

# THE SECULAR CITIZEN

(Total pages 24)

A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

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## Raphael Sequeira

CMD - Reliable Group, Mumbai  
passed away at the age of 59  
on Saturday 26th Sept., 2015

Mr. Raphael Sequeira was a great admirer and well-wisher of The Secular Citizen and Divo.

Our heart felt Condolences to his family members: Wife: Clotilda Sequeria, Daughter: Colette D'Lima, Son-in-Law: Aaron D'Lima, and Grand Daughter: Baby Ziann D'Lima.  
May His Soul Rest In Peace.



Bishop Emeritus Ferdinand Fonseca,  
passed away at the age of 89  
on October 2, 2015.

He served the Archdiocese of Mumbai  
in various capacities.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord.  
And let perpetual light shine upon him,  
may his soul rest in peace. Amen

# ICPA - Northern Regional Convention Of Christian Journalists

“India will make no progress whatsoever as long as it clings on to the caste system,” said Mr Ignatius Dhabi, veteran journalist from Ahmedabad. Mr Dabhi was speaking at the first ever Northern Regional Convention of Christian Journalists held at the Agra Pastoral Centre on Sunday 27 September 2015.

The two-day event which included a General Body Meeting of the Indian Catholic Press Association saw some 50 journalists of every hue descend on the city of the iconic Taj. Present at the meet were Archbishop Albert D’Souza of Agra, Bishop Salvadore Lobo of Baruiapur, Chariman of the CBCI Office for Social Communications, Bishop Chacko Thottumarickal of Indore, Bishop Raphy Manjaly, Bishop of Allahabad and Chairman, Hindi Sahitya Samiti, Allahabad, Fr Bhaskar, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Agra, Fr Marneni Varapasrad, Secretary, CBCI-OSC.



John Dayal

The ICPA President, Fr Alfonso Elengikal, SSP, welcomed the participants. In his keynote address, Bishop Manjali, speaking on the topic Role of Regional

Languages in Evangelization hoped for a new Pentecost experience among those involved in the media. Presentations on allied topics were made by no less than some 12 eminent speakers.



chhotebhai



Ignatius Dabhi



Ladislaus, Sr. Mariola, Fr. Alfonso and Jose



Inaugurating the convention, Archbishop D’Souza called upon the journalists present to project the Catholic ethos in the press and media and play a prophetic role in defence of truth and justice. He placed on ICPA the task of highlighting the need for one voice in the North.

Bishop Lobo, Chairman of the CBCI Office for Social Communications, spoke about the role of Catholic press in the region and asked the journalists to stand up for the rights of the needy.

Bishop Chacko delivered the keynote address on the “Role of Regional Languages in Evangelization.”

Fr Bhaskar also welcomed the gathering. Fr Jacob Palamattom, Director of the Agra Archdiocesan Communications Centre, headed the local organizing committee.

Others who addressed the event on Catholic Print Media in the Hindi belt and the Catholic Publishing Centre in North India included Fr Sebastian Vedamuthu from Varanasi, Dr Lucy Gabriel, Editor of B-uland Prajatantra, New Delhi, Fr Anand Mathew, Fr Pankaj Kandulna, SSP from Allahabad, Fr Deepak Sulya and Fr Clarence Srambickal from Indore, Fr K C Philip from Patna and Dr Nishi from Agra, apart

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**'Thought for the week'**

*To get through the hardest journey we need take only one step at a time, but we must keep on stepping.*

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Cover : Sad demise of Raphael Sequeira and Bishop Ferdinand Fonseca

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**India fails to heed its father's call**

**A**s the world observes International Day of Nonviolence on Oct. 2, the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, it is simply unbelievable, but truly painful to see what is happening in India, where Gandhi championed the cause of nonviolence.

Just this week a Hindu mob lynched a Muslim man, following rumors he and his family ate beef in Bisara, a village just 40 kilometers outside New Delhi.

The murderous mob of some 1,000 people armed with swords and clubs dragged Mohammed Akhlaq and his family from their home and beat them with bricks and clubs on Sept. 28. He died the next day; his son remains in critical condition. His 82-year-old mother, wife and daughter were molested and beaten. The beef-eating rumor seemed to have originated from a nearby temple. That such an incident can take place in 21st century India should make any Indian hang one's head in shame.

If this was an isolated incident, we could attempt to brush it aside. However, we routinely hear of groups taking the law into their own hands and lynching people. Women paraded naked, people attacked, sexually violated, and sometimes killed as punishment for actions that some groups consider morally incorrect.

On March 5, another mob stormed a jail in the northeastern city of Dimapur, dragged a man accused of rape onto the streets, stripped him and lynched him. Vigilantes and moral policing seem to be the order of the day as right-wing forces in the country decide what one should eat and wear, what films one should see, what books should be read, above all whether it is "Indian culture" or not for a woman to be out late at night.

These radical forces have institutionalized violence in the country as never before. They have engaged in a multipronged program ranging from aggressive ghar wapsi [literally homecoming but which refers to religious conversions of Christians and Muslims to Hinduism] campaigns to the renaming of roads with Hindu names.

In their scheme of things, in order to establish a Hindu nation-state, they need to denigrate minorities, uphold the highly patriarchal and caste-based Manusmriti code [an ancient Indian legal compilation that divides society into four main groups based on four occupational groupings: Brahmin (priests), Kshatriya (warriors), Vaishya (traders) and Sudra (menial workers)], tamper with India's constitution and above all negate the ideals of a democratic India based on pluralism, justice, liberty and equality for all.

One of their key outfits — the "Sanathan Sanstha" — is held responsible for the murder of the communist politician Govind Pansare; they also are reported to be behind the murders of rationalists Narendra Dabholkar and M.M. Kalburgi.



**BY FR. CEDRIC PRAKASH SJ**

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(Contd.. from p. 3)

Violence holds sway even as the country celebrates another birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the apostle of truth and nonviolence. Symbolically enough, in June 2007, the U.N. General Assembly through a resolution declared the day as International Day of Nonviolence, which is certainly an unparalleled tribute to the father of the Indian nation.

The resolution for this observance states: "the day is an occasion to disseminate the message of nonviolence, including through education and public awareness; it reaffirms the universal relevance of the principle of nonviolence and the desire to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and nonviolence." Mahatma Gandhi did his best to mainstream the doctrine of nonviolence. He was unequivocal about that.

Unfortunately, there are those from the political class, the corporate sector and others with vested interests who have completely disregarded what Gandhi epitomized, preached, lived and died for. Nonviolence is more of a utopia because we have not had the courage, the humility and the determination to mainstream it.

Tribal people across India are robbed of their water, forests and land with impunity. Faulty land and mining laws legitimize the way big players not only deplete precious natural resources but also destroy the identity and livelihoods of local tribal people.

Human trafficking and bonded labor has become an accepted practice in several parts of the country with thousands of children working in cotton fields, at brick kilns, in the stone-cutting industry and other forms of hard labor. There are an estimated 60 million children working in India's agricultural, industrial and commercial sectors according to a recent report released by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

The high rate of female feticide, the way the girl child is treated and the inability of most men to treat women as equals is a powerful indicator of a violent society. Caste discrimination, honor killings, the inhuman practice of scavenging are all part of a canvas of institutionalized violence in India.

Early this week, a special court in Mumbai sentenced five people to death, holding them responsible for planting bombs on city trains, which resulted in a series of explosions killing 188 commuters and injuring many more on July 11, 2006. When Yakub Memon was hanged on July 30 for his involvement in the 1993 Bombay bombings a sense of violent perversity seemed to grip large sections of the country. India has increased its military budget by 11 percent and is today the world's biggest arms importer. All this is certainly symptomatic of a violent state.

If we are serious about nonviolence becoming a tangible reality, we must be able to mainstream it in every dimension of life: in our attitudes, articulation and action. Precious little seems to be done about this.

We would do well to pay heed to the words of Gandhi, who wrote in his Harijan journal on July 20, 1935: "Nonviolence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man. Destruction is not the law of the humans. Man lives freely by his readiness to die, if need be, at the hands of his brother, never by killing him. Every murder or injury, no matter for what cause, committed or inflicted on another is a crime against humanity."

*Jesuit Father Cedric Prakash is the director of Prashant (Tranquility), the Ahmedabad-based Jesuit Center for Human Rights, Justice and Peace.*

## SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA, KARJAT

### 80<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE



**SUNDAY, 18<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2015**  
**FEAST DAY PROGRAMME**

**Theme: MARY, the Queen of Family**

**ALL SERVICES WILL BE IN BILINGUAL**

07.00 am : Mass **Fr. Xavier Devdas** (Raigad Deanery)  
08.30 am : Mass **Fr. Samuel Rayer** (Raigad Deanery)  
10.00 am : Mass **Fr. Simon Borges** (St. Michael Church Parish Priest & Dean)  
11.00 am : Solemn Procession of Fatima Statue, followed by Mass  
11.30 am : Mass **Fr. Barthol Machado** (Dean Raigad Deanery)  
1 to 2 pm : Novena & Prayers animated by Legion members of Amarnath & Mumbai

**2.00 pm to 4.00 pm : Intercessory Healing Prayer/Adoration Mass at 4 pm**  
Animated by : **Fr. Sanjay Bramhane / Fr. Michael Anthony** (Aurangabad Diocese)

05.00 pm : Bhajans & Kirtans **Yohan Kshirsagar** (Nagar) & **Carlos Kasbe** (Mumbai)  
07.00 pm : Fellowship Meal with the Neighborhood People

**Tridum : 14, 15 & 16 Oct. 2015. Novena Mass at 5.30 pm.**

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2015 Full day Fatima Devotional service**

**from 9.00 am to 4.00 pm**

9.00 am : Mass, Unfurling of the flag, Novena, Message, Testimonies  
12.30 pm : Mass, Fellowship meal, Inner Healing Prayer, Adoration



All Ecclesial entities of Marian spirituality and Marian devotees are invited to celebrate Marian Day at the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, Karjat; the first Church in Asia and in India, to be dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima. An elegantly carved wooden statue of Our Lady of Fatima brought from Fatima, Portugal in 1920, adorns this Shrine.

