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A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

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Home Delivery of Church Services



Come evening and Orlemites get ready to participate in the celebration of the Holy Mass which is streamed live from Orlem church straight into the drawing room TVs of the 20,000 odd parishioners in Orlem. The mass, which is also available to parishioners on YouTube, gives parishioners the feeling that they are present in a virtual church, listening to the Word of God as they see and hear the familiar faces and voices of their very own parish priests. Lending support to the celebrant is a one-man or woman choir singing the hymns and answering the prayers, which are normally answered by the congregation. Fr Michael Pinto, the parish-priest and his team of 5 priests are going the extra mile to bring the church to the homes. Home deliv-

ery of church services have provided strong spiritual support to the faithful during the lockdown. Novenas and other prayers are also telecast half an hour before the mass. On Sunday mornings a mass for the 6,000-strong Tamil community is telecast at 9 am. These services can no longer be seen as a stop gap arrangement as willy-nilly coronavirus is here to stay. While we hope and pray that a vaccine will soon be available, we would be naive to believe that a vaccine is just around the corner. HIV/AIDS, for instance, has been around for 4 decades but a vaccine has not yet emerged. Without a vaccine or a reliable line of treatment for the deadly virus, full-fledged services in church will not be possible considering the large congregations. The church in Western countries may commence services but that cannot be a template for us in India. In the west church attendance is on the decline and anyway social distancing is so deeply ingrained in their psyche that even cars maintain social distancing of 10-15 metres!

Religious places in our country, are generally packed with people. When the lockdown is gradually lifted it will not be possible to pick up the threads and start as if nothing has happened. Some religions will find it easier while others more difficult to get into the groove. In temples, for instance, it will

be easier to maintain social distancing. People usually line up in orderly manner in and outside temples, pay obeisance to the deity and then they move on. All that is required is to ensure that they maintain 3-4 feet distancing. The problem is more daunting in churches as the one-hour services are conducted inside the churches with the 'altar' being central to the worship. Social distancing will not be possible given the large numbers of devotees on Sundays as it is obligatory to attend the full mass. Hence upscaling 'Home Delivery' of church services in all parishes is something which church authorities will have to apply their minds to. Church authorities will have to come up with some out-of-the-box ideas of administering the sacraments while maintaining social distancing. For instance Holy communion is now given 'spiritually' because it cannot be given physically. Similarly 'general absolution' may be given instead of face-to-face confession and absolution for those wish to confess. Already funerals prayers are now said at home and the body taken straight to the cemetery or crematorium without going to the church. (Condolences may be sent by Whatsapp or other social media). Recently one private funeral in Vakola was 'Zoomed' so that friends and relatives could be virtually present. Facebook can also be used to good advantage. The church will have to make full use of all social media tools to keep the faithful in the loop at all times.

In conclusion it is pertinent to note that senior citizens and children under 10 years make up the majority of church-goers. When church doors are thrown open they will be the first to enter!

*Prof Robert Castellino
Orlem Mumbai*

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Storms Teach Us More Than Peaceful Times!

Or Is It Goodby Or Au Revoir?

by Don Aguiar.

Every storm not only leaves some marks of destruction, but also signs of construction. Just as rivers flowing through mountains and destroying part of them, makes the plains fertile with silt; any storm or disaster has inbuilt seeds of reconstruction.

That's how Himalaya was born. That's how our Galaxy came into being (if we believe the theory of Big bang). Nature has a capability to convert mountain into a sea and vice versa.

The recent Pandemic forced countries to lockdown and see Nature healing herself. A visible disaster of the Pandemic leaving some seeds - some wisdom for reconstruction of Earth. It is preaching us a new way of living, a new world order so to say.

A beautiful sky line of Mumbai post Nisarg cyclone is yet another example of Nature leaving some good symbols of cure and hope.

Let's keep our mind, eyes and ears open and alert; our senses and heart sensitized to experience and understand the message of Mother Nature and ensure that **humanity must not create a potential catastrophe for itself. Will we be able to adjust?**

But we have created a hell, and have created too much of it. Now either humanity will have to disappear from this planet earth, or will have to be transformed. Either humanity will have to die completely - because this hell cannot be continued any more - or we will have to go through a mutation....

If modern technology is creating an

ecological crisis on the earth, disturbing the balance of nature, then it is a very simplistic solution to drop modern technology and go back....

Going back cannot be supported, because it means no railway trains, no hospitals, no surgery, no medicine, no post offices, no mobiles, no telegrams, no emails, no electricity; and all these have become part of our life. We cannot conceive of ourselves without electricity! Technology should not be looked at only negatively....

It is not the fault of modern technology; the fault is that we have not been very clear what we want from modern technology. The scientist has been discovering almost in a blind way, and whatever is discovered we start using - without thinking of the aftereffects.

We need a technology which can avoid plastic garbage and disturbance in the ecology. The scientist has to be very alert that whatever he is doing should become an intrinsic part of the organic whole; technology should not go against the whole. And it is possible, because technology does not lead you somewhere in particular; it is we who go on discovering things in a blind way.

It is clear that whatever we have discovered up to now, much of it is a disturbance in the harmony - is finally going to destroy life on the earth - still, scientists go on piling up nuclear/biological weapons. They don't have the guts to tell the politicians, 'It is enough. We cannot create anything that is going to destroy life'.

All those parts which are dangerous, poisonous and which are destructive of ecology, harmony, nature, life must be dropped. And substitutes which enhance the ecology, the life of humans,

and their outer and inner richness and bring a balance into the world must be discovered....

Humans still remain very ancient and old and have remained almost the same and has not learned anything because we are doing again the same and in the same rut.

Somebody belongs to a religion founded ten thousand years ago, somebody belongs to a religion two thousand years old - these people are not contemporary. They are living in present times, but they are not in the present.

And this has created a tremendous problem: technology, scientific progress needs people in the present times to use it, and people in the present times are not available. Technology is available, science is available, but the people who can use it creatively are non-existent.

The result is disastrous, because to these people who are not contemporaries, science has given technological instruments, machines, which are dangerous. It is like putting a sword in the hands of a child who may hurt somebody, or himself.

Let's not lose focus or momentum. The question we all need to answer is what we do to really bring about change. Yes we need to educate ourselves about the issues. How can we change the narrative?

Modern technology and science has not corrupted us humans and is not the problem. The problem is the retarded human.

Rumi said, 'Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world.

(Contd.. on p. 6)



GOD IS TRUTH, NOT A GUEST

Since my recent return to India from the USA, I have been participating with much joy in, H E Oswald Cardinal Gracias' Eucharistic Celebration live streamed on YouTube every morning. I appreciate his homilies very much. However, one thing that has been disturbing the peace of my mind in the "My Spiritual Communion" prayer is the phrase, "O Divine Guest". Jesus, a 'guest'? How can that be? A guest is always an outsider, a *paraya* (a stranger or an alien, a foreigner – **not to be mistaken for 'pariah' which means social outcast**) who comes and leaves. Jesus is an insider, always in me and in every human person. He is my Creator, my Lord, my God, my Spouse, my Brother, and my Friend! Even when I sin and thus snap or break my relationship with Him, He continues to abide in me. He is my Prana, i.e. energy, life, breath, chi or qui. He is present in every cell of my body. Because He is in me, I exist! *Aham Brahmasmi-I AM*. It pains me immensely to call Jesus a guest. I am because He is in me.

Secondly, I have also enjoyed participating in the preparation for Pentecost, 22-30 May 2020, that has followed the Eucharist. I liked the Novena Prayer to the Holy Spirit and the talks. But on 24 May 2020, Father Michael D'Cunha, the young, enthusiastic and eloquent preacher, in his dissertation on the Revelatory gift i.e. the Discernment of Spirits said, "Truth can also come from the evil spirit", quoting the Acts of the Apostles, where the girl follows Paul and shouts the truth - "You are the Son of God". I pondered over this. It still bothers me. How can truth come from an evil spirit? Jesus quieted the spirit because it was not the appropri-

ate time to reveal that truth. Truth is God. Falsehood comes from the evil one. When I am tempted to tell a lie, I know my conscience pricks me. My good parents and teachers taught me to always tell the truth and to accept the consequences, even when it may be very difficult. I have painstakingly lived this principle all my life. At 63 it is hard to accept that truth can also come from the evil one. In my humble understanding, truth can only come from the good spirit, i.e. from God.

Would some kindly soul please help me answer my queries and thus clear my doubts, please?

—Sister (Dr) Mudita Menona
Sodder RSCJ
Sophia College, Mumbai

Our great Nation should take inspiration from these countries.

It is interesting to note that countries like New Zealand, South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan do not have even a single active case of Covid-19. With due respect to all, As soon as the virus outbreak was detected, they started screening passengers at all their Airports. Nevertheless, a vaccine/ cure must be found soon for this virus.

— Agnel Dmello,
Mumbai

Precautions to be taken as

city opens up

During this time of Coronavirus, buy vegetables early in the morning and leave it for 6 hours. After 6 hours, consider it as safe as it used to be before Corona existed.

Avoid buying vegetables in the evening; it's the leftover of all day, touched by hundreds of people who came to the shop and chose the best of the lot.

Once you have cooked a vegetable, there are no chances of Corona being still active in it. Its completely safe to be consumed.

Avoid eating raw vegetables and fruits as soon as you bring them home. Also avoid keeping them in the fridge. Keep them soaked in water or in open if they are not too perishable.

Higher chances of infection is when you touch them at the shop itself or when you exchange cash with the shopkeeper. He comes in contact with hundreds of people everyday and goes to crowded wholesale markets everyday to purchase them. These days, the wholesale markets of vegetables and fruits are the biggest carriers of Coronavirus.

