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A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

Dear Catholic Bishops of India....

Dear Catholic Bishops of India,

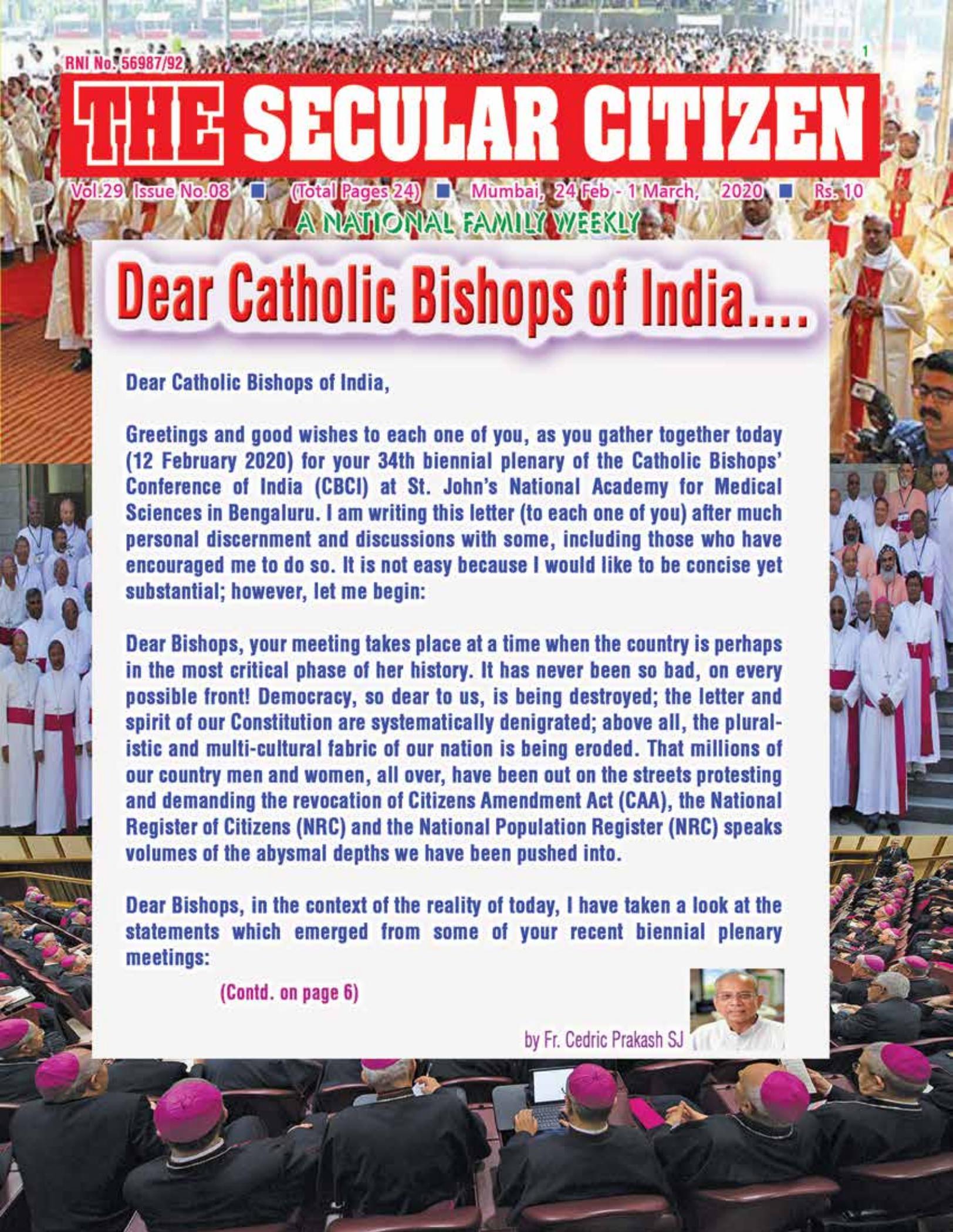
Greetings and good wishes to each one of you, as you gather together today (12 February 2020) for your 34th biennial plenary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) at St. John's National Academy for Medical Sciences in Bengaluru. I am writing this letter (to each one of you) after much personal discernment and discussions with some, including those who have encouraged me to do so. It is not easy because I would like to be concise yet substantial; however, let me begin:

Dear Bishops, your meeting takes place at a time when the country is perhaps in the most critical phase of her history. It has never been so bad, on every possible front! Democracy, so dear to us, is being destroyed; the letter and spirit of our Constitution are systematically denigrated; above all, the pluralistic and multi-cultural fabric of our nation is being eroded. That millions of our country men and women, all over, have been out on the streets protesting and demanding the revocation of Citizens Amendment Act (CAA), the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the National Population Register (NRC) speaks volumes of the abysmal depths we have been pushed into.

Dear Bishops, in the context of the reality of today, I have taken a look at the statements which emerged from some of your recent biennial plenary meetings:

(Contd. on page 6)

by Fr. Cedric Prakash SJ



Gandhian Litterateur Donates Body

chhotebhai

Noted Gandhian litterateur, Padmashri Dr Giriraj Kishore, had pledged his body for medical research. Accordingly, after his demise on Sunday 9th February, at the age of 83, his body was donated to the local GSVM Medical College at Kanpur.

Body donation has been the brainchild of Manoj Sengar who began the Yug Dadeechi Deh Daan Abhiyaan (Body Donation Movement) in Kanpur 17 years ago. It is named after Maharishi Dadeechi. According to Hindu mythology, during the Tretha Yug, there was a fierce battle between the forces of evil and good. The Maharishi sacrificed his life, and with his bones a weapon, Vajra, was made, that destroyed the forces of evil.

Sengar said that he got the inspiration for this movement when Dr K.C. Arya's body was donated on 20th January 2003. He was the husband of Lt Manvati Arya of the Azad Hind Fauj of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. Lt Arya also died recently at the age of 99 and her body too was donated. Her senior colleague, Padmavibhushan Dr Lakshmi Sehgal, head of Bose's Rani Laxmibai Regiment, had also donated her body in like manner a few years earlier.

Sengar stated that Kishore's was the 226th such body donation. When he started this movement there were no cadavers available for medical research in the anatomy departments of medical colleges, and they had to resort to virtual or plastic models for study. The citizens of Kanpur responded generously to Sengar's appeal, so much so that cadavers have now been sent to neighbouring medi-

cal colleges in U.P. as well. This writer and his wife have also pledged their bodies in like manner.

It may be recalled that when modern medical research was evolving in the West, Dr Henry Gray actually dissected his own mother's body, as cadavers were not available. He is now



known as the father of anatomy with his classic book "Gray's Anatomy" published in 1858. It was illustrated (no photographs then) by Henry Vandyke Carter.



Dr Kishore, a former Deputy Registrar of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, was passionate about Hindi, and even crossed swords with the administration over the promotion of the language. Besides literature, he was known for his Gandhian research, and later for his civic activism. He was the patron of the Kanpur Nagrik Manch (Citizens' Forum). His best known works are "Pahle Girmitiya" and "Baa". Girmitiya is a colloquial distortion of the English word "Agreement", and referred to the indentured labour (people of the Agreement) that the British took from the Gangetic plains to work in the sugarcane fields in far off countries like South Africa, the West Indies and the Fiji Islands. With a financial grant from then U.P. Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav, he could go

to those distant lands to record for posterity the travels and travails of the people of the Agreement.

His research also drew him closer to Kasturba Gandhi, the devoted wife of the Mahatma. The novel "Baa" is centred on her. Dr Giriraj was conferred the Padmashri for his contribution to Hindi literature by President APJ Abdul Kalam in 2007. He was also the recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award, among others. He leaves behind his grieving wife Meera, daughters Jaya and Shiva and son Aneesh.

Though born in Muzzaffarnagar in western U.P. he had made Kanpur his home. He never used his caste name, and nobody dared ask him! The city feels orphaned at his passing on.

** The writer is the Founder Convener of the Kanpur Nagrik Manch.*

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Coronavirus Outbreak 2020

By Don Aguiar

1720 Plague, 1820 Cholera Outbreak, 1920 Spanish Flu, 2020 Chinese Coronavirus – What's happening?

A new virus arriving on the scene, leaving patients with pneumonia, is always a worry and health officials around the World Health Organization has declared a global emergency. Can this outbreak be contained or is this something far more dangerous?

This virus is not really "new" - it is just new to humans, having jumped from one species to another. Many of the early coronavirus cases were linked to the South China Seafood Wholesale Market, in Wuhan.

Sars started off in bats and then infected the civet cat, which in turn passed it on to humans. And Middle East respiratory syndrome (Mers), which has killed 858 out of the 2,494 recorded cases since it emerged in 2012, regularly makes the jump from the dromedary camel. It largely spreads when infected people cough droplets containing the virus into the air that infect those nearby.

Initially, the Chinese authorities said the virus was not spreading between people. But now we know each infected person is passing the virus on to between two and three other people. This figure is the basic reproduction number of the virus - anything higher than one means the virus is self-sustaining.