For information on train timings:

**Surendra** 9881846938 • For other General Information - **Victor** 9604886678  
For accommodation at **Gethsemane Prayer Centre** (3 Kms. away from the Shrine)  
**Alfred D'souza** 9820281099 • **Mark Pinto** 9561500814/9833704510

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## Pope Francis on climate change

Pope Francis who opened his recent visit to the US with a call for action to combat climate change, comes in the wake of his recent encyclical 'Laudato Si', meant to inculcate in people the responsibility of protecting the environment and saving its destruction by listening to the cry of "mother earth". For Pope Francis the entire cosmos is "Our common home" which is entrusted to us by the creator. It is therefore our duty to protect this home as a human family from catastrophic eventualities. In the introductory chapter of the encyclical Pope Francis appeals to us to imbibe the spirit of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology. The encyclical is unique in a sense that it is a call to "ecological conversion" from the religious point of view and not confined to the usual scientific or political lingo. The encyclical has also won widespread acclaim from world leaders, scientists, the UN and climate-change activists.

—A. F. Nazareth,  
Alto porvorim

## Holy And Homely Gestures!

At the conclusion of the 'World Meeting Of Families' in Philadelphia, Sept 27, 2015, Pope Francis delivered this homily (Vital Extracts):

"Faith opens a 'window' to the presence and working of the Spirit. It shows us that like happiness, holiness too is tied to little gestures – 'Whoever gives you a cup of water in My name will not go unrewarded', says Jesus (cf. Mark 9:41). These little gestures are those that we learn at home, within the family! They are the quite little

things performed by mothers, fathers, grandparents and children. They are the little signs of tenderness, affection and compassion – like the warm supper we look forward to at night; the early lunch awaiting us who get up early to attend work – 'Homely Gestures'! Like a blessing before we go to bed; or a hug after we return from a hard day's labor – 'Homely Feels'! That is why our families and homes are true 'Domestic Churches'!"

"Jesus tells us not to hold back these little 'Homely Miracles'! Instead he wants us to encourage them and spread them. He asks us to go through our everyday life as signs of His love; of His Own living and active presence. Jesus loves families. Remember the wedding at Cana!"

"Our common home can no longer tolerate sterile divisions. The urgent tasks of protecting our homes include efforts to bring the entire human family in the pursuit of a sustainable and integral development. Imitate the Holy Family of Nazareth."

"May our children find in us, men and women, capable of joining others in bringing to full flower, all the good seeds which the Father has sown! Pointedly, yet affectionately, Jesus reminds us: It is the Spirit Who challenges us to respond as part of the great human family! 'If you, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will Your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?' (Luke 11;13)."

—Dr Trevor Colaso

## School Teachers Pay Scale

It is indeed a good news to read the letter by Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay, in the Examiner dated 26th September, 2015,

that the primary school teachers will be getting the 6th Pay Commission recommended scale. The news unfortunately is not good enough as the decision is far too late since the 6th Pay Commission scale has been effective from 1st January, 2006. I hope the decision also includes payment of arrears wherever they are due. It is surprising to read "we are not bound to pay government scales. We voluntarily decided to pay as per the government regulations." If the schools are bound to run as per government rules such as, permission to start a school, affiliation, teacher's qualification, examinations, etc.....then why not the pay scale? The ABE schools enjoy the minority status and the advantages associated with it but it does not include 'right to exploit teachers'.

As per the resources are concerned, the parish managed diocesan schools should not face any problems. The resources of the entire diocese should be taken into account to help the poor schools by transferring the surplus income from parishes which have the surplus without taking shelter under excuses like 'single trustee' and that the parish and school are separate and independent entities and so on. Children of poor parents can be supported from the 'community development fund' which was promoted for health and education of poor catholic families. More funds if needed can be raised by appealing to the well to do catholics. Before that, may we please know the finance of the Diocese?

The catholic schools managed by parishes or religious orders cannot get away from the responsibilities of paying the teachers their due scales merely by explaining to them, their resource scarcity. Raising resources to run a school is the responsibility of the management and not of the teachers, though they may help the management in the task as they always do. The schools have to collect the fees to meet all the genuine expenses including teachers salaries. The poor catholic students must be supported by the community as explained above. Catholic schools need not, suo moto shoulder the responsibility

(Contd.. on p. 9)

# Have We Converted Nature Into A Monument?

by Don Aguiar

In India, we stay away from certain issues in the name of political correctness. Sadly those are the issues that most need attention. One such contentious issue in India is appreciating and valuing nature. While often dormant in people's minds, it doesn't take long for the issues to be taken up at intervals.

Let society look down on people who disregard nature. If we can make it interesting and worth it in collecting antiques valuing and preserving them, why not make it necessary to talk about valuing and preserving nature and appreciate the wonders the natural world offers?

A Columbian, Russian, Arab and a Parsi were in a discussion during an Antique Collectors Dinner. Columbian Drug Lord, "I have loads of money.... I want to buy world's rarest 10 Pens." Russian, "I am a billionaire... I want to buy the world's 20 antique watches." Arab Says, "That's nuthin, I am a rich prince... I intend to purchase world's top 50 Vintage cars." Then they wait for the Parsi to speak... He stirs his Tea, bites into his Bun Maska, places the spoon neatly on the table, takes a sip, leans back with hands on the head and softly says, "I am not Selling."

In nature and in culture, seeds are the future and they are also the past. They are ancestors and they are offspring. Seeds are the circle of life. The three Sisters of corn, squash and beans were a gift from the Divine Creator to be cherished and nurtured from generation to generation. When we nurture them they nurture us. It is a circle which leads us to the celebration of "AGERA" or the blessing of the corn on Sunday 4th Oct.

What I know from nature, from practice and vision, is that seeds are sacred. They are the central metaphor for who

**In nature and in culture, seeds are the future and they are also the past. They are ancestors and they are offspring. Seeds are the circle of life.**

we are and how we act in the world, how we cherish what is passed down to us, how we live today and how we take care of what is to come.

Our surroundings influence the seeds that are strong in us, but it is our spirit, our consciousness that shapes our lives, that helps us to know that we are One and to live each day in that knowing – and in that knowing we need to take note that there is a big difference between Money & Time – you always know how much money you have! But you don't know how much time you have. "ALWAYS VALUE YOUR TIME" - do not let our sources of wonder diminish. The joy of the Gospel resides here as well.

Come any Muslim festival and the city Muslims go moon hunting. Eyes scan the sky anxiously; doing the bidding of growling stomachs, and the sighting of the moon brings relief. It is the one functional purpose the moon still serves in their lives. Similarly the Christian festivals too are also based on the moon such as Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Easter and Christmas. For the rest, it barely registers as it goes about its business and we go about ours. The moon has more or less disappeared from the lives of those who live in large cities, in small flats with smaller or no balconies. The moon does not preside over the night, having been tucked away behind some buildings. Our windows look often at other windows, and at night the sky is a snatch of black somewhere in the background.

This wasn't the case in an earlier era

and still isn't the case as one steps out of the city. When in the country side I see the moon at times in all its glory. It is more beautiful at times than I remembered it- a blaze of luminosity hanging out of the sky. It is in the hills where the moon still is an arm's pluck away and where stars come out of the hiding in a giddy rush. It was not quite Christmas, but it was close and the sitting in the open in the well-lit night, it was impossible not to be mesmerized. The moon looked huge and implausibly round, and the fact that its magnetic pull controlled the rise and fall of tides seemed easy to believe.

Moonlight has a magic that is quite its own. Sunlight is the default setting for the idea of light, particularly in a tropical country where the appearance of the sun comes unaccompanied by any question marks. The sun is always out and lights up the world in a flat, matter-of-fact way. The moon casts light more enigmatically, waxing and waning rhythmically, and sometimes disappearing altogether behind clouds. Moonlight doesn't just render things visible, but imparts a quality to everything it touches. Things seem to sparkle with their own essence under the moon, something that has made the moon so attractive to writers and poet's right from Shakespeare to the penners of lyrics for Hindi film songs. Stories, poetry and songs about the moon are legion and they cover the broad range of meanings that were imparted to it. It was a sign of ethereal beauty, a witness to the little games lovers played, it presided over union and heartbreak, ached with separation, marked time occasionally with indifference, and acted as a confidante for the lonely. The moon connected the individual with the universe, in a way that no other natural object could.

Nothing unified the world more than the moon. We marked our days through our nights, giving time a lunar name. In lunar calendars, time grows out of

(Contd.. on p. 8)

# Analyzing Modi Sarkar's report card

“Corruption Ka Dusra Naam hain Congress Party” clamored Narendra Modi, as he vowed the nation to liberate it from the fold of the ruling dynasty, during the final stages of his election campaign last year. The Modi sarkar succeeded in trouncing the Congress Party and acquire the reigns from the jaws of ‘Gandhi dynasty’. However, almost over sixteen months of his stint at the highest office, the nation is stacked with skepticism and cynicism about his promises.

by Chris Emmanuel D'Souza,  
Mangalore

Shortly, after Modi and his Party assumed power, the parties guardians; the Sang Parivar stepped out to affirm their projects in the form of blazing labels and epithets. The placards of Love Jihad, Ghar Whapsi, Beef Ban, Yoga etc replaced the original promised agenda of 'Sab Ka Sath Sab Ka Vikas'. And what followed was a series of arsons on Christian places of worship spiraling across the country, death threats to its leaders and activists, to the extent where New York Times published an editorial piece expressing deep concern over country's trajectory.

