

THE SECULAR CITIZEN

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A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

FRATELLI TUTTI



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CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY

'Fratelli Tutti' - We Wish This Well

by Don Aguiar.

ANY MANS DEATH diminishes me," wrote John Donne, "because I am involved in Mankind." With that thought, let us all wish this new encyclical, Fratelli Tutti well...

In his new encyclical, Fratelli Tutti, Pope Francis invites all people of goodwill to begin to imagine "a new vision of fraternity and social friendship." Inspired once more by his namesake, St. Francis of Assisi, the pope had begun writing about fraternity and dialogue when the COVID-19 pandemic "unexpectedly erupted, exposing our false securities."

The pandemic has exposed fissures previously overlooked and issued a stern reminder that finitude and fragility cannot be avoided. Everything and everyone is connected. Natural disasters, sometimes only briefly, focus our attention to reveal the injustices and inequalities otherwise overlooked by those in power.

Diagnosing our current context, the pandemic demands our immediate attention, but it is the globalization of indifference that is our most insidious comorbidity.

On Aug. 5, Pope Francis began a weekly general audience series on Catholic social teaching in the midst of COVID-19. Nine weeks that were focused around the most basic principles of Catholic social teaching began with an invitation to "reflect and work together, as followers of Jesus who heals, to construct a better world, full of hope for future generations."

For those unfamiliar with Catholic social teaching, these nine audiences provide a primer into how Pope Francis understands human dignity, the universal destination of goods, soli-

arity, subsidiarity and such concepts. For those well-versed in Catholic social teaching, these messages provide some added theological depth to the encyclical's application of the concepts to larger social and economic crises.

Within Fratelli Tutti, there is an immense amount of content. The goal is to draw all people of goodwill into a long-overdue conversation about the practical moral obligations within the one human family.

The text says about the moral obligations of solidarity, which Pope Francis first addresses using the paradigm of the parable of the Good Samaritan and then applies to our world through his reflections on the universal destination of goods.

How do we understand our positive moral obligations within the one human family? The pandemic has made me appreciate Immanuel Kant anew. For Kant, moral actions and principles should be universalizable. When deciding whether or not to wear a mask or engage in communal activity, we should ask ourselves, would it be permissible if everyone acted as I act?

Kant's duty-based ethic acts as a dam against a flood of individuals all treating oneself as the exception to the rule. It posits negative duties (do no harm) as absolute and positive duties as imperfect and contextual.

The focus on universalizability, in an Indian context, has become highly individualistic.

For far too long, for example, conversations about racism and caste focused on individual actions alone — ignoring a positive obligation to promote anti-racism and anti-caste. I have a perfect obligation to avoid actively violating your human rights, but do I have any firm obligation to pro-

mote your human flourishing and your integral human development?

Pope Francis laments "insufficiently universal human rights," and a globalization of indifference in which no one feels responsible for their neighbour — a persistent theme of his pontificate. Underlying his critique is a deeper unexamined fissure within contemporary Western moral philosophy concerning our moral obligations.

Fratelli Tutti helpfully argues with precise clarity that positive moral obligations of the universal destination of goods are not bound by borders and are operative on levels of the global economic apparatus.

In particular, Pope Francis identifies both positive and negative moral obligations of nations, stating, "If every human being possesses an inalienable dignity," then "it matters little whether my neighbour was born in my country or elsewhere." Every nation has responsibilities to the one human family; and this responsibility can be met either by offering "a generous welcome to those in urgent need, or work to improve living conditions in their native lands by refusing to exploit those countries or to drain them of natural resources, backing corrupt systems that hinder the dignified development of their peoples" (Paragraph 125).

Taking to heart Fratelli Tutti, and especially its economic and political moral obligations, would drastically change the calculation for what is asked of Indians — as individuals, communities and as one nation — with respect to those migrants and Dalit's journeying to seek their livelihood. We are not only asked to provide welcome, but also both to avoid participating in their oppression and positively support their development.

Our responsibilities are not bound by

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Dear Reader,

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borders but by our common humanity. **Repeatedly, the encyclical calls for listening at the margins, developing policies from the bottom up, and building a radically different social, civil and political global community.**

It was not hard to imagine the new papal encyclical on fraternity and social friendship would provoke criticism in certain quarters.

Pope Francis released Fratelli tutti on October 4 and some have begun to accuse him of interfering in politics and the economic sphere, being naïve about human nature and overreaching his authority as a religious figure.

Such critics are correct if one defines religious authority narrowly. In fact, the pope is guilty on all counts.

And yet, and yet...

It can be all of these things, yet be absolutely necessary at this moment in the history of our planet.

Pope Francis has issued a cri de coeur to all people of good will. It is a call to better ourselves, an astute reading of the "signs of the times",

and a reminder that simple virtues like love, compassion, kindness and openness to the stranger are essential ingredients to the healing of our common woes.

One thing Fratelli tutti is not: a religious tract. Its theology is simple and universal, certainly not unique to Catholicism.

The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10) and the Golden Rule (Matthew 7) are the staples of basic Christian moral teaching form the foundation for his appeal.

Pope Francis also finds common cause with other faith traditions -- with references to Mahatma Gandhi, Rabbi Hillel and Grand Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb – to underline the universal reach of his message.

The 83-year-old pope is ideally suited to issue this call to conscience. A religious leader? Yes. But even more than that, he remains one of the world's leading moral figures in a world sorely in need of them.

And for this –

We wish this well because, even, or

(Contd.. on p. 4)

(Contd.. from p. 3)

especially, in our hyper political age, some things must be beyond politics. When everything is political, nothing is sacred — starting with human life. It's a point the totalitarian regimes of the 20th century understood well.

The marketplace, by itself, cannot resolve every problem, however much we are asked to believe this dogma of neoliberal faith.

Neoliberalism simply reproduces itself by resorting to the magic theories of 'spill over' or 'trickle' — without using the name — as the only solution to societal problems, referring to "trickle-down economics," or the idea that as the rich accumulate wealth, money will automatically flow into the pockets of poor people.

The pandemic's fallout, including massive unemployment spikes around the world, as evidence that not everything can be resolved by market freedom.

There's no question that capitalism, as it gets more advanced, will widen the gap between the people that have market skills, whatever that market demands, and others, unless government does something in between.

It isn't some diabolical plot or anything. It's because of the market system.

We wish this well to reverse the decline of progressive Catholicism that reflects not only a reorientation of the hierarchy during the John Paul II and Benedict years, but also a transformation of the Indian's Church's social base.

A 2015 Pew Research Centre report found that nearly 13 percent of all Indians are former Catholics, people who were raised in the faith but who now identify with other religious traditions, or no religion at all. Church's losses have been especially pronounced among the young—only half of millennial raised Catholic have remained in the Church, Pew found, and only 57

percent of Gen Xers have stayed.

Those who continue to identify as Catholic are thus older and, on the whole, more conservative. This is a great loss for the Church as a whole, but it is a loss that has specifically decimated social and progressive Catholicism's successor generation.

There is a kind push-pull effect at work among the Catholic faithful, and in religious India generally.

We wish this well because, to shape positive peace that ensures sustainable development, it is essential to have leaders who are willing to take responsibility for serving their countries, not for being served by their countries or using their countries.

They must also be authentic. That is to say, they must think, spend and act for what is honourable and proper to the righteousness of their consciences.

Indeed, the world and India in context needs leaders who have the vision and audacity to make courageous decisions and have the remarkable dynamism to adapt to the changes of the century without losing the soul of age-old traditions.

Pope John XXIII said it takes men and women legitimately invested with authority to safeguard institutions and provide for the common good of all in order for there to be peace, order and fruitfulness in life and in society.

We wish this well because today there are many who question the role of the Church: for some it belongs to the past and can only hinder the development of civilization; according to others its influence drives the moral forces that ensure the orientation of progress; still others uphold it as the key to justice and peace in a world dominated by globalization.

Such a position actually concerns all religious forces and cultural traditions because each one has woven links with the conceptions that are at the origin of civilization. Moreover, inter-

national institutions have been created to overcome differences and oppositions. The aim assigned to them is to allow peoples who come from different horizons and follow opposing philosophical beliefs or theories to gradually build the foundations of their unity, leading to the discovery of what they have in common.

The ethics of the future universal society require that we give these values a common meaning that cannot belong to just one civilization or a single religion present in that society.

The reconciliation to be made between loyalty to tradition and the universalization of values is a challenge to all societies today. It is a particularly strong challenge for the Church who proclaims herself universal despite appearing to be linked to Western culture.

We wish this well because it's the right thing to do. It's more than reason enough for Christian Identity in a Globalised and Pluralist World.