In other words, this is not an outbreak that will burn out on its own and disappear. The World Health Organization (WHO) says the virus is a public health emergency of international concern - as it did with swine flu and Ebola.

Currently the world's attention is riveted on the Whuhan Corona spread. How much is spread despite a coordinated and robust response by China and the world is still anybody's guess. It was heartening to see the Indian government's quick mobilisation to evacuate its citizens from Whuhan

(Contd.. on p. 4)

(Contd.. from p. 3)

The World Health Organisation said that the spread of coronavirus cases which may have no history of travel to China could be the spark that becomes a bigger fire. The virus has spread to at least 27 countries and territories according to a Reuters count based on official reports.

The virus seems to be quite stable, so far. However, it is possible for viruses to mutate and that is something scientists will be watching closely.

The World Health Organization say the outbreak can be contained, but this is not a universally shared view. Experts, including the former head of the US Centres for Disease Control, argue the virus could become a pandemic - a global epidemic.

Dr Golding says: "At the moment, until we have more information, it's really hard to know how worried we should be - "until we have confirmation of the source, that's always going to make us uneasy."

Prof Ball says: "We should be worried about any virus that explores humans for the first time, because it's overcome the first major barrier. Once inside a [human] cell and replicating,

it can start to generate mutations that could allow it to spread more efficiently and become more dangerous. - You don't want to give the virus the opportunity".

The World Health Organization says the official name for the disease caused by the new coronavirus is Covid-19. The word coronavirus refers to the group of viruses it belongs to, rather than the latest strain. The virus itself has been designated SARS-CoV2 by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses.

The symptoms of Coronavirus are sweating, weakness, diarrhoea and stomach pain. Basically it's the same kind of feeling you get when you see you wife checking your phone.

There had been concerning instances of transmission from people who had not been to China. The detection of small number of cases may indicate more widespread transmission in other countries: in short we may only be seeing the tip of the iceberg.

Dr. Francis Boyle Creator of Bioweapons Act Says Coronavirus Is Biological Warfare Weapon | GreatGameIndia

In an explosive interview Dr. Francis Boyle, who drafted the Biological Weapons Act has given a detailed statement admitting that the 2019 Wuhan Coronavirus is an offensive Biological Warfare Weapon and that the World Health Organization (WHO) already knows about it.

Francis Boyle is a professor of international law at the University of Illinois - College of Law. He drafted the U.S. domestic implementing legislation for the Biological Weapons Convention, known as the Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act of 1989 that was approved unanimously by both Houses of the U.S. Congress and signed into law by President George H.W. Bush.

In an exclusive interview given to Geopolitics and Empire, Dr. Boyle discusses the coronavirus outbreak

in Wuhan, China and the Biosafety Level 4 laboratory (BSL-4) from which he believes the infectious disease escaped.

He believes the virus is potentially lethal and an offensive biological warfare weapon or dual-use bio warfare weapons agent genetically modified with gain of function properties, which is why the Chinese government originally tried to cover it up and is now taking drastic measures to contain it. The Wuhan BSL-4 lab is also a specially designated World Health Organization (WHO) research lab and Dr. Boyle contends that the WHO knows full well what is occurring.

Dr. Boyle also touches upon GreatGameIndia's exclusive report Coronavirus Bioweapon - where we reported in detail how Chinese Bio warfare agents working at the Canadian lab in Winnipeg were involved in the smuggling of Coronavirus to Wuhan's lab from where it is believed to have been leaked.

A friend of mine in Shanghai sent me some pictures showing what a ghost town the city looks like now and I have seen similar from Beijing and other cities in China, something that I never imagined I would ever see. Let us hope that the combined efforts of China and the World will result in a reversal of this virus and that we will all learn from it! We also depend on each other more than ever before and it seems no border or Great Wall anywhere is able to contain anything or anyone.

I am not easily alarmed by things I see on the news but the Coronavirus outbreak in China has made me feel uneasy. The virus is said to have claimed 5000 lives in China, and is showing no signs of slowing down. Since no individual is immune to its infection, it will enter India. How am I supposed to keep my loved ones and myself safe? In these times of fake news, I don't know what to believe. What we need is credible information. Viruses spread faster than fake news. So we need to act now and demand accurate information immediately. -

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Catholic Youth Make Good Executives

I am happy to note from the Examiner dated 8th February, 2020, the achievement made by the **TAKE CHARGE MENTORING TEAM**, A pet project of Archdiocese of Bombay. I congratulate the Mentoring Team for the excellent work done by it during the last few years. I suggest that more and more Youth should come forward to take advantages of the facilities provided by the Take Charge Mentoring Team. I wish to make the following suggestions for favour of consideration by the Take Charge Mentoring Committee.

There are two streams of Civil Services- Central and State. In case of Central services (such as IAS, IPS, IFS etc) recruitment is done by holding competitive examinations at all India level. The selected candidates are given intensive training at the Administrative Staff College and other Institutions. Civil Servants occupy the position of District Collectors, Magistrates, Secretary to the State and Central Government, Chief Executives of various Public sector Undertakings etc.

In the case of State governments, recruitment of State Administrative Services, Gazetted and Non Gazetted officers (class I, II, III) namely: Sales Tax Inspectors, RTO Inspectors, Talatis, Revenue Officers, Police Inspectors, Lady Constable, Judicial Officers (Advocate with 5 years legal practice are eligible) etc. is done by inviting applications through advertisement in leading **local language papers**. The Civil Servants and Gazetted Officers can influence Government policies in

a big way.

As regards Defence Services – All the three wings, direct recruitment is done by inviting application form 10 + 2 candidates by National Defense Academy. The best thing would be to persuade one of the community school with hostel facilities to convert it into Military School similar to the Bhonsala Military school- Nasik. Students of such Institution are trained to compete the exams.

Our Youth are shy of local language. They study it because of compulsion. Very few people read the local language papers. Hence, they are not aware of recruitment advertisements and do not apply for competitive exams. I suggest that the Mentoring Team may collect copies of the recruitment advertisement published in local language papers and forward them to the Catholic Organizations to circulate among the Youth for necessary action.

Catholic Youth make good Executives and Managers. They are reluctant to venture into business. They are only aware of benefits of being in service and not of business. In business, the sky is the limit with regard to economic independence and wealth. There is a need to change the mindset of the youth. Youth should venture into Entrepreneurship in a big way.

In regard to entrepreneurship, Christian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, a non profit organization with over 650 members with diverse entrepreneurship background can extend their expertise in Mentoring the Youth on line with the **Take Charge** initiative of the **Archdiocese of Bombay**.

—John D'Silva,
Dadar

Eucharist faith at a low

It is often seen in churches that Holy Communion is often treated casually, indeed this is a sad matter. Holy Communion, the consecrated host must be treated with all due honour and attention of a high caliber. If one believes in the true presence of Jesus Christ in the form of the host at mass, any amount of reverence is not enough. There are several handicaps regarding people other than priests distributing communion, often the manner of handling is too casual ; perhaps it would be far more reverent and safe for those who are not priests/ deacons to simply hold the ciborium with both hands and communicants take the Eucharist between 2 fingers of the right hand, with the left hand cupped below host and receive in the mouth, consideration is needed.

I came across a peculiar and sad episode in a church more than once. A person, I used to observe attended mass mostly in the evening. He used to proceed in line for receiving communion at the altar as normal. After receiving the communion, he would head out of the side door of the church. Just beside the side portico is a 'Bimbli' tree, often with a good yield hanging from it. He would take out his kerchief and fill it with Bimbli from the tree, wrap it with care and go back to his seat at the back, through another door.

In the meanwhile it seemed he had forgotten all about having received holy Communion. A little reverence would prompt one to do this after mass perhaps. The mass would end and he would leave the church with the Bimbli tied in his kerchief... Now, certainly this is extreme indifference to the Eucharist. But, many simpler irreverences can be found and all are rather improper and need to be checked by church priests who are oblivious to say the least.

— Ivan Saldanha-Shet

(Contd.. on p. 10)

Dear Catholic Bishops of India....

(Contd.. from front page)

In 2018, based on the theme "United in Diversity for a Mission of Mercy and Witness: 'I am with you always, to the end of the age'" (Mt 28: 20), your statement included, "Any attempt to promote nationalism based on any one particular culture or religion is a dangerous position. It may lead to uniformity but never to genuine unity. Such misconceived efforts can only lead our nation on the path of self-annihilation. Mono-culturalism has never been and can never be the right answer to the quest for peace, progress and development, especially in a country like ours that has a rich diversity of culture, language, region, race and religion. Violence always recoils upon the violent sooner or later, "For all who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Mt 26: 52). We deplore the rising incidence of atrocities against women, killings, caste rivalries and communal violence which includes attacks on Christian institutions and communities. Therefore, let us follow the path of true nationalism that can lead our motherland to true peace, harmony, progress and prosperity. Authentic nationalism respects the human dignity of every citizen, regardless of one's economic status, culture, religion, region or language".