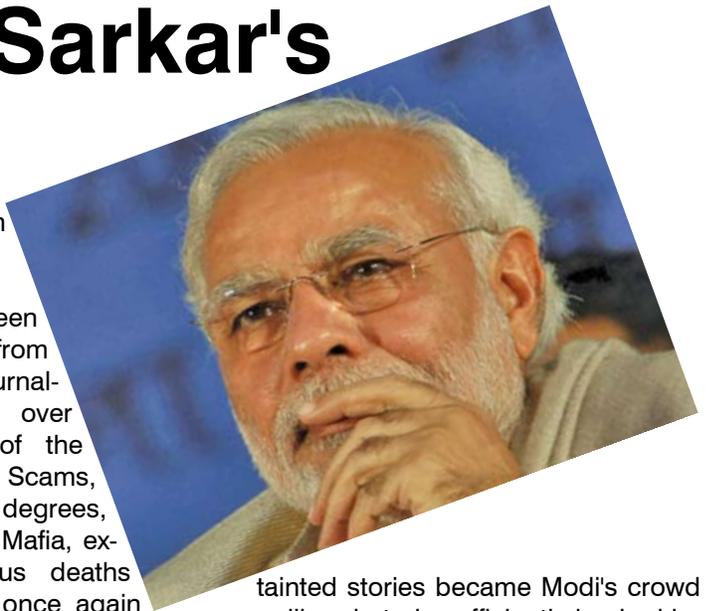
The most worrying part and as most experts believe, that there has been a strategy devised by the Sang Parivar to institutionalize Hindutva. Although, Hinduism is not a monolithic faith like Abrahamic religions, there has been an attempt design it on lines of highly successful Saudi Arabian and Iranian theocracy. They have been rigorously striving to penetrate in every institutional space available, and have already bought some of the electronic media anchors under their wings. At the same breath, hardline Islamic political leaders Like the Owasi brothers, are pushing and crusading to bring more poor ignorant muslims under their clutches. As Right wing Hindu outfits explode and triumph, so do the

militant Islamists in their own terms.

There has been staunch criticism from political rivals, journalists and activists over several policies of the Modi government. Scams, scandals, fake degrees, Land, Sand, Mine Mafia, extortions, mysterious deaths have all returned once again to haunt the 'liberated' country. The economy has not yet shown any signs of refinement, the way it was assured during BJP's opposition days. Modi had sent a open threat to China just prior to the elections, but less than a year later, he made a audacious visit and bowed to Chinese premier with submission.

Several RTI activists have accused the Prime Minister for not disclosing the bills of foreign trips, it has been widely believed that Modi's spending have been lavish and the Indian consulates have refused any revelation on this matter. The accusations that Modi and his party made against the former ruling party, is comically back-firing them. The Delhi debacle, where Arvind Kejriwals AAP decimated all oppositions, miscalculating opinion and exit polls, has left the Government in the last ditch to save its face.

During the last four years or so, there has been an unprecedented wave of Modi supporters flooded in the social media and blogosphere. They were tagged as Bakhts or the Internet Hindus; extremely passionate, reactionary and jingoistic in their views. They ran a contemptuous smear campaign against the then ruling Nehru family. Interestingly, some of the things these bakhts alleged were true, but most of it was twisted and warped. Half truths, historical distortions and



tainted stories became Modi's crowd pulling rhetoric sufficiently backed by the bakhts all over the virtual world. Just minutes after the mandate was declared in BJP's favour, Narendra Modi, gloated before the crowd 'Ache din Ayenge'.

And these one liners that made him a rockstar a year ago, have now boomeranged with a smack. All those one liners have vanished from his eloquent oratory, and his once fiery speeches have dried down in tone, reduced in intensity and sound humdrum. It's time for Modi's think Tank and his animated Bhakts to ponder; Apart from sporting a stylish beard, donning fashionable suits, uploading spectacular selfies and for the unaccounted expensive foreign trips, what has 'Modi sarkar' delivered in the last sixteen months?

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(Contd.. from p. 6)

life, with every day being marked with an individual and independent character. Easter, the night of the full moon was imbued with a sense of fertile celebration, while Ash Wednesday, the state of moonlessness, was seen with trepidation, as it underlined the power that nature, always a fickle friend, held over us. The moon had many powers, not only over the oceans but over the bodies and minds of animals and humans. The full moon made us wild and primitive; madness (lunacy) after all has some lunar origins.

The moon is not that useful anymore, and lives on in our imaginations as vestigial habit. Its light carries little meaning, for the city is ablaze with its own and it is difficult to make out a full moon night from a moonless one. It is no longer a marker of time. Time itself has lost rhyme; it now refers to nothing else outside of itself. It offers no proof, and comes with no markers. Day and night do exist of course, but in a globalized world, with decreasing meaning. Time is now a purely conceptual entity, a convention that we have collectively agreed to submit to.

Its mysteriousness too has lost luster. The moon was once beyond human reach and as fables have it, made available to children crying for it, by casting its reflection in a bowl of water. Landing on the moon might have been a human fantasy but it made the moon prosaic, a mere satellite, which the human race had managed to vanquish. Flags have been planted on the moon, and in the ultimate sign of mastery, samples from the moon have been tested in our laboratories.

Every individual and every culture has a story that we hold onto in order to make sense of our world. But things are definitely changing. All over young and not so young people no longer believe so resolutely in old paradigms. We are as things indicate, in that 'space between stories'.

But what is this space between stories? Broadly speaking, it is the time when our familiar ways of understand-

ing and behaving are no longer applicable. The old story of who I am/we are, what is real, what is true, whom to believe and how to navigate life is breaking down. What had seemed so understandable, permanent and reliable is revealed now as being an illusion.

Sometimes the new story- and its related new ways of thinking, being and doing – emerges gradually; short cycles of change, with success and elation interspersed with disappointments and setbacks. At other times, it plunges us into a different world so swiftly that it is a while before we even know it has happened like –

**Big House.....Small Family  
More Degree.... Less Common Sense  
Advanced Medicine..... Poor Health  
Touched Moon.... Neighbors Unknown  
High Income.... Less Peace of Mind  
High IQ ..... Less Emotion  
Good Knowledge..... Less Wisdom  
Number of Affairs..... No True Love  
Costly Watches..... No Time**

We seek new gadgets with frequent updates, in fantastic stories of the superhuman and the otherworldly, by making nostalgic artifacts out of our past, by converting nature into a monument, by using the word awesome an awful lot, and by clicking on links that promise us that we will be amazed or blown away by what we are about to see. I saw the moon the other night, and I was transfixed, or blown away if you prefer.

Science has been nature's ally in demystifying nature and its complexities. Gradually, nature is being erased as a point of reference for our lives. The conceptual, abstract and the virtual are replacing the natural. The internet is humankind's most ambitious rejoinder to the natural universe. Here is a universe of another kind, hewed out of the recesses of human imagination, living in a space constructed out of electronic signals. The digital marks an independence from the physical, and takes the separation from the natural to its logical end.

What does it matter anyway? The

moon was romanticized out of need, and is neglected today because it no longer serves the purposes it once did. The question perhaps is a larger one. With time it seems that our sources of wonder are diminishing. Once we marveled at everything, out of ignorance often, but the world seemed full of things much larger and mysterious than we were. Now, technology produces wonder just as easily as it destroys it.

Enough has changed and the time has come to recast our view on nature. Modern technology allows us to do so. If we don't do it, the youth from who we steel opportunities in the name of fairness won't like it. You don't create fairness by doing something unfair.

It is in such moments of paradox, tension and yes creative energy that we can discover our humanity or the lack of it, even though we are saddled by distrustful workplaces where dog-in-the-manger habits trample interpersonal trust and ruin the sense of higher purpose.

So the question becomes - How can we prepare for this? Actually we fully cannot prepare. But we are being prepared by the space between the stories.

Will our generation be remembered for having generously shouldered its grave responsibilities of appreciating and valuing nature? Despite the many contradictions of our time, we have sufficient reason to nurture our hopes of being able to do so. And we should let ourselves be guided by this hope. In fulfilling this commitment, it is hoped that each one of us may experience the satisfaction of participating in actions that transmit nature and life.

## Matrimonial

R.C. Batchelor 37 years, Ht. 5'7", M.Com, MBA. Working for a Bank in Canada. Contact Wilma Britto, (Match maker): 9741621574 or 9845516093. Mail: wilmabritto31@gmail.com

(Contd.. from p. 5)

of serving the society at large at the cost of teachers.

The period of 7th Pay Commission starts from 1st January, 2016. Hope our schools are prepared for that. The church which stands for justice must practise what it preaches. Let us not compel our teachers to run to the Court or write to the Pope to obtain justice.

—Prof. A. D. Mascarenhas

## Papa Francesco

As Pope Francis is affectionately called, had by all accounts, an extremely successful visit to Cuba and the USA. Indeed, it was he who brokered peace between these two long-standing enemy countries. Thought by many, inside and outside the Church, to be a liberal, the Pontiff is merely underscoring the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church of sharing and service. As the Moslem Imam on CNN's show recently commented: "It's a good time to be a Catholic- no scams or scandals. The Holy Father is 'walking the walk' of inclusion, compassion, mercy and peace, rather than of judgement and division. He is responsible for a return to faith for persons of diverse Faiths."

