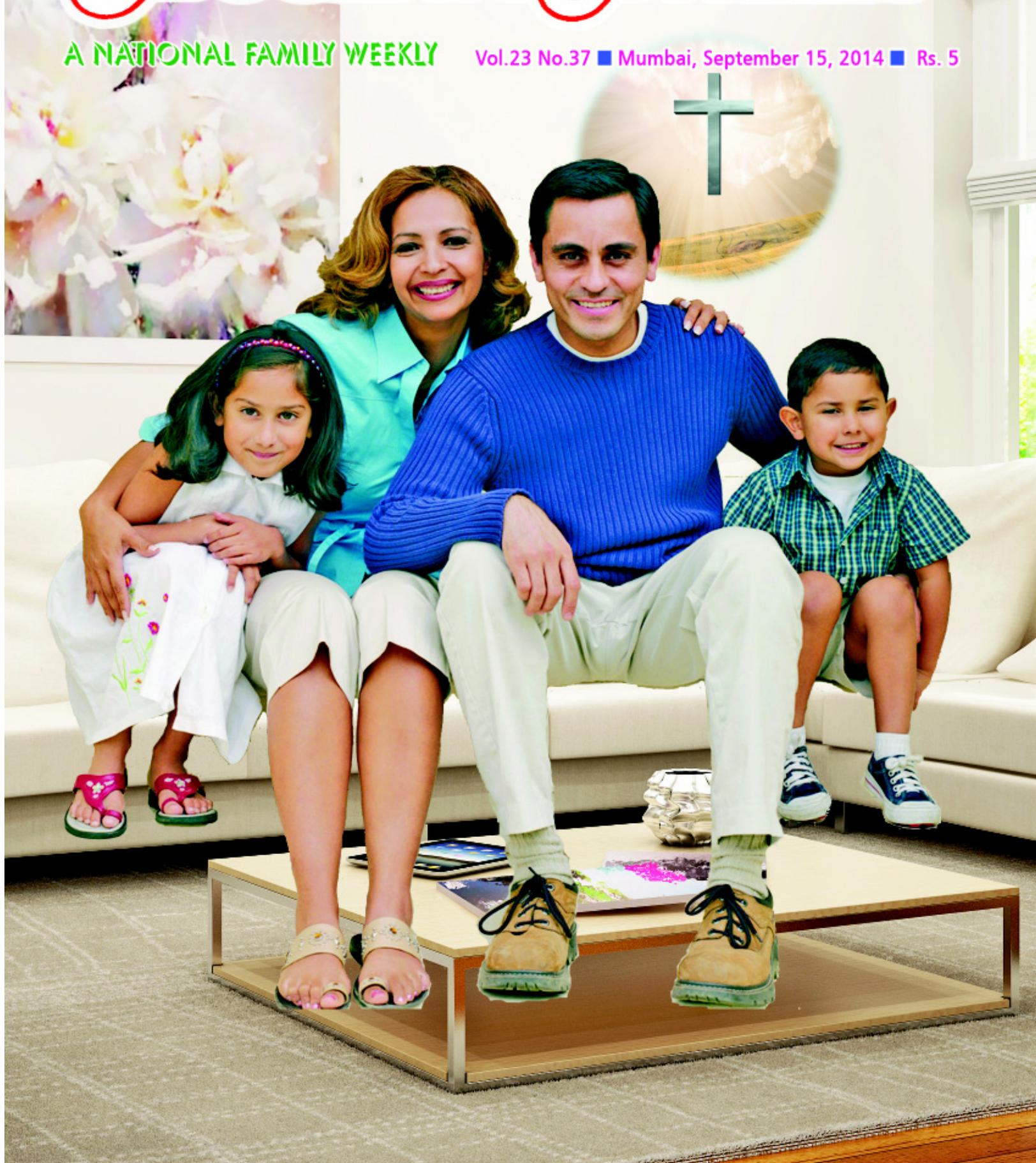


THE SECULAR CITIZEN

A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

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New Directors of Model Co-operative Bank Ltd.



Adv. Pius Vas



Lawrence D'Souza



Thomas Lobo

Adv. Pius Vas, Lawrence D'Souza and Thomas Lobo have been appointed as new directors of Model Co-operative Bank Ltd., (Read the AGM news on pg. 12)

A New Role For Mrs Alice Johnson Therattil

Mrs Alice Johnson Therattil on her appointment as a member of the state's consumer protection commission. She is the only representative chosen from Mumbai out of the total nine members of the commission in the entire state of Maharashtra. The announcement on 3rd September 2014 made by the state's Hon'ble Chief Minister Mr Prithviraj Chavan, was a tribute and acceptance of her hard work and tenacity which she exhibited in all her previous assignments.



Mrs Alice Johnson Therattil displayed a good sense of discipline and maintained good relationship with the people during her tenure as corporator of BMC Ward 84. Among the other assignments she handled with poise was as General Secretary of the Mumbai Mahila Congress, she later became district observer of the Mumbai North Central Congress Committee. Later, she was promoted as president of the Kalina Taluka.

In her new assignment, Mrs. Alice will continue to interact and serve the people in a much larger area of operation – the entire state of Maharashtra.

Jewish Body Applauds Pope For Charity Soccer Match

Rome: A US-based Jewish body has lauded Pope Francis for co-organizing an international football match to promote peace around the world and to raise funds for children in need.

"By lending his backing to this initiative, Pope Francis has proved once again that he is open to unconventional and refreshing ideas on how to bring people together to unite for a common aim: peace," said Claudio Epelman, World Jewish Congress (WJC) official in charge of dialogue with the Vatican.

"The Pope deserves our wholehearted support in this endeavor, and we hope he will succeed in bringing people from different religions closer together," he added.

The Inter-Religious Match for Peace is the brainchild of retired Argentine captain Javier Zanetti and is being organized by the Scholas Occurrentes initiative, an Argentine project that aims to educate poorer people in different countries around the world, and Italy's Fondazione PUPPI, which works to unite people of different faiths.

Pope Francis, an avid soccer fan, succeeded in bringing together football legends past and present – and of differing religions – to play the in Rome Monday night.

Thousands of sports fans, young and old, came out to Rome's Olympic Stadium to watch football greats Roberto Baggio, Javier Zanetti and Diego Armando Maradona, among others, take part in the match.

The players, who represented the Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and Shinto religions, took to the field shortly before 9 pm. The former Argentine striker Maradona kicked off the game, played in good spirits and with a festive atmosphere, Zenit news agency reported.

After meeting Pope Francis at the Vatican before the game, Maradona said he was returning to the Church.

Thought for the week

Sometimes we must get hurt in order to grow. We must fail in order to know. Sometimes our vision is clear only after our eyes are washed away with tears.

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Unheard Voices of Women from Kandhamal

An extraordinary book was released recently in Bhubaneswar and Kandhamal, Odisha. It was commissioned by the National Alliance of Women – Odisha, after every visiting fact-finding team post the Kandhamal communal violence mentioned sexual and gender-based violence but was unable to document its occurrence.

“Breaking the Shackled Silence: Unheard Voices of Women from Kandhamal” does that in two ways — by letting us read extracts from interviews with women who witnessed, experienced and survived (barely) the gruesome violence that took place in 2007 and 2008 and by listing 41 verified incidents at the end, an indicative and not exhaustive list, the author points out.

But the report's great contribution is that it does not limit women's experiences to violence, but in its assessment of a gendered impact, also seeks to learn about their trauma and concerns about livelihood, displacement and accountability.

A small reminder of what happened in Kandhamal: The Christmas eve communal violence in Kandhamal, Odisha, in 2007 was followed by a second round in August 2008, when Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati was killed. The violence raised questions about conversion (and re-conversion) activities in the area as communal politics.

For this report, the author, law and human rights researcher Saumya Uma, reached out to more than 300 women through Focused Group Discussions, and the book contains extracts from 17 one-on-one interviews with Kandhamal women – 14 Christian and three Hindu.

Three threads run through these stories. First, all of them witnessed cruelty and unrelenting violence being inflicted on their families and others around them. Second, the threat or experience of sexual and gender-based violence was definitive. Finally, most of them are struggling to make ends meet and loss of livelihood has resulted in a loss of dignity and self-esteem for some.

An older report on post-traumatic stress disorder in women from Assam and Nagaland identified several causes of trauma, including the experience of violence, the anticipation of violence, witnessing violence and remembering violence. There is evidence of that in the accounts of women from Kandhamal as well.

(Contd.. on p. 4)

(Contd.. from p. 3)

Several women interviewed in this study recounted the death of their family members vividly. One woman whose son defended the Christians in the village narrated:

“The mob got angry and warned him that if he came in their way, he would be get killed too. Due to his continued opposition to the violence, and support to the Christians, the mob got angry. They cut his legs, hands and penis, and left him in a pool of blood. I was with him at that time... I sat with his body for three days, safeguarding it from dogs.”

The threat of sexual violence pervades individual accounts, although only a few really speak about it. A dalit Hindu woman was raped because someone else in her family was a Christian.