Based on the theme, 'Response of the Church in India to the present-day challenges', your statement in 2016, said precious little. It was a brainstorming exercise with many generalised proposals (which few would take seriously) though your conclusion said, "As authentic citizens of the country, we repose our confidence in the democratic values and the Constitution of India. Trusting in God's grace, love and mercy, we march ahead to carry out our God-given mission, confident of the goodwill and support of our people everywhere. We appeal to all people of goodwill in India to join hands with us in solidarity to work for a better Church and a better society".

Very interestingly, a couple of years earlier (in February 2014 and just before the General Elections that year) when you met in Palai Kerala on the theme, 'Renewed Church for a Renewed Society – Responding to the Call of Vatican II', your words were even more emphatic, "When we look at our country, we see corruption plaguing every sphere of society. In such a scenario, Church institutions must be an example of transparency and probity. Another phenomenon is that of internal migration which, while opening opportunities to people, has torn the cultural and religious moorings that sustained them. Globalization too has brought in its wake problems like prolonged working hours which have disrupted family life. We witness the trend to fundamentalism which seeks to dilute the secular character of our nation. Against this trend, we stand by the values upheld by the Indian Constitution and appeal to governments to respect these values".

"The experience of God will lead us to involvement in and solidarity with the marginalized and the exploited, those suffering from disabilities, those living in the peripheries of economic, cultural and social spheres. We will speak out against all forms of injustice meted out to them and we will defend their rights. We listened to the call of Pope Francis urging us to "work to eliminate the structural causes of poverty and to promote the integral development of the poor." (Evangelii Gaudium, no. 188). We want the Church to be truly a Church of the Poor."

In 2012, at your 30th Meet in February 2012 at Bangalore on the theme 'The Church's Role for a Better India', your meaningful message was addressed "to all people of goodwill", and included, "We sensed in our hearts our country's yearning for a Better India. Our country has been noted for its deep spirituality, its saints and sages, its rich diversity of cultures and religions. People yearn for the ideal enshrined in the Preamble of the Constitution of

Dear Fr Cedric
Greetings

Please accept my personal gratitude, as a Catholic and an activist, for your brilliant Letter to the Bishops.

You luminously paint the backdrop and the context

Your clear challenge is for every Bishop, Clergy, Religious and Lay person.

You in your private and public life show how it can be done at the individual and social level.

I hope the letter is mandatory reading at every mass — or at least needs be published in every catholic journal in the country.

God bless you
John Dayal

India of a Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic which will secure for its citizens **Justice**, social, economic and political; **Liberty** of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; **Equality** of status and of opportunity; **Fraternity** assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation. But this yearning has remained largely unfulfilled. Economic development has brought about increasing inequities, an ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor with consequent tensions spilling over into violence. We see around us a betrayal of the poor and marginalized, the tribals, dalits and other backward classes, women and other groups who live in dehumanising and oppressive poverty. We witness rampant exploitation of children. There is disappointment with those in public life for whom ethical concerns matter little. The Church does not wish to rest on her laurels. **She recommits herself to being a prophetic Church, taking a decisive stand in favour of the poor and marginalized "We envision an India with more attributes of the Kingdom of God such as justice and equity with its consequent fruits of love, peace and joy."**

Dear Bishops, could I humbly request you, to revisit your own words and statements? Why is it that you were

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(Contd.. from p. 6)

so articulate and forthright in 2012 and 2014 and well, rather muted and very general in 2016 and 2018? What about the follow up? And the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating-whether these statements (particularly those of 2012 and 2014) are mainstreamed and tangibly become the DNA of that **Prophetic Church** you are committed to be?

Dear Bishops, the theme of your current meeting 'dialogue', is certainly laudable. But first we need to ask, "*dialogue with whom and for what?*" Dialogue is always in the context of mutual respect and equity; it can never take place in a vacuum or if one party feels superior to the other or for that matter, is rigid not being able to accept another point of view. For example, if one is having a dialogue on the 'Constitution', are both parties willing to accept that the basic framework of the Constitution, the sanctity, the values and particularly the democratic, secular and pluralistic fabric will all remain non-negotiables? Are both parties willing to accept that Article 19 (Freedom of Speech and Expression) and Article 25 (Freedom of Conscience and to freely preach, practise and propagate one's religion) guaranteed in the Constitution, are fundamental to a vibrant democracy? Yes, 'dialogue' is important, but not if one is expected to toe the line or to follow unacceptable diktats. Throughout his public life, Jesus 'took sides' with the poor and the excluded; the vulnerable and the oppressed. He listened and responded to their cries. He has strong words for powerful vested interests who 'lay heavy burdens' on the common people. He refused to dialogue with the scribes and pharisees, the Pilates and Herods (for that matter even with the devil) of his time!

Dear Bishops, millions of our sisters and brothers in our country are crying out for a more humane, just and equitable society; they are crying because divisive, discriminatory, draconian law and policies are threatening their very citizenship; they are crying because

Fr. Cedric Prakash has shared his heart out.

Looking forward to a positive and constructive response from the CBCI.

The Church for Others is the prime call and it has to venture out even if there are risks.

I remember Dr. Gnana Robinson, then Principal of United Theological College, Bangalore, commented in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in November, 1986, that the Church is like a Highway Bypass, i.e. bypasses ground reality.

We wait for the Church to forgo its earthly comfort to grind for justice, peace and equity.

Thank you Dr. Michael for sharing Fr. Cedric Prakash's letter. It is very encouraging and inspiring.

***In solidarity,
P. B. M. Basaiawmoit***

they are being targeted because of their faith; they are crying because they are poor and vulnerable; they are crying because they are Dalits and Adivasis, women and children, unemployed youth and beleaguered farmers; they are crying because they want to be listened to, to be in dialogue with, to be accompanied!

Dear Bishops, so where do we stand as Church in India today? To put matters in perspective, some Bishops have come out in the open, joined protest rallies and have issued unequivocal strongly-worded statements asking for the repeal of the CAA and a stay on the NRC/NPR; several priests, religious and laity all over the country, have been responsible for organizing protests and/or have joined with other concerned citizens in protests, rallies, sit-ins etc. All this is heart-warming and certainly goes a long way in our witness to the person and message of Jesus in India today!

But dear Bishops – this is just a drop in the ocean; definitely not enough! We have to do much more unitedly and immediately. There are some things that hold us back, that prompt us to be more 'diplomatic' and 'cautious'; that seem to legitimize a 'silence' for

apparently a 'greater good.' These include **Fear, Ignorance and Exclusiveness**. All these are sinful! Jesus and his teaching are about exactly the opposite. Jesus says to us "*fear no one; I am with you!*" When we have no courage to take a stand for justice and truth, because those who rule us may take away our possessions, privileges, power, position whatever – we are in fact sending a stronger message which is contra-witness: that our faith in Jesus is shallow, mere lip-service; that we really do not believe in him; that our treasures are with the rulers of this world! Ignorance is never a value: Jesus himself warned us about our inability to "read the signs of the times." Yes, many of us suffer from a serious **CCM** illness (**Church/Convent Compound Mentality**); our approach is hardly inclusive; we tend to ghettoize; often forgetting the Jesus-style to reach out to the lost, the least and the last! When we stick our necks out, we may lose everything, we may be persecuted: we will be hounded and harassed and God knows what more. That is the core of our spirituality: the crib and the cross before the resurrection! But when we don't stick our necks out -we will perhaps still lose everything, but also our own credibility and be a betrayal to the person and message of Jesus.

Yes, dear Bishops, you owe it to our faith, to the Gospel of Jesus, to the people of our country and above all, to the sanctity of our Constitution. There might not be another chance! In India, our Church is still very hierarchical and patriarchal: the laity and the people of India look up to you for a Christ-centred, selfless and servant leadership. Please do not disappoint them or the future of the country. Speak out today against the unconstitutional CAA/NPR/NRC through a strong public statement (cfr. www.wethepeopleofindia.net ; <https://cjp.org.in/>). Just as you did some years ago, come out onto the streets of Bengaluru NOW, in order to demonstrate your stand for the secular and pluralistic fabric of our country and Constitution! Many from Bengaluru will surely join you and mil-

(Contd.. on p. 9)

WHETHER SOCIAL UNREST HAS BEEN AN ADDITIONAL DRAG THAT HAS BROUGHT DOWN THE GDP OF THE COUNTRY?

by Eric D'Sa

Gita Gopinath, the Chief Economist at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), while she set out the economic outlook for the economists and businessmen that had gathered at Davos stated that the world GDP growth had fallen to around 3.2, it may still come down further due to what she termed as the Social Unrest around the world. We in India have for time now put the blame of drop in GDP on just two factors, the sudden demonetisation of high value currency and the poorly planned implementation of GST.

Since then some of the Indian economists are seriously studying whether social unrest that started with the imposition of the ban on transport of cows and bulls and subsequent shut down of abattoirs on a large scale, especially in UP had an effect on lowering of GDP. Exports of meat and leather items dropped. Lynching of alleged illegal transporters of cattle took place creating a lot of social unrest.