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The 'Secularly' Religious Weekly

Kudos to Mr Lawrence Coelho who has been publishing The Secular Citizen for last several years with dedication! Specially I admire him for running the paper during pandemic days without missing a single issue! He has collected a number of great Christian thinkers and authors in his 'parivar'! The weekly serves Mangalore and Maharashtra and reaches all over India.

In fact I consider The Secular Citizen as a weekly that is complementary to The Examiner. The Examiner is purely religious and 'Roman catholic' whereas The Secular Citizen allows thinkers to express their views on social and political life in the country. In fact what we really need today is that the youth takes into consideration the social and political situation in the world specially in the country; and plans their lives in the light of the catholic faith and theology. This goal to great extend is achieved by The Secular Citizen. It is truly a family magazine, attractive to the young and old, guiding the committed Christians in religious, social and political fields. Therefore once again my hats off to the editorial board and managers of the paper! May God Bless you!

—Fr. Michael G,
Vasai

UP govt must be held accountable

Following the 2012 horrifying Nirbhaya gang-rape, lawmakers brought stringent reforms, including death

penalty for repeated rape offenders. However, even with changes in the law and continuous media coverage, it took over seven years for Nirbhaya to get justice. Over the years, governments have changed but nothing much has been done to improve the justice system. There is no political will to enforce the laws. Unfortunately, even a heinous crime like that of rape becomes a political issue in India as parties start exploiting the situation for their selfish gains. The brutal gang-rape and murder of the 19-year-old Dalit girl in Hathras, Uttar Pradesh is a perfect example. And Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's government has much to answer for it. The manner in which crimes against women, especially Dalit women, is being approached and dealt with by the Uttar Pradesh police is outrageous. And what is more obnoxious is the way it justified its act of obstructing justice as necessary for maintaining law and order before the Supreme Court. What the Yogi government cannot deny is that the State has witnessed a 28 per cent rise in crimes against women, especially those of Dalits. The UP government and the State police must be held accountable for caste-based atrocities and injustice meted out to them.

— Jubel D'Cruz,
Dombivili, Mumbai

Keep our schools closed

Given the alarming rise of new Covid cases in the country, it is advisable to keep our schools shut for the present, even though the Centre has permitted states to reopen schools in a phased manner after October 15 with the strict observance of SOPs

and protocol. While most states have yet to take a decision on the matter, some have deferred reopening till November and beyond. Most parents are also of the view that states should not consider reopening of their schools in regular mode till the start of the new year. The focus should instead be on on-line classes till the situation improves. Schools in western countries are paying the price for their hasty decision in reopening their schools due to which hundreds of children and teachers got infected with Covid. Let us not make the same mistake and play with the lives of children who are the most vulnerable and fall easy prey to the deadly Covid virus.

—A. F. Nazareth,
Alto Porvorim, Goa

Together with Fr. Stan Swamy

The Jesuit Team at St. Michael's, Mahim regretted the unfortunate arrest of 83-year-old Jesuit Father Stan Swamy of Ranchi, Jharkhand, in the Bhima Koregaon case. He is now lodged in Taloja jail. Fr. Stan has worked for decades in the most democratic manner, using the legal system, to safeguard the land rights of tribals in Jharkhand. He is being accused of being involved in a violent Maoist movement, as have few other intellectuals and human rights workers.

A prayer meeting was organised in catholic communities showing solidarity to Fr. Stan on 12th October 2020 from 4 to 5 pm. Excellent!

It would have been nice to mention together with Father Stan Swamy the two activists of Mumbai, Mr. Arun Ferreira and Vernon Gonsalves who are languishing in the same Taloja jail for last several years for the same reason and charges!

Inquilab zindabad!

—Fr. Michael G.
Vasai

(Contd.. on p. 6)



“Balatkaar” – Old Phenomenon, New Pastime?

On 20 March 2020, INDIA TODAY reported that Nirbhaya’s case was merely one of the 24,923 cases recorded in 2012 and that there have been a minimum of 24 rape incidents per day since Nirbhaya’s rape. Further, according to the National Lawyers Forum of Religious and Priests (NLFRP), a forum of Catholic priests, nuns, and brothers practising as lawyers, though the National Bureau of Crime Records noted in 2019 that a rape took place every 16 minutes in India, the Bureau of Police Research and Development had procured for nationwide distribution only 3,120 rape kits, meant for collecting “evidences and samples to be sent for forensic examination as the forensic report always plays a decisive role in trial and conviction of the guilty” [Matters India (MI) 8 October 2020].



by Ladislaus L D'Souza

On 7 October 2020, the said forum demanded “an uncompromising commitment from the federal and the northern Indian state governments to do justice and uphold the rule of law.” Condemning the 14 September 2020 rape-death of 19 year-old Dalit girl Manisha Valmiki at Hathras in Uttar Pradesh, the forum emphasized that “no daughter of “Mother India” should be slaughtered on “the altar of caste, religion and patriarchy.”

Examples of rape-murder galore

The details of both cases, Nirbhaya and Manisha are—as are of other cases as well—too well known both

domestically and internationally to require repetition here. True, the NLFRP did well in highlighting the Hathras instance. However, what the Catholic lawyer priests, nuns and brothers clearly failed to even touch on was the issue of punishment vis-à-vis justice and fairplay. The fact thus remains that with no deterrent punishment in sight, rapists and prospective rapists [including ‘minors’] are having a field day across the country, backed as they obviously are by governments brazenly demanding narco-analysis tests on the members of the victim’s family. Worse, the kind of haste with which the police now take it upon themselves to destroy the body of a rape victim—and with it, all necessary evidence—by burning it to cinders is both astonishing and abominable. Indeed, such an act cannot even by the wildest stretch of the imagination be termed as ‘cremation’

for the simple reason that ‘burning’ per se is associated with anarchy whereas ‘cremation’ is essentially an orderly act performed with certain formalities, be these religious or civil.

Governmental apathy

The forum referred to above (as reported by MI) further bemoans the fact that “the Hathras horrors” have established the rule of the mighty and the top police officer of the district has thrown “all legal norms into the dustbin” and “danced to the dictates of the ruler.” “The executive committee of NLFRP takes cognizance of the crimes against the young Dalit woman

and terms it a national shame. NLFRP unreservedly expresses its empathetic solidarity with the suffering victims,” says a press release issued by forum spokesperson, Arockiasamy Santhanam, a Jesuit priest based in Madurai, Tamil Nadu. Well said Father Arockiasamy! But **how about some well thought out suggestions as regards punitive action as a strong deterrent?**

The forum is rightly alarmed that “the country, “gloriously characterized as Mother India,” has witnessed “a series of horrendous and abhorrent episodes of violence, rape and murder against women.” It further avers that the state administration has irretrievably tainted and shamed the image of ‘Mother India’ by allowing and ignoring such recurring crimes against women and so “wants the Supreme Court approved Witness Protection Scheme 2018 implemented in all Indian states and Union Territories, especially in Uttar Pradesh.”

The urgency of deterrent punitive measures

It is obvious that the debate over the Death Penalty [DP] which erupts periodically whenever a death sentence is passed or when the execution of the sentence is around the corner, must needs be conscientiously revived and brought to a decisive conclusion. At the very outset it may be said that from the humanitarian point of view, those who time and time again have opposed the DP, demanding its abolishment, have done yeoman service to those sentenced to death, not only in India but in countries where capital punishment continues to be the norm. Surely, there couldn’t be a better way of setting Christian love in motion than through forgiveness. Add to it the love and concern so graciously shown to prisoners (rapists included, surely) by those involved in the Church’s ‘Prison Ministry’ and we have a river of Christian mercy flowing in our midst! May their tribe increase!



(Contd.. from p. 6)

Rape and its aftermath

Having said that, considering that of all human offences the most gruesome is the **sexual violation** of another, generally termed as 'rape', here's a twin-question for those of my fellow Christian professionals—journalists, writers, editors, publishers, lawyers, doctors, teachers, professors and others—who are ardent opponents of the DP: (a) What about genuine justice for the victim (and her family)? (b) What is the alternative you suggest as a **deterrent** to future offenders, **most specifically in relation to rape** irrespective of whether the victim is your own wife, daughter, sister, mother, aunt, niece, girl-friend, favourite cousin, neighbour, best friend's daughter, maid, nun or whoever?

Make no mistake, one cannot escape the fact that while the victim of a murder suffers a horrible death and then suffers no more, the victim of rape has to live the scars of the crude experience lifelong. Why? What is the victim's fault that she has to endure such suffering as long as she lives? In the circumstances, it wouldn't be too far-fetched to say that what a rape victim endures is lifelong DP.