The clinical use of sexual violence is illustrated by this sentence in her account: “Four-five men raped me after discussing with each other as to who will rape me first.” One woman describing the gang-rape of another woman 50 meters away from where she was experiencing the same thing, asks: “Men—when they are handling women—do they have any sense what they are doing and how they handle them? They were playing... as if she was a football. They did the same with me.”

One question that has begun to haunt me in recent months is, are those of us who write about these topics beginning to reduce gendered impact to the threat or experience of gender-based violence in every context? Women’s accounts, whether from Kandhamal or in the Nagaland-Assam report cited earlier, or in conflict zones in Afghanistan, Pakistan and India (including Kandhamal by the same author) show that their experiences, priorities and concerns are not that narrow.

Livelihood and life-chances loom large in their worries. In the Afghanistan and Pakistan studies, for instance, young girls spoke about the hardships they willingly underwent just to go to school and college. Women spoke about anxiety when anyone left the house, fearing that they would not return – either being caught in the crossfire, or being targeted for some reason, or because of the rumours of forced disappearances.

The women in the Kandhamal study said in so many words, “Liveli-

hood is the biggest concern for me.” The report writes about a “financial quicksand.”

In the interview extracts, women speak about the experience of violence, but reports from the Focused Group Discussions center around how people have reconstructed their lives—perhaps a more comfortable topic to discuss in a larger group. Displaced during the violence, some women lost their homes, family members and documentation, including identity documents such as a voter ID or ration card.

“Many have not applied for a new ration card, BPL card, voter ID card or health card (after their old ones were destroyed during the violence). The procedure requires that they return to their area of origin to obtain a replacement of these documents, which the women are fearful of doing. For this reason, they have waived their entitlements under government schemes.”

The symbiotic economic relationship between people living in the same area has been rent by a few days of intense violence. For instance, women are not able to collect leaves to make leaf-plates because the other community controls access to the forest, and no one is willing to buy the plates, either.

Although communal violence has an episodic quality, it has a long-term impact on people’s lives.

- “After the violence, due to mental trauma, I fell severely ill. I have lost a lot of weight; suffer from gastric problem, stomach ulcers, diabetes and pancreatitis. I have spent more than Rs. 1.5 lakhs on my medicines.” (page 23)

- “In the place where I live, I do not mix with the neighbours, as I am worried that they would communicate with my husband’s murderers and tell them where I live, and they would come to attack me.” (page 13)

Accountability for violence has been impossible to ensure. First, the attackers were from the same village, making it hard or intimidating to file and pursue complaints. Second, neither law enforcement nor the judicial system showed any inclination to help the survivors of violence. Women’s accounts include statements about the police standing by as mute witnesses or prosecutors

that harassed them. Finally, the delay in justice has made it very difficult for them to rebuild their lives. They remain displaced:

- “I am not able to return to my village, as the villagers are angry with me for having lodged a complaint in the police station for the killing of my husband, and for pursuing the case in court.” (page 12)

- “If we are alive, we can do something for our survival... By returning to Kandhamal, we would be risking our life.” (page 57)

Years after the violence, Christian and Hindu women defined peace differently. A Christian woman told the author that there was no peace for women, within or outside the home. The demands of children and violence from the husband marred domestic peace while the fear of violence by the Hindus dimmed its prospects outside. To Christians, after the riots, peace meant harmonious coexistence in society. For Hindu women, it was freedom from domestic violence and in particular, “the absence of alcoholic activities in the village.”

In 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action first put women in situations of armed conflict on the world’s agenda for the first time. In these 20 years, we’ve walked a great distance but an overwhelming amount of work on every level still lies ahead of us.

Studies like this, that patiently and quietly write down exactly what real people experience and how they cope, ground us in that work. The outreach and the solutions we devise come more from empathy and understanding, and less from our theoretical or polemical positions on a particular problem. Therefore, reports like this one need to be supported—especially financially, but also in terms of access and outreach.

Listening attentively is the responsibility of a compassionate citizenship, and also the first step towards real justice. To start with, do take the time to read this 103-page report.

(Swarna Rajagopalan is a political scientist based in Chennai. She is grateful to Saumya Uma for permission to write about this important report.)

Stop New Babri Movement Against Churches

When the demolition of the Babri Masjid was threatened in 1991, Parliament enacted a law prohibiting the conversion of any place of worship of one religion into that of another, the only exception being the Babri Masjid itself. Back then, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad sought to demolish 3,000 mosques, claiming these were once temples. This threatened 3,000 more clashes of the Babri Masjid variety, stoking communal carnage and destroying Indian secularism. The Masjid was ultimately demolished, but the new law helped prevent the disease spreading to other places of worship.

The problem has returned in unexpected fashion in Aligarh. It must be tackled before it can grow.

In Aligarh, several dalits were once converted to Christianity by the Seventh Day Adventists. That organization then built a church for its new converts. However, 72 of these dalit Christians have been re-converted to Hinduism by the Dharam Jagran Vibhag (DJV), an RSS branch aiming to stop conversions of Hindus to other religions, and attempt re-conversion.

The DJV organized a “shuddhikaran” (cleansing ceremony) to wash away the Christian “taint” in Aligarh. A Shiv poster was put up in the church, but later removed. The alarmed Seventh Day Adventists locked up the church.

The danger is that the DJV and re-converts will seize the church and put up a temple there. “We have found a place near the chabootra (verandah). That is where we will set up the temple. I don’t have anything to say for the church. We have done the shuddhikaran in the building, whether they want to uproot the church or raze it to the ground is their headache. We will not let another church come up because there is no Christian left,” said DJV pramukh Rajeshwar Singh, who came from Uttarakhand for the re-conversion.

The 72 dalits in Aligarh can follow any religion they want, but cannot claim ownership of the church, which belongs to the Seventh Day Adventists. The mere fact that the 72 dalits worshipped in that church does not make it their personal property, to be disposed of as they like.

Khem Chandra, a local member of the DJV, added, “We will think about the church building. It belongs to the missionaries, but the ground on which it stands belongs to Hindustan. We will not compromise on our dharti (earth). We will meet the villagers and decide about the temple (coming up).”

Now, our Constitution and laws clearly permit the conversion and re-conversion of individuals from and to any religion. The use of financial and other inducements for conversion is illegal, but voluntary conversion is permitted freely. The Seventh Day Adventists and the DJV both have a right to convert people to their respective faiths. The RSS claims that foreign Christian money is being used to “buy” converts to Christianity. This has certainly happened in some countries, leading to the derisive term “rice Christians”. But the Christians point out that overseas Hindus pour enormous sums into Indian religious organizations. Besides, Indian temples and organizations have humungous wealth. If indeed faith can be bought, Hindu organizations have a distinct financial advantage in India, and can easily outbid Christian ones.

But this is just a distraction. Financial inducements for conversions are illegal. Only voluntary conversions are legal.

What is clearly illegal, however, is the destruction of a place of worship, or its conversion into a place of worship for another sect or religion. The 72 dalits in Aligarh can follow any religion they want, but cannot claim ownership of the church, which belongs to the Seventh Day Adventists. The mere fact that

the 72 dalits worshipped in that church does not make it their personal property, to be disposed of as they like. They can build a temple on any other land, close or far from the church. But they cannot claim, as DJV leader Khem Chandra has done, that the church building may belong to the Christians, but the ground underneath belongs to Hindustan.

Hindustan does not mean the exclusive land of religious Hindus. Historically, Hindustan simply meant the land of the people of the Indus valley. The Constitution is very clear that India is a land of multiple religions where persons of all faiths are equal, and none can be discriminated against.

Let us hope good sense will prevail. There has been no violence so far, and the Seventh Day Adventists clearly want to avoid any clash. But their fear is palpable, and they wonder if threats to other churches will follow.

On Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for communal peace. He should follow up by formally declaring that a place of worship cannot change hands merely because local worshippers have converted. The UP Government should re-iterate that this is what the law says. But if all major parties remain silent, it can only encourage those wishing to take the law into their hands. This tumour must be cut out before it becomes a malignant cancer.

—SA Aiyar in *Swaminomics* | India, Politics | TOI

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Called to Revamp Mount Mary Festival

As I read the article and other related stories on Mount Mary in the recent special issue dedicated to Mount Mary I recalled some nostalgic moments of my childhood. The annual pilgrimage to the Mount; was the most awaited treat given by my parents to us, which I looked forward to. The travel all the way from Vasai was not that easy, those days. Rising early, getting ready, gathering all the required provision for the day was all part of the fun. Attending the Mass, taking the darshan and then moving into the fair, the wheel chair, getting choked in the crowd, holding hands of the elders to remain united, all this is still fresh in my mind. For the Archdiocese of Bombay Mount was an important Pilgrim center. In our parish at Vasai the Mount Mary's novena that was recited. After the Mass standing in the queue to offer the flowers from the small "Topali" to the Mother Mary was a thrilling experience.