Crores of rupees are being spent by central and state governments on building thousands of goshalas to look after feral cattle. It takes additional money to feed the unproductive cattle though effort are being made to earn some money from cow dung and urine. Herds of stray cattle abounded by farmers are marauding farms causing substantial loss to the farmers. No one has made a detailed study of how much all this has cost and is still costing the nation.

We then had a political decision to suddenly divide the State Jammu and Kashmir and then abrogate the article 370 of the constitution that provided for decades special status to the state. Though the decision provided political dividend to BJP, it has caused lot of ex-

penditure to police the state and ensure there is no upheavals. This has gone on for six months and will have to continue during the summer months. Again the cost that the country has to bear for such additional policing by para military and military forces is substantial.

We now have the unrest caused by CAA, NRC and even amended NPR which have started creating more unrest in the country, not only with Muslim population but also with the students who believe it goes against the constitution. This will also create the Social unrest that will affect the GDP - if left unattended to. So

YOU THE CITIZENS DECIDE:

has all the above social unrest caused and causing a drop in GDP?

This is a good time to take a look at the rest of the Asian region and our immediate neighbours who are broadly at a comparable level of development as India and to do this the World Bank data estimates for economic activity in 2019 have been considered. There are a lot of sobering lessons there for us. Four points are especially important and stand out.

First, India is no longer the fastest growing economy in the region. There are 8 regional economies that are growing faster than India is at this point of time. These include China (this may change due to the Coronavirus epidemic), Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, Vietnam, Bangladesh and Nepal. This is a diverse bunch of countries with diverse economic structures. The fact they are all going faster than India is a hard fact to digest and should not be ignored as our Finance Minister did during her latest Budget speech.

Second, among the above countries some have experienced growth slowdown and lost some of the momentum. Some have broadly maintained their rates of economic expansion. Bangladesh surprisingly has accelerated in the midst of slowdown in India and Pakistan. However no country has slowed down as fast as India since 2017. This shows that the bulk of Indian slowdown is because of our domestic rather than global factors.

Third, most regional economies have macro stability indicators, fiscal and monetary, that are in par with India's though India is now an outlier when it comes to actual fiscal balances. Only China is worse than us. Other Asian economies run relatively tighter budgets. This means unlike India these countries have more policy space to increase public spending if required. Since Indian retail inflation has started increasing, this has put constraints on loosening fiscal and monetary policies.

Fourth, unlike Vietnam and Bangladesh who have an early lead in the race to attract global supply chains that are moving away from China, India for one reason or the other has been losing out on this. There is an urgent need to find out why we are losing out on this score. There is a need for policy framework that will plug India into global supply chains, rather than moving back into protectionist shell.

The above clearly shows that what is urgently required is for our government to ensure social harmony so that the nation can avoid wasting its political stamina on useless issues and concentrate its resources faster growth of the economy. It is also necessary for us the Citizens to ensure that social harmony is maintained in our own circles so that governments can concentrate on GDP growth.

(Contd.. from p. 7)

lions more throughout the country and the world, will be made aware that **“your light shines!”**

Dear Bishops, in ‘**Evangelii Gaudium**’ Pope Francis says, “An evangelizing community gets involved by word and deed in people’s daily lives; it bridges distances, it is willing to abase itself if necessary, and it embraces human life, touching the suffering flesh of Christ in others. Evangelizers thus take on the **“smell of the sheep”** and the sheep are willing to hear their voice. An evangelizing community is also supportive, standing by people at every step of the way, no matter how difficult or lengthy this may prove to be.” He bluntly adds, “I prefer a **Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets**, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security. I do not want a Church concerned with being at the centre and then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures.” Ultimately saying, “Peace in society cannot be understood as pacification or the mere absence of violence resulting from the domination of one part of society over others. Nor does true peace act as a pretext for justifying a social structure, which silences or appeases the poor, so that the more affluent can placidly support their lifestyle, which others have to make do as they can. Demands involving the distribution of wealth, concern for the poor and human rights cannot be suppressed under the guise of creating a consensus on paper or a transient peace for a contented minority. The dignity of the human person and the common good rank higher than the comfort of those who refuse to renounce their privileges. **When these values are threatened, a prophetic voice must be raised.**”

Dear Bishops, on 12 March 1977, Je-

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suit Fr. Rutilio Grande was killed by the regime of El Salvador. Presiding over the funeral Mass of his dear friend, Bishop(now Saint) Oscar Romero said, “*The government should not consider a priest who takes a stand for social justice as a politician or a subversive element when he is fulfilling his mission in the politics of the common good;*” brazenly adding, “*Anyone who attacks one of my priests, attacks me. If they killed Rutilio for doing what he did, then I too have to walk the same path*”. Three years later on Sunday 23 March 1980, in a powerful homily, Romero minced no words as he castigated the Government and the military of his country, “*I would like to make an appeal in a special way to the men of the army, to the police, to those in the barracks. Brothers, you are part of our own people. You kill your own campesino brothers and sisters. And before an order to kill that a man may give, the law of God must prevail that says: Thou shalt not kill! No soldier is obliged to obey an order against the law of God. No one has to fulfil an immoral law. It is time to recover your consciences and to obey your consciences rather than the orders of sin. The church, defender of the rights of God, of the law of God, of human dignity, the dignity of the person, cannot remain silent before such abomination. We want the government to take seriously that reforms are worth nothing when they come about stained with so much blood. In the name of God, and in the name of this suffering people whose laments rise to heaven each day more tumultuously, I beg you, I ask you, I order you in the name of God: Stop the repression!*” He was assassinated the very next day!

Dear Bishops, I am not sure how many of you will see this letter of mine: it may perhaps get into your ‘spam’(I am also aware that some of you may never open your email!); you may choose to ignore it(that is your right!);but some of you may even have the courage to read and reply! I will be delighted to receive a response from you: do challenge me and please correct me where I am wrong! I am still learning! Thanks, in anticipation. Since there is nothing personal and confidential

about this letter, I will also be sharing it with others! I am deeply grateful to those of you who had the openness to invite me your Dioceses, in the context of what is happening in the country today.

Dear Bishops, I have written this (as I said earlier) after plenty of soul-searching and consultation. It has not been an easy exercise. I did not want to be too long; but I needed to substantiate my arguments – totally based on what you have said, what the Pope is saying, what Jesus expects us to be doing. Above all, this letter has been written professing my unflinching loyalty to Jesus and his Church; and my sincere commitment to protect and promote the Constitution. My prayer and hope are, that it is accepted with the same openness and positivity with which it is written.

Finally, I cannot help recalling those immortal words of the German Pastor Martin Niemoller, “**Then they came for me, and there was no one left, to speak out for me!**” Craving your blessings and prayers and with an assurance of my prayers for you, dear Bishops,

Yours in Him

Cedric

12 February 2020

Fr. Cedric Prakash SJ

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*(Fr. Cedric Prakash SJ is a human rights and peace activist/writer)

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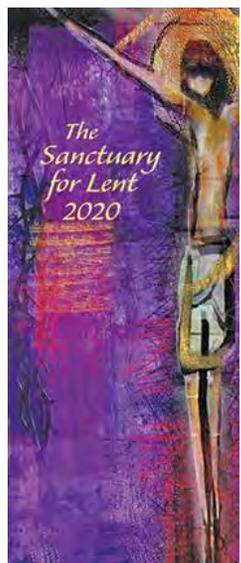
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Lent in 2020

by Albert C deSouza

This year 2020, Lent begins on 26th February which is Ash Wednesday. Easter arrives a little late this year since the full moon after the Vernal Equinox (21st March) falls on 8th April. Easter is observed as the first Sunday after the first full moon which occurs after the Vernal Equinox. This full moon falls on 8th April and the Sunday following it is 12th April Easter Sunday. Working backwards for 46 days (This leap year 46 days because 29th Feb is an extra day) is Ash Wednesday which falls on 26th February. Lent lasts for 40 days but we go back 46 days from Easter Sunday since there are 6 Sundays which are holidays. It is not too difficult to understand all this if you go step by step after the vernal equinox (equal day and equal night). There is also an autumnal equinox in September but it has nothing to do with any of the church festivals. Every Year Easter falls on a different calendar date depending on the phase of the moon after the Vernal Equinox.

More important than determining when Easter falls is the reason for Lent which is a period of prayer and fasting if you are aged between 21-60. Lent is a time traditionally for introspection. It is an annual feature when we are supposed to ponder on how we have been carrying on our lives. Are we observing the true Christian Spirit in all our actions towards ourselves, our family members and neighbors or those whom we work along with. We have to be truthful in this examination of conscience and turn over a new leaf if we are lacking in the Christian philosophy supposedly imbuing our lives. The parish priest and his team would



no doubt be preparing special devotions like retreats and missions to help parishioners to become more devout and ponder on the purpose of life, its impermanence and what we need to do to live truly Christian lives as a preparation for the hereafter. The stations of The Cross are held regularly throughout Lent each year. They are written specifically for each participant group e.g children. Regional languages, English (Adults). In some parishes every Sunday in Lent there are special Lenten sermons by visiting priests each a renowned speaker so as to motivate the faithful to attend and hear the word of God. In the fifties as a parishioner of Holy Name Cathedral, Mumbai I remember Valerian Cardinal Gracias speaking to a packed church on Sundays in Lent. His oratory was quite a draw. However we should remember that it is not enough to hear good sermons by top orators. The difficult part is practicing what they preach. To turn your life over!