Stock non perishable items for a week, if possible. Also, reduce your frequency of visiting the market.

As soon as you come home, wash your hands properly, possibly take a bath and keep the clothes away which you wore to the shop.

Do not use sanitizer or disinfectant on food items.

Do not let your kids touch them before 4-6 hours of being brought and you should not touch the kids before you take a bath or at least wash your hands.

Try to pay online as much as possible. These days even small shops accept paytm and phone pe, etc.

Do not wash vegetables and fruits with soap or any such chemicals like handwash. A professor and safety specialist in North Carolina State University, Benjamin Chapman came forward saying that the use of dish soaps or any kind of soap has always been harmful for consumption and may lead to various health prob-

(Contd.. on p. 6)

(Contd.. from p. 5)

lems. He said, "We've known for 60 years that there are toxicity issues about consuming household dish soaps. Drinking dish soap or eating it can lead to nausea. It can also lead to an upset stomach. It's not a compound that our stomach is built to deal with. He advised people to wash their fruits and vegetables with cold water instead as it gets 90-99% of germs out.

—Jubel D'Cruz,
Mumbai

Unstoppable Corona virus

India is now in 4th place after U.S. Brazil and Russia in the list of total world Covid-19 cases with the number of Covid positive cases crossing the 3-lakh mark and the daily spike in cases going past 10,000. Maharashtra and Delhi are the worst hit states with no respite in the increase in the number of new cases. It appears that we have now reached a point of no return, having lost control of containing the spread and bringing down the number of infections that are rising exponentially despite the lockdowns, hotspots and containment zones. Even after the 2-month nationwide lockdown, lakhs of migrant workers tested positive after their return to their native place. Green zones in Goa have now started to turn red after the opening up of state borders and inter-state travel. Testing has become less stringent and people have been given the option of home quarantine. A second lockdown now seems imminent as the number of people testing positive has started to increase. It is a never ending cycle of increasing and decreasing numbers. So, what do we do to stop the onslaught of the killer virus. WHO has warned that the worst has yet to come as the virus has not yet peaked. How do we flatten the curve? Probably it is time to take a cue from New Zealand which

(Contd.. from p. 4)

Today I am wise, so I have begun to change myself." His words ring true across centuries. But in the process of our metamorphosis, we need to make sure our change is directed towards the betterment of our environment. This is now a global movement as the world unites in protest and some international governments have begun steps to cement this change.

Objects have changed but humans remains just the same. Nothing much can change unless we humans take the step to change it. Unless transformation becomes our heart and mind. It is rare to come across a contemporary as the technology has gone far ahead.....

I hope in the generation to come they will speak up as they're the future and understand the message of Mother Nature and ensure that **humanity must not create a potential catastrophe for itself.**

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has succeeded in bringing down their numbers to zero, and is now stated to be Covid-19 free.

—A. F. Nazareth
- Alto Porvorim

Lockdown Blow to Catholic Publishers!

CAN (Catholic News Agency) staff on 02 June 2020, reported that Catholic Publishers in the UK (United Kingdom) are turning to social media and online sales in an effort to survive the impact of the novel corona-virus or COVID-19 pandemic on their businesses.

CEO of the Catholic Truth Society (CTS) told CNA, that many publishers had lost 60-70% of their normal income after the government imposed a nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of the COVID-19.

"It's a pretty huge hit to take. Two main selling outlets for CTS Publications – books stores and Church stalls were forced to close. We saw individuals ordering through our website going up quite substantially. But it didn't make up for the loss of the other two big ones – Pauline Books and Media (UK), which had to shut five book centers."

"We're constantly asking ourselves, how is this changing our outlook and our way of operating? However, it has energized us to be more present online and on social media, opined Sister Angela Grant, provincial of the Daughters of St. Paul in the UK. Its publishing ministry also posts daily Scripture Reflections!

Sister Grant also emphasized that they remain committed to operating their book centers, even if they are unlikely to make a profit. We are optimistic! The Gospel requires to be sown. God will provide.

And if I may add, the author of this letter: "The words of the mouth are deep waters; the fountain of wisdom a gushing stream; the intelligent will draw them out" (Proverbs 18:4; 20:5).

—Dr. Hazel Colaso,
Bandra (W), Mumbai

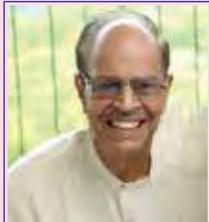
Saliva To Sweat

Game of cricket is a funny game and the rules of the game change according to the situations. As Covid-19 did enter the cricketing field, the rules of the game needed to be changed. And one such change from the health point of view was the usage of saliva applied on the ball for getting extra shine. As saliva posed the danger of Coronavirus infection, the laws of the game changed in the rules. So application of saliva is totally banned and as an alternative the bowlers can apply sweat as per ICC's rules committee. Now it will be interesting to see the bowlers will work hard to get more sweat just like the fight to get more wickets.

The ICC says changes to regulations have been brought in to mitigate the risks posed by the COVID-19 virus and protect the safety of players and match officials. The regulation to ban saliva to shine the ball has been put in place because spitting on the ball elevates the risk of virus transmission. The World Health Organization (WHO) advisory opined that COVID-19 virus is primarily transmitted between people through respiratory droplets and contact routes. Hence, the ICC Cricket Committee unanimously agreed to enforce the ban. Players can use sweat to polish the ball. The

Committee also noted the medical advice that it is highly unlikely that the virus can be transmitted through sweat and saw no need to prohibit the use of sweat to polish the ball whilst recommending that enhanced hygiene measures are implemented on and around the playing field. The Corona era is changing the rules of the game as well.

Saliva has been the bowler's friend for so long now that no one remembers when it was first used. Perhaps it was the American bowler Barton King, credited with developing the out-swing who began the trend. It creates an imbalance between two sides of the ball, and that influences the way it is propelled through the air. Shane Warne has suggested a ball weighted on one side to help the swing bowlers, but how effective will that be? Sachin Tendulkar favours wax or something similar.



C.K. Subramaniam

But keeping bowlers from using saliva on the ball — a practice sanctified by generations of use — and monitoring their moves is only a part of the problem. On the field, sportsmen sweat, they spit, they blow their noses; if sweating is medically safe, there is still the question of the other two hanging in the air, so to speak.

The habit is too deeply ingrained, and sportsmen will have to remind themselves regularly not to spit or blow noses. These are involuntary actions and difficult to keep track of. You can't have 'spit cameras' on the ground either. Perhaps — in the best case scenario — in a couple of years we will wonder what all the fuss was about.

Australia's premier fast bowler Pat Cummins while accepting the health risk associated with the usage of saliva urged the game's custodians to come out with an alternate option.

A Different Ball Game



Cummins said applying sweat or any external substance like wax on the ball could be an alternate option if usage of saliva is banned. There will be a debate for a while till the game is getting a freehand from the pandemic. Till then it will be a different ball game altogether.

The 'application' of saliva on the cricket ball has been going on for years in the history of the game of cricket. There will be many who say that nothing has happened to anyone till now. But when you think of the 'practice' in terms of hygiene, there is bound to be a pause. When no one likes to touch another person's secretions or saliva, then how on earth can anyone agree to handle a ball with saliva 'coated' by another player?

Whatever be the opinion of the cricket experts, in my opinion, the 'practice' needs to be banned and another artificial substance created and used instead. Ball hygiene and odour need to be kept in mind. There is speculation that use of saliva to shine the ball will be stopped to cut down the risk of the highly contagious infection with reports suggesting that the ICC is considering the possibility of allowing the use of an alternative to polish the ball under the supervision of umpires.

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WHETHER OUR NATION CAN AVERT A HUMANITARIAN DISASTER DUE TO RETURN OF THE POOR MIGRANT WORKERS TO THEIR VILLAGES?

by Eric D'Sa

Almost all State Governments across the political spectrum have asked the Central Government to expand the scope of the national rural jobs programme as they are struggling to accommodate the millions of impoverished migrant workers who are returning to their villages from distant cities they were working in. The abominable plight of these migrant workers in recent weeks has invaded television screens and stirred the nation's conscience. A number of people have even died on the roads and railways. Alas, this is just the tip of the wave of hardships that is sweeping through the country. The demands of States include increasing the number of working days under MGNREGS and expanding its scope by including several type of labour.

The situation looks increasingly alarming in the light of a series of surveys conducted by Azim Premji University (APU) and other institutions. The APU survey, for instance, found that 74% of the respondents (thousands of poor households scattered over many States) were "consuming less food" today than before the lockdown. Another survey, conducted by Farzana Afridi and her colleagues in low-income neighbourhoods of Delhi, found that 80% of the respondents had not earned any income during the lockdown, 90% reported "financial stress", and about half were too anxious to sleep at night due to the fear that has been put into their subconscious minds by the sudden total country wide lockdown that was imposed with just 4 hours notice.

Thankfully, the Public Distribution System (PDS) is preventing the worst. The same surveys show that an overwhelming majority of poor households (86% according to the APU survey) are currently receiving food rations. The doubling of food rations for three months was a good move on the part of the central government — there is every reason to extend it beyond the end of June. The PDS, however, leaves out 500 million people, including many who live in poverty. Further, even for those who are covered, the PDS is little more than a protection against hunger. It cannot ensure adequate nutrition, let alone a decent stan-

dard of living.

To cope with the crisis, poor households urgently need a chance to earn cash beyond small mercies. Unconditional cash transfers are not easy to use for this purpose, because there is no simple way of identifying those in need, and covering everyone would amount to spreading the money very thin. Universal basic income is a nice idea, but when you do the maths, anything practical tends to reduce the "basic income" to a pittance. India as a country is not yet ready to implement even a limited basic income scheme for the poor at the bottom of the pyramid. India's Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment

**YOU THE CITIZENS
DECIDE:**

Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) offers an obvious alternative, at least for rural areas: employment on demand at basic wages.