As Archbishop of Argentina, Francis chose to live in a small flat rather than in the imposing official residence; did his own cooking/cleaning/washing; used public transport or a small second-hand car and substituted for his priests whenever they went on their annual vacation, which he never did! His mission was primar-

ily to the poorest of the poor in the city's slums. As the supreme Head of the Church's 1.3 billion Catholics, the Pope lives not in the Vatican but rather where visiting religious to Rome live, sharing their meals. He uses a small Fiat when on the move, carries his own bags and pays his bills himself. Recently, an optician in Rome was stunned when Pope Francis entered his shop for a change of glasses and paid for them!

Simple and humble, a mirror image of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, Francis seeks to re-establish a "poor Church for the Poor". He has attracted criticism from conservative bishops and laity for what they perceive as a deviation from the Church's time-honoured doctrine on central issues. However, this misapprehension can best be set at rest by quoting the Pontiff on his pronouncements and actions. He stated that he would rather have "an injured Church than a sick Church", and that he believes "the Church should not be a regulator but a transmitter of Faith". He is motivated towards this end.

Pope Francis' clarion call at one recent event was: "Are you ready! So, are we laity, religious and hierarchy ready to follow his lead? Really?"

—Bernie Tellis

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## Christians oppose play on virgin birth

Mumbai: Christian groups are up in arms over a play, Agnes of God, which they claim “belittles their religion.” In fact it was their tone of protests which saw its scheduled staging at Sophia Bhabha auditorium cancelled at the last moment.

The Archdiocese of Bombay too has frowned on the play saying it had “serious reservations with regard to the promotional bill board advertisements and other ad-campaigns of the play.” According to the statement: “They distort Catholic religious concepts such as the Immaculate Conception and Virgin Birth and hence tend to ridicule tenets of our faith – without understanding their meaning.”

In fact the Major Archbishop Catholics and President Catholic Bishops Conference of India has also written to the Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on the issue asking for a ban on the play.

### WHAT'S THE PLAY ABOUT?

Agnes of God, the John Pielmeier play tells the story of a novice nun who gives birth and insists the child is born of virgin conception. A psychiatrist and the mother superior of the convent clash during the resulting investigation leading to several questions on belief, faith, religion and science. The play was adapted for a movie by the original playwright in 1985 and starred Jane Fonda, Anne Bancroft and Meg Tilly. The Norman Jewison directed film got Oscar nominations for best actress in a leading role (Bancroft), best actress in a supporting role (Tilly) and best music, original score.

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## BJP members plan for anti-conversion bill in Parliament

New Delhi: Two BJP members plan to introduce private member bills in both houses of parliament to stop religious conversions and go for a debate on the issue in next session of parliament.

BJP parliamentarians Yogi Adityanath will introduce it in Lok Sabha and Tarun Vijay will do so in Rajya Sabha, it was announced last Friday during a conference on ‘Dharmantaran Rashtranataran Hai,’ the Sunday Express reported.

The conference was organized at the Gorakhnath Temple in Gorakhpur, to observe the death anniversaries of former chief priests of temple — Mahant Digvijay Nath and Mahant Avaidyanath.

Tarun Vijay told Sunday Express while he will present the Bill in Rajya Sabha, “Yogi Adityanath will do the same in the Lok Sabha. Debates will be held on the issue in the Parliament on the lines of Thomas Jefferson’s famous Freedom of Religion Act-1786.”

He said many MPs from other parties have shown interest in the bill to stop conversions. “I am trying to build an all-party consensus by holding discussions with them,” Vijay said while refusing to reveal names of the “like-minded” MPs.

“My line of argument is that religion must remain a matter of personal choice. But in India, it has become a political tool in the hands of foreign powers, who are targeting Hindus to fragment our nation again on communal lines. This has to be resisted in national interest and in the interest of all minorities in India,” he added.

Religious conversion is a planned conspiracy, Vijay said. “Such areas get cut off from the country and Hindus are reduced to a minority... Jammu &

Kashmir is an example where Hindus were forced to leave their houses... anti-national and separatists forces are active there...” Hindu majority is an essential guarantee for the flowering of democracy, constitutionalism and pluralism, he claimed.

While addressing the conference, Yogi Adityanath said religious conversion was an “anti-national act” and it must be stopped. “An aggressive campaign is required for ghar wapsi of those Hindus, who had converted to other religions in the past,” he added.

The recent Census data shows that in India, Hindus population has first time gone below 80 per cent.. this was an alarming situation...while adding that Hindus cannot leave it only to the government to maintain national unity and prevent religious conversion but should themselves take initiatives.

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## A 'weighty' lesson for schools

I wonder where on earth a High Court has to get involved in telling all of us – those in charge of Education - the Minister, Secretary, Directors, inspectors, principals, teachers, PTAs, educationalists not forgetting the NGOs that the kids are not beasts of burden to carry huge loads on their backs to school. It had to be one activist - Swati Patil to file a PIL before the Bombay High Court. For over 60 odd years nobody really felt that something needs to be done and for this indifference, who knows, thousands of kids may have been victims of this load bearing medical consequences.

The government wasted time after the recommendations of education ministry panel were accepted by it. Now they have limited time to enforce those recommendations [majority of which are really laudable] like restricting the number of subjects per day which calls for redrawing the time tables. The purpose is to reduce the weight of books which the students are perhaps forced to carry. Completing the home work in school itself is one good suggestion which will bring huge relief to parents some of whom are not well educated. Banning thick cover note books and those exceeding 80 pages is also a good move. At least, if these are enforced in right earnest, the problem will be addressed to a large extent. Whether all the schools will be able to implement this, needs to be seen.

Some others may be hard to enforce. Every school conducts multiple classes in the same room and each class has around 60 students. How many lockers can a school provide considering the space crunch in cities like Mumbai. Issuing two sets of books – one for school and one for home is a costly exercise and the burden will have to be borne by the parents. Converting desks tops into blackboards or slates is also not feasible at all. What is the purpose? Can the kids take them home for revision? It will also be a messy affair.

Restricting the weight of school bag to 10% of body weight seems to be the trickiest. How many weighing scales will be required per school with 2-3000 students? Who is going to check the weight of the child and the bag? Does this 10kg limit include the tiffin box, wa-

## VIEWS on NEWS

ter bottle, umbrella, rainwear etc which every child carries? Will the kid be sent home and if the parent has dropped the child and left, will the kid be left to fend for itself? If this exercise is not to be carried out daily, who will maintain the record of each child's weight? This will consume a couple of hours. The logistics for such an exercise are too complicated and it is only reasonable to assume that the job may be outsourced. Like school bus, kids will be exposed to danger of being molested. What happens if there is disparity between the scales of the school and the parents? Disputes will arise and judiciary will have to step in at some stage.

Undoubtedly, the judiciary has the interest of the students at heart. But whether due attention has been paid to the feasibility aspect, is not clear. How much of a financial burden each parent may have to bear since all the costs will be factored by schools while determining the fees / contributions for other activities? Not all parents will be able to bear the costs. Will the government reimburse the schools? Or will they levy some other cess like they do to help farmers who are committing suicide?

*The court wants the government to name who would be responsible [accountable?] to ensure that the guidelines are followed. The intent is good but what happens if a child wants to carry some extra books [over and above the permissible limit]. Will the child be punished or the school will be taken to task? What happens if the child loses weight and thereby exceeds the 10% limit? Should the principal be held responsible? Too much of responsibility is being put on the principals who are also supposed to ensure safety of kids in school buses. Let them concentrate on their primary tasks of imparting education which may otherwise suffer.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## BJP Obsession with Rahul Gandhi?

The Congress party is a confused lot because they do not have issues to talk about. Can you play the same record every time? Rahul Gandhi has been harping on 'soot-boot' – taunt which paid some political dividends in the past but has now lost its value. You must find something new to target the government



by Marshall Sequeira

in general and Narendra Modi in particular. Now the party is asking questions on why Modi should have gone to the United States. That can be as ridiculous as it can be. I think attending the UNGA is the most important thing for a PM to do. He goes there representing 125 crore people [including Congressmen] and speaks to the world community. Almost all the Government heads are there and they have not come to market themselves but their respective countries.