Lent is also the time when people deny themselves luxuries like Smoking, Drinking alcoholic drinks, rich foods, sweets etc etc. While it is good to mortify the flesh I do not think that it is necessary to over do such denials. More important it is necessary to change ourselves from within. Being good Christians. Why not less gossiping for example? Both men and women are guilty of gossip. We have to avoid uncharitable dangerous gossip. With these few thoughts I think normal healthy people (in mind and spirit) can enter into the mood of Lent. Our aim has to be result oriented with hope for a permanent change for the better. Here is wishing all Christians a fruitful Lenten period. God Bless.

(Contd.. from p. 5)

Goa Archbishop's appeal misconstrued

It is unfortunate that Archbishop Filipe Neri Ferrao's appeal to the centre for the immediate and unconditional revocation of CAA, and to desist from implementing the NPR and NRC, have not found favour with some politicians in Goa who see it as a gross interference of the church in state governance. Let us not forget that the church in India, besides its spiritual and moral role is also irrevocably committed to the cause of nation-building and welfare of the citizens. Archbishop Filipe Neri therefore, as head of the church in Goa, has therefore the responsibility to defend the democratic and secular principles enshrined in our Constitution and save them from being eroded. In view of the nationwide protests, violence, arson and shootings to protest against the CAA which is seen as un-Constitutional, the Archbishop is therefore perfectly justified in appealing to the Centre to revoke the CAA which discriminates and denies citizenship to millions on the basis of their religion. It is a moral responsibility which cannot be construed as interference in state governance.

—A. F. Nazareth
Alto Porvorim

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Prop. B. D'Souza

Model Bank gets 'Best Bank' award



Mumbai, Feb 11: The Maharashtra urban cooperative bank's federation held its 24th annual award event at Ravindra Natya Mandira auditorium, Dadar (W) on 10th February 2020. The occasion marked with presentation of Best Bank Award to Model Co-operative Bank Ltd.

Model Bank Chairman Albert W. D' Souza received the award Memento Trophy and a certificate from the Deputy Chief Minister Ajith Pawar. The award is presented to the bank's in the category of those who have a turnover of more than 1000 crores in the cooperative sector during the period of 2018-19.

Bank's Vice-Chairman William Sequeira, directors C. A Paul Nazareth, Thomas Lobo, Lawrence D'Souza, Adv. Pius Vas, Jerald Cardoza, CEO and General Manager William Louis D' Souza and Deputy General Manager Zenon D'Cruz were present on the occasion.

Chairman, Albert W. D'Souza said that the honour has increased the responsibility of the bank to function



with more vigor to serve the customers, depositors. It is recognition to the uninterrupted service of the bank's management and employees and honour to shareholders, customers, well-wishers, senior officials and different branch managers. The bank has 25 branches in the State of Maharashtra.

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The East Indian Kitchen



The first East Indian Restaurant '**The East Indian Kitchen**' was opened in Kiroli, Vidyavihar, Mumbai , on Monday 10th February 2019.

The owner Mr.Oscar D'Souza 's name will go down in the History of East Indian Christian Community of Mumbai as the first Restaurateur to start The East Indian Restaurant with indigenous cuisine since the Establishment The Bombay East Indian Association on 26th May 1887 to advance the education, employment, duties, rights & economic backwardness of our East Indian Christian Community.

All credit should go to Maharashtrian East Indian Christian Federation President Herbert D. Barretto who since 2010 was actively pursuing the matter to start an East Indian Restaurant or any other business but the name of the establishment on the board should only be The East Indian... and below the board should be written . *Mumbaiche Mool Raivashi*. so that the name of East Indian Christians become popular in Mumbai .

The President of MEICF has advised the youngsters to study and get degrees but not to work under anyone but start their own business in different fields. BE OWNERS AND NOT EMPLOYEES.



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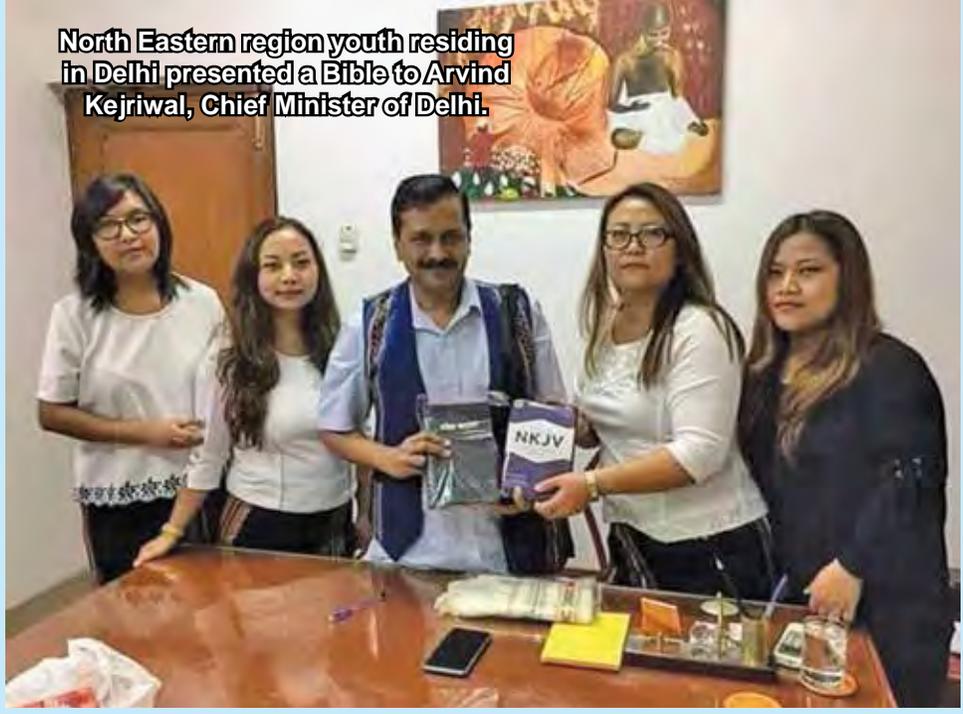
The Synod of Pentecostal had their 3rd Congress in Coimbatore City, TN and in their memorandum one of the main request is demanded Central Government to revocation of Citizens Amendment Act (CAA), the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the National Population Register (NPR). This is read in front 100,000 Christians from all over India specially from Tamilnadu



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North Eastern region youth residing in Delhi presented a Bible to Arvind Kejriwal, Chief Minister of Delhi.

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Thanksgiving

Novena Prayer to St. Jude

O Holy St. Jude, Apostle and Martyr, great in virtue and rich in miracles, near kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke your special patronage in time of need, to you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg to whom God has given such great power to come to my assistance. Help me in my present urgent petition, in return I promise to make your name known and cause you to be invoked.



Say *Three Our Fathers, three Hail Mary's and three Glory be's.*

St. Jude pray for us and all who invoke your aid.
Amen.

—T. Y. S. Mumbai

Thanksgiving

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit, you who makes me see every- thing and who shows me the way to reach my ideals, you who gives me the Divine gift to forgive and forget all that is done to me, and you who are in all the instincts of my life with me, I, in this short dialogue, want to thank you for everything and affirm once more that I never want to be separated from you, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with you and my loved ones in their perpetual glory. To that end and submitting to God's holy will, I ask from you.....
(your request)



—T. Y. S. Mumbai



Guava Cheese (Perad)

Guava Cheese (or Perad) is a sweet Goan recipe that will leave your mouth watered by its tempting taste. This easy-to-make recipe is made with over-ripe guavas, lemon juice, water, salt and sugar. One of the perks of making this palatable recipe is that the dish is made with simple ingredients that are easily available to you in your kitchen.

Ingredients:

2 kg over-ripe guavas
10 cups water
1 tsp salt
4 tbsp lemon juice
4 cups sugar
Food colour
Vanilla essence



by Jubel D'Cruz

Method:

Wash and cut the guavas. Take a deep bottomed pan, keep it on medium flame and pour water in it. Bring it to a boil and to this boiled water, add the guavas. Cook it for at least 10 minutes until the guavas turn mushy and tender.

Once done, remove the pan from the flame and transfer the content in a big sieve. Now gently press the guava mixture in the sieve to separate the skin and seeds of the guavas from the guava pulp. Keep this pulp aside.

In a pan kept on medium flame, add the guava pulp, sugar, lemon juice and salt. Cook for 15 minutes at least until you get a jelly-like texture. Add two to three drops of any food colour and half a teaspoon of vanilla essence to it.

Transfer the mixture in a greased plate and cut into desired shape while the mixture is still warm. Once done, allow it to cool and store it in an airtight container. Eat whenever needed.

