the AOCC had demanded Diquattro's resignation in the first place, the general response was : "There is no action on the part of the nuncio with regards to the issues related to Bishop Mullakkal and Bishop William. There is not even a cursory acknowledgement or any reply as to whether he has taken the matter for consideration. There is total silence and disregard to so many voices asking for his interven-

Media Blitz : A well known daily of Mumbai, Mid Day, August 31, in an article on the front page with a bold headline, came as a surprise. The bottom line of the article is quite disappointing from what is normally expected of a diplomat attached to the Vatican and the Universal Church. The sub-line where the article is continued screams "You are of little or no use to catholic community of India ", it indeed is a shock..

The nuncio had come under heavy fire from multiple Catholic community groups, who accused him of inaction and shielding corrupt bishops. The groups, along with retired Bombay High Court Justice Michael Saldanha were pressing for the nuncio's resignation. The pan-India group, Association of Concerned Catholics (AOCC) is one of the groups that was heavily demanding the papal nuncio's resignation. Recently, AOCC had written a strongly-worded letter to the nuncio – more commonly known as the Vatican representative to India asking for his immediate resignation as had 'failed to discharge your duties.'

The letter, written by General Sec-



Teachers are Lifelong Learners

September 5, is celebrated as 'Teachers' Day' to commemorate the birth anniversary of Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, the Second President of India and a renowned teacher and a philosopher for his commendable contribution to education. This day is rightly set aside to honour our teachers for their sacrifice in making a significant contribution to the society. Dr. Radhakrishnan believed that "teachers should be the best minds in the country". Indeed, teachers are lifelong learners because learning never stops neither for them nor for the students.

Due to the current pandemic situation, over the past few months, the Indian K-12 sector has evolved tremendously with a transition taking place from offline to online mode of learning. Lifelong learning being the essence of teaching, we witnessed teachers unlearn and relearn, and learn new strategies and tools that were available online in order to provide a productive learning experience for the students. As a result, there was a seamless transition for many schools from offline to virtual interactive model of learning. We greatly

commend all our teachers for their commitment and sincere effort to constantly upgrade and equip themselves for the betterment of our students. In the years ahead, hybrid blended learning with 'face-to-face classrooms and virtual lessons' is likely to be the future of education that will provide engaging and meaningful learning experiences for our students. Virtual learning as an integral part of education system is here to stay, however the holistic development through school activities

with teachers as mentors will continue to remain extremely integral part of child's education.

While we appreciate our teachers for their relentless effort to guide children, with the National Education Policy (NEP2020) the whole pedagogical framework has undergone a change and therefore we will stand to benefit if our teachers as lifelong learners embrace the changes proactively and redesign and redefine the learning outcomes to make our children more global citizens. Teachers as mentors are not only empowering individuals but empowering generations to come. On this Teachers' Day, we urge all our dear teachers to rededicate themselves for this noble cause of education. There is a wealth of talent and potential within every child and teachers would serve them well to facilitate the unlocking of this wealth and empowering them to discover their true purpose in life. Teachers - cherish your special calling to be lifelong learners in order to impact eternity. Happy Teachers' Day!

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