The Congress party is losing it. It appears that they do not have answers to the relentless questions from the other political parties, media and the public. Not too long ago, the Gandhi icon – Rahul Gandhi did the disappearing act for almost two months and the party spokesperson was all at sea in trying to convince the people that he is somewhere [on this planet] and there is no need for any anxiety. It was not anxiety, you dimwit, it was sheer curiosity. The party must either consider him a public figure or a private person – you cannot have it both ways. Now again he has disappeared ostensibly to attend some week end meet [some Charlie Rose] but he left in the beginning of the week

*It is sad that Rahul Gandhi goes where and when he likes – does not keep other leaders informed about where and why he is traveling at crucial times. The ideal thing for his office is to issue a press release and give full details of his programme. One can understand the curiosity of the media. But is BJP uncomfortable with Rahul since he keeps on needling them all the time and there is a need for a hit-back? The party is obsessed with him and it is suffering from OCD – "Obsessive-compulsive disorder" where one needs to perform certain routine things repeatedly. Or could it be that the BJP is getting cornered at regular intervals on issues like 'ban culture', Sanathan, RSS, VHP etc for which it has no real answers. Surely, the BJP can do better than bashing Rahul Gandhi.*



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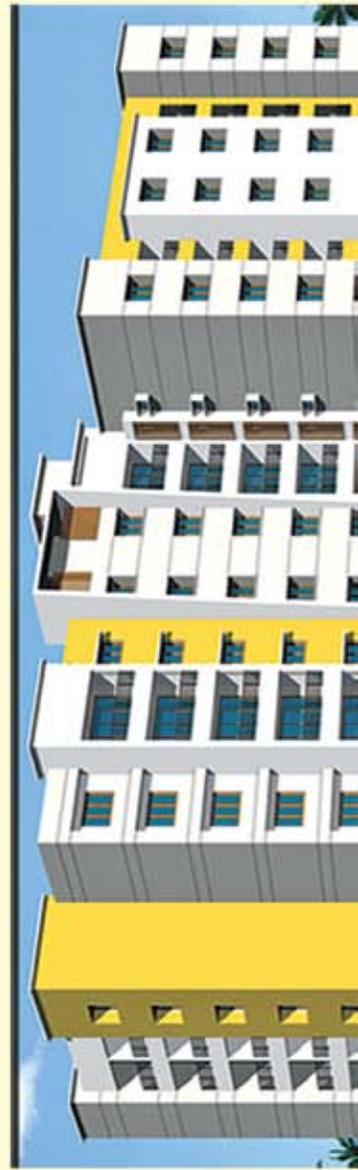
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# Catholic Journalism In North India

## Challenges/ Concerns/ Scope

(Based on a presentation at the North India Convention of the Indian Catholic Press Association held at Agra on 28th September)



by **chhotebhai** \*

**T**he previous speaker was asked to present a bird's eye view; but the topic given to me is so vast that it would require a wide-angle lens to cover it! Nevertheless, here goes. I will attempt an analysis of the six key words – North India – Catholic – Journalism – Challenges – Concerns – Scope. We need contextualising for, as the old adage goes, “A text without a context is a pretext”.

**North India:** My first premise is that North India (NI) controls the rest of India politically. Unfortunately the Catholic presence in what is called the cow belt is abysmally low. My second premise is that though there is a large Muslim presence in U.P., Bihar and the Kashmir Valley, this vast region is distinctly Hindu. It is here that the major Hindu epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharat are based. They impact the NI psyche. We need to keep this in mind when looking at Catholic journalism here.

**Catholics:** We are in the historic city of Agra, in the shadow of Akbar's Church (built circa 1599). At that time there were 1000 Catholics in Agra. Begum Sumroo of Sardhana, who was also baptized in this church in the 18th century, had 2000 Catholics in her fiefdom. By that count there should have been lakhs of Catholics in these places today. It hasn't happened. I have with me Catholic Directories dating back to 1902. They show large-scale apostasy. Where have all the flowers gone?

The church here is a migrant, transplanted one; not a Local Church as envisaged by Vatican II. The min-

iscule local populace feels like strangers in their own land. The church is highly institutionalized, where individuals don't count. It has become insular and isolated, not inserted and integrated. Though our institutions began as services to the poor, the rich soon commandeered them. Now they are the breeding grounds for an aspirational Middle Class, the type that wants Modi, Malls and MNCs.

The church suffers from the problem of plenty – too many priests, bishops, dioceses, religious, institutions and money. In Ignatian spirituality we may say that our strength has become our weakness.

If the church itself is rootless and weak, both numerically and sociologically; any attempt at journalism, without first taking its own people on board, is a recipe for disaster. It makes me wonder aloud, “Does the Catholic hierarchy actually want an enlightened (and therefore empowered) laity?” My former experience as the National President of the All India Catholic Union makes me say that the answer is a firm “No”.

**Journalism:** Here I again wonder, do we have journalists who happen to be Catholic, or Catholics who happen to be journalists? Going by the number of journalists that are actually committed to the church I daresay that most of them are journalists who just happen to be Catholics. That bodes ill. Now let us examine the types of Catholic journals we have. I would put them in four categories.

The first are what I would term vehicles of parochial propaganda – diocesan magazines with the “Shepherd's Voice”, parish bulletins, and pious journals. They flourish. The second category is hierarchically controlled journals that will only publish “good news”. There is no room for dissent or critical awareness. They too flourish among the sheep, the “cattle class”, to borrow from Shashi Tharoor.

The third are relatively independent secular oriented journals like “In-



dian Currents” published from Delhi. It languishes in comparison to the other categories. But I would single it out as the only Catholic journal in NI that seems to have an impact on both the life of the church, and society at large. It has an excellent array of writers and social analysts. Unfortunately, because of its “serious” nature it is grossly lacking in advertising support, which in turn, affects its print quality. Nevertheless, for all its constraints, it is one journal that needs all our support. Its readership also seems limited to priests and religious, that too of a particular ethnic group. It needs to increase its subscriber base among the laity as also non-Christians.

Recently the Catholic bishops have launched a Hindi tabloid “Buland Prajatantra”, and they seem quite enthused about it. Not me. Firstly, the name is skewed. It is a mix of Urdu and Hindi. The word “praja” is anathema in a modern democracy, as it means “subjects of a king”. The journal also seems to suffer from an identity crisis. It is so secular that it ends up having nothing “Catholic” about it; other than the 40 bishops who are funding it. I do hope that they will have a course correction.

Fourthly, there are lay owned autonomous journals, in which I would like to give pride of place to “The Secular Citizen” of Mumbai. As its owner/ publisher Lawrence Coelho says, if he thinks about the finances he would go mad; so he doesn't think of money at all. For him it is a passion, a mission, and it shows.

Catholic journals should try to strike a balance between being too parochial or too secular. They should

(Contd.. on p. 18)

# A Defining Moment For Humanity!

—Fr. Cedric Prakash sj\*

**P**ope Francis is currently taking the United States by storm! In just a little over a day since he touched down at the Joint Base Andrews (just outside Washington), he has not only charmed thousands of adulating Americans from across the board but has also raised several major concerns which need to be addressed.

In an unprecedented move, President Barack Obama, First Lady Michelle Obama and their daughters, along with Vice-President Joe Biden and his family welcomed Pope Francis when he arrived on September 22nd. The US President does not normally go to welcome a foreign dignitary; however by doing so, Obama has sent a message to the American people and to the world leaders that the Pope's visit is being taken very seriously. After the welcome, Pope Francis demonstrated what he stood for: simplicity and austerity as he shunned the limousine normally used by dignitaries and preferred to travel in a much smaller ordinary black Fiat hatch-back car. A powerful message for the people of the world's richest country!

On September 23rd his first full day in America, he 'wowed' the people of America. At a highly moving reception at the White House and after a warm effusive welcome speech from President Obama, Pope Francis touched the hearts of the American people when he said "as the son of an "immigrant family", I am happy to be a guest in this country which was largely built by such families. I look forward to these days of encounter and dialogue, in which I hope to listen to and share, many of the hopes and dreams of the American people". He touched upon unjust discrimination, religious liberty, reconciliation and above all climate change saying, "it seems clear to me also that climate change is a problem which can no longer be left to a future

generation. When it comes to the care of our "common home", we are living at a critical moment of history. We still have time to make the changes needed to bring about "a sustainable and integral development", for we know that things can change".

Pope Francis is known for his compassion for the poor and the refugees; besides being a blunt critic of capitalism, unbridled consumerism and the market-driven economy. He has constantly been advocating a simple lifestyle and being close to the people who live on the margins of society. In his path-breaking Encyclical 'Laudato Si: On the Care for our Common Home' he states "many people know that our current progress and the mere amassing of things and pleasures are not enough to give meaning and joy to the human heart, yet they feel unable to give up what the market sets before them" (#209). On the flight from Cuba to the US, he told the journalists that his critique of capitalism is consistent with the social teaching of the Church.

Besides addressing a joint sitting of the US Congress on September 24th he will also address the United Nations General Assembly on September 25th on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the UN and also in the context of the Summit on "Sustainable Development Goals". This Summit is expected to bring together heads of Governments and of States from most of the 193 member countries. In both these momentous addresses, Pope Francis is expected to touch on some of the key concerns plaguing humanity today; including climate change, global warming and the wanton destruction of natural resources. In 'Laudato Si' he states "the warming caused by huge consumption on the part of some rich countries has repercussions on the poorest areas of the world" (#51). It is significant that one of India's leading dailies (DNA, page 1, September 23rd) in a major

headline stated that, "Law aids tainted firms to continue mining: backed by a new law, it's business as usual for miners accused of illegally extracting iron ore in a massive Rs 1 lakh crore scam". But do we care?

US lawmakers and world leaders will surely pay rapt attention to what Pope Francis has to say as he emphasizes the urgency to end poverty and ensure peace for all. He is also expected to make a call for a paradigm shift in the way countries respond to endemic issues and of the way the powerful and vested interests would rather keep war and conflict going on in several parts of the world, for profiteering and greed.

In an anticipatory message on the Pope's visit to the UN Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon says that "he is confident that His Holiness Pope Francis's visit will inspire the international community to redouble its efforts to achieve human dignity for all through ensuring greater social justice, tolerance and understanding among all of the world's peoples"

These next days are surely going to be special not merely for the US and the UN, but for the ordinary citizens in every corner of the world. A truly defining moment for humanity! Pope Francis through word and witness has brought a new breath, a fresh ray of hope to many. He is bound to challenge the world leaders in no uncertain terms. Will they have the courage to accept his challenge? And particularly, will India do so?