An ideal alternative to any form of the DP is **CASTRATION**, either chemical or surgical, the punishment perforce widely publicized. **The reason is not difficult to fathom: having to live with the loss of one's manhood for aye!** Can there be a surer deterrent? Indeed, after the hanging of the Nirbhaya convicts was shelved the first time, had the victim's parents wisely filed a special petition in the Supreme Court, demanding **nothing less than castration for the four criminals in place of hanging**, the demand, whether admitted by the court or not, would have duly set in motion a much-needed serious debate on the issue.

Frankly, there's no gainsaying the fact that had the rapists in the Nirbhaya case been castrated, there would in all likelihood have been no Hathras today where the cops obviously acted

(Contd.. from p. 5)

Why Increase Toll Rates

The coronavirus-induced lockdown has affected several people's income. From soaring prices of daily essentials to pay cut, financial woes just refuse to die down. Adding to this, now commuters will also have to worry about paying extra before entering Mumbai toll. The one-way toll for a passenger car, which was Rs 35, is now Rs 40. The toll rates for buses, mini-buses and trucks have also changed. As per the revised toll rates, mini-buses have to pay Rs 65 and trucks and buses have to pay Rs 130. This is too much. The government should think twice before increasing the toll rates.

—**Jubel D'Cruz, Dombivili, Mumbai**

in favour of the criminals, to the extent of not even permitting the distraught family a last glimpse of the girl's face.

Put simply, if neither the DP nor CASTRATION for rapists, then what is the alternative as punishment that serves as a surefire deterrent?

Christians to the fore!

Every believer worth his/her salt is duty bound to think seriously over the issue and come up with viable remedial measures. Are the journalists, writers, editors, publishers, teachers, professors, psychologists, lawyers and other significant professionals among us, who have it in their power to influence an appropriate conclusion, willing to face up to their God-given responsibility? Or are we going to pretend that while we oppose the DP in principle in order to please God-knows-whom, it is jolly well someone else's responsibility to come up with alternatives, even as offenders meanwhile continue to go scot-free, treating rape as a casual fling and a national pastime of sorts?

www.aleteia.org

Aleteia is an online Catholic approved news and information website founded in 2011/2012 by Jesus Colina via the Foundation for the Evangelization through the Media (FEM). It has the explicit blessings of the Pontifical Council for Social Communication and the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization. Its website: www.aleteia.org. The word aleteia in ancient Greek means truth or disclosure in philosophy. It was revived in the 20th century by Martin Heidegger.

The Aleteia site offers a Christian vision of the world by providing general and religious content that is free from ideological influences. Here are some statistics: *20 million users around the world read Aleteia.org every month. *Aleteia is published every day in 8 languages: English, French, Arabic, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Polish and Slovenian.*Each month readers view more than 50 million pages. *Nearly 4 million people follow Aleteia on social media. *Each month Aleteia publishes 2,450 articles and around 40 videos. *Aleteia have 60 full time staff and approximately 400 collaborators – writers, translators, photographers, etc. *One can support Aleteia with as little as \$1. It takes only a minute.

In communion with the Church's Magisterium, Aleteia is open to working with the Dicasteries of the Holy See; and also collaborates with Bishop's Conferences, religious orders, congregations and communities, some of which are directly involved in the Board of Directors of the FEM.

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

WILL OUR COURTS ENSURE OUR CITIZENS DO NOT LOSE FAITH IN THE FUNCTIONING OF THE STATE?

by Eric D'Sa

Of late, our nation has witnessed crimes especially against women, the sheer barbarity of which has shocked our collective conscience. Perpetrators of such heinous crimes have been emboldened by the manner in which the state investigating machinery has been dealing with them in the recent past. Unfortunately since 2014 after the present central government took over, the caste-based criminal targeting has increased exponentially. Dalits are often victims of upper-caste brutality. The iniquitous caste structure accompanied by unforgiving mindsets allows such crimes to be committed with impunity.

The perpetrators believe that the state machinery will come to their aid because of caste affiliations embedded in the power structure. This explains the public lynching of Dalits and the forgotten episodes of their victimisation including sexual assault, with perpetrators going unpunished. Caste and poverty go hand in hand. Those at the bottom of the caste structure are also immersed in poverty. They lack the wherewithal to get justice. To get justice in our nation takes a long time and pots of money, both beyond the reach of the poor Dalits.

No social contract can eliminate crime in society. History has shown constant hostility between criminals who disturb the social order and those who endeavour to maintain it. Laws dealing with crimes and criminals emanate from power structures, in one form or another, charged with the responsibility of maintaining the social order which allows individuals to go about their everyday lives in the belief that they enjoy the protective cover of those wielding authority. No modern society should tolerate individual rights to be trampled upon and individual liberties to be sacrificed by the state and its machinery collaborating with or aiding those charged with offences that disturb societal peace and tranquility. Unfortunately this is happening in our nation as we are struggling to modernise our soci-

ety from the indoctrination that has occurred during thousands of years.

For the rule of law to prevail, the legal system must equip itself to meet the expectations of the law. It must investigate fairly, remain unbiased, and punish the guilty. But the legal system seems to have distanced itself from the law by doing the bidding of dominant affiliations. Recent tragedies fuel doubts about the nature of the state and the role of investigating agencies. How then does one explain a crime recognised by a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court to have been committed in public gaze culminat-

YOU THE CITIZENS DECIDE:

ing in the court unable to identify both the conspiracy and the conspirators?

How does one explain the conduct of an investigating agency which cremates a 19-year-old victim in secrecy at 2:30 in the morning without informing and getting the permission of the family? How do we come to terms with the opinion of that agency that the victim was not raped despite the family referring to the condition of the girl and later her dying declaration alleging gang-rape?

Was her body quickly burnt without being handed over to the family to cover up sins of omission and commission.

The cases relating to lynching of Mohammad Akhlaq and the rape victim in Kathua along with the politics of dominance surrounding such crimes show the state machinery as biased and unforgiving not qua the perpetrators but qua the victims. Any investigating agency has the ability to botch an investigation: manipulate records, fail to record statements of key witnesses, wilfully choose not to collect evidence crucial to the case, and ensure that witnesses incriminating the accused are not produced in court. The court finds itself helpless and occasionally chooses not to help itself and the law. When the nexus among the state, investigating agencies and the accused becomes the norm, the victim is the rule of law.

This is a wake up call for us the Citizens who want to see our nation being governed without bias and as per the constitution. Few of our institutions that required some spine to do so are regularly failing and this has led to the present abysmal affairs. The only institution that we the Citizens can hope will withstand such aberrations is the Court. Our future as a democratic secular nation will depend on the Courts courage to stand by the Constitution of our Republic.

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Fights, Frustration And Boredom Between Couples

A 28-year-old man from Navi Mumbai, who went missing in July after calling his wife that he had tested positive for coronavirus, was found in Thane with his girlfriend. This reveals the state of frustration and boredom between couples. All these situations have created a sense of mistrust in couples, which poses a significant danger of hampering the relationships. Couples are getting into unnecessary fights where they know that the matter is tiny, but since they are super frustrated with the current situation, they pick fights with each other.

People need to understand whenever a person gets cheated on, they do not doubt the other person, but themselves. Once a person gets betrayed by someone, it gets very difficult for that person to love, trust, and empathize with themselves. It creates a fear of trusting others, being abandoned, being played, and so on. These fears and emotions tend to push an individual towards isolation.

Couples who can maintain good communication and be supportive and responsive to each other throughout the Covid-19 crisis will likely remain together and possibly feel more connected for having weathered the

storm. However, couples who have difficulty communicating and effectively supporting each other may feel less happy with their relationship and be more likely to separate.

The pandemic has wreaked havoc on even the most stable relationships. Uncertainty in almost every aspect of life is causing tensions to boil over, and our partners are getting caught in the crossfire. Due to this, couples have been facing multiple issues such as separation from each other, physical distance, emotional distance, anxiety, fear, lack of trust, and increased fighting. It has been repeatedly found



Jayanthi Subramaniam

that we fight with people we are closest to as we deem them 'safe targets.' While this phenomenon makes sense, it also leads to constant friction and unhappiness.

Nowadays, you have no option but to stay inside your house with your family members. People cannot do whatever they want and whenever they want. A lot of couples say that it is getting very difficult for them to speak to each other in the presence of family members. When the male partner is free, the female partner is occupied with work, and vice versa. Couples cannot step out whenever they want and

meet. This forced distance between couples has built up a lot of frustration in them as they are surrounded by their family members 24x7, and not everyone's family has a modern mindset and respect for privacy.