A Lourdes in Chennai - *National shrine*

- *Compiled By:*
Ivan Saldanha-Shet. Mangalore.

A 140 years ago in 1879, in a suburb of Chennai metro, called Perambur, a well known locale due to the Coach Factory (ICF) and other industries around, housed the magnificent shrine. This is the first shrine in India dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes in the year 1897, in remembrance of Her apparition in Lourdes, France, in the year 1858, it is believed. The Lourdes phenomena is now marked world wide on February 11, also as 'International day of the sick', and brings many blessings. It may be fitting now to surrender our great nation India to Our Lady of Lourdes, for protection in the wake of the Chinese Corona Virus scare now.

This shrine's 120th 'National Pilgrimage 2020' was on February 15 & 16, on a solemn mega scale. The torch light procession on Saturday evening through the streets is memorable; the national pilgrimage rally on Sunday at the sprawling grounds with thousands of devotees is a wonder. In times gone by when the Anglo Indians of this railway base were at it's peak, this enterprising ethnic group was dominating the area; migration in the last few years has seen the area change with devout Tamil Catholics. There are continuous devout celebrations that attract many all year round and several social actions here.

History of the Church : In 1879, commemorating the silver jubilee of the proclamation of the 'dogma of the Immaculate Conception,' Fr. Hennessey, Parish Priest of Vepery, Madras, built a chapel near this spot at Perambur. This chapel was blessed and dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes in 1880 and served the spiritual needs of the Catholics. In 1900 the annual pilgrimage commenced, in 1903, Perambur was raised to the status of an independent parish.

Then, the Catholic population was around 5000 and the church was inad-

quate. In 1928, the Archdiocese of Madras was entrusted to the Salesian Congregation which included Perambur too. Fr. Alfred Mariotta parish priest in 1946 hailing from the Alpine heights of Switzerland had the dogged tenacity of the mountaineer, as well as taciturnity and brought miracles.

Rev Mariotta's first achievement, no one ever knows how but, the devoted of Mary soon found a ready site adjoining the tiny church. In 1948 the first full fledged National Pilgrimage took place on this site. Then Archbishop of Madras, Louis Mathias, wanted a magnificent shrine which would resemble the great Basilica at Lourdes, in France. The site was solemnly blessed, on September 8, 1951, foundation stone of the new shrine was laid, a dream coming true, many ingenious methods



were initiated for fast progress. The lower church was completed on February 22, 1953 with great joy and splendor, Archbishop Louis Mathias blessed and consecrated the altar. A year later, on February 2, 1954 three large bronze bells from France were blessed in the memory and dedicated to the Mariotta family who had donated them.

January 1953, Fr. Joseph Sandanam SDB (the first local Tamil) replaced Fr. Mariotta as parish priest. Always optimistic, he set about the difficult task of raising more funds and he was confident that 'Mary would build her shrine'. Mary was true to the task, benefactors came from all over; nevertheless special credit should be given to the un-



stinting efforts of Fr. Alcide Seeber who worked hand in hand with Fr. Sandanam, toiling day in and day out to procure funds.

February 11, 1960 Archbishop Louis Mathias had the happiness of blessing the upper church and consecrating the altar, it was

indeed a magnificent, impressive monument, which stands tall even today. In many respects this majestic shrine is a form of the basilica of Lourdes in France. It consists of a church upon a church, so 2 churches. The upper Church approach has two imposing ramps it is dedicated to OL of Lourdes. The interior is simple and beautiful creates an atmosphere of peace and devotion.

On June 21, 1967, Fr. John McFerran was officially installed as parish priest of Perambur. Fr. McFerran was succeeded by Fr. Anthony Hickman who took over as parish priest on May 29, 1970. All need to be remembered e.g. Fr. Murray, Fr. Schlooz, Fr. Bout, Fr. Papes, Swamy Vikrant and so on and now Fr. Deva Joe.....all worked zealously, each making some worthy contribution to the development of the parish, the flock at Perambur; could well total at least 14,000 now. It has a life like grotto on the South side, a 24x7 adoration chapel, an open air stage on the North side, in the compound and much more. It has produced a phenomenal number of vocations to the priest hood and religious service.

Conclusion : Indeed the faith and hope of the people have been blessed by our Lady a hundred fold, this great shrine of India is well on it's way to become a second Lourdes and set to be a place where miracles and blessings are visible. It is indeed worth to visit this divine spot to pray, thank and to glorify the LORD through Our Lady of Lourdes who will care and protect and grant health to all who ask.

Santa goes into a bar in new York. The man on his right orders a drink, 'Johnnie Walker, single.' The man on his left says, 'Jack Daniels, single.' Santa says. 'Santa Singh, married.'

A husband died. A few years later the wife dies. As she got to heaven she saw her husband and ran up to him with tears in his eyes. "Darling, oh how I've missed you!" The husband extends his arms stopping her from embracing him and says, "Woah there woman. The contract was until death. Remember till death do us apart!"

Jim the town drunk was at his wit's end, he had no money to buy even the barest necessities for his family. It was right before going to sleep one night that Jim prayed the following emotional prayer: 'Dear Lod, please, all I', asking for is some food to put on the table, NOTHING else! The booze I'll buy myself.'

"Never say I failed 99 times. Say I discovered 99 ways which causes failure."

Thomas Edison

Moral : Besharam ho jaana but apni galti mat accept karna.

Maid problems in India

Government banned maid under 15 years. Wife banned maids between 16 years and 40 years. Husband banned maids above 40 years.

The worst combination

Q: What is worst combination of two sicknesses?

A: Diarrhea and Alzheimer. You're running but you don't know where.

Two kids are talking

Chintu : What's the name of your new dog?

Pappu : I don't know. He won't tell.



Wife : If I had known you were this poor, I wouldn't have married you!

Husband : When I was telling you that you are the only thing I have in this world, what were you thinking?

If your wife catches you looking at another woman, turn to her and say "I'm glad you don't dress like that."

Marketing guy : Sir, this machine will reduce your work by half.

Banta : Wow! Give me two of them.

I asked my daughter if she's seen my newspaper. She told me that newspaper are old school. She said that people use tablets nowadays and handed me her iPad. The fly didn't stand a chance.

A wife is never dominating, it's just that she loves her husband so much that she always forgets the difference between a suggestion and an order.

What is the first sign of Getting old?

Grey hair.....

No

Loss of memory....

No

Wrinkles in face.....

No

Doctors prescription and medicines

No

Baldness.....

No, no, no

Then what?

When your wife stops suspecting you any more!

The old vase

A boy breaks an old vase at a rich uncle's house. The uncle gets extremely angry and yells: "Do you even know how old the vase was? It was from the 17th century! The boy sagged in relief: "Oh, good that it wasn't new."

The comedy of my life Sometimes I think I am a film. Produced by my mother and father. Directed by my wife.

Touching farewell

Two men are playing golf. One of them is about to take a swing when a funeral procession appears on the road next to the course. He stops mid-swing, takes off his cap, closes his eyes and bows his head in contemplation.

His opponent comments: "That must be the most touching thing I've ever seen. You are a very feeling man." The man, recovering himself, replies, "Yeah, well we were married 35 years."

Women really know how to hold a grudge. My wife asked me to pass her a lip balm. And by mistake, I gave her a tube of Super Glue. It's been a month now and she's still not speaking to me!



Husband: You are upset from past two days. What happened?

Wife: There is one folder in your laptop with name 'My Documents' You could have named it as 'Our Documents'. You don't love me anymore. I hate you.

Inspiration!

Your success after struggles is your power

If you like it or not we are all going to go through one challenges or the other, it's either Emotional challenges, financial challenges and many other type of challenges

Everybody loves to experience comfort in life and we all love to experience the sweet side of living but as much that its sweet and captivating to live a nice life without stress, its also very important to know that having life struggle is something you can't bypass easily, either you want it or not you have to face life challenging's and the ability to over come them is what makes it worthwhile, it is easy to get over this moment when you are so determine to, you can get over this moment by reading old wise quotes about life struggles.

No one can have all perfect life till death and expect his or herself never to go thought any challenges, its only the dead ones who are free from life challenges.

1: Struggle is part of life existence: You should know and understand that life is a constant battle and facing battles is one thing you should face, it's the first thing you experience before you reach the final stage of success. When the road seems so hard and tough to cross know that there is a big and shining diamond at the end of the road, know that you can't reach your success if you don't face challenges.

#2. It prepares you towards the future: Know that by facing this life struggles

you are preparing yourself toward the unseen future, it reveals the hidden treasure awaiting you in the nearest future. The period you going through this struggle is when you are able to plan your future and the things that matters. You get to know your focus and work toward making it in life.

#3: You will be able to know your strength: During this period, you will be able to know your strength and work on your weakness, it helps you in gathering your strength and this period is what you need in other to be very strong and responsible about what matters the most in life.

#4: Facing any other struggles won't be new: The next time you face any life struggle, you will be more active in facing it, it gives you the full knowledge about the world and when next you find yourself in any related struggles you will know how to fix it and put yourself in perfect shape.