The demand for MGNREGA work is stronger than ever now after the lockdown was imposed. This is not surprising as most people would prefer to do some work and earn a little money than to sit idle with empty pockets. This huge demand that has risen after the lockout was announced contrasts with the resilient indifference of rural workers towards MGNREGA in recent years, due to low wages and erratic payments. Wages are still low, and payments are still far from timely and reliable; what has changed is that for most workers today, there is nothing better on the cards. However the idea of work on demand is still alien to most rural workers, so few of them take the initiative of applying for MGNREGA work.

They fact that many in the village are illiterate and semiliterate also creates a problem for them to fill the forms. But whenever they are helped, people are eager to work. Without assistance, however, most workers would find it difficult to submit work applications. The sad truth is that except in areas where rural workers are relatively empowered, work applications (reflected in "e-muster rolls") are not generally initi-

ated by the workers themselves. Instead, they are initiated on their behalf by others, who have a stake in activating MGNREGA works. Local government officials will have to be motivated to do the needful.

This is one reason why the scale of MGNREGA works remains very low in many States in spite of a huge demand for employment. This situation calls for large-scale opening of MGNREGA works on a proactive basis. Every village needs at least one major worksite, where a good number of people can work at short notice (with adequate distancing precautions). Ideally, workers should be allowed to enrol at the worksite. Further, large-scale employment generation should continue throughout the monsoon, the hardest period of the year for poor people in large parts of rural India.

Averting a humanitarian disaster in the next few months calls for a veritable explosion of MGNREGA work. Much can be done to facilitate this: expanding the list of permissible works, hiring more gram rozgar sevaks (employment assistants), simplifying the implementation process, mobilising para-teachers for work application drives, and so on. And of course, top-down orders to expand the scale of works could work wonders. Village infrastructure could be improved during this period.

Funds are not an immediate concern since the MGNREGA budget for 2020-21 has been raised to ₹1-lakh crore or so. But more money is likely to be required to meet the tremendous demand for MGNREGA work. It is important to ensure that funds never dry up: this happened every year in the last few years, leading to huge wage arrears. MGNREGA is supposed to be a demand-driven programme with an open-ended budget; nothing in the Act authorises the government to impose a budget cap. These are some of the issues that arise in activating NREGA for crisis relief. The main thing is to provide work aplenty and pay wages at speed. This is a matter of life and death to millions in villages who have shifted from cities. The least we Citizens can do is to help the migrant worker leave the city with the required food and drinking water for the journey.

Is India losing its battle against Covid-19?

India's bravado in dealing with Covid-19 seems to be heading towards near-collapse, with nearly 10,000 new cases added daily amid reports of a shortage of hospital beds and the breakdown of the economy.

With some 287,000 cases and more than 8,100 deaths as of June 11, India has become the world's fifth most infected country after the United States, Brazil, Russia and the United Kingdom.

"There are a lot of difficulties and crises. Our villages, poor, laborers, farmers and industries are facing a crisis," federal road transport minister Nitin Gadkari said on June 10.

"The crisis faced by the government of India has also grown. Some of our state governments don't have money to pay salaries next month."

The crisis was well predicted by economists and health experts months in advance given India's 1.3 billion population and the cramped and unhygienic situations facing most people in cities.

The government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi imposed a nationwide lockdown from midnight on March 24 when positive cases were less than 100. More than 70 days later, the economic and social situation compelled him to ease lockdown rules as cases were spiraling up.

The government faced a Catch-22 situation, say political observers like Vidyarthi Kumar. The economic situation looked grim if the lockdown continued but relaxation could mean a pandemic explosion.

Besides the double whammy of the severe financial crisis and shooting up of the Covid-19 graph, health workers report a shortage of health infrastructure in cities, including commercial hub Mumbai and national capital New Delhi.

The national capital region of Delhi, with 19 million people, is a state. Arvind Kejriwal, its chief minister, last

week said the administration was short of hospital beds as the city reported some 31,000 cases. The government estimated Delhi alone would have some 550,000 cases by July 31.

Opposition Congress party leader Ajay Maken appealed to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), saying 70 percent of 57,000 available beds in the city are not used.

Delhi has several large hospitals functioning under the federal government besides those under state and private management. But altogether fewer than 27 percent beds are used, Maken said.

A lack of coordination and effective command structure seems to be the issue, NHRC officials told media. The agency on June 10 served a notice to the Delhi government and the federal government asking them to file comprehensive reports on the availability of hospital beds within 10 days.

Lack of money seems another issue.

Doctors at New Delhi's Kasturba Hospital have threatened mass resignation over non-payment of their salaries since March. "As this is not the right time to go on a strike, we have not stopped giving our services," said Sunil Kumar, president of the doctors' association in the hospital.

Doctors in another government-run hospital have also threatened mass resignation on similar grounds.

Crowded Mumbai city of 18 million people, where an estimated 40 percent live in cramped slums, had reported 52,000 positive Covid-19 cases as of June 11. As the city adds some 18,000 cases daily, its death toll has doubled in a fortnight to more than 600.

Maharashtra state's chief minister Udhav Thackeray says the lockdown could be reimposed in capital Mumbai and other severely affected areas.

Officials say more than 65 percent of positive coronavirus cases come from cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai and

Ahmedabad. A shortage of beds remains a significant handicap in Mumbai and Chennai.

The virus has now spread all across Asia, and experts say the peak will come only in July and August.

But many observers say that, more than beds, the real challenge is a lack of a centralized management structure to fight the crisis. The country is also facing an acute shortage of healthcare staff, testing kits and basic infrastructure in hospitals.

Has India's courageous and much hyped battle against Covid-19 already been lost?

Meanwhile, authorities seem to be drawing satisfaction from the fact that Covid-19 mortality rates have been around 3 percent, while recovery rates are near 48 percent.

Many say the lockdown enforcement from March 25 had little impact in checking the spread of the virus.

"The lockdown did not stop or fight Covid-19. It rather brought immense hardships for millions, especially migrant and daily wagers, and hit the economy hard. When the lockdown was relaxed, we have an abnormal increase in the number of positive cases ... Something went wrong somewhere," says Ahmedabad-based Congress leader Ilyas Qureshi.

In many places, the refrain is to develop the "art of living with corona." It shows the hollowness of the claim that India fought the battle led by PM Modi and was victorious.

Under Modi's instructions, Indians in March and April practiced plate banging and candle lighting as military helicopters showered flowers on corona warriors and hospitals.

But the administration made no real preparation for the impending pandemic. That is the reality on the ground now facing all Indians.

— UCA News.

Social Distancing A Safe Measure

Seventy Five Days Of Social Distancing

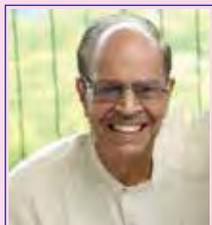
Social distancing is a public health practice that aims to prevent sick people from coming in close contact with healthy people in order to reduce opportunities for disease transmission. It can include large-scale measures like canceling group events or closing public spaces, as well as individual decisions such as avoiding crowds. With COVID-19, the goal of social distancing right now is to slow down the outbreak in order to reduce the chance of infection among high-risk populations and to reduce the burden on health care systems and workers. Experts describe this as flattening the curve, which generally refers to the potential success of social distancing measures to prevent surges in illness that could overwhelm health care systems.

It is particularly important and perhaps obvious to maintain that same 6-foot distance from anyone who is demonstrating signs of illness, including coughing, sneezing, or fever. Along with physical distance, proper hand-washing is important for protecting not only yourself but others around you—because the virus can be spread even without symptoms. Don't wait for evidence that there's circulation [of COVID-19] in your community and go ahead and step up that hand-washing right now because it really does help to reduce transmission.

Reopening of worshiping places, malls, restaurants and work-places with limited attendance after nearly two months may bring a sigh of relief to the majority of people whose movements were restricted until now

but this measure will throw a big challenge to the government and health care givers what with the way the corona virus is spreading fast and furious despite lock down. It looks as if the battle against the COVID 19 will be a long drawn affair.

New Zealand has no active cases of COVID-19 in the country for the first time since February 28, the country's Health minister. The last person who was being monitored for coronavirus has now been released from isolation



C.K. Subramaniam

as he has been symptom-free and is regarded as recovered and it is a success story from down under. Like the Olympic gold medal tally we have reached 5th position in world level corona disease deaths and infection percentage people seem to be more courageous to face good or bad as humans are on thresholds of their life. And their beliefs on Almighty help human survival to end this spreading of these types of dangerous pandemics and pessimistic instant predictions of astrologers and the world is in a confused state of mind.

It's not just markets in the city that residents are crowding at: flouting lock-down norms, many residents have resumed their workouts at beaches of the city, risking the spread of COVID-19 as in USA and other countries. While a few residents were seen wearing masks and following physical distancing norms, many others did not follow safety measures. It is time to adhere to guidelines given by the health department and maintain safe distance. Social distancing is the only solution for achieving a make or break situation. Seventy

Pope's Message to Scholas Occurrentes

Pope Francis delivered a video message to Scholas Occurrentes Foundation on 05 June 2020. This international organization is intimately connected to young people, and their parents and teachers who provide technological, artistic and athletic initiatives. Pope Francis spoke about three aspects. (Some excerpts):

1. Times of Crisis: "Crises, if they are not well accompanied are dangerous, as one can become disoriented. And the advice of the wise, even if they are for small, personal and social crises is: 'never go into a crisis alone, always go in company'! In a crisis, we are overwhelmed by fear, we close ourselves off as individuals or we begin to repeat what is convenient. Rather, we should empty ourselves, even losing our beauty."