Couples who are in serious relationships and were planning to move ahead in their relationships have developed a fear of losing each other. As we all know, this situation has become increasingly uncertain, and nobody knows what will happen tomorrow. The couples were used to meeting each other often and spending time together, now that time has been divided among multiple tasks.

Honestly speaking, there is always scope for disagreements and arguments in a healthy relationship. And fighting is, even for successful couples, an inevitable part of living together. Conflicts are always not necessarily a sign of an unhealthy or problematic relationship, and while marriages that were already experiencing bad phases may be cracking under the strain, fighting during the lockdown is not necessarily about deep structural problems. It can also be about the unceasing togetherness and the unbearable nature of that condition. Many couples fight not because they lack intimacy, but because they possess it.

Frustration, friction and fatigue are part and parcel of family life and it creates pressure during pandemic. Lack of space resulting in a lack of close relationship and this is the root cause for maximum tension. Family members find it somewhat tough to meet both the ends of family life and marital relationships. With few available bedrooms and more members it is a matter of adjustment and just picking the right time to get an opportunity to be together and make hay when covid-19 poses a big problem. Let the relationship flourish in the right time for the blooming buds.

‘Duc in Altum’ – Delving into the Deep

by Fr Dr M. D. Thomas

‘Duc in Altum’ is a popular Latin phrase, with wide-ranging implications and applications. ‘Duc’ means ‘to lead’, as in words ‘conduct, induct, produce and educate’. Further, it connotes ‘put out, cast out, draw, delve, plunge, launch’, etc. ‘Altum’ would mean ‘altitude, depth, sublime’, and the like. That would amount to state that ‘duc in altum’ implies ‘delving into the deep’, in search of the unlimited, unseen and the unfathomable.

Originally, the above phrase was a compact instruction Jesus gave to Peter, “put out into the deep” (Lk 5.4). It meant then ‘go out where it is deeper and let down your nets for a catch’. No doubt, Peter was an experienced fisherman. All the same, he chose to act upon the ‘wisdom’ of the instruction of his Master. As a result, he got a ‘catch’ that was far beyond his entire world of imagination, for sure so.

Peter has been with Jesus for fairly some time. The current episode gave him a ‘deep sight’ into his ‘divine nerve’, anew, too. Therefore, it did not take much time for Peter to realize that the ‘deeper’ way for him, in the real sense, would mean following him in ‘full measure’. He decided to pursue the instruction further and to go beyond the profession of fishing, in view of exploring its implications for him in the larger context of life. And, in reality, Peter “left everything and followed him” (Lk 5.11), for good.

‘Delve or launch out into the deep’ is indeed a complete dictum in life for all humans, in all aspects, at all times and in all places. Life would mean ‘delving into the deeper, larger and higher horizons’ of life, every moment of one’s life, and all at one shot. Such a delving is an ‘unending process’ be-

tween birth and death, or better, from womb to tomb, and even beyond, by way of ‘rising again’ to eternal proportions.

In the ‘parable of the talents’ (Mt 25.14-30) Jesus illustrates the sublime paradigm of leading one’s life towards attaining the fullest stature of life possible. The one who received ‘five’ talents engaged in trading with them and made five more. In a similar fashion, the one who received ‘two’ made out of them two more. Naturally, both of them were accorded a grand ‘well done’, signifying the creditable merit of multiplying oneself towards deeper, larger and higher prospects of human life, of course, to divine prospects, as well.

Further on, Jesus made a brilliant revelation of the ultimate purpose of his life. Life, for him, was to fulfill the will of God the Father in favour of the humans, “that you have life, that too, life to the full” (Jn 10.10). Sharing life with the humans, life with all the lives, no less than to the brim, is the way he lived out his mission of life, in full. He motivates, enthuses, enlightens, energizes, empowers and fructifies the lives of those who stay tuned to him. The voyage of life has to go on until one reaches the rim, well, the depth and height of all efforts.

Jesus defined the core of the relation between him, the Master, and his disciple, in a very subtle, sublime and decisive way. “I am the vine and you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him, will bear much fruit” (Jn 15.5). Obviously, the stem of the tree is rooted in the ground and branches have to remain essentially ever united with the tree. Only then, the ‘sap of life’ from the roots and the stem will flow into the branches, which would grow larger and higher and

eventually bear fruit. ‘Roots at depth and fruits at height’ are interleaved in the extensive space of the stem and the branches between them.

Once Jesus inquired among his disciples ‘who do people say I am’? The popular answers that came up were extremely scattered, shallow and pointless. He proceeded, “who do you say I am” (Mt 16.12)? The answer requires ever a thorough ‘delve’ in to the deep recesses of one’s life, manifestly so. One has to dig deep to obtain pure water. A disciple is he or she who has fathomed the reservoir of one’s mind, heart, spirit and conscience and has learned, at depth, how remarkable and resourceful the Master is! Personalized knowledge from the depth of one’s experience only can imagine the depth of the Master. No wonder, it calls for an out and out ‘delve’ into ‘the unfathomable niche of the human and divine mystery’.

Jesus narrates the luminous and earth-shaking story of “a poor widow, who put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury of the temple. For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood” (Mk 12.41-44). The widow is an outstanding model of ‘what it means to give’. To give ‘something’ from the plenty is no giving, at all. To give, truly, is to ‘give everything’, that too, out of having hardly anything. That amounts to state that ‘total giving’ knows ‘the depth and the quality’ of giving. That is the ‘height of giving’ as well as the high point of life, too

Thomas the Apostle is a synonym for a ‘faith’ that is possibly the most brilliant paradigm for all times (Jn 20.24-28). Without relying on the surface-level information of others, Thomas



wanted to see the risen Jesus for him. He wanted to know the secret of 'what it means to rise again', by seeing the risen Jesus with his own eyes, listening to his voice himself, knowing him with his own mind and experiencing him with his own heart. No wonder, having been 'face-to face with the risen Jesus', Thomas fathomed Jesus at depth and he exclaimed, 'my Master and my God'. Thomas mastered the 'depth' and 'height' of faith in the risen Jesus, in one go.

The people who have been witnessing Jesus for years, overwhelmed in amazement, called out "he does all things well" (Mk7.37). This is the best compliment Jesus could have, ever, that illustrates the singular blend of the divine and human power of 'perfection', both in word and deed. Jesus was eternally scheduled to make God incarnate on earth, as the Father of all humans, in all possible dimensions and proportions. He did it with the supreme quality of brilliance, without a shred of doubt, too. When the sacred transforms the human into humane, when the depth rises up to the altitude, it is 'perfection' that emerges as its natural outcome.

In point of fact, 'delving in to the deep' is the pathway towards the fuller and richer possibilities and spheres of human life. The deep and the high, along with the large, together define life, which is 'full-blown' in the human and divine realms. The deep has to duly be situated in 'oneself and in the other'. The deeper dimensions on either side are complementary, progressive and enriching. It is like, left and right legs moved forward alternatively in the act of walking, in view of advancing the journey to the unfathomable.

Plunging into the collective deep, with one accord, is definitely the search for the deeper and higher in life, of course, with richer and enduring results, more and more. In fact, the 'inclusive and interactive' aspects of depth and altitude are beached at the



The Secular Citizen reader Sweta D'Cruz receiving a medal from her college principal for her best performance in class.

'horizontal' facet of life, of course, in complete tune with the 'vertical'. The multi-layered faces of life underscore the all-round and immeasurable scope of delving into the 'human as well as divine mystery' in the deeper, larger and higher horizons of human life.

All things considered, the deep refers to 'the unseen and the unknown', both in the limited and unlimited contexts. Human life is a never ending spiritual journey towards the unidentified and the unheard of. All that is beyond the current moment is part of the unknown. The known has to be ever unlearned, in view of learning that, which lies beyond thus far. The process of descending to the deep necessitates and corresponds entirely to the process of ascending to the heights, certainly, by way of the areas of the larger.

'Depth and height' in the complete and ultimate context is the 'core' of life, the hub of 'being', in the 'natural, human and divine' arenas. In other words, it would mean relishing the 'spirit' in oneself, in the other, in the creation and in the Creator, all together. 'Duc

in Altum' is a spiritual 'leap forward', every moment of life, towards being increasingly charged by the 'electric wire of the divine', spread over 'inside, outside and above'. That very same energy keeps the timeless spiritual journey of the humans, along with the creation, heading for the intended destination of the 'eternal depth and altitude' that is far beyond the frail human mind.