Today Mount Mary's Novena is not prayed in the parishes. Valankani has taken precedence practically in most of the parishes. It won't be a surprise if you come across few parishioners insisting to replace the Valankani Novena to the Mount Mary's Novena. In the Mumbai's traditional parishes all importance is for Valankani, one would hardly hear anything about Mount Mary. Among many reasons for this shift one reason would be the absence of "Indianess" in the devotion. Mount Mary devotional services have not merged and moved into the nerves of the people. It has not been appealing to many, it is moving all devotees who come from all faith and all linguistic background to excepting the culture that is foreign and alien. The Archdiocese takes pride of having lakhs of devotees coming daily from non-Christian background. These devotees are totally new to the liturgical services, and hardly understand. The overweight age of English while celebrating the Eucharist keeps majority of the devotees from total participation. The weekly



Mass programme holds only a few vernacular Masses. I fail to understand this step motherly treatment given to the Vernacular when it was the vernacular that brought this rising glory to Mount Mary. The Eucharist which is the centre of our Christian devotion is not all inclusive when it comes to participation of devotees of other faith. The devotees of other faith have to be stopped by the volunteers if they are seen receiving Holy communion. To accommodate the devotees of other faith, Bhajan Kirtans can be introduced as devotional service, where they can take part totally. What an immense good, will be done if this can be tried at the Basilica of Mount Mary. The Organizing committee needs to make an attempt to come out from the western grab to accommodate not only the devotees from other faith but also catholic devotees who come not only from Mumbai but also from Vasai, and other parts of Maharashtra and India. There is a strong myth prevailing in the minds of the Mumbai Catholic community that English is the language of Mumbai catholic and that Majority speaks and understand English. Mount Mary Basilica is the heart of our Archdiocese, it belongs not to the elite and to one particular language people. It has a vast mission of evangelization. Let is all open our minds to revamp it to make a home for all .

—Fr Calistus Fernandes
Shrine of OL Fatima Karjat

Church Becomes Temple

A 7th Day Adventists Church became a temple overnight with the reconversion of 72 Valmiki (untouchables) who had become Christians in 1995. One of the reconverts said that they were unhappy with the Hindu caste system and so had converted to Christianity. "But we found ourselves in a no better position among the Christians". He regretted that even after 19 years of conversion their social status had not changed in any way. As Hindus they had no status and were restricted to doing menial jobs, but even after remaining Christians for 19 years they remained marginalized.

This may not be the whole truth behind the reconversion. Nevertheless the incident is important because it is symptomatic of the way we treat Dalit Christians. Of the 25 million Christians in India nearly 70% are Dalits! Dalit Christians are 'twice discriminated against'---by the state and by the church. The discrimination is more pronounced in the Catholic church. The facts are well documented and cannot be swept under the carpet. Discrimination against Dalit Catholics is most pronounced in Tamil Nadu. During the 2003 ad limina visit of Indian bishops to Rome, Pope John Paul II, while addressing the three archbishops of Tamil Nadu criticised the discrimination in the church. " It is the church's obligation to work unceasingly to change hearts... to see every human being as a child of God, a brother and sister of Christ and a member of our own family" the pope told the archbishops. Churches in India are largely controlled by upper caste priests and nuns. Out of the 156 bishops only six are from the backward classes though they constitute 70% of the Catholic population. In Goa the top hierarchy is almost exclusively Bammn (brahmin).

The church does not recognise caste based reservations, but it is necessary that the CBCI ensures that we 'reserve' a special place in our hearts and minds for Dalit Catholics. We must treat them like brothers and sisters and members of the catholic family.

—Prof Robert Castellino
Orlem Malad

Splendid Mount Mary's!



It's that time of the year when Mary comes in for fulsome praise for the role she played in our salvation – a time when we recall the unfolding of God's plan of redemption with the Immaculate Conception whose birth heralded the era of hope long promised by the Father when he said, "I will send my messenger!" (Mal 3:1) It's that time of the year when all roads in Mumbai lead to the hillock in the Queen of the Suburbs atop which stands in splendid array the beautiful Queen of God's great creation, overlooking the Arabian Sea. Popularly known as Our Lady of the Mount and venerated as the Mother of God no less, there's something so adorable about Mary, something so therapeutic about that calmness emanating from her countenance! There's something about the statue itself that's so electrifying as to defy imitation. Indeed! So besotted was the then Holy Father, Pope Paul VI with the statue on his visit during the 38th International Eucharistic Congress held in Bombay in the year 1964 that it was not long before he sent across a beautiful gold crown with which the then Archbishop of Bombay, Cardinal Valerian Gracias, formally crowned it in a special ceremony that was to be witnessed to be cherished!

The Missing Crucifix - Strangely, amidst the splendid atmosphere, there seems to be something amiss. When the annual Novena in preparation for Mary's Nativity was first moved out into the open decades ago (during the Archbishopric of Cardinal Simon Pimenta) due to constraints of space, what dominated the backdrop for the

Altar was a Crucifix, with only a 3-ft size pictorial representation of the statue of Our Lady with the Infant standing close to the Altar while the Lady herself held Court within the hallowed precincts of the Basilica. And rightly so, for the message it clearly spelt out for believer and non-believer alike was that the end of all

Marian devotion is not Mary herself but JESUS! That Crucifix has over the time been replaced by a mannequin that is but a poor representation of the said statue. And to think that it is before this representation that our Reverend Celebrants and Concelebrants bow (even incense at the *Salve*!!) before the commencement of Mass and after the Last Blessing! One cannot help but ask, would Mary have approved?

I just can't figure out as to why we are so reluctant to acknowledge the focal point of our faith in general and of the Mass in particular - CHRIST CRUCIFIED FOR OUR SALVATION. Is Mary THE Redeemer? Or is she the CO-



by Ladislaus L D'Souza

REDEMPTRIX? If it is the former, we would need to have our Theology re-written; if the latter, why do we so consciously miss the point of Marian devotion? Look at what Paul says: "I was determined not to know anything among you but Christ Jesus, and **him crucified**" (1 Cor 2:2). Isn't 'Christ Crucified' central to the very Gospel about which the great apostle says, "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!"? (1 Cor 9:16b)

A mix-up? – One always thought that it was Jesus who lives and reigns with the Father in unity with the Holy Spirit. One also always knew that it is Christ Jesus who presents all our petitions to the Father even as it is through Mary that one went to Jesus in prayer. Who then would believe that in one of our parishes in Bombay the Novena Prayer to Mary in honour of her Nativity ends with asking Mary to present our petitions "to the Father, who lives and reigns with your Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit forever and ever, Amen"! If I may ask, is there a mix-up or a misunderstanding?

Just why do we take such lapses so lightly? Could it be that we fail to understand that the externals, which many consider nonessential, are a reflection of an interior disposition, apart from the fact that they also have a message to convey to the world? As we rejoice in Mary's birth that signalled the dawn of salvation, we'd do well to reflect meaningfully both on Jesus and on Mary, thereby giving each their due, to the glory of the Trinity. Only then can we say with Mary: "My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour!" And only then can we, with all the generations gone by and yet to come, delight in calling Mary her 'Blessed' (Lk 1:46-48)!

**Ladislaus L D'Souza, is a Pauline Cooperator, a member of the Indian Catholic Press Association and Copy-editor at St Paul's / Better Yourself Books, Bandra, Mumbai*

Bandra Fair Should Continue

A lot of newcomers in Bandra (West) have been requesting the Police Commissioner year after year, to discontinue the weeklong fair which has been going on since the last 450 years. I was a former resident of Bandra (West), now residing in Dombivili, I enjoyed the fair thoroughly when I was a little boy. Even now, every year, I take my wife Shirley and daughter Sweta to the fair. In fact, we spend the entire day at the fair enjoying ourselves. We also visit the homes of our near and dear ones residing along the fair area and we are welcomed with open arms. The Bandra fair shouldn't be discontinued. It should go on....

—Jubel D'Cruz, Dombivili

3 Major Situations Where The Modi Government Doesn't Seem To Be On The Right Path

by Parul Assudaney

Narendra Modi and his party fought the Lok Sabha Elections 2014 under many a different campaigns, but the most important of them and the one that caught people's attention was "acche din aane wale hai". Now that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has completed 100 days in office, people are wondering when those "acche din" are going to come. I say this because in the last 100 days, the government has seen itself surrounded by some controversies and decisions that they took which had some people raise their eyes and question their intentions of fulfilling the promises they made during the Lok Sabha polls.

Here is an assessment of 3 major situations where they have gone wrong:

Revamping Education in India

Smriti Irani started her work as the

The possibility of Mr. Modi becoming all-powerful authoritative figure cannot be ruled out. There are certain aspects of authoritarianism in his leadership. For instance, his style of closed door meetings and decision making does not appear transparent and inclusive. The guidelines given to states as to how the Independence Day is to be celebrated and live telecast of Modi's speech to be viewed by students across the country reflects, so to say, Modi's excessive passion for authority, if all cannot come to terms with the word "intimidation".

Minister of Human Resource Development by announcing plans to give a "Hindu perspective" to school curriculum. Though, instead of it looking like an idea of her own, it looked like an RSS project. RSS has always been wary of foreign influence in the textbooks and in favour of including an Indian perspective to the education system so as to promote "patriotism".

Many people expressed their fears over this 'communalisation' of the education system by making school children study Indian mythology as facts rather than subjecting them to scientific scrutiny and research.