2. Power of Education: "Education should listen, otherwise it does not educate. Education creates culture, or it does not educate. Education teaches to celebrate, or else it does not educate. Someone can ask me, 'But isn't education knowing things? No. That is knowledge. But to educate is to listen, to create, and to celebrate as a community that educates, as an institution that grows, opening the doors of the University to the Sense! – because, to educate is to seek and to teach the meaning of things, especially the truth!"

3. Value of Gratitude: "Here I want to emphasize 'gratitude', its meaning and its beauty! They may seem useless especially nowadays. Who starts a business looking for gratitude? And yet, on these things that seem useless depend the whole of humanity, including the future!"

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

'Breathing' problems in America

Breathing problem, in the current context, is associated with Covid-19. Yet, right now it has a different connotation for the American blacks – a community considered second class citizens for centuries though the country became independent in 1776. Black men got the right to vote only in 1870 and black women in 1965. America may now pose to be the champion of democratic rights but its citizens had to fight for their rights. India. On the other hand, India gave full voting rights [universal suffrage] to every citizen – men and women of all religions, races, status, without distinction. To that extent there was purity in Indian democratic values despite its poverty and religious diversity. The blacks with their baggage of 'slavery' since the 16th century were treated as 'commodity' by whites for trading. That stigma persists in America and blacks are being exploited, perhaps covertly. Blacks still feel slighted and ignored by society similar to what the lower castes suffered and continue to suffer in India.

What really triggered the riots in Minneapolis? Reports suggest that George Floyd 46, not a paragon of virtue anyway, was apprehended for using a counterfeit 20 Dollar note and the Police pinned him down on the ground and one of them, Derek Chauvin put his knee on his neck and pressed it hard for too long. He pleaded "I can't breathe". He was unarmed so the only reason that can be attributed to this inhumanity is hatred. It is this inhumanity at its worst that angered the black community despite the victim being a history-sheeter. Other American citizens – whites and coloured alike joined in. While the riots started in the city where the crime was committed, it literally spread like wild fire across the nation putting the Trump administration under severe test. Trump, arrogant that he is, thought he could unleash the army and suppress the movement but faced resistance from even white Americans. America has a history of civil disturbances over the centuries but independent analysts believe that this movement is unique because it is not limited to the Black community alone. It shows the magnitude of the people's anger so much so that the protests have engulfed the world. It has spread to UK

VIEWS on NEWS

and the continent as well as places like Australia and understandably South Africa - the home of apartheid.

One of the high ranking army officials gave a subtle message to Donald Trump that army men have taken the oath to defend the American constitution and not the President. This statement must have unnerved the President who quickly decided to withdraw the limited National Security guards deployed in Washington whose Mayor made her protest public. Even his own Defence Secretary publicly differed with the President but he was not sacked because of the possible backlash. The riots are reminiscent of the widespread riots way back in 1992 when four Police Officials charged with assault on a black – Rodney King, were acquitted by the Court.

In the present case, mind you, George Floyd had a history of wrong doing. He was last sentenced for 5 years in 2009 for aggravated robbery. Despite all the officials being charged with murder, the disturbances have continued unabated much to the discomfiture of the President who is facing a tough re-election bid later this year. This unfortunate development is likely to affect his chances and that perhaps is the larger worry for the beleaguered President whose popularity has sunk to minus 12 already. Rights activists say that racial pandemic killed George Floyd – not a very flattering compliment for the Americans who only preach about civil liberties to the world but do not practice. To make matters worse now a Police Officer in Atlanta shot another black man dead. It is time America allows the black community to 'breathe' freely like fellow whites as their lives also matter - many banners and placards pronounced. With even racism related statues of famous personalities being demolished, this could be the turning point and a decisive phase in American history.

Make every day a Sunday

We all know that the Corona Virus is here to stay. It is like a man-eater lurking somewhere for sure [no one knows where] and therefore the precautionary measures will have to stay [lockdown or unlock]. The lock is opened but the choice of opening the door and going out in the open is left to the citizens. To that extent,



by Marshall Sequeira

the government has played safe. Since you go out knowing that the danger is there, you will have to face the consequences, howsoever unpleasant they may be. We all agree that there is no way the lockdown can be a permanent feature of our lives. Among the concessions announced, places of worship are allowed to conduct services under strict conditions – some of which may be hard to adhere to but not impossible. These guidelines are applicable to all religions which is fair.

Much as they may try, the Catholic Church will find the new guidelines hard to comply with especially the limitation on the number of devotees who can congregate at a time. In larger parishes in Mumbai, hundreds assemble for Sunday Masses, be it morning or evening despite having multiple Masses. Therefore it will be a Herculean task to keep the faithful away. Most Catholics take their Sunday obligation seriously though an Italian proverb says 'All are not saints who go to Church'. On a lighter note, in the words of Thomas Fuller "Many come to bring their clothes to Church rather than themselves". On a serious note though, the Church will have to come with some out-of-the box solution. It will be a good idea if through a Papal decree or by the Archbishop if he is empowered to do so notifying that the Sunday obligation will stand fulfilled if the faithful attend any Mass on any day including the weekdays like it is being done in some Gulf countries. This will spread out the crowd to a large extent. Masses can continue to be live-streamed for the elderly to fulfill their obligation. Occasionally, Holy Eucharist can be shared with them at their homes through Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers. Sunday-School for children can also be live-streamed. Finally, though the Shepherd has a very tough job on his hands, he will have to take care of the spiritual needs of his flock and at the same time will have to respect the directives of the State, in these trying times.



Thriving On Confusions

Goa And Its Covid Fight

Goa is turning virulent with each passing day!

But the recent spurt in the number of COVID-19 cases reported does not seem to have deterred the administration from continuously relaxing the norms in a bid to bring back normalcy to the state. In the bargain, a reign of confusion prevails over the region.

Amid a series of Standard Operating Procedures issued, apprehensions that many of the SOPs which are by themselves self-contradictory could lead to a whole lot of misperception have not been unfounded either.

While on paper these sets of instructions promise relief to those affected, the ground reality fails to inspire confidence among them. The state government's latest SOP will see a large number of untested people coming into Goa from other states.

In the absence of a proper vigilance system that largely depends on local bodies to monitor the isolation of an infected individual in their area, it is difficult to comprehend how quarantined persons can be made to follow the protocol.

It is quite evident that the locals feel let down by the inefficacy of an administration which many feel faltered

at crucial points in its war against the dreaded microbe and is hence unable to contain its spread in the state.

The government's hesitation over many an issue pertaining to the COVID-pandemic has further prevented people from exuding confidence in their government!

The public cannot be faulted for assuming that if the virus has spread to every taluka of the state and has been alarmingly growing to even infect health workers, there must be serious flaws in the government's handling of the pandemic.

With coronavirus cases sprouting in several parts of the state, it is now becoming difficult to understand the modus operandi the state government will resort to to avert dangers posed by the COVID-19 spread.

It would not be wrong at this juncture to state that the state government has lost its way on COVID!

Just a week back we were debating the prudence of having the government acceding to the demands by a couple of political leaders for the lockdown of the port-city of Vasco in the wake of the steep surge in COVID cases at Mangor Hill.

We need to understand that as long as the rampaging virus continues to evade a potent cure, there is bound to

be a spike in infections.

The process of declaring 'containment zones' is the administration's response vis-à-vis the seriousness of the situation and with a view to arrest the spread of the disease.

But does this entail a lockdown of the entire region every time such procedures are followed!

The government's concern for the lives and livelihood of the populace was being cited as the reason for its reluctance to agree for the total lockdown of Mormugao taluka.

For a state struggling to come out of the rigours of a prolonged nationwide lockdown, another forced internment of its populace and the order to shut down all business and commercial activities would only add to its woes, or so it was thought.

The state's efforts to limp back to normalcy economically would also be drastically hampered.

That is not to say that the government can endanger the lives of its citizens by concentrating only on reviving the economy of the state and overlooking the risks of exposing them to the hazards of the deadly virus.

It however remained to be seen as to how steadfast the standard operating procedures issued by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs would be adhered to once public movement starts in public eateries and shrines in Goa.

Moreover, considering the local conditions, it was pertinent to have the state authorities mandating their own set of rules and guidelines as Goa addressed the 'Unlock' phase.

So far the state has followed the MHA advisories verbatim without taking into consideration the local concerns. Even otherwise, the haste



by Pachu Menon



(Contd.. from p. 12)

shown by the state for being declared a 'Green Zone' earlier has not been without its own share of surprises.

With the spate in infectious cases observed, it is all the more shocking that the Chief Minister in recent times has been giving into bouts of perceptual illusion confusing setbacks as rare achievements.

The fact that the CM has also got into the habit of contradicting the Health Minister quite often on matters relating to the COVID pandemic in the state is equally worrying.

Considering the fact that Goa is in a far worse condition than it was earlier, Pramod Sawant's haste to get the state into Unlock-mode emphasizes his indecisiveness and lack of foresight.

With gaping holes in systems and protocols it is all the more worrying to have partisan attitudes deciding the movement of people across the borders.

Moreover, the CM's assertion of preparedness is indeed hollow considering the state's limitations in healthcare infrastructure, testing and quarantine facilities.

Critics of the CM have been quick to point out that he has not been able to grasp the enormity of the situation and has failed to understand the COVID-19 impact in Goa.

As more and more people have begun to doubt the effectiveness of Goa government's anti-COVID plans, it is the almighty the populace will have to turn to for deliverance from the scourge of Coronavirus.