The author, a Ph.D. in Hindi Literature, is an activist for 'multi-faith relations and social harmony' and is a writer, speaker and a social engineer to that effect. He was Diocesan Director of Institute of Religion and Culture, Ujjain, National Director of Commission for Religious Harmony, CBCI, New Delhi, and Editor of multi-faith journal 'Fellowship'. Currently, he is Founder Director of Institute of Harmony and Peace Studies, New Delhi. He can be contacted at 'mdthomas53@gmail.com'.

During the days of pandemic Corona thoughts necessarily go to -

THE GOD OF SPINOZA



Baruch de Spinoza was a Dutch philosopher considered one of the three great rationalists of 17th-century philosophy, along with René Descartes in France, and Gottfried Leibniz in Germany. Spinoza denies the immortality of the soul; strongly rejects the notion of a transcendent, providential God—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Hence this history's boldest and most radical thinker was sanctioned by the orthodox Jewish community.

Albert Einstein made him popular among the university students. Einstein too did not believe in a personal God who concerns himself with fates and actions of human beings. He clarified however that, "I am not an atheist", but an agnostic. Einstein did not believe in life after death, adding "one life is enough for me." He took this life seriously and got closely involved with several humanist groups. Einstein confessed, "... I am a Jew, but I am enthralled by the luminous figure of the Nazarene." Einstein accepted the historical existence of Jesus "Unquestionably!" He further asserts, "No one can read the Gospels without feeling the actual presence of Jesus. His personality pulsates in every word. No myth is filled with such life."

Spinoza and Einstein, whatever may be their theology but as far they help us to purify our Christian faith, there should be no difficulty in listening to them.

THE GOD OF SPINOZA:

When Einstein gave lectures at nu-

merous US universities where he was invited to, the recurring question that students asked him was: Do you believe in God?

And he always answered: I believe in the God of Spinoza.

How did Spinoza understand God?

Spinoza has put the description dramatically in the mouth of his God himself. The God of Spinoza would say, "Stop praying and punching yourself in the chest!

What I want you to do is go out into the world and enjoy your life. I want you to enjoy, sing, have fun and enjoy everything I've made for you.



Fr. Michael G. Vasai

Stop going to those dark, cold temples that you built yourself and say they are my house! My house is in the mountains, in the woods, rivers, lakes, beaches. That's where I live and there I express my love for you.

Stop blaming me for your miserable life; I never told you there was anything wrong with you or that you were a sinner, or that your sexuality was a bad thing! Sex is a gift I have given you and with which you can express your love, your ecstasy, your joy. So don't blame me for everything they made you believe.

Stop reading alleged sacred scriptures that have nothing to do with me. If you can't read me in the sunrise, in a

landscape, in the look of your friends, in your son's eyes... you will find me in no book! Trust me and stop asking me. Would you tell me how to do my job?

Stop being so scared of me. I do not judge you or criticize you, nor get angry, or seek to punish you. I am pure love.

Stop asking for forgiveness, there's nothing to forgive. If I made you... I filled you with passions, limitations, pleasures, feelings, needs, inconsistencies... free will. How can I blame you if you respond to something I put in you? How can I punish you for being the way you are, if I'm the one who made you? Do you think I could create a place to burn all my children who behave badly for the rest of eternity? What kind of God would do that?

Forget any kind of commandments, any kind of laws; those are wiles to manipulate you, to control you, that only create guilt in you.

Respect your peers and don't do what you don't want for yourself. All I ask is that you pay attention in your life, that your consciousness is your guide.

My beloved, this life is not a test, not a step, not a rehearsal, nor a prelude to paradise. This life is the only thing that exists here and now, and it is all you need.

I have set you absolutely free, no



(Contd.. from p. 12)

prizes or punishments, no sins or virtues... no one carries a marker, no one keeps a record. You are absolutely free to create in your life heaven or hell. I could tell you if there's anything after this life, but I won't... but I can give you a tip. Live as if there is nothing after... as if this is your only chance to enjoy, to love, to exist.

So, if there's nothing, then you will have enjoyed the opportunity I gave you. And if there is, rest assured that I won't ask if you behaved right or wrong, I'll ask, Did you like it? Did you have fun? What did you enjoy the most? What did you learn?...

Stop believing in me; believing is assuming, guessing, imagining. I don't want you to believe in me... I want you to feel me in you when you kiss your beloved, when you tuck in your little girl, when you caress your dog, when you bathe in the sea.

Stop praising me, what kind of egomaniac God do you think I am? I'm bored being praised, I'm tired of being thanked. Feeling grateful? Prove it by taking care of yourself, your health, your relationships, the world. Express your joy!... that's the way to praise me.

Stop complicating things and repeating as a parakeet what you've been

taught about me.

The only thing for sure is that you are here, that you are alive, and that this world is full of wonders.

What do you need more miracles for? Why so many explanations?

Look for me outside... you won't find me. Find me inside... there I am beating within you.

-Spinoza.

REFLECTION:

I asked one Church dignitary. These pandemic days this description of the God of Spinoza has become viral among our faithful. Please comment. He said, "I to comment? No! As a result I would have to resign my job!"

I reflected over it myself. I could not deny any article of faith put down by Spinoza. None! The God of Spinoza is filled everywhere and experienced everywhere; whereas Christian God is a captive in churches! The God of Spinoza is more joyful, down to earth and positive. Jesus said, "Behold the lilies of the field and birds of the air... be carefree like them!" (Lk 12.27) The God of Christianity is rather God of fear and apprehension. Are the attributes of God according to Spinoza denied by the Christianity? No! I find quotations galore in the Bible in support of them. The attributes were forgotten; or rather purposely hidden by the authorities, to save the anthropomorphic gods of their own making! Did

not Yahweh object to Solomon when building a temple? (2Sa 7.5) Even in Confession, conversion is never just a 'punching yourself in the chest; but a joyful coming home of the prodigal son, celebrated with banquet. Are the commandments a burden? No! In fact they are expressed in just one word: Love! "Love and do what you like," said St. Augustine! If you cannot love your neighbour whom you see, how can you say that you love God whom you cannot see? (1Jn 3.13-17). The days have come when true worshipper will worship God not in this or that temple but in spirit and truth (Jn 4.23). Our final justification will depend on not our temple worship but on our acts of compassion to human beings (Mt. 25.40). The kingdom of God is come, its here and now (Mt. 7.21, 10.7).

Albert Einstein and Spinoza are not saints for us. They are philosophers. Grace a Corona, many of us have learnt to think like Einstein and recognise the God of Spinoza in real life here and now! Pope Francis has recently said, sex and food are "simply divine" pleasures that arrive "directly from God," in an interview with writer Carlo Petrini for his book Terra Futura. He condemned the church's past views on simple pleasures such as food and sex, calling it "overzealous morality" that has "caused enormous harm, which can still be felt strongly today."

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Learn To Live In Love Tangle During Pandemic

Love Matters takes a pleasure positive approach to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), believing that young people have the right to safe and satisfying love, sex and relationships. This approach is a challenge when millions of people around the world are struggling with the physical, emotional and mental effects of isolation, anxiety and economic difficulty.

We are at a crossroad in the matter of love and relationship, which we have been faced with a puzzle. We are in the business of bringing people together. And here we are, in a world that needs us to stay apart! But then we thought about it a bit more. And realised that the COVID-19 pandemic has actually brought us all together! It has brought the world together towards a single goal, with a singularity of purpose that we would have found hard to imagine only days ago. That is to fight the disease and bring us all back together, physically and socially.

Whether you are playing the dating game, just started something new, or have been together long term, coronavirus (COVID-19) is impacting everyone's romantic relationships. Love requires patience, understanding, ability to bow out in argument and love. Love marriage fad has blinded people to assume that dating and small term relationships lead to marriage. In reality it doesn't. As people fall into relationships before marriage, they spend a lot of time together and forget about getting along with each other. That is why all relationships end up in marriage? But the pandemic brought sea change in the love relationship at this crucial hour.

This is because not everyone is cou-

rageous enough to take their relationship at this hour. Many problems arise between them such as social distancing, fear of catching up virus and falling sick. Love is not the most important thing but sharing and maintaining a distance is not easily achievable. It is more common than one would imagine. But having an emotional and intellectual bond and having a physical connection tend to be really important for most couples. Pandemic prevents such personal touch in the prevailing conditions.

Delaying the decision to leave a marriage is scary: There is often a deep fear of being alone, not to mention the possibility of an unknown future. So many stick with mediocrity, settling for low-level pain and dissatisfaction instead. Men are confused but women are very choosy. They change due to a variety of reasons and all are waiting for a vaccine to arrive at the market.



C.K. Subramaniam

Quarantine has also thrown up a whole range of relationship problems from couples who are finding it difficult being shut-in together to the challenge of maintaining a long-distance relationship when partners are quarantined separately. Responding to these issues, an experienced marriage therapist offered suggestions on how to stop arguing and support each other through the quarantine. The problem is typical and how we get into the problem in the right perspective in a right frame of mind through the health and other aspects concerning the value of family life.