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

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# Relevance of 13th and Fatima Devotion

**O**ur Lady of Fatima is a title given to Mary, the Mother of Christ, who appeared to three shepherd children at Fatima, in Portugal. These apparitions of Mother Mary occurred on the 13th day of six consecutive months from May to October in 1917. In 1930, 13 years after these apparitions, the Holy See approved of them. The months of May and October have been specially recommended by the popes down the centuries for pious practice in honour of our Blessed mother. As a tradition, in a number of parishes the statue of Our Lady of Fatima is taken to the villages or homes for veneration. These are also months for special devotion to Our Lady of Fatima. The proper day for the feast of Our Lady of Fatima is marked in the liturgical calendar on 13th May which was traditionally the feast of Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament.



we can note the significance. It was during World War I that Mother Mary appeared on 13th May 1917 and announced her message of peace and a call to turn mankind towards Jesus the King. The then pope Benedict XV responded to her call, to save mankind from the impending disaster.

In the Old Testament, the book of Esther reports a similar story of how Jews were saved from massacre from the hands of their enemy Haman, the chief minister and adviser of king Ahasuerus. Mordecai, Esther's cousin and guardian urged and prepared Queen Esther to intervene on behalf of the Jews to the king. At her pleading the plot was reverted and thousands of Jews were saved. This day marked in the book of Esther is 13th day of the month of Adar (Esther 9:1; 3:9).

The Archdiocese of Bombay is blessed to have a statue of Our Lady of Fatima brought from Fatima, Portugal in 1920 to Karjat, an obscure village. This elegantly carved statue at first found abode at the station master office for veneration, till it was installed in the newly built Church, in the year 1935. Incidentally this is the first Church in Asia to be named after Our Lady of Fatima. For last 80 years pilgrims find solace in their visit to this shrine at Karjat. On the 13th of every month thousands of pilgrims gather faithfully for a full day Fatima Devotion to take darshan, to know more about the message of Our Lady of Fatima, and learn the way to peace from Our Lady of Fatima. The Sunday after the 13th of October is set aside for the Annual pilgrim celebration and the culmination of the year round celebrations and special full day Fatima devotions held on the 13th of each month at this Shrine.

On 13th May 1917, while the Mother of God was appearing in Fatima, announcing to the world her message of peace and conversion and warning humanity about the terrible crises of the 20th century, in the Sistine Chapel in Rome from which he would emerge years later as the Successor of Peter, the Nuncio Eugenio Pacelli, the future Pius XII, was being consecrated Archbishop by Pope Benedict XV. Later we read, Pius XII's burial took place on 13th October 1958. Our Lady's message at Fatima had reference and prediction of the assassination on St. Pope John Paul II. It was on Sunday, May 13, 1917 Our Lady of Fatima first appeared to the 3 children. Coincidentally, on May 13, 1981 Blessed Pope John Paul II was shot 4 times at St Peter's Square in Rome by Turkish gunman Mehmet Ali Agca. Pope John II survived the assassination. The following year on the same day, the pope visited the shrine city of Fatima in Portugal to thank Our Lady for surviving this assassination attempt.

The date 13th may not find many takers in the Indian cultural background since the day is considered inauspicious though this is not true for devotees of Our Lady of Fatima, for whom 13th is day set aside for prayer, peace and penance. The choice by our heavenly mother of this date for her apparitions for six consecutive months will always remain a mystery. However, as history unfolds

Pope Francis was elected Supreme Pontiff on 13th March 2013. On 13th May 2013 he consecrated his pontificate to the to Our lady of Fatima, on the 96th anniversary of her first apparition. On 13th October 2013, Sunday Pope consecrated the world to Immaculate Heart of Mary in front of the main statue of Our lady of Fatima which was flown for a day from Fatima Portugal. 13th Octo-

ber 2013 was honoured as the Marian day, an event organized as part of the Year of Faith. The last surviving Fatima visionary, Sister Lucia dos Santos died on February 13, 2005 at age 97. On May 13, 1947, at a youth congress at Fatima, a resolution was passed to have a statue like the original at the Chapel of Cova de Iria, visiting Europe and Russia, which is called the 'Pilgrim Virgin'. Since then, the Fatima sanctuary commissioned many international 'Pilgrim Virgin' statues. Our country and city witnesses the presence of this pilgrim statue in 1970 touring our Archdiocese

All these events with reference to Our Lady of Fatima have made 13th a glorious and interesting day, giving greater meaning for the Fatima devotion on 13th. The constant flow of devotees who come as pilgrims from distant places, to spend a full day at the Karjat Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, with love for their beloved heavenly mother reflects their tremendous faith and perseverance. Birthdays, weddings, jubilees which fall on the 13th of a month make the occasion even more special. Our Lady of Fatima desires peace in the heart of every devotee, in the neighbourhood and specially among the nations stifled in division.

The purpose of the 13th Fatima Devotion at Karjat is to meditate deeply on the love of God for us and on the lives of Jesus and Mary, with the intention of conforming our life to theirs, this devotion has great power to help transform our lives for the better and to bring many closer to God through prayer, penance and sacrifice. Today the world is in need of true peace and it can be attained only when one learns to respect and honour creation in totality. There is in man the unselfish desire to possess more in turn treating creation as an object. He has failed to love creation, so he uses it, robs it, uses it, for his personal gains. There is an urgent need to nurture and enhance the planet. Peace can come only by becoming kind to the creation and protecting nature. As we approach the 100th Anniversary of Our Lady's apparitions at Fatima, let us all join in spreading this devotion of Fatima, a devotion of Peace, throughout the globe.

—Fr Calistus Fernandes  
Shrine of our Lady of Fatima Karjat

**G**andhi was born in Porbander on October 2, 1869-his father was a chief minister of the Maharaja of Porbandhar-family were from the traditional caste of grocers and money lenders-the name Gandhi means grocer.

Gandhi's mother Putlibai came from the Pranami Vaishnava Jain community and was Karamchand-ie his father's fourth wife-the first three died in childbirth and she was a devout Jain-a religion where non-vegetarianism and non-violence are important ideals and Gandhi stated that he was most influenced by his mother whose life was an endless chain of fasts and vows.

Gandhi was married at 13 to Kasturba Makhanji and in the process lost a year in school.

In his autobiography titled : My Experiments with Truth which in 1999 Harper-Collins publishers declared one of the 100 most important spiritual books of the 20th century Gandhi says he likes Christ but not ' the Christians ' whom he said did not follow Christ but unfortunately he met the wrong type of non-practicing Christians- there were many devout Christians who he did not meet or for some reason he chooses to ignore.

Gandhi just went to South Africa to earn money because in India he could earn money and a name and in 1893 he accepted a contract in Dada Abdulla & Co in South Africa whose business was smuggling for which he charged a small amount.

In 1932 according to Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar's Writings and Speeches Vol 9 What Congress and Gandhi have done to the untouchables (-pgs 17-39) and Dr Muruga Dorai Ambethkar kaappujum Epic - Tamil- of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar's Biography Part 2, (pgs 221-222) Gandhi collected one crore and thirty lakhs of rupees in the name of Tilak Swaraj Fund to help the untouchables but only two lakhs for 60 million untouchables were spent.

Despite his Ahimsa creed of non-violence Gandhi favoured the British for World War-II without consulting congressional leaders and representatives and sent the Indian army to fight for England.

In 1938 Subhas Chandra Bose

## The Mixed Legacy of Mahatma Gandhi



was elected Congress President despite Gandhi's opposition and he later went on a hunger strike until he left his post and he promised to hand him over to the British government at the time of independence.

Gandhi kept on saying that he was trying to save Bhagat Singh but the untold truth was that he never contacted the Viceroy about the Bhagat Singh issue according to Manmath Nath in his writings-the reason being that he found Bhagat Singh's popularity a threat to his independence movement which the reason why he wanted him to hang - and on his execution he said that the government certainly had the right to hang these men. However there are some rights which exist to those who possess them only if they are enjoyed in name only.

He did not open a single door of a Hindu temple in Gujarat for the untouchables.

Gandhi started so many *Andolans* and *Lehars* against the Britishers and

their government which he withdrew after a month and two months rendering them useless and he never wanted to lead the people through these *Andolans*.

Surprisingly though Gandhi was a revolutionary he once said I have come to fulfill the laws of caste but how can a true revolutionary like Gandhi support the caste system because such people do not support the caste system or rich or poor people.

Gandhi wanted the caste system to be used as a division of labour.

He condoned the Zulu massacre-defending the killing of the innocent and the British in their actions which drew condemnation from the Congress of the United States against his derogatory and unjust remarks.

Besides this he did not express support for the independence of South Africa.

Thus since his mission was not international he did not deserve the Nobel Peace Prize.

His opposition to modern medicine took odd turns as he did want his wife to take life saving penicillin since it would be administered with a hypodermic needle yet he allowed himself to be treated with quinine and allowed himself to be operated for appendicitis.

Once when he was boarding a train one of his shoes slipped and fell on the tracks - he instantly removed the other shoe and threw it near the first one as his intention was to help the person who found the pair-so that he would have two shoes

Gandhi hated to be photographed.

The early life of Gandhi is unknown.

Despite all his many shortcomings Gandhi won independence for India without a drop of blood-we are grateful to him for promoting Hindustani, natural therapy, vegetarianism, communal harmony and humanism.

His greatness lay in his simplicity and he was often controversial because he thought and acted like a lawyer.

**(Contd.. from p. 14)**

not fight shy of criticism, dissent or even controversy.

Challenges: As I earlier said, one cannot view Catholic journals in isolation. Hence I see the foremost challenge is for the church itself to become a truly Local Church, with primacy to the local language, culture and leadership, both lay and clerical. Without a strong base we cannot dream of upper storeys. My experience of the last 40 years, as a Christian who boldly wears a wooden rosary and crucifix, and is involved in all kinds of secular affairs, there is no need to feel ashamed or apologetic about one's Christian identity. If we are committed Christians, and authentic Indians, it shows; as there is no dichotomy between the two.