#5: You will get to know more about your weakness: Your weakness won't be strange to you; with full knowledge you will understand what you need in other to face your next life battles. Getting to know the weaknesses in your life is one of the good reason why you need to face life struggles.

#6: Your outcome will give you more experience about life: After facing this struggle you will be happy to know you overcome them. Your success after the struggles is your power and your gain. After every struggles the success you gain is your power. There is always light at the end of every tunnel.

Checkmating railway touts

No matter what the railways do to curb the menace of illegal online tickets , touts using sophisticated software , are always one step ahead of them .Recently the railways unearthed a scam involving 20,000 agents, cornering 50% of all tatkal tickets in just 40 seconds! That explains why Tatkal tickets disappear in 5 minutes. Similarly, during the peak summer holiday season , it is difficulty to get regular confirmed tickets even if one stands in a queue at a booking window 120 days in advance. I don't think the railways have the expertise to counter the online scamsters.

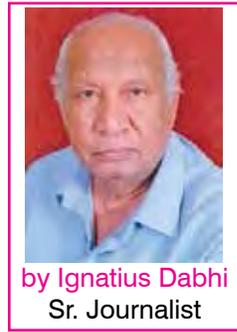
I suggest the following two measures to address the problem. 1) Regular tickets may be booked anytime in advance like airline tickets and not be restricted to 120 days. 2) Online booking of tatkal tickets should be completely abolished . Tatkal tickets should be available only at railway booking counters.

Regular tickets: Like the airlines, travellers should be allowed to book regular tickets anytime in advance and not restricted to 120 days. However the cancellation charges should be increased substantially with a minimum cancellation charge of 25% and additional 1% every day beginning from 60 days before departure of the train. Undoubtedly there will be a huge waiting list. However, this list will get whittled down rapidly everyday beginning 60 days before departure of train. (Presently people do not bother to cancel tickets till the last three days as cancellation charges kick in only then).

Tatkal tickets: For unplanned journeys and emergencies tatkal tickets should sold , but only at booking windows. (No online booking). Tatkal was initially introduced only for emergencies. But as the railways earned a huge amount of revenue from this source, the tatkal quota was increased considerably. Today the tatkal quota is 18% and another

(Contd.. on p. 19)

With malice towards none..... India is going through hell!



by Ignatius Dabhi
Sr. Journalist

93-year old freedom fighter Prityamlal Thakore with tears in his weather-beaten eyes seemed visibly moved commenting on the present situation in India. "We went through a period during which we all stood together to drive the British out of our motherland.... the entire country wanted the Brits out of India.... There were violent protests and brutal police actions..... Somehow, I am reminded of those nasty days now.... Rapes on young girls, unending suicides of farmers and students, total lawlessness in many areas, loots, communal violence burning borders with Pakistan, unending martyrdom of our brave sons on the borders,....." Tears.. tears and tears. The unconsoling old man said : "I pray, good God should take me away... I can not see India going through the hell..!"



commit suicides because of joblessness, government apathy towards poor farmers, the government seems to have failed totally to give jobs, industrial recession, killing inflation, soaring price rise, communal violence and inactive police.... Endless. Never in the past we had seen such a situation. Muslims and Christians are targeted by the present regime, the gap between the rich and the poor is ever widening....

the dignity and respect for the Prime Ministers office overlooked....

Political leaders know how to divert

people's attention from the burning issues to some other things.... The nation is undergoing a very very difficult phase. The multi-crore projects of secret tunnel

There are some disturbing accounts: 69 cities have protests against CAA..... 23 School and college campuses have students unrest against CAA, Kashmir remains a burning volcano.... the total number of soldiers World War on Pal borders is bigger than soldiers dies in the Second World War in India, sexual abuse of young and innocent girls is countless, delay in justice is the worst punishment for the victims, thousands

Every issue is given a political colour, every protest is considered anti-nation.... Corruption and scams know no limits. Sex and gun culture prevail everywhere... Man has become criminal, violent, psychic and inhuman.... Print media, news channels and writers can be easily bought. Journalism - a noble profession - has become a business. News papers and news channels with their anchors are purchasable commodities! Speaking against Gandhiji and Nehru has become a fashion. Godse is openly praised and glorified by the ruling party members and responsible persons,

from The P M S residence to the Parliament, the new Parliament House, and many other dream projects of some leaders are really the priorities of this country? It is difficult to say whether India is led or misled by over-ambitious fanatics! It is more than clear that there are some who want to make India a 'Hindu Rashtra'...

How long will this foolery continue? Can you fool all the people for all the time? The time has come when every secular citizen thoughtfully assesses the direction in which the country is led or misled?!

31st SabhaDay of BCS

The Bombay Catholic Sabha will celebrate its **31st Sabhaday** on Sunday ,23/02/2020 at St. Paul's Church quadrangle, Dadar East. The event begins with celebration of Holy Eucharist at 5.30 pm, followed by celebrations.

Besides, reporting of its activities, Sabha will recognise it's units for the outstanding work done by them. The awards are in the form of *Star unit of the Deanery, Challenger unit of the Deanery and Meritorious unit of thr Deanery*. Two individuals will be awarded with *Power of One* award whereas late Rev. Fr. Salvador Rodrigues and late Rev. Fr. Edward D'Souza will be awarded to two individuals/NGOs working for the upliftment of down trodden. The list of this year's winners is given below.

Shri Mervin Alexander, Joint Secretary, Atomic Energy, Govt. of India will be the Chief Guest. The event will also be graced by the President of All India Catholic Union Shri Lancy DCunha, the Christian businessmen, retired judges, professionals, religious and members of the Sabha. Entry is by invitation. Call 022 2446 3853/24446632.

Sabha solicit sponsorship/donations. Donations to Sabha get IT benefit under 80G of Income Tax Act.

The Sabha day 2020 Awards

List of Awardees:

FR.SALVADOR RODRIGUES MEMORIAL AWARD: **Ms.Nicola Monterio**

BCS POWER OF ONE AWARD : **Tricia Collaco -- Sports.** and **Victor D'mello – Environment.**

SARVA DHARMA EKTA AWARD : **St.Francis Xavier .Panvel**

SARFAROSH AWARD : **St. Lawrence .Wagle Estate.** and **St. Joseph's Vikhroli.**

FR.EDWARD D'SOUZA MEMORIAL AWARD : **Ms. Rose Dennis.**

THE BCS UNIT AWARDS 2020 SOUTH BOMBAY DEANERY Star Awards

Our Lady of Glory Byculla

Meritorious Award:

Our Lady of Rosary, Mazagaon
St Stephen Cumballa Hill

Star Award:

Our Lady of Victories, Mahim

Challenger Award:

St. Michael, Mahim
Our Lady of Dolours, Wadala

BANDRA DEANERY:

Challenger Award:

Our Lady of Mount Carmel

St. Andrew

Meritorious Award;

St. Theresa

CENTRAL SUBURBS DEANERY :

Star:

St. Francis Xavier, Vile Parle

Challenger:

St. Anthony, Vakola

Meritorious:

Our Lady of Velankanni, Irla

BORIVALI DEANERY:

Star Awards:

St. John Bosco

St. Thomas, Goregaon East

Our Lady of Lourdes, Orlem

St. Anthony, Malvani

Challenger Awards:

Our Lady of Rosary, Goregaon

Immaculate Conception

Navi Mumbai;

Challenger Awards:

St. Francis Xavier, Panvel

THANE DEANERY:

Star Awards:

St. Joseph Vikhroli

St. Francis Xavier, Kanjur



Challenger Award:

Our Lady of Mercy, Pokhran

Meritorious Awards:

St. Lawrence, Wagle Estate

St. Pius X, Mulund

KURLA DEANERY

Star Awards:

O. L. of Perpetual Succour.

Chembur

Holy Family Pestomsagar

*Vinod Noronha,
Secretary General.*

The Bombay Catholic Sabha.

(Contd.. from p. 17)

er 18% premium tatkal on dynamic pricing for popular trains. Tatkal has become just 'another booking option' for those able and willing to pay a premium. This is unfair to the common man who stands in long queues for regular tickets, days and months in advance. Hence the tatkal premium must be increased. If there is an emergency, travellers will not mind standing in a queue at booking counters or paying a higher premium for tatkal tickets. Moreover as such tickets will be available only at booking counters there be a huge number of tickets available to satisfy most people in the queue, unlike what happens now.

These suggestions if implemented, will sound the death knell of touts .

**—Prof Robert Castellino
mumbai**

Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - GROOMS

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

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

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7096. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in April 1990), Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 81 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. Mechanical and PGDM in Project Management,

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

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working for very reputed MNC.