At the moment, physical distancing rules apply when meeting anyone outside of your own household - this includes when you are indoors - unless you have formed an extended house-

hold with them or are in a relationship already with someone you do not live with.

If you need advice on sexual health, contraception or pregnancy, remember that the NHS is still open for you and leaving the house for any medical need during lockdown is allowed. The NHS are there to help you, not judge you, so if you've not followed the restrictions of lockdown, don't let this delay go to get support and advice.

A healthy relationship involves good communication, mutual respect, trust, honesty, equality and the ability to be yourself. A relationship is unhealthy when it involves controlling or threatening behaviour. This can be physical, emotional, financial or psychological. If your partner makes you feel scared in your relationship, it's important to get support.

In Indian conditions, marriage means more responsibility, especially in the Indian context where the 'provider syndrome' is dominant in the psyche of the man. Change is also perceived when there are certain expectations. Men are more independent than women and need more space. They need to let their hair down and tackle the crux of the problem well within the available income.

Youth and inexperience may lead a young bride to believe life after marriage will be a long, wonderful 'date' with a permanent suitor waiting to fulfill her every whim. But when the man who was demonstrative of his love prior to marriage stops being so afterwards, the wife gets disillusioned. She feels this is not the man she married.

Life is a constant series of changes. Individuals learn, grow, adapt and embrace change for better or worse. So, men too irrespective of whether they are married or not will change. There is no hard and fast rule that love must end in marriage.

Crossing The Threshold: Stepping Into The Field Of The Future

by Dr (Sr) Mudita Menona
Sodder RSCJ

In darkness the seed sprouts, new life is formed and transformation happens. Experiences of darkness invite us to alter our vision, clarify our priorities, and be more attentive to the things around us as well as within us. Darkness also invites us to embrace inner vulnerability and confronts us with our limitations and a sense of powerlessness. Darkness reveals the depth dimension of life and the mystery of wholeness. This mystery of wholeness is what Eco-Spirituality is all about. It is about the connectedness and wholeness of this Universe and demands the ability to seek the light within and without.

Reflecting on my own times of darkness, especially when I was diagnosed for third stage breast cancer, I was struck by the power of transformation in those moments. Cancer has been my greatest spiritual gift. I had the experience of seeing anew, of knowing the essentials, of discovering things in the Paschal Light, of perceiving the imperceptible and of becoming more than I could ever imagine myself to be. St Francis of Assisi wrote the Canticle of Creatures when he was almost completely blind. Yet through his suffering he celebrated the incredible light of Christ expressed in every creature. Could the present pandemic, Covid-19 be a blessing in disguise? Is it a Goldilocks Moment as Professor David Christian would say? Is it an Aha Moment as the Americans would say? Or is it a transformation? When persons walk together in darkness, they not only experience transformation, but also an unimaginable solidarity with one another and with the One who is the Light.

Eco-Spirituality is living in, *Now the*

Present Moment. It may look very simple. But it takes years of practice and demands Discernment, Discipline and Decision. Once it becomes a habit or second nature, then it is a cake-walk. Life is enjoyable and a Paradise here on Earth-God's Kingdom here or as the Indians would say *Ramrajya*. Could interrelatedness be the compelling New Normal to bring about justice in the world? To help us connect with one another in true love?

Teilhard de Chardin bridged the gap between science and religion and made it a vital force of daily living. Through appreciation of science, we are able to see with new eyes, and to understand that at the heart of the universe lies an emergent energy. This is the heart of God, or as he called it, the Divine Milieu. Thomas Berry called us to reinvent what it means to be human. For him this universe is not a collection of objects but a communion of subjects. Thomas Merton opined that God is everywhere, God is in everything and we cannot be without God.

An Integral Ecology challenges us to goodness, compassion and solidarity, which are the greatest virtues in nearly all religious traditions. These virtues challenge us to co-suffer, suffer with and feel another's suffering so deeply

as to be moved to alleviate it. These virtues tie us to humanity, link us with the divine, and make us responsible to and for one another. It implies and expects action. It is not enough to be compassionate. WE MUST ACT. Love and Compassion must move us to cooperate and collaborate with others. It must promote actions aimed at justice.

The story of the Good Samaritan in the Bible is a model of this goodness, compassion and solidarity. The Good Samaritan changed the structural system. It is not just giving someone what he or she needs at that moment. To do what no one else would do, what society even forbids to associate with such a person begins to break down barriers; the social, political walls that block the development of humanity. It is not a simple act. It is a courageous act. Eco-Spirituality is not a simple Spirituality. It is a COURAGEOUS SPIRITUALITY that demands our 100% or the unceasing flow of God consciousness 24X7.

The New Normal challenges us to cross the threshold and to step into the field of the future. Here Eco-spirituality challenges us to DEEP LISTENING which creates new connections between the one who speaks and the one who listens. This calls for slowing down our pace of life, listening with all our six senses, listening to the words that often carry images, listening to the emotions i.e. tone of voice, change in the rate of speech; suspending judgment, noticing what I do not understand and noticing what I am feeling, and listening to why, I am here on this Planet?

Eco-spirituality also challenges us to speak our truth, while also preserving conditions for constructive dialogue. We need to remain faithful to our selves, without forfeiting collabo-

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(Contd.. on p. 17)

India is taking social distancing seriously

Citizens without masks were seen getting hard whacks on the behind by policeman with batons as punishment.

When asked if the punishment was too severe, one constable responded, "Not at all. I'm just flattening the curve".

The World Health Organization announced that dogs cannot contract COVID-19. Dogs previously held in quarantine can now be released. To be clear, WHO let the dogs out.

This morning I saw a neighbor talking to her cat. It was obvious she thought her cat understood her. I came into my house, told my dog—we laughed a lot.

Wife: I want to know if I have grounds for divorce.

Lawyer: Are you married?

Wife: Yes, of course.

Lawyer: Then you have grounds.

My husband and I divorced over religious differences. He thought he was God, and I didn't.

"Are you a lawyer?"

"Yes."

"How much do you charge?"

"A hundred dollars for four questions."

"

"Isn't that awfully expensive? "

"Yes. What's your fourth question?"

Coroner to Witness: "The collision occurred at the junction of High Street and Church Road; how far away were you?"

Witness: "54 yards, 2 feet, 6 inches."

Coroner: "You are very precise. Did you measure it?"

Witness: "Yes."

Coroner: "Why?"

Witness: "I knew some idiot would ask me."

In a British bar, a short discussion on arranged marriage took place as



follows:

English man: How could you marry a woman before knowing her?

Indian man: How could you marry a woman AFTER knowing her?

End of the discussion!

Q: What is your date of birth?

A: July fifteenth.

Q: What year?

A: Every year.

Workers by their old titles are not outdated . .

Address them by using their improved new titles !

OLD: Garden Boy

NEW: Landscape Executive

OLD: Gardner

NEW: Plant nutritionist

OLD: Petrol attendant

NEW: Fuel transmission technician

OLD: Car Cleaner

NEW: Vehicle Image Developer

OLD: Water Pump Operator

NEW: Aqua line Executive

OLD: Lift Operator

NEW: Vertical Movement Specialist

OLD: Receptionist

NEW: Front Desk Executive

OLD: Typist

NEW: Printed Document Handler

OLD: Messenger

NEW: Business Communication

Conveyer

OLD: Telephone Operator

NEW: Communications Executive

OLD: Window Cleaner

NEW: Transparent Wall Technician

OLD: Temporary Teacher

NEW: Associate Teacher

OLD: Tea Boy

NEW: Refreshment Technician

OLD: Garbage Collector

NEW: Environmental Sanitation Technician

OLD: Guard

NEW: Security Enforcement Executive

OLD: Driver

NEW: Automobile Propulsion Specialist

OLD: Maid

NEW: Domestic Management Executive

OLD: Cook

NEW: Food Technician

OLD: Gossiper

NEW: Oral Research and Evaluation Executive

Finally,

OLD: Thief

NEW: Wealth Relocation Specialist

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Fear Is The Rhapsody Of Evil

Among all human emotions, communications and moments of experiences, none comes near to being the most hated of phenomenon as Fear is taken to be. Ultimately, every imprisoned memory of ill treatment, sorrow or betrayal has a coating of 'humanness' buried in fear.

Do not let the rhapsody of evil lie in fear to grieve your spirit. It is wrong to suppose that fear can do you harm – it will, if you let fear wash your mind with its darkness. Remember what Jesus said, "Do not fear, only believe".(Lk.8:50).