But almost all religious places and shrines in the state have de-

clined to keep away devotees for yet another indefinite period advising them instead to pray from the safe confines of their homes.

Likewise, the voluntary decision by the vendors to close their shops consequent to the virus scare sweeping across the port-city can only be seen as an alarming response to the escalating cases which has made the members of public more cautious.

The clamour for lockdown of the affected areas reflects the concern of the locals who fear for the lives of their families. As more and more people have begun to doubt the effectiveness of Goa government's anti-COVID plans, self-help remains the only option.

For members of the public who have been flippant enough to consider the lockdown as a period of forced hibernation, the unlock phase might well have turned into 'party time'. And this is precisely where the whole problem lies! People will have to strictly adhere to the precautionary norms prescribed in order to mark themselves safe.

'Atmanirbharta' or self-reliance will be achieved when the locals decide on overcoming the difficult situation through their collective and selfless efforts.

A public showdown over the government's failure to 'break the chain' of infections is however no solution to the problem at hand.

With the onset of monsoon, the state will now have to contend with diseases like Dengue and Malaria as well.

Goa is in for tough times ahead!

A Great Loss To Indian Cinema



Bollywood and TV actor Sushant Singh Rajput committed suicide at his home in Mumbai and it is a sad news for Indian Cinema in general and sports fans in particular. In India cricket is considered a religion and MS

Dhoni is the matinee idol of Indian cricket. By enacting his role of MS Dhoni, he lived in the hearts of cricket lovers all over the world. The way he executed the helicopter shot in the biopic of MSD, showed his caliber of a class actor. The untimely and unfortunate demise of Hindi film actor Sushant Singh Rajput is extremely shocking. He always enthralled the audience with his power packed performance in films such as M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story and Kedarnath.

Sushant was born in Patna. His father was a government official. He is the youngest and only son in his family. He has four elder sisters, one of whom is a state level cricketer. His mother passed away when he was in 12th standard. The actor spent his childhood in Delhi. He was one of the finest students during his school days and stood at 7th Rank AIEEE in 2003. The actor even got admission in Delhi College of Engineering and even did Mechanical Engineering but later chose glam world over studies. 'Pavitra Rishta' wasn't the debut of Sushant in Indian T.V. He started with the role of Preet Juneja in the serial 'Kis Desh Mein Hai Dil Mera'. He is often touted as another SRK in Bollywood since he had no family relation in the glam industry and made it big after being part of Indian T.V. Sushant self-confessed as he used to mimic King Khan during his school days to impress girls. The actor puts so much reality into his physical appearance for the role that a unit member mistook him as a helper on the set of Deductive Bakshay. He was one of the dancers under choreographer Shiamak Davara and was a background dancer in many of the events like Commonwealth Games 2006 and Filmfare the same year. Before entering the industry, he has even shaken a leg with Ashley Lobo's troupe. Sushant took martial art lessons from Allan Ami. This genius lad was also the National Olympiad Winner in Physics. He assisted the director Mohit Suri during the filming of Raaz 2. It is rumored that the actor joined a theater group 'Ekjute' and was also a student at Bary John's drama classes.

**Condolences to the bereaved family.
RIP SUSHANT.**

—C.K. Subramaniam

Stewardship Of The Earth Is An Obligation

By Melvyn Brown

"The earth will not continue to offer its harvest, except with faithful stewardship. we cannot say we love the land and then take steps to destroy it for use by future generations."

-Pope Saint John Paul II

The stewardship of God's creation is a physical bequest given to mankind. The wonders, treasures and resources of the earth is our responsibility to nurture, discover and to benefit from their hidden values and potentials. The stewardship of Mother earth is everyman's benefaction.

When we look into the early chapters of creation, we are in awe at the incredible power of God to design and control not only our planet, but the entire universe. When we share our united concern for the preservation of the earth, the planet serves us in return with seasons which produce the best harvest, the best herbs, clean air and pure water, all in abundance.

Our stewardship drive has to be on all fronts of creation. Top priority must be water, 'Every drop counts' is a powerful commercial slogan. For us it's an obligation, a mystical commitment to understand and to share the water of life. Truly, without water there would be no life.

The conservation of water is important. Clean water, free of contamination. Rainwater harvesting is most welcome in our present times. To make certain that arsenic does not pollute our drinking water, especially in the rural areas. All this is the package for our stewardship in the bracket of water consumption and production for the food we prepare.

The recent cyclone Amphan, caused the West Bengal State Rs. 80 Crore. Hundreds of homes were blown away and massive damage was done to agriculture and the power sector. Today, a great plantation drive across the State from New Town to the Sunderbans is being implemented.

People in the city and suburbs are being

involved in extensive plans to make the earth Green again. Pruning of trees still standing is a big job for the Forest Department. Urban farming on roof-tops of high rises deserves mention. To respect nature let us try to plant trees and save our planet for future generations.

The West Bengal State has taken the promise to plant "five crore" trees in the Sunderbans. The loss of mangroves due to the cyclone Amphan has been a tragedy for those in the area. The mangroves have saved the Sunderbans in the past and helped to break the force of the winds entering the cities and towns.

Global stewardship can save and rejuvenate the battered earth we call our home. Ecology of the planet and its Ecosystems has to be better understood. Environmental Pollution and its control, plants and animals, diversity, the proper study of agricultural ecology along with waste control technology and other such topics to delve into. The stewardship for humanity must come out of the cupboard and into our daily life-styles.

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Seriously Taking A Look At Abortion

A measure of legal protection is also needed where the unborn can still afford dignity and not oratorical comfort.

Roman Catholics are always determined and dedicated supporters of Pro-life. I would not say the same for a band of other anti-abortion workers and their tactics for taking the life of an unborn child.

They should read the Gospel of LUKE. 6:9 "And Jesus said to them, " I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it ?" And he looked around on them all, and said to him, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored."

The English Catholic church has a beautiful slogan in their Pro-life message: Life from Conception – No Exception".

The euphemism used in the abortion battle had always used the cloak of one phrase "Anti-Abortion". Today, the same group of women against abortion are using new 'support terms': FREEDOM FOR WOMEN and CHOICE is her decision. These women are waging a war of violence

on society's humanitarian voice, adding the colorful expression of Compassion and the will of God for their evil intentions.

I believe that the most protective place in the world is the womb. It is the unborn child's fortress from the armies of abortion cheerleaders. Have you ever witnessed the horror of suction abortion, the innocent child being torn apart by the method of suction in the first trimester.

In January 2020 the Union Cabinet (New Delhi) had increased the abortion limit from 20 to 24 weeks. The news item went on to state that this "special category" would include rape survivors, victims of incest, differently-abled and minors. All this information was to give women reproduction rights over their bodies.



BY MELVYN BROWN

The abortion industry worldwide shares a terminological camouflage to ignore the reality of their business to keep it out of the public pervue. On the ground level the act of abortion is to be taken seriously, the killing of babies is a tragic and visibly shameful acronym when used as products of conception, "pieces of children".

The famous Jane Roe and Wade case

(1973) was when the US supreme court legalized abortion and made it a groundbreaking chapter in the ugly story of abortion. The name Jane Roe was anonymous for the plaintiff. The real Jane Doe was Norma McCorvey who died at the age of 69 of heart failure. Before her death Norma became a Pro-life worker.

The Roe and Wade subject and the abortion issue was made into a 1998 documentary called "Baptism of Fire". Seven years later it became a pro-choice film, "Lake of fire' (2006).

Catherine Adair of England was a former Planned Parenthood employee. She revealed many dark moments of the terrible crime she witnessed at the abortion operations, and how the people got away with the killings of unborn children. Catherine eventually left the clinic. She said, "People who work in abortion clinics are good people, but they are deceived. Pray for them."

"Reasons" should not be the cause for an abortion. The very act of abortion, in itself, is a crime against humanity. There is a way out and a conscious-free way not to abort, whatever the situation might be. Give life, give birth and adopt or send for adoption.

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Ex Covid-19 Patient

Today I saw a sticker on a car, "Ex.Co-vid-19 Patient".

I was amused to see this sticker & out of curiosity, I enquired when it stopped at the signal.

He said, "Sir, seeing this sticker no Police man now dares to do Alcohol Breath Analysing Test".

Indians convert adversity into opportunity..

How To Identify Different Cities In India: (COVID Version)

Scenario 1: Two guys are fighting as one of them isn't wearing a mask & a third guy comes along, sees them and walks on...
That's MUMBAI..

Scenario 2: Two guys are fighting on not wearing a mask & a third guy comes along and tries to make peace... And offers to give a mask. The first two get together and beat him up..
That's DELHI.

Scenario 3: Two guys fighting over a mask and third guy comes from a nearby house and says "Don't fight in front of my place, go somewhere else."
That's PUNE..

Scenario 4: Two guys are fighting over a mask. A crowd gathers to watch... A guy comes along and quietly opens a stall selling masks there.
That's AHMEDABAD.

Scenario 5: Two guys are fighting over a mask. Both of them take time out & call their friends on their mobiles... Now 50 guys are fighting...
That's PUNJAB.

Scenario 6: Two guys fighting. Third guy without a mask, comes and shoots both of them..
That's Bihar.

Last Scenario: Two guys fighting over mask third guy comes along with a



carton of beer... All sit together drink beer and abuse COVID and go home as friends...

You are definitely in GOA

Quotes

"The law of work seems unfair, but nothing can change it; the more enjoyment you get out of your work, the more money you will make."

- Mark Twain

"Don't wait around for other people to be happy for you. Any happiness you get you've got to make yourself."

- Alice Walker

"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream."