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glo_2008@rediffmail.com

6949. MUMBAI : Proposals are invited from parents of a Roman Catholic God fearing educated homely girl for a Mangalorean Roman Catholic boy, finance professional, (Born in March 1983), Ht. 5' 10", Church marriage annulled, no issues presently working overseas on PR. Please email the profile and photo to benedict83319@gmail.com

7011. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1983), Ht. 6', Wt. 75 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA Electronics and Finance, working as Research Electronics. Contact email : canute.serrao@gmail.com

7008. USA : Separated Roman Catholic, (Born in October 1983), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 62 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MD, MS, working as a Senior Engineer. Contact email : jesusmary58@yahoo.com

7010. BAHRAIN : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Divorcee (with in three months of marriage), (Born in June 1985), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 76 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. HSC Diploma in food & beverage, working in 4 Star Hotel Bahrain. Contact Mob: 8806129309

6966. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1965), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 45 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. SSC., working as a Field Executive. Contact email : sameer_bhagwatt777@rediffmail.com

6968. DUBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in March 1991), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Graduate in Commerce. Working in Dubai since 2014 in Indian Consalate Office. Designation Senior Customer Executive. Contact

Email : shalenedsouza4@gmail.com

6963. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in July 1981), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 62 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA, Well settled. Contact email : freshflwr@gmail.com

6993. MUSCAT : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in May 1982), Ht. 5' 8", Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., Dip. in Financial Management, Working as an Accountant. Contact email : sandeepfernandes2002@hotmail.com

6948. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic bachelor, (Born in July 1987), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., working a HR. Contact email : adleyds@gmail.com

6980. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1987), Ht. 182 cms, Wt. 79 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. PGDBM, working as a Manager. Contact email : roystonpereira2007@gmail.com

6938. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in January 1989), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., well settled. Contact email : yohancharry03@gmail.com

6934. MUMBAI : East Indain Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1987), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 75 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Gradute, Hotel Management, Contact email : nevaidd2016@gmail.com

6930. GOA : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in August 1979), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. SCC and Diploma in Electrical, Electrical Contractor. Contact email : cajetan1208@gmail.com

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7122. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1993), Ht. 5', Wt. 45 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc. IT., working as a Tech Support Engineer. Contact email : lynettelewis67@gmail.com

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

7070. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in March 1992), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 48 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com., CS., working as a Company Secretary in Private Firm. Contact email : smile9920@outlook.com

7120. CANADA : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1986), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 51 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., University of Toronto, working as a Customer Support for Canada Government. Contact email : joafaria@yahoo.ca

7121. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in

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

August 1988), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 55 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Bachelor of Physiotherapist, working as a Physiotherapist. Contact email :

ryanbarboza806@gmail.com

7098. MIRAJ : Protestant Spinster, (Born in November 1983), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 52 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Masters in Dental Science, Doctor by profession. Contact email : dprebentisch@yahoo.com

7067. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1994), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 54 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Chartered Accountant, working for Finance Department in MNC. Contact email : wpm999@gmail.com

7093. MUMBAI : Gujarati Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in July 1982), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working for Private Bank. Contact email : annie.waghela@gmail.com

7111. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in November 1993), Ht. 5', Wt. 47 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. BMS., working with an MNC. Contact email : owena.dsouza@gmail.com

7082. MUMBAI : Tamilian Roman catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1985), Ht. 5', Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. 12th std., working as a sales girl in Big Store. Contact email : susanmoses1385@gmail.com

7103. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Divorcee (Separated), (Born in October 1989), Ht. 5', Wt. 62 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a HR. Contact email :

mail2tinafernandes@gmail.com

7081. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1993), 5' 3", Wt. 55 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Masters of Dentistry (MDS), Dental Surgeon, Doctor by profession. Contact email : carlferns93@gmail.com

7074. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1985), 5' 2", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.D.S., (Mumbai), Self Practising. Seeks a well settled qualified Or Professional bachelor. Contact : email : dabfern@yahoo.co.in

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Ash Wednesday Prepares Us For The Season Of Lent

Ash Wednesday is the mystical door which opens to prepare us for the Season of Lent.

Pope Francis said: "Let us allow God to surprise us. He never tires of casting open the doors of his heart and of repeating that he loves us and wants to share his love with us."

After Christmas, Holy Mother the Church draws back to almost six and a half weeks to the Season of Lent. Ash Wednesday is the prelude to the coming weeks of preparation for Easter and new life.



BY MELVYN BROWN

Basically, the theme for the six weeks is centered on the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus. From Ash Wednesday Lent begins, taking us along the path of fasting, penance and prayer, in a special invitation to return to God.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI had highlighted the importance of fasting. He said, "Fasting is a great help to avoid sin and all that leads to it."

The prophet Jeremiah calls for repentance with ashes: "O daughter of my people, gird on sackcloth, roll in the ashes." (Jer.6:26). The prophet Isaiah had also called for repentance with ashes. Fasting in the Old Testament was to put on sackcloth and ash as a sign of being sorry for sins.

Ash Wednesday reintroduces each year the Christian Season of Lent, placing before us the enigma of redemption; of Easter, in a way that we should meditate in its totality and undertake to participate in it.

The norm to burn palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday began in the 12th century. Parishes often ask their members to bring their old palms before Lent for a ritual burning after

Mass. It was Pope Urban II who called for the use of ashes and later it was called Ash Wednesday.

During the Season of Lent the call is for repentance to turn to the Lord in prayer and meditation. On Ash Wednesday starts a time for personal renewal in preparation to highlight the act of penance and reconciliation during Holy Thursday which had started by the Order of Penitents.

Jesus fasted in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights and afterwards he was hungry. (Mat.4:1-2). Jesus also prayed and fasted preparing himself

them.

Ash Wednesday initiates the period of Lent and asks us to repent for our mistakes and to prepare our spirit in the mystery of redemption.

We should practice self-denial. Let us say, 'no' to the things we would like to do, or to have. As human beings we need to exercise in self-control. This can be achieved only by practice.

The Second Vatican Council (1962-65) had given Catholics a more personal approach to conditions of fasting, taking into account the changing circumstances of modern times. Our tradition of the Lenten fast is "no lon-



ger what it was. Voluntary self-denial is made through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. You can abstain from food, smoking, cinema and other forms of pleasures.

Even Elijah's fast was made before meeting the Lord on Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:8). It is written in Maccabees, Chapter 3:47, "They fasted that day, put on sackcloth and sprinkled ashes on their heads, and rent their clothes". In the Book of Daniel, Chapter 9:3 : "Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and supplications with fasting and sackcloth and ashes".

It is with deep reverence to find in the "Apocrypha", the Book of Sirach , Chapter 17:32, "all human beings are dust and ash. " Reading further we discover Jonah's call to the people of Nineveh was to repent, announce a fast, saying "Who knows, God may yet turn from his fierce anger, so that we perish not?" As we know God spared

Money saved from these means can be given to the needs of the poor. The putting on of ash is relevant as a sign to 'turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel" (Mk.1:15). Since Ash Wednesday is the start to Lent, it is also the beginning to focus on baptism – thereby helping us to renew our baptismal promises on the arrival of Easter.

Begin Ash Wednesday by attending the celebration of Holy Mass, coming away with ash on the forehead as a sign of your repentance. Make this Season of Lent meaningful and the medium to draw you closer to God.

Begin Ash Wednesday by attending the celebration of Holy Mass, coming away with ash on the forehead as a sign of your repentance. Make this Season of Lent meaningful and the medium to draw you closer to God.

How important is digital literacy?

DIGITAL LITERACY is all about how you use, consume and share digital data

How important is digital literacy in the classroom? When you consider that every student today must learn to be responsible for how they use technology to interact with the world around them, the answer is clear. It's crucial.

Digital citizenship :

Literacy skills have been important. Written letters transitional to telephone skills and then internet capa-



To be sure, Google is a power digital tool. But most students concentrate on the search itself instead of understanding why. To achieve deep learning, teachers must also teach students to:

- Evaluate and question their sources.
- Draw strong conclusions
- Reach for new levels of creativity

Knowing how to use dozens of different software does not make a student digitally literate. Teachers must guide students into how to bring their answers to the next level.

Expanding knowledge :

Most students may be adept at using digital tool but their understanding of everything these tools offer is often limited. For instance, they may love posting selfies to Instagram but they may not think of it as a creative platform for art or other subject projects. Teachers can inspire students to use today's fun technology as the powerful tools they are for expanding learning opportunities.

Encourage lifelong learning :

Technology is now firmly entrenched in daily living. Educators must begin technological education early on, continually improving teaching techniques to support student personal and career growth.

Embracing digital literacy is key to encouraging learning from pre-k through adulthood. It is essential to a school's success and a student's lifelong improvement.

Literacy implies a fuller understanding and a rounder knowledge. A literate person is aware of multiple information sources, the pros and cons of the media forms and the value and credibility of information. A literate person can process diverse data sources and suggest macro relevance and micro application of seemingly disparate ideas.

Digitally literate teaches see technology for all of its creative potential, rather than something they are mandated to do in a step-by-step fashion. Digital literacy doesn't require that teachers become experts but it require that they understand the digital tools that can unlock their deeper teaching potential.



bility. Today's students are learning literacy in ways their teachers could not have imagined, with children as young as three years old learning technology just like they do the spoken language.

Digital literacy is just one component of teaching children how to be digital citizens. And its definition has shifted over the years creating an environment where technology has permeated the classroom to a degree not dissimilar to the workplace.

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