Our human shortcomings abound because of our frailty and doubts we periodically confront. You might want to know how to respond to the challenges of not being afraid. Someone might tell you, "It's a human thing." It truly is a manifestation of our obvious 'human state', to react without remaining calm.

St. Peter understood better the word, Fear. In his first letter written around 49 A.D. the Apostle stated, "Do not fear what they fear or be disturbed as they are." I might add, be sensitive to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who is always with you, he will help you overcome fear. Therefore, in the face of fear he will guide you, be calm.

Should you review the dark chapters of human history you will discover that evil thoughts, words and deeds have been played out among the innocent with the hand of fear. On fear, my son had once expressed his opinion which quite surprised me for his age. He said, "The darkness of ignorance is used to instill fear." He went on to balance his thought, "The light of knowledge and the hand of human kindness vaporizes fear." Yes, truly,

good always triumphs over evil.

The first sin of disobedience was made by Adam and Eve when they ate of the forbidden fruit. And then, both experienced the first fury of fear when driven out of Paradise.



BY MELVYN BROWN

Positive steps can be taken to tackle a phobia. An American President once remarked at a Democratic convention, "Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself...." (Franklin Roosevelt). Adolf Hitler used fear to try and conquer half of

Europe, "Confusion, indecision, fear: these are my weapons," Hitler declared. He was defeated on all fronts.

Pope Saint John Paul II would always say, "Do not be afraid." The dark night of the soul is the open window which evil seeks to invade your quiet moments, often while a person is in prayer or meditation. The devil is always waiting in the wings of your routine life to snare you in temptations which later drive the spear of fear into your heart, when you need to be in tune with the spirit of fortitude.

The Greek philosopher Sophocles stated, "Laws can never be enforced unless fear supports them."

While in the confines of my college I read a book by John Steinbeck : The Short Reign of Pippin IV. In the novel, "The King said, 'Power does not corrupt. Fear corrupts, perhaps the fear of a loss of power.'"

Fear is a rhapsody of evil, and in the sunlight it is a mere shadow that can follow a person without having entry to his mind..

Much can be said on the destruction of fear accruing to the interests of our

world, nothing is obvious and common. Fear is the mother of morality, my mentor once told me. If we work towards making our lives Christocentric the fear factor will vanish.

Christ first loved us and when we reciprocate he will wash away every fear you live with through his grace and goodness. The rhapsody of evil will spin like a whirling dervish twirling his feet into the black pit of eternity, the moment you decide to battle your fear.

(Contd.. from p. 15)

ration. Here we need to begin with being present to our self, and truly responding to what was said, responding in ways that do not close the conversation, break the motivation of another person or cause division within the group. It is important to keep conversations open, and contribute to the good of the whole; no judgments or assumptions, only thought, reflection and further exploration.

As we cross the threshold and step into the future, let us ask Creator God to impress upon us and imprint into us, true and genuine love that goes beyond all imagination and heights. Help us to take responsibility in the management of our Planet Earth and imprint into us the core concept of love. Encourage us Creator God to reach out and touch others in love and make this digital world of Science and Technology a better and more beautiful place to live in.

(Sr Sodder has been the Coordinator of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) for her Province in India for the past nine years, and is now promoting Eco-Spirituality as her full time ministry. She lives in Mumbai on the Sophia College campus).

A Teenager - on his way to Sainthood

There are more than 10,000 saints recognized by the Roman Catholic Church, though the names and histories of some of these holy men and women have been lost to history. There were three categories that provided a path to sainthood: being killed for the faith (martyrdom), living a life heroically of Christian virtues and having a strong reputation for religious devotion. The process of becoming a saint begins after an individual's death.

Pope Francis has introduced a new pathway to Catholic sainthood, recognizing those who sacrifice their lives for others. The new category, introduced in an official letter from the Pope on Tuesday, is "one of the most significant changes in centuries to the Roman Catholic Church's saint-making procedures," (Reuters report.) According to the Vatican's official news service, the new addition is intended "to promote heroic Christian testimony."

This is the life story of a teenager saint, the first millennial of the 21st century.

Carlo Acutis was born in London on May 3, 1991 to Andrea Acutis and Antonia Salzano. His parents later settled in Milan, Italy. He grew up a happy lad, and soon became devoted as a child to Mama Mary. He recited rosaries as a sign of his devotion to her. He received his First Holy Communion at the age of seven, and was fascinated and drawn to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Often, before or after Mass he would sit in church, and reflect in front of the tabernacle. Carlo also made his confession once a week.

Carlo studied under the Jesuits at the Istituto Leone XIII. He was an ordinary simple boy who loved the



outdoors, and his friends liked him for his cheerfulness. He was spontaneous, and endearing, loved nature and animals, played football, and had many friends of his age. He worried about those friends whose parents were divorcing and so he would invite them to his home to support them. He defended disabled peers at school especially when bullies mocked them. He loved travelling and often visited Assisi.

It was a well known fact among his peers that Carlo had a passion for computers. He was self-taught and so gripped by the love for the Eucharist that it became a core theme of his life. He began documenting Eucharistic miracles which had taken place around the world and cataloging them all onto a website that he himself created in 2005, at the young age of eleven. He also liked film and comic editing. He used the media to evangelize and proclaim the Gospel. On the website he said, "the more Eucharist we receive, the more we will become like Jesus, so that on this earth we will have a foretaste of heaven". He also mentioned, "When we face the sun, we get a tan...but when we stand before Jesus in the Eucharist we become saints."

In his early teens he contracted leu-

kemia and offered his pain for both Pope Benedict XVI and for the Universal Church. He said, "I offer all the suffering I will have to suffer for the Lord, for the Pope, and the Church". He wanted his parents to take him on pilgrimages to all the sites of the Eucharistic miracles in the world but his health prevented this from happening. The doctor treating him asked if he was suffering much pain, and he responded: "there are people who suffer much more than me". He died on October, 12, 2006 and was buried in Assisi according to his wishes.

Carlo has left behind various photos of all those Eucharistic miracle sites. He said, "We are meant to move towards our destination (Heaven) and are not "to die as photocopies." In his honor an Exhibition was organized, and it has since travelled to dozens of different countries across five continents. Truly, an amazing legacy of fifteen year old, indeed an inspiring life! And what a wonderful example for our young generation!

The Church leaders were very impressed with Carlo's fantastic media work that in February 2013 Cardinal Angelo Scola inaugurated the process of his sainthood. Soon he became titled as a Servant of God. With-



by:
**Dr Jeanette
Pinto**



(Contd.. from p. 18)

in 5 years he was put on the road to sainthood after Pope Francis approved a miracle attributed to Acutis: The healing of a 7-year-old Brazilian boy from a rare pancreatic disorder after coming into contact with an Acutis relic, a piece of one of his T-shirts performed a miracle which qualified him to be a Venerable by Pope Francis.

The tomb of Carlo Acutis was opened on October 8, 2020 in Assisi after Holy Mass officiated by the Bishop of the Diocese. The miracle is that the body of Carlo Acutis was found intact. For the first time in History you will see a saint clad in a tracksuit and sneakers, on display for veneration in a sanctuary in the town, and his heart will be displayed in a reliquary in the St. Francis Basilica. Holiness is not a distant thing but very much within everyone's reach because the Lord is for everyone.

Carlo was beatified at the Papal Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, on Saturday October 10, 2020; at 4 pm. The beatification drew an estimated 3,000 people to Assisi including people who personally knew Acutis and many other young people. The Holy Mass and Beatification of Carlo Acutis was presided over by His Eminence Cardinal Agostini Vallini from the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi.. With the beatification of Carlo Acutis in Assisi the Catholic Church now has its first "Blessed" who loved Super Mario and Pokemon, but not as much as he loved the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist...indeed a teenager saint in the making. Pope Francis said: "Blessed Carlo Acutis is a witness of Christ for younger generations."

Courtesy: the Internet.

Prayer to **St. Expedite** for solving a financial crisis



I call forth the Power and the presence of **St. Expedite** in my time of financial trouble. I offer my body, heart, mind and soul upon your altar of light. I have faith and trust and complete confidence that you will be my strength in this time of need. Quickly come to my assistance.

(State Your Petition) _____
My financial need is urgent. Be my

Light and Guide in this situation so that I may live with peace, love, prosperity and abundance and in the Praise of God.

Amen. (Promise Publication)

—A Devotee



To make jeera aloo, you just need to boil some potatoes first and then saute them with spices.