Also, in the Union Budget 2014, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley promised the setting up of five IITs, five IIMs and four AIIMS. But, there has been no mention of improving the quality of education, which has always been more about rote learning than skill-based or practical learning.

The government also garnered some controversies when the Health Minister expressed reservations about introduction of sex education in schools. In his vision document for Delhi schools, Vardhan, himself a doctor, has said, "So-called 'sex education' (should) to be banned."

A Clean Government

On 27th August, 2014, the Supreme Court of India advised the Prime Minis-

ter and Chief Minister of States not to include chargesheeted persons facing trial in the Cabinet. The Bench asked "whether a person who has come in conflict with law would be in a position to conscientiously discharge his functions as Minister when his integrity is questioned and whether a person with doubtful integrity can be given the responsibility."

Reports have shown that over 12 leaders in the Modi Government have criminal cases under their names.

A 24 year old woman who claims to have been raped 3 years ago by Union Minister Nihal Chand Meghwal asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for two minutes of his time and requested him not to include Meghwal in the Cabinet.

In the recent days, PMO was seen denying allegations levelled against



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Home Minister Rajnath Singh's son for alleged misconduct. Reacting to the development, Congress spokesperson Rajeev Gowda said, "We would like to know what are these allegations that have made the country's home minister so upset... What has caused the Prime Minister's Office to respond with such an alacrity. The country should know what is going on between a senior Cabinet minister and the government."

Clean India and Green India

Modi wants his government to function on the agenda of development, to bring in economic reforms. But that development cannot be successful at the cost of the environment, which is what has been happening – relaxing or quashing of environmental laws to pave the way for economic growth.

Modi's proposal to duplicate Sabarmati riverfront project on Yamuna river in Delhi received strong criticism from environmentalists who felt that such a decision will "kill the river", like the Sabarmati in Ahmedabad. C R Babu, DU professor emeritus and chairman of the state-level expert appraisal committee, has advised the lieutenant governor and the capital's bureaucrats against replicating the Sabarmati project. In a report addressed to Najeeb Jung and environment secretary Sanjiv Kumar, Babu has said that the Sabarmati is not a river rejuvenation project but an urban development one. "There is no Sabarmati river. It's stagnant water with concrete walls on two sides. The floodplains have been con-

St. Lawrence High School & Jr. College

Chairman of St. Lawrence High School & Jr. College **Sylvester D'Souza** was awarded with **Rashtriya Rattan Award** for his contribution in the field of education at a function which was organised on 19th August 2014 at Teen Murti Bhavan by Citizens Integration Peace Society, New Delhi, in the presence of three former Govern-



Shri T.N. Chaturvedi, Shri Bhisma Narain Singh and Shri Shekhar Dutt.

Shri G.V.G. Krishnamurthy (former Election Commissioner of India) presided over the function.

cretized to make pathways and real estate projects. It cannot be replicated for our Yamuna," Babu had told The Times of India.

The government also stated that it is contemplating changes in the land acquisition law to make it "more flexible", a move which could help in kick starting the stalled projects. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, while addressing a press conference to mark 100 days of the NDA government, said, "when I say flexibility, I have in mind a slight enlargement of the exemptions", which can make it more industry friendly than people friendly. The various proposed amendments to the Land Acquisition Act range from scrapping the "consent clause" for Public Private Partnership (PPP) projects to narrowing the definition of "affected families" eligible for

rehabilitation and resettlement.

In keeping with industry's expectations, the environment ministry has also eased the clearance process for coal mines. The move to ease norms for expansion of coal mines is intended to benefit miners and increase output. The ministry has decided to extend the exemption from holding public hearings for the expansion of coal mining projects with annual production capacity of up to 8 million tonnes, which activists feel will not go down well with the locals.

While 100 days in office may be too short to judge, but these 100 days do show the intentions and the path the government is heading towards. All eyes are on Modi's Government and they need to make true of their promises to the public of India.

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An Open Letter To Shah Rukh Khan



Dear SRK,

You are considered as one of the biggest movie stars of the world. One of the wealthiest and most powerful celebrities of India, and your net worth was estimated at over US \$ 540 million in 2013. You have won countless Film fare awards and medals from many countries. You were born in Delhi, India on 2nd Nov. 1965. You have several properties in India and abroad. You own a house in New Delhi, a 20 million pound apartment in London and Rs.4 billion apartment on the Palm Jumairah (well we are not concerned about your wealth).

You came to Mumbai in search of work to a place which rightly belongs to Agris, Kolis and East Indian Christians, the original inhabitants of Mumbai and North Region. Here with the Grace of God and because of your talent and hard work you became rich and famous and started living a luxurious life

You are now thinking, you can buy anything and do anything you want. With your wealth, you purchased a heritage bungalow, a few years back at Bandra's sea front and constructed a massive building with tall walls surrounding your building like a fortress. On the north side of your building there is a ramp which leads to Mount Mary Church which is being used daily by people to go to the Church and some people use it to go to the sea shore as this is the short cut being used by people for a long time. During Mount Mary's festival, every year in September, thousands of pilgrims use this ramp/road on which you have put an UNAUTHORISED RAMP

As there is no place to park your Vanity van worth crores of rupees on the said ramp, outside your compound, it is alleged that, you and your political cronies thought of grabbing the ramp place, so that, you may park your Vanity van just outside your bungalow and also use the place for a parking lot for your friends and other guests vehicles whenever they come to your house for parties etc. A plan was hatched and in the beginning they constructed few W.C blocks for the local who are stay-



ing at the top and down below, this "kutcha" ramp with steps was demolished making way for a pucca concrete road. And now for the last 3 to 4 years you started harassing the devotees by closing the way at the entrance. If at all in future any negotiations take place, you or your cronies will say O.K. we will come to a settlement, allow me to park my Vanity bus with a wall .What an idea Sirji? Straight from a movie.

Every year, for the last four years, you are closing the concrete road with the tacit help of the politicians from Congress as well as Shiv Sena and BJP parties, otherwise, why would they be quiet when it is a sentimental issue concerning large number of people against one. Even the print and electronic media is not vociferous regarding such a public issue depriving their legitimate right to use the said ramp. The police and Municipality are also not asking for any proof of the illegal closure of the road, instead, they are also giving helping hand for such a naked act.

In spite of several morchas taken out by Catholic and non Catholic people, especially by Bandraites against it, you are acting like a dumb goat doing nothing, only watching the tamasha as if to send message that you are not involved in this nefarious act. We think, one more award should be given to you for this act. Do you know if any political party joins hand in this explosive matter, there will be law and order problem and you will be solely blame for it. But keep in mind, everywhere; money doesn't fetch one's sinister desire. On earth there is the Court of law which will give proper justice. God the almighty will put an end to it

and in the end better counsel will prevail.

Every year, by inconveniencing the pilgrims going to Mother's Mary Church by closing the road is not good on your part (in case you are involved in it) as you are a religious person and that too you also believe in Mother Mary, referred in Quran as Maryam. Umm Isa (Mary) the mother of Jesus, who is the only female explicitly mentioned 34 times in the holy Quran who is one of the most highly regarded woman in Islam.

We don't think even your Mother Late Mrs. Lateef Fatima or your father late Mr. Meer Taj Mohammed Khan; an ethnic Pathan would have ever allowed you to do this for Maryam ma Church. Why are you doing all this? You have come to Mumbai from Delhi, stay peacefully with your family. Don't create unnecessarily problems for the locals. Would you dare do this to block the road of a Temple or a Masjid?

Think over it. You got wealth and fame enjoy it. But don't create problems by playing with the religious sentiments of other people's faith. When you die (GOD Forbid), you will have to answer to God Almighty and you will not carry the wealth along with you. Everything will remain here .and in the end all you need is 6x3 sq. feet of land, that's all. Your good memories will linger forever in peoples mind. So stop this unreasonable act and put an end to it once and for all.

Hope you understand Mr. SRK and better counsel prevail. Amen, Amin



—Herbert D. Barretto,
President MEICF.

Footprints On The Sands Of Time

DR. LOUIS D'SILVA

After a quarter of a century, it would be worth our while to briefly revisit Russell Pinto's inspirational life and legacy which have left indelible footprints on the sands of time. His death was only a little more dramatic than his action-filled life. I hope that someone someday makes a moving film on his touching life motivated by the thought that a good man never dies and a great soul lives forever.

Deeply depressed by his failure in a college exam, Russell was lured to a psychedelic world of hallucinations. The drug world is a scary one and Russell shuddered each time he narrated his horror story. Entwined in the tentacles of drugs which devoured his body for eight years, Russell passed through the jaws of hell! He took every drug available in quantities and mixtures that reduced him to skeletal proportions. From a deadly daily injection of morphine he found himself taking it every fifteen minutes! Plus, he was smoking about 80 cigarettes a day. He saw two of his friends kill their mothers and five others die on his lap from an overdose! Thrice he attempted suicide by taking an overdose himself! Thrice he attempted suicide by taking an overdose himself! He reached a stage when he

(Contd.. on p. 22)



Russell Pinto

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Model Bank Records Good Growth



announced the appointment of Advocate Pius Vaz, Mariette D' Silva, Lawrence D' Souza Mulund and Thomas Lobo as new directors of the bank.