- C. S. Lewis

"All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them."

- Walt Disney

"When you feel that you have reached the end and that you cannot go one step further, when life seems to be drained of all purpose: What a wonderful opportunity to start all over again, to turn over a new page."

- Eileen Caddy

"Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time."

- Thomas Edison

Proverbs 2:10

For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.

"There is a wisdom of the head, and a

wisdom of the heart."

Gardens in your heart. A garden of peace has been planted in your heart by your creator.

Just like in a garden you will find that weeds will grow if your heart is unattended.

Gardens must be cultivated, along with the correct soil combination, water and sunshine for rich, healthy plants will flourish.

The seeds were planted for you to know your creator. But you must seek Him, thirst for Him, and fill your thoughts and heart's desire for Him.

Begin protecting your eyes, thoughts and heart from the wayward weeds of a selfish world. Seek out the sunshine of loving others.

Punjabi vs South Indian funny Jokes sms messages collection

Punjabi marries a South Indian.. Banner outside marriage hall says: SODA weds DOSA..

Panjabi walks in late for the wedding

Punjabi: Shadi ki Rasam hui?

South Indian: Pahila Shadi hoga, baad mein Rassam milega. Rascal!

THE SECULAR CITIZEN

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The Secular Citizen

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The Tipu disaster, 220 yrs ago and...now.

-Ivan Saldanha-Shet.

The 2020.AD closure of places of worship, regular Christian religious rituals in most parts of the modern world, as a direct fall-out of the 'Corona Pandemic' has shaken religious minded Christians, it forebores change in the approach to church rituals. Places of worship became inaccessible to the public and devo-

the opening to after June 30. Readers would be debating the various regulations and rules and are aware surely. It is interesting to note that "on-line" mass in most places will supplement the church, while the Mangalore directive does not make a mention of the matter which is surprising.

Tipu the tiger of Mysuru & 15 year captivity :

they were in the dungeons of Srirangapatna and elsewhere in hiding for 15 years (1784 to 1799); It is miraculous that in the absence of priests, who were banished, piety survived. The Catholics in Kanara are said to be present since early 1500AD, about 500 years ago; regrouped after the captivity effectively in 1800 AD. The British allotted help and the primitive church structures came up



tions were observed 'privately' on instructions by Governments; Rituals were beamed 'on-line' for the edification of the people, while people were not allowed to participate. Pope Francis at the Vatican and many Bishops world over performed ceremonies, many devout Christians believed they were toeing the line of the church laws. God's laws are locked down by man....but, did god prescribe the law of the church or are they man made and tampered from time to time? Strangely church administrators at different levels ignored the faithful and made themselves scarce. God's plans are not man's.

2020 marks the 221st death anniversary of Tipu Sultan, The tiger of Mysore - in some ways the 'Independence day' of Konkani Catholics of



and flourished.

In secret, from 1784 till Tipu's death on 04 May 1799, Konkani Catholics kept their faith strong by reciting angelus, rosary, common prayers, singing traditional hymns and listening to passages from the "Krist Purana" written in Marathi by a famous Jesuit. Some men knew Krist Purann passages by heart. They recited and explained in Konkani, to fellow captives. Captives were tortured, killed and some were converted to Islam by force. In 1799, the captivity ended in a battle by the British who killed Tipu Sultan in Srirangapatna. For a period of 15 long years of captivity our Konkani speaking Catholics from coastal Karnataka kept their faith alive and strong without official church rule and control. We have to live and practice the spirituality of Jesus and not mere rituals and pious religious customs, superficially.

As of this week, commencing June 13, many churches plan to 'open' toing the Govt orders with precision. The Bishop of Mangalore has issued an 8 page directory in detail in this regard; while the neighbouring Bishop of Udipi has chosen to defer

Kanara - they got freedom to return to their homes in their adopted Tuluva land. However, the community and the Catholic church of the region never marks this occasion and has paid tribute to ancestors, the martyrs. The rising of the Konkani Catholics from the ashes is forgotten? Even though

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The Corona captivity and fall out :

Now in 2020 AD, the “self-accepted wait and watch” policy has given the impression that church hierarchy is not an “essential service” and that people can live without it. “We built huge churches and institutions with people’s money but what is the future?” a rare local priest asks. Perhaps this lock-down like others in history...proves Churches and hierarchy are non essentials for God, His honour and worship. Many have observed that priests and religious seriously remain aloof - even while many ordinary lay people were doing their bit for the many suffering. Now, as the corona curse is fast spreading here the churches are set to open, the fact may be a fear of income losses.

It is in this time of trouble, many recall that church rituals have often been disrupted and gone underground taking unusual forms several times in it's 2000 year old history for one reason or another. It has been time and again proved and declared by the church it self that 'The Church', is not it's monumental and ornamental structures of mortar, metal and stone...But, the humans and people who profess the faith even in most unlikely situations and places like catacombs, dungeons, war fields, prisons, homes and in unimaginable scenarios. This Covid season has proved that religious services are certainly falling under the non-essential services,” a local priest said and decried some priests’ worry over the dwindling church collections. “Followers of the church have come to believe religious life is fine if they attend online Mass,”

Few pious Catholics seem to be worried about missing church or missing Mass, sacraments and visit to the Blessed Sacrament, in this present extraordinary closure, the authorities casually exempted the faithful from obligations under what power? Since many decades, people have been taught what, when and how to recite a prescribed text as ‘prayer’ by rote. This type of parroting is meaningless. Jesus has given clear guidelines on ‘how to pray’ in Mt.6:5-8 and 7:21. In line with this teaching, has the Catholic Church or any other denomination really taught the people how to ‘pray’ especially in ‘silence’? This is a million-dollar question. God has been quite peaceful, alive and active in everyone during the lockdown period it is clear. "Please allow people to interact with God in their own ways" seems the message loud and clear! Kindly stop your ‘spoon-feeding’! Let religious commerce die! Please focus on spiritual empowerment.

The word of God is a gold mine from which we draw our spiritual strength and eternal life..... There is a marked pointer that it should be seen seriously that places of worship for the worship and honour of GOD alone and now are in review by people.

Tasty Banana and Egg snack



Ingredients:

8 bread slices
2 bananas
2 eggs
3 tbsp grated coconut
3 tbsp ghee
3 tbsp milk
Sugar as required
A pinch of salt

Method:

Heat one tbsp ghee in a pan and roast the banana slices.
Add some sugar and caramelize the bananas nicely.
Add the grated coconut and turn off the flame.
Cut the edges of the bread slices and flatten them using a rolling pin.
Beat the eggs with salt and 2 tbsp sugar.
Place a caramelized banana slice in the centre of the bread.
Pour the egg mixture on one side.
Fold the bread slice and seal the edges (the side where the egg mix is poured should come on top while folding)
Heat two tbsp ghee in a pan.
Toast the bread slices on low flame until both sides are golden in colour.
Sprinkle some sugar or pour honey on top if you prefer it sweeter.

— Jubel D'Cruz

Snehalaya - helping the needy

During the COVID 19 lockdown, Snehalaya's volunteer teams started visiting the needy & the poor at remote places across DK district and reached them at their difficulties. More than 1000 such families were directly interacted. Helped, supported and assessed the ground realities.

One such family was introduced to Snehalaya by the ward head Mr. Jerald Moras. Who is also the parish secretary at Sacred Heart Church Madanthyar. The unit head of Snehalaya at Madanthyar plunged into action as the situation of the family was pathetic.

A teen aged daughter with absolutely no support from anybody, without a decent house to live, helpless parent, with her dad highly diabetic, having gangrene on his foot was literally in tears when the team Snehalaya visited. The house roof was about to collapse, covered with cheap plastic was threatening to live inside.

Mr. Leo D Cunha the beneficiary had obtained a bank loan of Rs. 5.00 lakhs and a house structure was raised. The estimated cost assessed by team Snehalaya was Rs. 3.50 lakhs and took up the responsibility to provide a decent home for them.

On April 3rd 2020 the half constructed work was resumed and within exactly 30 days the house was completed under the leadership of Mr. Santhosh, a civil engineer by Profession and the nit head of Snehalaya at Madanthyar.

On 10th June 2020 there is a reason for all of us to smile as Snehalaya handed over the house to the family of Mr. Leo D Cunha.

The people friendly, role model police officer Madam Sowmya, sub inspector of Police at Poonjalkattel nagurated the House sharp at 10.00 am. Janab Abdul Razak,

high priest of Noorulhudajama masjid, Madanthyar unveiled the name board of the house. It was a pleasant surprise to the gathering that the house was named as SNEHALAYA by the beneficiary.

Rev. Fr. Stany Pinto, the asst, Parish Priest of sacred heart church Madanthyar, blessed the newly built house.

The founder of Snehalaya Mr. Joseph Crasta, presented the reasons for reaching out to the needy amidst all challenges, as the team found that this is the mission we are called for and if we cannot reach out we do not love the almighty as all are children of God.

Rev. Fr. Stany Pinto said, God works wonders through different people and today a house has turned into a home of love, a beautiful place to live for a family through the efforts of Snehalaya. Their work culture, concern to the needy and completion of their projects in time speaks their professionalism. He congratulated the stakeholders and invoked God's blessings.

Joseph Crasta, handed over a token of reemergence to the beneficiary by handing over beautiful words "There is a reason to smile, a home by Snehalaya".

Ms. Melita D Cunha, the daughter expressed the vote of thanks. She thanked Snehalaya, the team who were instrumental in materializing her dream of having a sweet home.

The trustees of Snehalaya, family members of Leo D Cunha, the unit members of Snehalaya enhanced the celebration by their presence.