Concerns: There was a happy couple that had sorted out its concerns. The husband handled major concerns like nuclear disarmament, global warming, communalism, corruption, blah blah blah. The wife handled minor concerns like the household budget, the childrens' education, health etc. She was infact in control of the situation, of which her husband was merely concerned. In management we are taught to increase our areas of control, and our areas of concern will decrease proportionately.

What are our areas of control? Firstly, the pulpit; the largest captive audience in the world. It can be used for effective communication. Then there are our institutions. There is nothing Christian about teaching Maths and Geography, or attaining

99.9% results. It is no use having all these institutions if we cannot use them to propagatate Christian and human values. Let us capitalize on what we have instead of being like Martha whom the Lord reprimanded for being "concerned about many things".

Scope: There is immense scope for Catholic journalism in NI, if we follow the steps that I have tried to identify. Then we should identify our target group and go in for niche marketing. Wheel, Rin and Surf are all manufactured by the same company. But it has identified the different users, and targeted them accordingly.

We also need to bear in mind that with the advent of the electronic media and constant breaking news, readers are suffering from an attention span deficit. Hence our articles and headlines should be catchy. We need more authentic or original writing. I often come across articles that are obviously "googled". They are second hand and therefore third rate. Then there are readers' interests that may not necessarily be the same as that of our bishop "promoters". And let's not get too serious. Give us a judicious mix of light and heavy stuff, sweet and sour.

I would conclude by saying that

many of us good Catholics may be comfortable with our mediocrity and anonymity. But the good is the enemy of the great. If we seek

to make Catholic journalism in NI truly impacting then we need to ascend the dizzying heights of greatness, with all its attendant risks.

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**(Contd.. from p. 2)**

from Mr Dabhi.

At the public function that brought the first day to a close, the contributions of two senior veterans in the profession, viz. the indefatigable Mr John Dayal and the prolific Chhotebhai were each acknowledged and felicitated by means of shawl and a citation. Dances by girls from schools in the locality gave colour to the event.

At a public function in the evening, senior Catholic journalist John Dayal from Delhi and Chottebhai from Kanpur were felicitated with a shawl and memento by Archbishop Albert D'Souza, Bishop Slavadore Lobo and Bishop Chacko Thottumarickal for their distinguished service to the Catholic Press in India. Six Agra journalists were also honoured on the occasion.

by Ladislaus L D'Souza & Jose Vincent K J

### J.M.& J.

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Contact Mr. Stephen Lobo 9821013678 / 9920285167

And many more plots etc.

# Inspiration!

## Be bold, speak your mind

**T**he art of communication is not mastered by just knowing what to say and how to say it. So often people sit back and say nothing when something really needs to be said. It could be an idea, a suggestion, an observation, a criticism... but for some reason they don't want to speak up. We need certain people who can tell us truth - the way it is or the way it should be. People who boldly speak out their mind are not simply attractive; they also make the world a better place by providing more truth. Here are reasons why people who speak their mind are incredibly attractive.

### **They don't mince words:**

You can always know what they're thinking because their words somehow reveal their emotions, feelings, and perspectives. They know that being pretentious will make them pretty uncomfortable in the relationship with you, so they will pour it out in words and expressions.

### **They are honest:**

People who speak their minds are advocates of honesty. They don't simply preach it, they practice it. At the end of the day, there is so much strength and solidity that can be achieved with honest – like trust, transparency, and awareness.

### **They are bold:**

Bold is sexy and appealing. People who speak their minds are bold and courageous. They really are not fo-



cus on what they have to lose, but rather on what they will gain by telling you the truth. They just are not worried about compromise. When push comes to shove this quality could be what your relationship is valued on.

### **Not confrontation issues:**

Actually, they revel in confrontation, and are great at confronting others. They consider confrontations as a way of making a statement. Such moments can make you see a person who speaks their mind for what they are. You are forced to accept them this way or not.

### **They don't limit themselves:**

They see possibilities in the cold wilderness. They know that a hard truth doesn't hide these possibilities, but actually reveals them. It makes them aware of all the chances and options that they can urge you to take.

### **Voicing concern boldly:**

People who speak their minds are bold and courageous. They really are not focused on what they have to

lose, but rather on what they will gain by telling you the truth. They just are not worried about compromise.

### **No flattery, only the truth:**

All that pampering and smothering may never make you aware of the smart and hard decisions you have to be making. They wouldn't flatter you. Everything you will get from them is something you deserve.

### **They understand that life is short:**

We do not have too many chances or opportunities in life to express how we feel or take those decisive actions. However, a person who speaks their mind takes the slim opportunities they have and still makes such moments matter. They know that life is too short to be holding in feelings and not expressing yourself.

### **They offer an honest opinion:**

At this point, they can attract people who want to be mirrored by them. They have no problem giving anyone an honest opinion on any given issue. Actually, they attract a lot of people who want an honest piece of advice.

### **They will apologize if they have to:**

They are responsible. They know that they will not always be right. When they are on the edge of a mistake, they are okay with telling you that they are sorry and they are on the wrong. They are never too egotistic to admit a mistake because they know how to reveal their hate, love, fears, distaste, and their mistakes.

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# Grooms



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**MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 25 years, Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 75 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. F.Y.B.Com., well employed. Contact email : gerardd754@gmail.com OR 9930620943/9594766322 (Regd. No. 6424)

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

**MUMBAI :** Mumbai born, Mangalorean RC Bachelor 40, handsome, Post Graduate, good family background. Financially well established, very practical, having own business and flat in Mulund. Fair Complexion, Height 5' 9", Built on heavy side. Looking for a spinster who is willing to be his Life Partner. Send full details and latest photograph by email : amithanand@theoremsol.in (Regd. No. 6416)

**MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic 1st marriage annulled by the church, aged 37 years, Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 80 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. HSC., Diploma in Hotel and Restaurants Management, Working in Front office Department, well settled. Seeks a simple, humble, godfearing girl. Contact email : menezes\_kenneth@rediffmail.com OR 9619089645 (Regd. No. 6154)

**MUMBAI :** Telugu Protestant Bachelor, aged 26 years, Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 86 kgs, Fair Complexion, Handsome, Well qualified and good family background. Seeks a suitable match. Contact email : ashok.williams@gmail.com (Regd. No. 6153)

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

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

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

**MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor Edn. 8th std., having own accommodation, working in Catholic school as a Peon, drawing good salary, aged 47 years, Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 55 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Seeks a suitable match. Contact Mob.: 9892134950 (Regd. No. 6294)

**MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 27 years, Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 86 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., IT, MCM, working as

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

a Associate Developer. Only Child. Seeks a educated girl. Contact email : peterlobo.lapetero@gmail.com OR 9969477179 (Regd. No. 6278)

**MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 28 years, Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 78 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.E. I.T., Principal Consultant in South Africa. Contact email: ronaldsouza.pm@gmail.com OR 9702970004 / 9820842154 (Regd. No. 6276)

**MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic, aged 67 years, looks much younger to his age, Pensioner from Australia, intend to settled in Mumbai or Goa. Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 83 kgs, Wheatish complexion, Edn. SSC., seeks a girl from decent family background. Contact : 7506932009. (Regd. No. 6274)

**BANGALORE :** Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 30 years, Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 78 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Tech., MBA, PGDM., working as a IT Software - Business Analyst. Seeks a suitable match. Contact email : osbon\_prusty@yahoo.co.in OR 8123090908. (Regd. No. 6158)

**MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 60 years, looks much younger to his age, Ht. 5' 10", Fair Complexion, M.Sc., IT, worked in Australia as a Programmer. (Regd. No. 6238)

**MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, aged 34 years, Ht. 5' 4", Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a Bank Officer. Contact email : savioanthony.dias@sc.com OR 9820379835 (Regd. No. 6231)

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**MUMBAI** : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 27 years, Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.A. (Lit) Teacher by profession. Contact email : shalantam@gmail.com OR 91-67285160 **(Regd. No. 6428)**

**MUMBAI** : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 30 years, Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.E., working as a Sr. Analyst in MNC. Contact email : joe51in@yahoo.co.in or 9322282297 **(Regd. No. 6427)**

**MUMBAI** : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 26 years, Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Bachelors in Physiotherapy, working as a Physiotherapist. Contact email : tracy.veigas89@gmail.com OR 7506574831 **(Regd. No. 6426)**

**MUMBAI** : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 25 years, Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.A. in Political Science, working, Contact email : dsilva.maggie252@gmail.com OR 9960376878 **(Regd. No. 6425)**

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

**MUMBAI** : RC Goan Spinster, 39 yrs, 5' 2", slim, Wheatish Complexion, looks young and good looking, holding USA Citizenship. Completed Associate Degree from USA. Presently residing in Mumbai for a short while. Seeking alliance from a well-educated, well-settled, good family background bachelor from USA or someone from UK, Canada, Australia upto 42 yrs. Reply with details and latest photo to [senorita\\_gomes@rediffmail.com](mailto:senorita_gomes@rediffmail.com) or 9769825928. **(Regd. No. 6031)**

**MUMBAI** : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 31 years, Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 56 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. SYBA, Dip. in Avition, working CO in TCS, Seeks a Goan, loving, understanding, social and should have family values. Preferred from Gulf/Mumbai. Contact email : costa\_05@rediffmail.com OR 9869316699 **(Regd. No. 6170)**