Some of the shareholders present appreciated progress of the bank and gave useful suggestions.

Bank's General Manager Francis J A Vaz read the report. Edward Rasquinha compered the programme. Additional Cheif manager William L D' Souza proposed vote of thanks.

The 97th Annual General Body meeting of Model Cooperative Bank Ltd held on Saturday evening, August 23 at the St Xavier's Engineering College hall in Mahim west. Bank's Chairman Albert D' Souza presided over the programme and addressed the gathering giving details of the achievements of the bank.

The bank has received nearly 529.38 crores of deposits, has extended Rs 291.98 crores advances, has 60.50 crores gross income, Rs 8.45 crores net profit PBT and Rs 5.81 crores net profit PAT. The bank is distributing a dividend of 12%, said the Chairman. The Bank provides educational loans, ATM Debit card, Smart Card account, PAN Card and other services.



Earlier Auxiliary Bishop Rt Rev John Rodrigues conselebrated Holy Eucharist with Fr. Lancy Pereira, former Principal St Xavier College. Keneth Sequeira and others participated in the Choir.

The entire board members were present on the dais. The Chairman

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Born to Dance : Miss Chelsy Parmar

Miss Chelsy Parmar, 17 as described by her family was born to dance.

Studying in standard 11th at her Alma Mater Convent of Jesus and Mary Girl's High School, Baroda. She aspires to own a dance studio of her own one day.

Born 5th of November to Ms. Mona Parmar in Baroda, Chelsy showed an inclination towards dance even when she hadn't learn to crawl. A movie song on TV or radio and her entire little body would start shaking much to the delight of her family members.

At an early age of 2, you would find Chelsy in front of the television trying to mimic the dance steps of her favorite songs even if she had no idea what they were singing...Her mother tried to take her to learn alternative sports which she disliked instantly.



As any parent worth their salt would do young Chelsy's mother found her a dance teacher who would teach her to dance. Mr Nilesh Parekh a Gold Medalist in the ancient and popular form of

Bharatnatyam took Chelsy under his tutelage. Mr. Parekh runs a well known institute in Vadodara called as "Pranav Performing Arts".

Chelsy took to classical dance as a duck to water and has never looked back. She has finished six years of her dance training and is now preparing for her Visharad the final exam of year seven. She has participated in various dance competitions and has done numbers of stage shows.

Chelsy has decided to make dance her profession and is working towards joining the Faculty of Performing Arts in Baroda to enhance her dancing skills.

She is an immense source of pride and joy to her mother and her entire family.

- Apeksha Parmar-Shah
vijaymacwan BBN

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Indian Catholics Pro-active For Family Synod



BY CHHOTEBHAI

The Catholic laity of India has been pro-active for the forthcoming Extraordinary Synod on the family, to be held in Rome this October. As a preparation for the same Pope Francis had sent out a Questionnaire on various issues affecting the family. This Questionnaire was to be circulated to all parishes across the globe. The Questionnaire touched on some theological issues, but did not shy away from addressing contentious and contemporary issues like contraception, abortion, gay and live-in relationships, divorce and annulment, and giving communion to Divorced and Remarried Catholics.

When a group of lay leaders came to know, through the press, that a



Kanpur. It simplified the Vatican Questionnaire and circulated it among the laity, under the initiative of theologian Virginia Saldanha of Mumbai. The archbishop of Madras and Bp Thomas Dabre of Pune actively encouraged the local consultations. Alan Doulton of Pune was able to collect and collate 800 responses to the Questionnaire. Louis Menezes IAS (Retd) organized several local level consultations in Chennai, and got 600 responses from college-going youth, on issues affecting them. After all this systematic spade-work the National Consultation on Catholic Families (NCCF) was held on 23rd/ 24th August at Navsadhana Diocesan Pastoral Centre, Pune. Committed lay leaders from across the country attended it.

Diago Almeida, President of the Catholic Association of Poona, welcomed the delegates. In his opening address Bp Dabre asserted that the family was the Domestic Church. It was not just a human creation, but also a divine institution. The emphasis should therefore be on ongoing catechesis for the promotion of Christian family life.

Bp Lawrence Pius of Dharampuri,

report on the Questionnaire had already been sent to Rome, they did their own investigation; only to discover what they had apprehended, that the laity had little or no role in the formulation of the so-called report that had been sent to Rome. This despite the fact that the issues raised directly

concerned them!

This core group adopted a multi-pronged approach to the Synod. It coordinated its efforts with "Catholic Church Reform International", a group with a presence in 65 countries, working on similar lines. It organized local consultations in Pune, Chennai and



Chairperson, CCBI Family Commission, was accompanied by Rev Arulraj CSC, who is one of the Indian delegates to the Synod. The bishop wanted the latter to have a first hand experience of the aspirations of the laity. Bp Lawrence stated that after the Extraordinary Synod this October, there would be another gathering in Philadelphia, USA, followed by the Ordinary Synod next year, in which a wider cross-section of the church would be involved. He regretted that of the 125 Latin Rite dioceses that came under his Commission, only 55 had responded to the Vatican Questionnaire; quite possibly in a not very systematic manner. The general excuse was that there was not enough time to respond.

In his 4-page report sent to Rome, Bp Lawrence said that gay and live-in relationships were generally not accepted in India. People respected church teachings on abortion, but not on artificial contraception, which they did not consider morally wrong. He said that whereas in Sweden the rate of divorce was as high as 54%, in India it was less than 1%. The Church needed to adopt a more compassionate approach to divorced and remarried Catholics, even though there is, as yet, no clarity on the issue.

The Co-ordinator of the NCCF, chhotebhai, said that this gathering was not just about the Synod. If we accept that the family is the basic unit of society, then nurturing healthy and happy families was the greatest contribution to society and world peace. He, however, regretted that far from being the Domestic Church, the Catholic family was more like a domesticated fowl, that was expected to make appropriate clucking noises, and produce more eggs (increase the Catholic population) as some bishops in Kerala have been advocating.

Virginia Saldanha said that even after simplifying the Vatican Questionnaire people still found it difficult to comprehend or respond to. Hence the poor response ratio. Louis Menezes stated that in Chennai they found alcoholism to be a major cause of family breakdown. It was ironic that the State Govt's excise policy netted over Rupees Thirty Thousand Crores annually,

in the name of poverty alleviation, but had quite the opposite effect. Alan Doulton gave a lucid power point presentation on the survey conducted in Pune diocese.

David Lobo from Bangalore, who described himself as a conscientious objector, threw light on the run up to the promulgation of *Humanae Vitae* in the 1960's. This was the document that had categorically stated that all forms of "artificial" contraception were intrinsically wrong; a teaching that alienated millions from the Catholic Church. He shared how a group of 4 arch conservatives prevailed on what came to be known as the "Majority Report" of 52 among the 56 experts that had deliberated on the issue for 3 years before its actual promulgation. It is this subterfuge that the laity now fears. History should not repeat itself, with a handful of die-hard conservatives trying to suppress the vast majority of the laity that neither accepts nor practices the teachings of *Humanae Vitae*.

Panel discussions were held on various issues. The first set of panelists was Virginia Saldanha, Lorna D'souza (Mumbai) and Dr Aloma Lobo (Bangalore). Virginia dwelt on gender issues – a patriarchal mindset, the preference for having boys, freedom for boys but control on girls, the false projection of masculinity/ machoism, sexual abuse by close relatives/ friends, and the insistence on "virginity" for women only.

Lorna D'souza spoke on the plight of widows, giving her own traumatic testimony, which brought tears to many eyes. She said that widows did not want pity, but dignity and security. The "Hope & Life Movement" started in 1985 by Bp Bosco Penha of Mumbai was a source of great strength to widows.

Dr Aloma Lobo, who was earlier on the Central Govt panel for adoption, said that families should be their own agents of change. Unfortunately, almost all religions fed on fear and/ or superstition for their survival. We need freedom from fear and the anxiety about what others would have to say. She felt that the existing Marriage Preparation Courses were grossly inadequate. Most people were hypocrites when it came to the practice of dowry or a "dress

code" for women only.

The next panel discussion was initiated by chhotebhai, Virginia and Louis Menezes. chhotebhai spoke on the interface between Canon Law and various civil laws, specifically the Christian Marriage Act (1872) and Divorce Act (1869). Lay leaders needed to be well acquainted with their respective provisions. He also dwelt on the piquant situations arising out of inter-faith/ inter-denominational and inter-rite marriages. Virginia spoke about the Uniform Civil Code proposed by the new BJP Govt at the Centre. We need to support this move, she opined, as it was envisaged in the Constitution of India. Louis Menezes asserted that the laity should be involved at every level of ecclesiastical decision making on issues that directly affect them.