Mr Geo D Silva, the head of Snehalaya's social out reach program, welcomed the gathering, presenting the key note and compared the program in his unique entertaining style.

St Anthony's Ashram M'luru, Annual Feast - June 13, 2020

On the solemn feast of a well known and liked universal saint in the catholic church and very much so in Mangalore, June 13, 2020, morning; Most Rev. Dr Peter Paul Saldanha the Bishop of Mangalore offered the Holy Mass and preached a homily on the life of Saint Anthony. The content was how St Anthony was raised to the state of Sainthood in the shortest time of 11 months after his death. The Pope Gregory who canonized. The Bishop added ' he is the arch of the New and Old Testament of the Bible', meaning to say that he had read and digested the Bible. He was filled with zeal to preach the Word of God. He lived and died for that cause. That's why God has honoured him by preserving his tongue from decay during the past eight centuries.

Today is the feast of Saint Anthony. And this evening the Holy Masses stopped due to 'Covid 19' will restart with the commemoration of precious body and blood of Christ. This may look co-incidence. But in God's plan St Anthony on his feast leads the devotees to Jesus, the Bishop mentioned.

During the 13 days of novena in preparation for the feast special prayers were offered for overcoming Covid 19, for those who are rendering service to the sick, for those who are affected directly and indirectly by the pandemic, for those who are stranded in different places and specially those who are working abroad.

Prayers were also offered for various groups of people on each of the days of novena- for the farmers, the unemployed, labourers, children, parents, those working abroad, the sick etc. The devotees were given an opportunity from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. to come and pray near St Anthony's grotto and to light the votive candles while following the instruction given by the government.

Fr Onil D'Souza the director of the Institutes thanked all those who contributed and co-operated to have a meaningful celebration in the midst of pandemic. Fr Thrishan D'Souza and Fr Roshan D'Souza the Asst directors were present on the occasion.

Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - GROOMS

5996. MUMBAI : RC Bachelor (Born in November 1974) / 5'8", B.E., working in Senior position reputed IT firm. Seeks alliance from R.C. spinster educated good family background Pl. reply with photograph and details to keithcardozo@hotmail.com OR **9820338755**

6198. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic (Born in October 1969), Ht. 5' 10", Edn. B.Com., good personality, hailing from God fearing, cultured family, issueless, divorcee by mutual consent, working for Cruise Liner in U.S.A., as Security Supervisor, well settled in Mumbai, Seeks suitable match. Contact email : dsouzamalcolmneil@gmail.com. Phone/SMS 09480157258.

6424. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1991), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., well employed, working as Sr. Customer Care Executive. Contact email : gerardd754@gmail.com, Mob: 9594766322 / 9930620943

6485. MUMBAI: North Indian R.C. Bachelor, (Born in October 1974), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 75 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working for an MNC

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

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Email : royalchristianfamily@gmail.com

in Mumbai as Back Office Executive.

Contact email : awr88@rediffmail.com

6228. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor (Born in December 1972). Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 65 kgs., Wheatish Complexion, Edn. S.S.C. A/C Tech. Course, working as a A/C Technician in Voltas. Contact email : lawrencedias321@gmail.com / Mob: 8291056939

6172. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in February 1978), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 86 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com., Position : Financial Consultant. Seeks a alliance from RC graduate/pst graduate spinster. Contact email: raceangelreb@yahoo.in

6508. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor (Born in October 1986), Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 80 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E.. working as a Asst. Manager in German Company. Seeks a tall, well educated homely Mangalorean girl. Contact email : colind.3010@gmail.com

6434. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in November 1978), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn.MD, MS., Doctor by profession. Contact email : rayanvincent@rediffmail.com

6573. VALSAD : Goan / Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in February 1986), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 68 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. Mechanical, working as a project engineer in **SAUDI ARABIA** seeks a well qulified girl from a good family background. Contact email :

ian.roshan.dsouza@gmail.com

6664 MUMBAI : Mangalorean R.C. Bachelor (Born in December 1982) Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 68 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., A.C.A., LLB., C.A. by Profession. Contact email: saldanha_ryan@yahoo.com OR 9820670158.

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6713 MUMBAI : Mangalorean RC Bachelor, (Born in September 1989), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 67 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.E. (Extc) working as a Sales Engineer. Contact email : coelho.helen@yahoo.co.in

6841 MUMBAI : Anglo Indian / Keralite Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in May 1991), Ht. 170 cms, Wt. 78 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Com., working as a Sales Executive. Contact email : mrsannieroy@yahoo.co.in

6507. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor (Hearing Impaired) (Born in September 1989), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 62 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. HSC., Dip. in Computer Hardware. Working as a Cashier. Contact email : clifford9948@gmail.com OR 9920331773

6797 MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in December 1987), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working for Five Star Hotel in Mumbai. Contact email : johnserrao14@yahoo.com

6585. MUMBAI : Mumbai born and broughtup Roman Catholic Bachelor, Handsome, (Born in June 1988), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 78 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. EXTC Engineering, working as a Networking Engineer. Having own accommodation. Contact email : 18.elaine@gmail.com

6856. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1973), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 67 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA, working as a HR. Contact email : clifforddsilva@yahoo.co.in

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6033 ABU-DHABI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in May 1979), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.A. Eng., Literature, working as a Copy Editor. **Contact email : barretto.lorraine@gmail.com OR 9730454857**

6831 MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1991), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 54 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as an Associate in Insurance Company. Contact email :

denidsouza854@gmail.com

5828 MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Divorcee, (Born in March 1954), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 80 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. HSC., House Wife. Contact email :

veradsouza3@yahoo.com

6381 MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1984), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com., working as a Secretary. Contact email :

soareskaren14@gmail.com

6685 MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1968), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. S.Y.B.Com., having own business on **DUBAI**. Contact email :

reachbernie@yahoo.com.

6502 MUMBAI : Mangalorean R.C. Spinster, Date of Birth 14-5-1983, Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Sc. Nursing, working as a ICU Head in Abudhabi - UAE. Military Hospital, Seeks a well educated hav-

ing a good job. Contact immediately email : janydz_1484@yahoo.com OR Tel.: 0971 557463484 / 9930076741.

6528. DUBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1985) Ht. 5' 7", Beautiful and Fair Complexion, Edn. Masters in Health, Care (MHA), Employed as a Manager in MNC Dubai, is looking for a suitable alliance between the ages of 32 to 36 with a height 5' 10" and above. Kindly respond directly to the party by email : aara8185@gmail.com with your photograph.

6642 MUMBAI : Goan/Mangalorean Roman Catholic Divorcee, (Born in September 1979), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 60 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a Customer Service, Seeks a suitable match. Contact email : rowmonteiro@yahoo.com OR 9820792115

6665 MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1986), Ht. 4' 9", Wheatish Complexion, Edn. 12th (HSC), Hair Dresser by profession. Seeks Mangalorean / Goan / East Indian Bacheor. Contact email: alcheckmate@gmail.com OR 9867292764

6532 BANGALORE : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, Only Child, (Born in December 1976), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 58 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.A. Communication, working as an Assistant. Contact email :

ashajob@hotmail.com

6341 MUMBAI : Protestant Christian spinster, (Born in April 1985), Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., B.Ed., Teacher by profession Seeks a groom from well settled, educated and good family background. Contact email :

georghomas1353@yahoo.com

6653-R MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in July 1990), Ht. 5' 2", Fair Complexion, Edn. M.B.B.S., Doctor & pursuing M.D. Seeks M.D. / M.S., Doctors. Contact email :

selwynhenriques13@gmail.com

6500 MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in May 1975), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. S.Y.B.A., Pursuing TYBA., / ECCED (Teacher' Training Course), Teacher in a reputed Catholic School. Contact email : dmljanet@gmail.com or jdmello@rediffmail.com

MATRIMONIAL

7126. U.S.A. : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1992) from Mumbai, Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. (Computers) from Mumbai, M.S. (Information Systems) from US. Possesses H1B visa and is working as a Technical Analyst with a MNC in USA. Contact email : wilfyjoy1315@gmail.com or call +91 98603 02527 / + 91 9970172527

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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

MATRIMONIAL

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

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'WE', NOT 'US' and 'THEM'

In 1972, David Campton, a prolific British dramatist, wrote an apparently innocuous, straight-forward and simple one-act play entitled '**Us and Them**'. The play begins innocently enough with two groups of wanderers looking for an 'ideal' place to settle. They do find this 'ideal' place in the midst of environmental grandeur. Ironically, their 'places' are adjacent to each other. After mutual agreement they draw a line (what all of us humans will find simply natural and practical) demarcating their respective territories. No problem for some time; soon however, the line becomes a fence, the fence becomes a wall, and the wall grows in size until neither side knows what the other is doing (on the 'other side' of the wall)



Naturally, they keep wondering! They start 'jumping' to conclusions. In a matter of time, their thoughts turn to suspicion and their suspicion to mistrust and mistrust to fear, with each side believing that the other is hatching a plot against them. As fear takes hold, both sides unknowingly make preparations for ensuing conflict until eventually it becomes violent. In the end, two survivors, looking at the waste they have inflicted on one other, conclude, "*the wall was to blame*". The play was reflective of the growing polarisation and divisiveness that had seized several nations and groups at that time of history. It was a play meant to ridicule the abysmal depths to which human nature can fall; to highlight the absolute stupidity yet the pain which exists in society!

Historically, the late 1960s and the early 1970s are a watershed. This period was marked with protests against racism and injustices; against war and violence. The Civil Rights movement and the anti-Vietnam War protests saw millions come out in the United States. In Europe, there were

student uprisings. The 'hippie' culture which stood against all that a 'hypocritical society' legitimised, attracted youth from across the social spectrum. In April 1968, Martin Luther King Jr was assassinated; the years after that, witnessed a global social turmoil. People were genuinely angry with the growing divisions in society. Those years were also pregnant with new hope and yearnings for greater social cohesion, a better future for all.