**MUMBAI** : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 30 years, Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA (Finance), working as a Finance Manager in Dubai Seeks a well settled boy in Dubai or Mumbai. Contact email : lobocindrella@gmail.com OR 971501663159/9867375554 **(Regd. No. 6169)**

**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)**

**PUNJAB** : North Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Post Graduate in Nursing, **Position** : Nurising Tutor (Clinical Instructor), Calm, quiet, intelligent, Seeks a suitable match from respectable family, and well settled. Contact email : shephalitigga04@gmail.com OR 0164-2272549. **(Regd. No. 6161)**

**MUMBAI** : CSI Protestant Spinster, aged 40 years, Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 60 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., Computer Teacher. Seeks a suitable match. Contact email : george\_bhagya@yahoo.com OR 9819206366 / 9545978761 **(Regd. No. 6160)**

**BOISAR** : CNI Protestant Spinster,

aged 34 years, Ht. 5', Wt. 58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. BE Com, PGD in Textile Designing, working as a Textile Designer. Contact email : jackson.reena@gmail.com OR 02525-284872 **(Regd. No. 6159)**

**DUBAI** : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 28 years, Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 58 kgs, Fair Complexion, good-looking and smart, Edn. MBA., working as a Manager in Bank. Seeks a graduate Bombay based Mangalorean bachelor, working in Dubai. Having a good status. Contact email : vick5256@gmail.com OR 00971 55 5902447 **(Regd. No. 6150)**

**MUMBAI** : Mangalorean RC parents invite alliance for their daughter 28 years, 5' 4", B.Tech (Computer Engineer) Working for MNC. Seeks well qualified and well settled bachelor with good family values. Kindly reply with profile and recent photograph to email : dmaryln@ymail.com OR 09916087940 **(Regd. No. 6223)**

**MUMBAI** : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 27 years, Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 44 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., Working as a Sr. Officer in Bank. Contact email : rima.dsouza@hotmail.com OR 9920627802 / 9819602045 **(Regd. No. 6217)**

**MUMBAI** : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 27 years, Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 58 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Chartered Accountant, working as a Manager in Bank. Contact email : multipurpose2909@gmail.com OR 9004351178 **(Regd. No. 6306)**

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**6249. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, Only Child, aged 34 years, Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 57 kgs, Fair and good looking, Edn. B.Com., working for Banking Organisation in Fraud Dept., Contact email : annmdsouza09@gmail.com OR 8983236758 **(Regd. No. 6249)**

**MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 26 years, Ht. 5' 3", Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.A. (English Literature), Working as a Journalist (Asst. Editor) Contact email : sarita.rebello310@gmail.com OR 9833157737 **(Regd. 6194)**

**MUMBAI :** Goan (Bardez) Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 33 years, Ht. 5' 4", Fair Complexion., Edn. B.A., Dip. in Financial Management, Banking Exams, Working as Senior Manager for a reputed Private Sector Bank Seeks educated and well settled Roman Catholic Goan (Bardez) Bachelor between 35-38 years. Ht. 5' 7" and above. Contact email : andy.franky@hotmail.com OR 9833710833 **(Regd. No. 6185)**

**MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 36 years, Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a Sr. Customer Service Associate. Contact email : dsouza.arati@gmail.com OR 9869612479 **(Regd. No. 6184)**

**MUMBAI :** R.C. Goan parents seek alliance for their daughter, 1987 born, 5' 3", M.Sc., MBA employed with MNC in Mumbai, from bachelors aged between 30-33 years with good family background. Those interested kindly reply with complete details and recent photograph at buddies\_22@yahoo.in **(Regd. No. 6174)**

**MUMBAI :** Tamilian Roman Catholic

Spinster, aged 28 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 :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 5", Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.S. in Human Resources, working for an international school, seeks a well educated Mangalorean bachelor from a decent family background. Contact email : marriageproposal986@gmail.com OR 9892656367 **(Regd. No. 6147)**

**GUJRAT :** Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 28 years, Ht. 5' 4", Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.E. (Mechanical) working as an Asst. Professor in Engineering College. Seeks highly educated bachelor. Contact email : alicedsz08@gmail.com / alicedsouza08@yahoo.in OR 0265-2339630 **(Regd. No. 6144)**

**NEW DELHI :** Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 3", Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., working as a Travel Executive. Seeks a suitable match. Contact email : elaine.j.gomes@gmail.com OR 9818729963 **(Regd. No. 6143)**

**MUMBAI :** Anglo Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 68 kgs, wheatish Complexion, Edn. T.Y.B.A., working for CSR, Seeks a well settled, sober habits, presentable, understanding nature, Contact email : foreverbeck@yahoo.com OR 9049766964 **(Regd. No. 6142)**

**MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com., B.Ed., Seeks a suitable match. Contact email : w\_noronha@yahoo.co.in OR 9867435052 **(Regd. No. 6139)**

**MUMBAI :** South Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 32 years, Ht. 160 cms, Wt. Normal, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc./ PGDMLT, working as a Pathology Lab Technician (Instructor) in KSA since 10 years,

well settled, seeks a suitable match. Contact email : Mathew\_680@yahoo.com OR 8652531726 **(Regd. No. 6136)**

**PUNE :** Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 28 years, Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 82 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.A. working with MNC as HR. Seeks a suitable match. Contact email : minin1958@hotmail.com OR 9860097450 **(Regd. No. 6132)**

**MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 26 years, Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 72 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., Diploma in Fin. App. working as a Sr. Executive in Finance Company. Seeks a educated and well settled bachelor Ht. above 5' 8". Contact email : jovy.rodrigues@gmail.com OR 9769440351 **(Regd. No. 6131)**

**MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 26 years, Ht. 5'4", Wt. 56 kgs, Fair Complexion, goodlooking and graceful, Edn. as Interior Designer & works as an Interior Designer. Seeks an well educated, working Goan Bachelor. India/Abroad. Having a good status. Contact : +918689890839 and email : mary29paul@gmail.com **(Regd. No. 6403)**

**MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 37 years, Ht. 5'2", Wt. 60 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Post Graduate working as a Support Analyst in Airlines. Contact email : erminda3561@gmail.com OR 9870180036 **(Regd. No. 6402)**

**DUBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, B.Com, aged 29 years, Ht. 5' 4", working for a Bank in Dubai contact email : lavalobo11@gmail.com OR 9769144425 / +971559689017 **(Regd. No. 6400)**

**MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, aged 27 years, Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 58 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Chartered Accountant, working as a Manager in Bank. Contact email : multipurpose2909@gmail.com OR 9004351178 **(Regd. No. 6306)**

# Agnes of God!

“An Immaculate Conception? Or a bold-faced lie? You will be the judge and jury!”- Advertisement in the Bombay Times.

Never before has an advertisement for a play appeared in such large size, in huge bold print with such attractive artwork. It was published in a daily paper which is rapidly gaining the reputation for seeking cheap popularity by sensationalising its reports!! The advertisement offers ‘complementary invites’ to the play ‘AGNES OF GOD’ by theatre persons known for producing controversies in the past.

‘Agnes of God’ is a play by John Pielmeier which tells the story of a novice nun who gives birth and insists that the child was the result of a virgin conception. - Wikipedia. It was originally published in 1982 in New York. Digging up the past sometimes yields dirt for building castles in the air.....

We do not question why the advertisement in the society column has failed to credit the play to the playwright, John Pielmier, or why it boldly displays the names of the locals involved in it. No, we do not take objection to the play itself but to the manner in which it is used to catapult someone into the limelight. The question thrown to attract theatre-goers will first have to be answered by them, “Do you believe in miracles?”

For rational people the answer is not far- this case was not a miracle!! A young novice, mentally and spiritually challenged, possibly friendly with a young man named Charlie from the neighbourhood could easily have gotten involved physically and produced a baby.....why is it a miracle?

- We seem to forget that the youth that opts for religious life and to abide by the vow of chastity are all human, plagued by the attractions of the world.
- The novice nun in the play has hallucinations and talks to herself, proving that she could be unable to discern and draw the boundaries of behaviour within the convent.
- Records show that those mentality

disturbed are an easy prey for sexual predators.

- It is not surprising that in her feeble mental state, she described her pregnancy as ‘immaculate conception’. In the US where religion does not occupy social centre stage, this case was treated as a human health issue.
- The producers in Mumbai through the advertisement have projected the play as a challenge to the Christian belief of ‘Immaculate conception’.
- Being soft targets, the community’s religious beliefs have been parodied in the past too. Some sensitivity was expected from the producers in treating this topic.....

**To set the record straight here is another proof-**

Theatre critic LEAH D. FRANK, in her review of the play, published: in December 16, 1984, treated it with sensitivity and said this, “THOUGHT-PROVOKING ‘AGNES OF GOD’”

“Agnes of God” is superficially about a psychiatrist who becomes more in touch with herself and her view of the world while she is analyzing Agnes, a nun barely out of her teens who has given birth in a convent to a child she is now accused of murdering. Agnes claims no memory or knowledge of the event, her Mother Superior, Mother Miriam Ruth, insists that Agnes does not understand what happened.

Dr. Martha Livingstone, the court-appointed psychiatrist, wants to discover the truth of the matter hidden behind Agnes’s veiled and cloistered mind. A psychological war ensues between Dr. Livingstone and Mother Miriam Ruth over Agnes’s mental and spiritual health, and the play becomes a collection of contrasts between science and religion, between the temporal and spiritual, and between facts and faith. “

Throwing caution to the winds, without a thought for the faith of other Indians, the producers of the play in Mumbai have sensationalised the issue. The advertisement is in bad taste and in

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these difficult times may spawn more hate campaigns, targeting the Christian community. Is it what they desire and work for?

— Vera Alvares

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