The inputs and panel presentations were followed by group discussions, open and general sessions. Issues were discussed under four broad categories that had been circulated earlier – Pastoral, Sociological, Psychological and Physiological. Based on all these deliberations, an "Agenda for Change" emerged as below:

PASTORAL

1. The Marriage Preparation Courses are grossly inadequate; and they are attended only for obtaining the mandatory "certificate". They need drastic improvement. It is equally important to have ongoing catechesis and remote preparation, which, as of now, stops with Confirmation classes.
2. Marriage Enrichment Programmes should become an integral part of the pastoral ministry of the Church.
3. Lay groups, parish councils and Catholic Associations should organize seminars on Canon and civil laws.
4. The process of church annulments should be expedited.
5. Respite Centres should be established in existing Diocesan Pastoral Centres, for immediate relief and shelter to victims of domestic violence or marital discord.
6. From the time of St Thomas Aquinas, considered the greatest

(Contd.. on p. 16)

theologian, the sacraments are considered to be a means of sanctification, and not a reward for being good. Jesus himself knowingly broke bread with Judas Iscariot eventhough he was in a state of grave sin. It is therefore mete and just that divorced and remarried Catholics be admitted to the Eucharist, provided that they are suitably disposed, and after due catechesis.

7. Canon 1398 that provides for a *latae sententiae* (automatic) excommunication of a woman who procures an abortion, regardless of the circumstances, should be suitably amended.
8. Canon 1083:1 stipulates 14/16 as the age for girls and boys respectively to get married, whereas Clause 60:1 of the Christian Marriage Act stipulates a minimum age of 18/21. Canon 1072 dissuades people from marrying at a young age, and Canon 1083:2 advocates a higher age for marriage. Canon 1071:2 does, no doubt, subjugate Canon Law to civil law. Nevertheless, considering the growing complexities of modern life, it is advisable that suitable amendments be made in Canon Law, increasing the age for eligibility for marriage.
9. Canon 1095:1-3 prescribes the various criteria for valid matrimonial consent. However, Canon 1096:2 sates that ignorance of the same cannot be presumed after puberty. Since girls are attaining puberty as early as in their 9th year, and boys in their 12th, such a presumption defies all logic. Such presumptions will later impinge on any subsequent annulment process. This provision in Canon Law should be scrapped immediately, and replaced with a more equitable amendment.
10. The laity/ families should be fully involved in any ecclesiastical decision making process that affects them
11. The refusal by some Oriental Rite eparchies to recognize the *Status Liber* (free state) certificates issued

by Latin Rite dioceses in which the concerned persons are now residing, goes against the very essence of Christian unity. The CBCI must act firmly to stamp out this insidious practice.

12. When there is an inter-faith/ inter-denominational marriage, where one side is denied Communion, it is advisable that such marriages are celebrated without having the Mass, for which suitable pastoral guidelines should be issued.
13. It is sometimes reported that dispensation is denied to those seeking an inter-faith marriage, eventhough there are specific provisions for the same in Canon Law. Such dispensations should not be treated as a condescension, and should be granted on request.
14. The practice of our Christian faith and the liturgy should be made more relevant to our youth.
15. The "Hope & Life Movement" for widows should be extended to all dioceses
16. Instead of tidbit synods, it is time for Vatican III for a radical updating (*aggiornamento*) on all aspects of Church life and practice.

SOCIOLOGICAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL

1. Since our girls are today outshining the boys in almost every field, they often cannot find suitable marriage partners. Community leaders and organizations should organize marriage Bureaux and meeting points.
2. Families should make adequate legal provisions for inheritance devoid of any gender discrimination.
3. Families must make concerted efforts to overcome the patriarchal mindset and all forms of gender discrimination.
4. We need to reach out to migrants, especially in urban conglomerates, lest such persons go astray for want of community support.
5. Extravagant weddings should be discouraged, and dowry in any form should be stopped.
6. We need to replace "competition" between the sexes with a more

collaborative/ co-operational approach.

7. Spouses/ children from broken homes should have access to proper counseling.
8. Co-education should be encouraged, so as to inculcate respect for each other from an early age.
9. We need to have an inclusive approach to persons having various sexual orientations.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

1. The blanket ban on "artificial" contraception has proved to be a no go, no show, no tell state. It needs to be given a quiet burial
2. Considering the advances in science, we should respect, and not condemn, those who opt for In Vitro Fertilization (IVF).
3. Surrogacy, with adequate safeguards, may be accepted under special circumstances.

MISCELLAENOUS

1. The Central Govt should circulate the provisions and aims and objects of the proposed Uniform Civil Code to all stakeholders. It may be introduced in parliament only after a thorough public debate.
2. The Central Govt should establish a Commission, on the likes of the Sachar Commission for Muslims, to determine the socio-economic status of the Christian community in India.

To ensure a proper follow up of the recommendations of the NCCF, and to see that its voice is heard in Rome, the group formed itself into the "Indian Catholic Forum". It is not an organization, but a movement for reform, to address various issues affecting the community. chhotebhai (Kanpur) was elected the Convenor, and a Steering Committee consisting of Dr Aloma Lobo (Bangalore), Virginia Saldanha (Mumbai), Louis Menezes (Chennai), Adv Antony Ambat (Kochi), Juliana D'mello and Somyabapu Waghmare (both of Pune) was formed. Rev Arulraj has assured the Forum that he will carry its "Agenda for Change" to Rome.

About Intercessory Prayers Of The Faithful

Part of the fabric of the visible Roman Catholic Church are the intercessory prayers and devotions interwoven in the tapestry of the faith. St. Paul in his first letter to Timothy referred to his young disciple as my true child in the faith. Paul instructed him: "First of all, then, I urge that supplication, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men." (1 Tim.2:1).

Prayer is the most remarkable way to bring about overwhelming change in your life or in the world. Much evidence is found to acknowledge the statement. From the history of the Old Testament down to our present generation, the power of prayer is a spiritual mystery which helps humanity to reach out to the love, mercy and forgiveness of God absolutely.

Prayers work for all people if they believe and trust in Him. "Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God." (CCC. 2559). Prayer increasingly draws a person closer to God, more so when one prays with a humble and contrite heart.

"Humility is the best foundation to prayer." (CCC). Prayer is probably an immeasurable gift from God. It is always used as the effective means of communication to the Lord, His Mother and the Holy Spirit.

We beseech grace from the Holy Spirit through Jesus in prayer. And Jesus hears our prayers: the prayer of faith (that of the good thief), the prayer in silence (the woman with hemorrhage), the urgent prayer (Have mercy on me), the healing and forgiving prayer. The prayer through intercessors. (CCC.2616).

Intercessory prayers of the faithful through the Virgin Mary the Mother of God, through the angels and saints, are heard and answered according to His will. "Hitherto you have asked nothing in my name; ask and you will receive, that your joy may be full." Said Jesus, (jn.16:24). Through contemplation and dedication the faithful say prayers; Catholic spirituality believes in the formal and informal acts of prayer and

worship – priests, religious and the laity indulge in the many forms of Christian prayer.

There are prayers of adoration, prayers of blessing, for needs and occasions-also, ecclesiastical forms of prayers. The people of God often turn to the saints to intercede for them.

Many others appeal to Mary, and have recourse to novenas and the promise of making offerings or even pilgrimages. Intercessory prayers are popular with the Popes, including the late Pope John Paul 11, who had great trust in our Lady. The Gospel reveals to us how Mary prays and intercedes in faith. At Cana, the Mother of Jesus asks her Son for the needs of a wedding feast...(CCC. 2618).

In 1939, Jose Maria Escriva, a Spanish priest had a vision of the Lord who asked for the establishment of Opus Dei, a movement in the Catholic Church to assist the laity discover sanctity in their life. In his book 'The Way' published in 1939 contained 999 spiritual maxims. Escriva believed in intercessory prayers and devotions. He passed away in 1975.

Prayer groups, or 'Schools of Prayer' are very important to propagate among the faithful as they help to bring about a renewal of prayer in the Church. Intercessory prayers in this case are needed – to turn the searching soul thirsting for God's love and mercy in His Light. "For personal prayer, this can be a 'prayer corner' with the sacred scriptures and icons, in order to be there, in secret, before our Father". (CCC.1175:48).

In referring to the Lord, St. Paul wrote in his letter to the Hebrews, "Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them". (Heb.7:25). Catholicism with its tradition and history is a faith of prayer, and can look back to the time of the Apostles.

Intercessory prayers are also mentioned in the Old Testament in the Book



BY MELVYN BROWN

of Deuteronomy, Chapter 9, verse 20 – a time when God was angry with Aaron, Moses said, "A prayer for Aaron".

A beautiful example for intercessory prayer comes from the words of St. Therese of Lisieux. St. Therese was a French

Carmelite nun. She is known as the Little Flower of Jesus, a Doctor of the Church and Patron saint of the Missions. She died at the age of 24. Before dying she said: "I will spend my heaven doing good on earth." She took upon herself to be an intercessor for all those who turn to her, in times of their needs. It is well known throughout the Catholic world, that should God grant her petition for someone on earth, the person receives a rose, or has the fragrance of a rose, or comes across roses in the most unlikely of places. I am witness to the proof of this awesome truth. In France there is a grand Cathedral to St. Therese of Lisieux.