For the Church, that era it was also a kind of a springtime; Vatican II and Pope John XXIII literally opened wide the doors of the Church. In April 1963,

Pope John XXIII gave to the world his incisive Encyclical '*Pacem in Terris*' (peace on earth). He wrote it in order to address a world deeply engaged in the Cold War. The Berlin Wall had just gone up and the Cuban Missile Crisis frightened millions

as nuclear weapons began to proliferate. In his Encyclical he speaks of the **inviolability of human rights** and the four non-negotiables of **Truth, Justice, Charity and Liberty** which are fundamental for sustainable peace. He was convinced that if these four dimensions are mainstreamed, 'peace on earth' would be guaranteed. Sadly, almost sixty years ago, no one was listening; and no one seems to be listening today too!

The 'Us and Them' has been playing to a full house on the world stage, in the recent past. Two painful images will forever remain etched in the memory and conscience of humanity: the first, a little child playfully pulling out a sheet which covered his dead mother on the Muzzafarpur railway station in Bihar; the second, a white police officer in full weight kneeling on the neck of a black man in Minneapolis, US- for almost nine minutes till he could breathe no more. Both these defining images speak to us about man's inhumanity to man; the victim in both cases is 'them'.

George Floyd (46 years) a black American who was killed on 25 May by Derek Chauvin, a white policeman. The video of that killing filmed by bystanders, which has gone more than viral all over the world, vividly and painfully shows how Chauvin had pinned him to the ground and for almost nine minutes knelt on Floyd's neck. Gasping Floyd is heard pleading "**I can't breathe**"; Chauvin does not let go until Floyd breathes no more. The image of that brutal killing, the way Floyd begged for his life, will haunt America and the world forever.

At a 4 June Memorial Service, in an impassioned eulogy, civil rights leader Rev. Al Sharpton said visiting where Floyd died made him realize that what happened there is a metaphor for the African American experience. Sharpton said, "*When I stood at that spot, the reason it got to me is that George Floyd's story has been the story of black folks; because ever since 401 years ago, the reason we could never be who we wanted and dreamed of being is you kept your knee on our neck.*" He added, "*What happened to Floyd happens every day in this country, in education, in health services and in every area of American life. It's time to stand up in George's name and say get your knee off our necks!*"

The murder of George sparked spontaneous protests all over the United States, hundreds of thousands (from across the divide) have come out chanting "*No to Racism*" and condemning police brutality; in some areas, the protests have also been violent: with plenty of arson and looting. The violence part is non-acceptable and has been universally condemned. There have also been protests all major cities of the world. People have come out on the streets demanding an end to racism and every form of discrimination. Strangely, both in the United States and in sev-

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eral parts of the world, 'leaders' seem to be numbed in taking a stand.

Nearer home, in India we have experienced, in the last three months, the pathetic situation of our migrant workers. That little child near the dead body of his mother says it all! The vast majority of migrant workers in India are adivasis, dalits or OBC's; most are originally from the remote areas of India. They migrate to bigger towns/cities, better-off States to eke out a living. They have to struggle from hand to mouth. Yet it these people, the 'them', who are truly the lifeline of the country.

Ever since the lockdown was announced, a humanitarian crisis unprecedented in India's modern history, has severely disrupted the lives of India's migrant workers. Millions of migrants have found themselves stranded without food, cash, and shelter, trying to get home. They have been subjected to violation of their fundamental rights under Articles 14, 15, 19, and 21 and often to severe police harassment on interstate borders. Many have reportedly died as a result of the lockdown, due to exhaustion en route home, starvation, suicides, police excesses, illnesses, and rail and road accidents. In spite of Supreme Court orders, the Central and State Governments have done pretty little to alleviate the suffering of the 'them' people. Everything is focussed on those who 'have', those who need to be brought back home from abroad, by air, at the cost of the exchequer!

Exclusion and discrimination seem to be part of our DNA as people of India. Casteism in India, we are aware, is older than racism. We have internalised it in our behavioural patterns – in our food, clothing, and dress and even in our worship! We have just taken it for granted that we have the 'divine right' to discriminate against 'them'; one does not have to go very far to see how discriminatory attitudes have permeated into society. The ads in our 'Matrimonial Columns' (even in so-called 'Catholic' magazines)

are a clear indicator of our biases and prejudices; the partner that we look for blatantly has to belong to a particular caste or ethnic group; the 'colour' of skin that one looks for is downright racist. The fact that the higher castes in most parts of India do not allow the lower castes to draw or drink water from their wells, seem to be an accepted norm. Many 'locals' were recently complaining about the migrants: also wondering how they have official identities in their possession: ration card, Aadhar card, EPIC etc? Many of those who live in 'big cities' are actually migrants; for example, in Bollywood, the biggest names are not originally from Bombay/ Maharashtra but from elsewhere. Surprisingly we do not refer to them as 'migrant film stars!' In most so-called 'developed' countries of the world, outsiders (colonialists, 'pilgrims' whatever) have taken away the lands and resources from native/indigenous peoples. Strangely we conveniently forget these bare facts! Some of our attitudes are so blatantly discriminatory and patently un-Christian.

The minorities of India are also discriminated against. There are innumerable instances to prove this. The rant and rave against the Muslims by Hindu extremists seem to become an order of the day. There is hardly a whimper of protest when members of a minority community are lynched. The then Chief Justice of India referred to lynching as the 'new normal'. Once on bail, the lynchpin is even feted by the ruling party. A fourteen-year old Christian boy was lynched in Odisha at the end of May. In the midst of the breakout of the pandemic Covid-19, the only group which was held responsible was an assembly of Muslims in Delhi! This assembly actually met days after the 'Namaste Trump' tamasha in Ahmedabad which brought in several people from abroad and thousands from all over Gujarat; and of course, all at the expense of the State exchequer. If you take a stand against the draconian Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and happen to be a Muslim, then be assured that you can be easily incarcerated under the dreaded UAPA.

Christians too are not spared: Churches are regularly attacked; church personnel are beaten up and Christians are systematically discriminated against. They are denied Government employment, even when they have the necessary competencies. These acts take place directly and subtly. Adivasis, tribals and other forest dwellers are at the receiving end of an exclusive regime. For years the forests and the forest lands were the natural habitat of these indigenous people. In very calculated moves, they are being denied what is rightfully theirs. The slum dwellers, the daily wage earners and the migrant workers as we have seen in this current pandemic, women and children are all victims of an unjust and exploitative system, which caters to a very small segment of rich, powerful and higher castes and clearly discriminates and excludes vast sections of society.

Sadly, 'Us and Them' is so relevant for our contemporary world and particularly for India. So, when Rev Al Sharpton in his eulogy to George Floyd said, "*what happened to Floyd happens every day in this country, in education, in health services and in every area of American life. It's time to stand up in George's name and say get your knee off our necks!*", he was in no uncertain referring to the Dalits, the Adivasis, the minorities, the migrant workers, women and other sub-altern sections of Indian society. In India we have umpteen metaphors (like Floyd's life being snuffed out) to describe the painful reality of our people: Muhammad Aklaq being beaten to death, the migrant workers being run over by a train, the little child playing with the cloth sheet which covered his dead mother... The cry of suffering is clear: "***get your knee off my neck, stop strangulating me, and let me breathe...***"

Pope Francis has been consistent in his stand against exclusion. In a message after the death of Floyd he referred to **racism as a sin** saying "we cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to

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racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life. At the same time, we have to recognize that the violence of recent nights is self-destructive and self-defeating. Nothing is gained by violence and so much is lost".

On 13 May, in an advance message for the **106th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2020** (which is on 27 September) Pope Francis focuses on 'Like Jesus Christ, forced to flee: Welcoming, Protecting, Promoting and Integrating Internally Displaced Persons'. He says, *"I have decided to devote this Message to the drama of internally displaced persons, an often-unseen tragedy that the global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated. In fact, due to its virulence, severity and geographical extent, this crisis has impacted on many other humanitarian emergencies that affect millions of people, which has relegated to the bottom of national political agendas those urgent international efforts essential to saving lives. But "this is not a time for forgetfulness. The crisis we are facing should not make us forget the many other crises that bring suffering to so many people"*

As one dwells on the reality of 'Us and Them'; one cannot help but be reminded of the lyrics of the popular folk song of Peter Seeger "Where have all the flowers gone?" It became one of the hit songs during the protests in the late

sixties. Joan Baez and others popularized it, with two more contextualized verses added, including,

"Where have all the soldiers gone?

Long time passing

Where have all the soldiers gone?

Long time ago

Where have all the soldiers gone?

Gone to graveyards every one

When will WE ever learn?

When will WE ever learn?"

Words powerfully relevant in our violent, exclusive 'my' world. 'Us and Them' is essentially about **WE: you and me**. The now moment, the now people. We are the 'someone', 'somewhere' and today is that 'someday' – when we need to have the courage to learn from history and to ensure that it is no longer 'us and them', no longer 'the other' but just 'WE' in this journey of life! It is **"We, the People!"**; **"We, the disciples of Jesus!"** Martin Luther King Jr. reminds us that *"injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere!"*. On the day of Judgement, when we ask the Lord *"when did we see you hungry, thirsty, a stranger...?"* The Lord will answer us, **"Simple, my child, you did NOT have the courage to love and be 'them'!"**

**(Fr Cedric Prakash SJ is a human rights & peace activist and writer. Contact: cedricprakash@gmail.com)*

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