Requesting Our Lady to intercede for us is the most popular of all prayers, especially the Novena prayers: to Our Mother of Perpetual Help; to Mary Help of Christians; Novena of the Assumption and prayers to Our Lady of Fatima, Lourdes, Vailankani, are among the better known. The efficacy of prayers to Our Lady of Happy Voyage is done at the Bandel Church in West Bengal; many vows have been fulfilled over the centuries. The shrine is now a living monument to the faith of the people across the nation. Today, it is known as the Bandel Basilica.

There is the beautiful and efficacious novena of The Three Hail Mary's. This novena is in honor of the power, wisdom and loving mercy of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Prayers to the saints for intercession come in many forms. There is a Week of Prayers for the Holy Souls from Sunday to Saturday. Prayers for a happy death and scriptural insights on our life to come is in the package of prayers to Our Lord. Remember, prayer requests you to be focused on your needs.

(Contd.. on p. 18)

(Contd.. from p. 17)

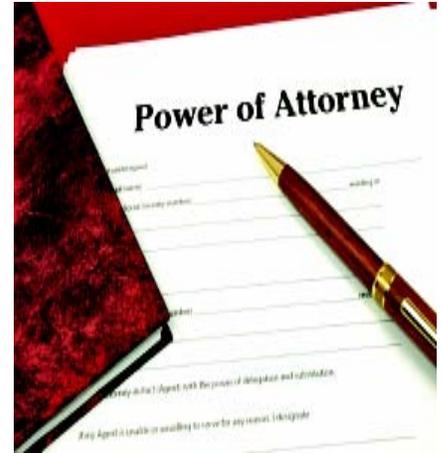
Intercessory prayers plead to the intercessor for assistance, and you voice your gratitude as a promise on its fulfillment. Loaves of bread, candles, acts of charity are among the thanksgiving items. There is no prescription for intercessory prayers. You ask, and if God wills it, you receive. There is no accountability – none is demanded. No inquisition. Saints are, 'the witnesses who had preceded us into the kingdom... when they entered into the joy of their Master, they were put in charge of many things'. We should ask them to intercede for us and for the whole world. (CCC.2683). Saints are the masters of prayer.

Contemplative prayer is to directly talk and share your worries with Jesus, and in him, the Father. Jesus is our divine intercessor. "Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people." (Heb. 2:17). I firmly believe that intercessory prayers can save our world.

Know About Power Of Attorney

It is important to know how a Power of Attorney works before you use them. Here are a few important things that you should know:

1. Power of attorney is a legal arrangement where one person (Principal) appoints another as his agent (or attorney) to act on his behalf.
2. Bank accounts, security trading accounts, investment transactions in property, mutual funds and securities can be operated using the power of attorney.
3. Non-resident investors tend to get into such arrangements to enable their relatives or friends to manage their affairs without involving them in operational activities.



4. The powers being so conferred have to be written down in a legal document (many service providers have standard formats) and notarised.
5. Both the parties have to sign the document, and submit the same after notarisation to the service provider.

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Inspiration!

Building Self-discipline

Self discipline is a lifelong commitment towards the 'self' for accomplishing success and enjoying happiness in life.

When it comes to building self-confidence, perception is everything. The way you view yourself has a huge impact on how others will ultimately perceive you. There may be some factors beyond your control when it comes to the confidence game, but you're in the driver's seat, holding the keys to your public persona.

Following below are a few tips to learn self-discipline:

Learning about the 'self'

The first step towards building self discipline is to learn about the 'self'. It means knowing every detail about the 'self'; what we like to do and what we do not like, what are our strengths and what are the weaknesses, what motivates us and what are those influences which irritate us. Learning the 'self' also includes personal value system. We have to know our moral standards and principles and accordingly we have discipline and educate ourselves.

Growth is a daily activity

Growth is not a magic, thus it cannot be achieved immediately. The way a child requires time to walk and then run, we also need time to build the habit of self-discipline. We have to set our goals and need to progress towards it on a daily basis. Every day before going to bed we have to evaluate our improvement and this is the only way to monitor our growth.

Today has no tomorrow

We have to keep in mind that today never comes back and failure is the only reward of procrastination. Discipline requires continuity; if a student



decides to study for 6 hours in a day, then it has to be 6 hours. If he studies for 5 hours and then things of adjusting the remaining hour with next day's schedule that would not work!

Set the goals

Human intellect is the best virtue of human life. It is a priceless asset which we can anticipate our future. Once we know our potentials very well, we can easily determine our destination which should necessarily be achievable.

Be your own mentor

A self disciplined person doesn't wait for anybody to come and teach him the lesson of discipline. We have to motivate ourselves when it is required as well as have to be our true critic. We should be focused towards our goals and at the same time we need to scrutinize them regularly.

Perform one activity daily

Doing something good for the self or for the society is also a part of developing self discipline. We may develop our self confidence by giving a free speech somewhere, we can perform different social activities like signing or dancing, and even if we help our young siblings in finishing their homework we actually make ways for us to become disciplined. Participation in different activities provides the energy to revitalize our thought process.

Practice self control

Building self discipline means learning the art of self control. Self control means controlling our impulsive desires which creates a real distinction between our physical and moral life. Self control over thought, word and action is the only way to avoid degradation. Self control gives us the resistance power to say a big 'no' to all external temptations and we earn humanity in true sense.

Predict success

Our entire life is a constant strive for success and nothing can be more important than accomplishing the same. When our desires are proportionate to our capabilities then we can easily make strategies to discipline ourselves in order to achieve success in life.

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Contact email :

rohan.hatakar@gmail.com OR 9619010888 (Regd. No. 6163)

KOLAPUR : Roman Catholic, Goan, 28 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. 6179)

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 32 years, Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA in Banking, working as a Auditor. Seeks a good natured, family oriented, smart, ambitious girl. Contact email : conrad_rodrigues@rediffmail.com OR 26454896 / 65178959 (Regd. No. 6178)

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 36 years, Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 86 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com., Position : Financial Consultant. Seeks a alliance from RC graduate/pst graduate spinster. Conatct email : raceangelreb@yahoo.in OR 9821173681 (Regd. No. 6172)

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 36 years, Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 55 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. 6th Std., honest, understanding, having a shop. Seeks a simple, homily Mangalorean Konkani speaking girl. Contact email : cyrildsouza87@gmail.com OR 07738976166 (Regd. No. 6152)

USA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Divorcee, aged 44 years, having 2 children aged 12 & 7 years, Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 73 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Masters of Engg. MCA., working as an Electronics / Telecom Engineer, working in USA. Contact email : l_lawrence_t@yahoo.com OR 0019496903065 (Regd. No. 6151)

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman

Catholic Parents Mumbai based invite proposal for their Bachelor son, aged 27 years, Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E., Chemical working in Saudi Arabia for reputed MNC having family status (ready to relocate), Seeks a suitable educted girl. Contact email :

florance903@gmail.com OR 9867974086 (Regd. No. 6141)

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 26 years, Ht. 6', Wheatish Complexion, Handsome, Edn. M.Sc., in Petroleum Engineering, working as an Application & Operations Manager in Engineering and Oilfield Co. in Gulf. Seeking alliance from a Roman Catholic family, with a homely, loving and caring below 26 years, educated, tall, fair and goodlooking girl. Kindly reply with profile with bride's picture by email : ritadz2003@yahoo.com OR 9819554390 / 0096895434412 (Regd. No. 6140)

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 36 years, Ht. 5' 8", Fair Complexion, Handsome, Edn. HSC pursuing S.Y.Com., working as an Emigration Supurvisions. Seeks a simple, understanding, good look, smart girl. Contact email : mariyo.80@gmail.com OR 9619019991 / 982095412 (Regd. No. 6138)

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 9", Fair Complexion, Handsome, Edn. B.Com., working as CEO in Family Business. Seeks a good looking, smart, stylish girl. Contacat email : mail2marg@gmail.com OR 9821556409 (Regd. No. 6135)

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 30 years, Ht. 5' 9", Wheatish Complexion, Edn.

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

B.Com., working as an Executive. Seeks a suitable match. Contact email : lewis.prashant@gmail.com OR 9833272796 (Regd. No. 6133)

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 9", Fair Complexion, Edn. S.S.L.C., Working as a Clerk. Seeks a suitable match. Contact email : robindsouza1985@gmail.com OR 9820527457. (Regd. No. 6128)

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 54 years, Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Bachelor in Hotel Management, working as a Food & Beverage Manager in Australia. Seeks a fair, should be willing to relocate overseas, single/divorced or Widow below 46 years. Contact Email : jjabanches@hotmail.com OR 9769494588 OR +61433072951. (Regd. No. 6126)

MUMBAI : Roman Catholic Manglorean Australian Citizen employed in Govt, 45 yrs, Ht 5'11, BCom, Wheatish, Tetotaller, Separated awaiting divorce seeks suitable alliance. Reply with photo to sharlet1968@gmail.com (Regd. No. 6125)

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Divorcee, aged 33 years, Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 62 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Undergraduate, working as a Admin. job in U.K. Seeks a graduate, simple, fair, understanding willing to work and live in U.K. below 33 years. Contact email : mariaferns5553@gmail.com (Regd. No. 6123)

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MATRIMONIALS

MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 36 years, Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., PGDC, NIIT. working as a Sr. Executive in DUBAI. Looking for well qualified bachelor from Working in UAE or Mumbai. Contact : 00971501684427 / 919820594221 **(Regd. No. 6177)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 24 years, Ht. 5', Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. HSC, Diploma, working as a Graphic designer. Deaf and dumb, can understand and speak little in English. Seeks a suitable match. Contact email : nancyserrao@rocket.mail.com OR 7208812988 **(Regd. No. 6176)**

MUMBAI : Keralite Syro Malabar Spinster, aged 25 years, Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MA, working with CFA firm in USA. Seeks a suitable match. Contact email : dayskul@yahoo.co.in OR 9869431648 **(Regd. No. 6175)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 27 years, Ht. 5', Wt. 48 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. BE (IT), working as a Sr. Software Engr., Seeks a suitable well qualified match. Contact email : western2462@rediffmail.com OR 8652024267 **(Regd. No. 6172)**

MUMBAI : Tamilian Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 27 years, Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 60 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Arch., Position : Interior Design. Seeks a well settled match. Contact email: hahlsr@gmail.com OR 02240153702 **(Regd. No. 6171)**

MUMBAI : Bombay Roman Catholic Goan Spinster, 31 years, Ht. 5', Wt. 49 kgs, I have done my MBA in finance and am working as a research analyst and consultant in Bombay. I am a very practical and logical person. I believe in striking a balance between work and

personal life. I love travelling, trekking and fitness. Looking for someone well educated, mature, sensible and jovial. If you find my profile interesting, Contact me email : miss.dynamic09@gmail.com OR 9594090936 **(Regd. No. 6068)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic spinster 1973 born, 5' 5" tall, fair complexion with qualifications, B.Com. (Mumbai), M.B.A. Finance (Canada), M.B.A., (H.R.) and Diplomas in I.T. (NIIT), Comp. (APTEC), and Cert.Ind Acct. (I.C.A.), working in good position. Graduate / Post Graduate unmarried R.C. Bachelors upto 45 years, employed in good position and well settled in Mumbai or abroad. Contact email : bellwether77@yahoo.com or Mobile No. 9892700617. **(Regd. No. 6166)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 29 years, Ht. 5'3", Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., Dip. in 3D animation, working. Contact email : nisha.britto@gmail.com OR 9967366434 **(Regd. No. 6063)**

MUMBAI: Goan RC Spinster, PG, aged 27 years. Ht.5'3", heavy built, wheatish complexion, employed with Pharma Co having good family values seek alliance from well settled Bachelors with good family background. Kindly reply with complete details with a recent photograph on email: buddies_22@yahoo.in **(Regd. No. 6174)**

NEW PANVEL : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, 37 years, Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 56 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com., working as a Account's Manager. Contact email : sl.cispl@gmail.com OR 9820794213 **(Regd. No. 6110)**

NEW PANVEL : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, 30 years, Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 80 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., Working as a Sr. Accountant. Contact email : slobo2283@yahoo.in OR 9819747847 **(Regd. No. 6109)**

MIRAJ : Maharashtra Protestant Spinster, 30 years, Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 50 kgs,

Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.D.S., (Dentist), Lecturer in Dental College. Contact email : dprebentisch@hotmail.com OR 0233-2211495 **(Regd. No. 6108)**

MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, 25 years, Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 45 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working. Contact email: dsdece@gmail.com OR 9619991298 **(Regd. No. 6107)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, 26 years, Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 66 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA in Hospital Management, working as a Asst. Manager Operations. Seeks a well settled match/. Contact email : irenealban@yahoo.com OR 022-25777199 **(Regd. No. 6106)**

POONA : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 28 years, Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 56 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA (Mktg & Intl Bus) working as a Lead Marketing. Contact email : mbpune85@gmail.com / lynette.borges@gmail.com OR 9881134217 **(Regd. No. 5974)**

MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 27 years, Ht. 4' 8", Wt. 45 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA., working as a HR. Contact email : jnoronha_55@yahoo.com OR 8806890197 **(Regd. No. 5977)**

NAVIMUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 26 years, Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 57 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Sc. (Mathematics), B.Ed., Lecturer by profession. Contact email : valerianp.sequeira@gmail.com / rohan@sib.co.in OR 8976104700 **(Regd. No. 5976)**

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(Contd.. from p. 11)

could not find his veins to take an injection. This went on simultaneously with lies and thievery of household objects, notably precious jewelry including his mother's wedding ring. His 78 year old mother frequently wept and prayed for him with great fervour.

One day he was returning from a Grant Road joint when his cab providentially broke down at Mount Carmel's Church. He clearly heard Fr. John Hoey, an Irish Redemptorist, say: "Jesus can free you from all addictions". Later, he met the priest. For the first time in his life, tears rolled down Russell's cheeks and he started on the road to recovery. After a few months, from being Bombay's King Drug Addict, Russell became Bombay's most famous crusader against drugs. Detoxification and reformation of addicts became his mission, testified John Lobo, former CBI Director. Deaddiction, indeed, became Russell's new addiction.

With missionary zeal, he opened a brand new chapter in his life and became a one-man crusade against drugs. In 1982, Russell established the Seva Dhan Foundation, Bombay's Pioneer Narcotics Rehabilitation Centre (for alcoholics and drugs addicts), of which he was Director. In all the Centres Russell established, the poor were graciously accepted and treated free of cost. He was conferred with several awards for pioneering work and attained both national and international recognition and appreciation.

Alas, and shockingly, the drug

world suddenly lost its leading light and Seva Dhan its guiding force on September 4, 1989. Sucked into the sea by treacherous waves, Russell's drowning on Baga beach in Goa sent shock-waves in the city's Christian Community and beyond. The tragic death of this celebrity healer who won the hearts of all, in the prime of his life and at the zenith of his humanitarian service, would be among the saddest in human history.

Nevertheless, Russell's spirit lives on as a beacon light to all on the drug-driven road to destruction. There was immediate evidence to this effect. According to Betty Gracias, one of his close associates: "Mr. Pinto would continue to be a tremendous source of strength and encouragement to the deaddiction programmes. When the drug addicts heard the news of his death they were determined to change their lives". Also, the late poet and writer Dom Moraes, who was Russell's friend, observed: "Russell having done it, the addicts of Bombay flocked to him for salvation, as to some newly arisen Messiah". Being an inspiring role-model will be Russell's noblest and most enduring legacy.

His spirit also lives on in the Seva Dhan Foundation in Dahanu, Thane. For 32 years, the Centre has treated over 20,000 substance abusers from around the country. Russell's cheerful but resolute widow and soulmate, Clema, co-founder and Executive Member of the Governing Body which runs the Foundation, is dedicated to sustaining his life-mission. Those who have a drug or alcohol problem and well-wishers and benefactors may kindly contact her on 9833908361 (M) and 26439126(L). God's blessings on and our sincere gratitude to all counselors, benefactors, collaborators and trustees (Chairman Joe Lobo, Raphael Donald, John Lobo (Emeritus) and Fr. Nigel Barrett) associated with Seva Dhan Foundation.

Dr. Louis D'Silva, author and educationist, is a former Vice-President, Bombay Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, and former President, Bombay Catholic Sabha and Newman Association of India.

"Teachers' Day" – Justice for Teachers

A teacher is the lynch pin in the Educational system. S/he has to manage an overcrowded classroom of about sixty to seventy students.

Economic compulsions lead parents into multi-tasking. Quality time for the infants is tackled by hiring nannies, crèche care, etc. This normally leads to depreciation of the home attention due to the child. The child then emerges into the educational sphere. The onerous burden of schooling the child is transferred to the Teacher. The most defenseless and vulnerable target is the School Teacher.

We have trouble in schools with students. Students with recalcitrant or rebellious attitudes often require more attention.

Teachers have to cope with these issues on two fronts - the personal and the professional.

Dr Benjamin Spock said we should not spank our children when they misbehave, because their little personalities would be warped, and we might damage their self-esteem (Dr. Spock's grandson allegedly committed suicide on Christmas Day).

After retirement, teachers draw measly pensions as compared to bank peons, or Below Poverty Line (BPL) people. Even projected BPL expenditure of approx Rs 32/- a day is Rs 960/- per month. The demands for extending implementation of Old Pension Scheme to the pre-2005 Retired Teachers was summarily rejected on July 22, 2013.

ABE Primary teachers have dedicated their lives teaching in ABE schools. Many ABE Administrators and parishioners also have personally experienced their dedicated service. Sadly, many ABE Primary Teachers draw pensions lower than peons. Apparently, this is because of Trustee pluralism, where finance is not directly under ABE. ABE has ordered that fee increase in all ABE schools is subject to ABE sanction. It is evident that ABE, if it so desires, can also streamline and unite the various Trustee systems, and pay the Teachers in the interest of Basic Natural Justice.

Till the injustice is not rectified, observance of Teachers' Day will be a mere tokenism.

—Denis Khan

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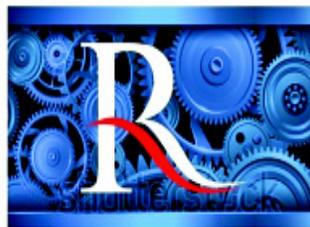
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