1. Rinse 5 to 6 medium-sized potatoes a couple of times in water.
2. Boil them till they are well cooked (The potatoes should be just cooked. They should not be crumbly).
3. When they cool down, peel them and chop them into small cubes.
4. In a vessel, heat 4 tablespoons of oil.
5. Add 3 teaspoons cumin seeds and let them crackle in the oil.
6. Once the cumin seeds crackle and change colour, add 3 to 4 finely chopped green chillies.
7. Mix very well and add the boiled potato cubes.
8. Mix the potato cubes well with the cumin seeds and green chillies.
9. Sprinkle one teaspoon of turmeric powder and one teaspoon of red chili powder. Also, add salt as per taste.
10. Saute the potatoes for 2 to 3 minutes on low to medium flame stirring often.
11. Then add 3 to 4 teaspoons of lemon juice to it.
- 12.. Next add 4 tablespoons of chopped coriander leaves to it.
13. Mix the whole mixture well and then switch off the flame.
14. Serve it hot with chapattis, puris or parathas.



Sweta D'Cruz

Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - GROOMS

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francisdsouza472@gmail.com
OR 00971501532702

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

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

fernandes.clayton@rocketmail.com

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

josephfernandes10@yahoo.com

7116. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in December 1988), Ht. 5' 9", Wt.79 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Masters in Financial Management, working for US based Investment Bank in Compliance and Audit dept. Contact email :

williamgonsalves123@gmail.com

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hilarylobo48@gmail.com

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fernandes.raymond@gmail.com

7104. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in August 1975), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 95 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. H.S.C., working as a Office Assistant. Contact email :

agnelo.nazareth1975@gmail.com

7102. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in August 1988), Ht. 6' 1", Wt. 95 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Masters, working for MNC. Contact email : am.pereira@rediffmail.com

7101. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in April 1988), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 68 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Masters in Logestics doing part time MBA. Working as an Asst. Manager. Contact email : gracian.moras@gmail.com

7100. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in March 1987), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 52 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. H.S.C., working as a Event Coordinator. Contact email : celeseinepereira@gmail.com

7099. USA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in March 1988), Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 82 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., working as a

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7097. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1991), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 97 kgs, WheatishComplexion, Edn. B.Com., working as Sr. Account Recievable in private company. Contact email : dsouzadonald11@gmail.com

7088. MYSORE : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in March 1983), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 70 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA. Marketing. well employed. Contact email : vishwasturners@yahoo.com

7084. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in May 1956), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. 9th std., working as a Machine Operator. Contact email : fern.gilbert54@gmail.com

7083. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in November 1985), Ht. 6', Wt. 68 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com., PGDLM, PGDSM, working as PPM & Data Engineer in Shipping Company. Contact email :

ryan.intermilan@yahoo.co.in

7079. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in December 1962), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 67 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., Inter MBA, working as a Manager. Contact email : archielewis.al@gmail.com

7077. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in March 1987), Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 80 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a Manager. Contact email : leroy2266@gmail.com OR Mob: 9503282306

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

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

wilfyjoy1315@gmail.com or call +91 98603 02527 / + 91 9970172527

7171 MUMBAI : Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1994), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Com., working as an Analyst. Contact email :

patriciaswamy94@gmail.com

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

l2018anselm@yahoo.com

7169 MUMBAI : Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1992), Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA in Event Management. Contact email :

rosypetters74@gmail.com

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

7167 MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1987), Ht. 5' 2", Fair Complexion, Edn. BMS. M.Com., and MBA, working as a Business Analyst. Contact email : soulmateforlife2019@gmail.com

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

7163 MUMBAI : Tamilian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1991), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 41 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., PGDM in HR working as a Receptionist. Contact email : dafrin1991@gmail.com

7078. USA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1992), 5' 6", Wt. 65 kgs, Brownish Complexion, Edn. B.E. Mumbai, MS Newyork, working as a Consultant. Contact email :

rcmatrimonial 2892@gmail.com

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

padmarrao@gmail.com

7072. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1991), Ht. 4' 10", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Digital Media, working for Designing Firm. Contact email :

aubreyds@gmail.com

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

stefsasha09@gmail.com

7071. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1983), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 63 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.A. B.Ed., Teacher in Aided School. Contact email :

marinamia44@gmail.com

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

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

wpm999@gmail.com

7127. MUMBAI : Goan R.C. Spinster, (Born in December 1992), Ht. 5' 5", Edn. Ph.D., Student. Contact email : exmi2019@gmail.com

7065. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1989), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 69 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., & Dip. in Clinical Research, working as Business Process Lead in TCS. Contact email : mendonca_luke@yahoo.co.in

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

mpchandran68@gmail.com

Mobile : 9820041633

7063. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1993), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 60 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Intert CA. working as a Fiancee. Contact email : eshitapais@yahoo.co.in / paischarlie@yahoo.com

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FUTILITY OF WARS

The Second World War could well be described as that traumatic period in global history where the entire universe was held to ransom by the whimsicalities of a megalomaniac who perpetrated some of the worst crimes against humanity in his pursuit of absolute power.

One would have thought that the consequences of the six-year military mayhem which involved the vast majority of the world's countries would help nations build up unanimity against another bloody skirmish.

But the Cold War as that period of geopolitical tension between the Soviet Union and the United States and their respective allies, the eastern Bloc and the Western Bloc, after World War II dispelled notions of any semblance of peace returning to these regions any time soon – till the unforeseen and unimaginable dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 then that is.

The race for supremacy by the global powers has further ensured that the world is forever in a state of turmoil with the politics of armed conflicts played out by them pushing the world to the brink of annihilation – well, almost.

Vietnam and Afghanistan for instance are stories of nations torn asunder by incessant wars which have taken their toll on an entire generation of countrymen, leaving them ravaged and ravished.

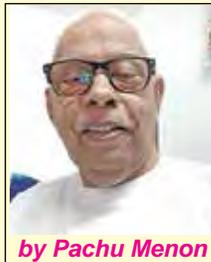
Over the past several decades, the world has also had to content with the scourge of terrorism spreading its tentacles rather ominously. Fraught with blood and gore, terror attacks by extremists have often left nations incapacitated.

For example, the 9/11 attacks by Islamic terrorist group Al-Qaeda on the United States had a huge impact globally.

Likewise, the infamous 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks which saw a group of ten Pakistani extremists virtually on a killing spree mowing down several innocent people in the city was a sadistic exhibition of mindless killing by the fanatics to 'drive home a point'.

To put it simply, the aversion for peace has never been as evident as it is now.

Nowadays, the 'call to arms' is an instantaneous response to any protracted problem, political or otherwise, between countries.



by Pachu Menon

Beset with territorial disputes, India, for instance, finds itself in a very peculiar position as regards maintaining cordial relations with many of its neighbours.

But it is China that has drawn India into a deceitful web of conviviality while holding out a false sense of peace in the region. It is time Delhi realized that it can no longer rely on informal summits to improve Sino-Indian relations.

The faceoff between Chinese and Indian troops at the Line of Actual Control in Galwan Valley in June this year raised apprehensions of an imminent war between the two. The serious situation arising out of the violent clash which left 20 Indian army personnel dead further escalated matters.

It hence comes as a huge relief to have India and China inching towards détente.

Having announced a slew of decisions to bring down tensions in eastern Ladakh, the two armies are believed to

have agreed to strengthen communications on the ground, avoid misunderstanding and misjudgments and earnestly implement the important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries.

Earnest attempts to stabilize the situation along the LAC in the India-China border areas bodes well for both the countries as conflicts and confrontations are never the solution to any problem.

Especially in these times where besides the latest technology that has pervaded every aspect of modern warfare, various nations have had their own perceptions about how 'hostile maneuvers' are to be taken into the enemy camps.

Military engagements between countries are not merely restricted to reinforcing troop strength along the borders these days but are guided by various other considerations as well.

With victory being the sole aim, nations are known to have adopted the most unconventional of methods to win wars.

Hence the landmark treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons which represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral accord to the goal of disarmament by nuclear weapon states is rightly seen as efforts by the global powers to dispel fears of another nuclear 'holocaust' which could evidently be more devastating than the one which shocked the entire world 75-years back.

But with many covertly reneging on the agreement, no country is believed to be completely safe from the intimidations of a nuclear-retaliation by an unfriendly nation even today.

Peace-pacts are not being accorded the sort of commitment which could avert tensions between warring nations.



Life & Death....

Where is thy sting

— Ivan Saldanha-Shet.



And now, more recently, the world is waking up to the threats from weapons of mass destruction being clandestinely produced by various countries.

Nations in their haste to gain global domination do not seem to have compunctions about waging a nuclear, radiological, chemical or biological war to assert their might.

China with its Novel Coronavirus has shown the world what it is capable of!

The atomic bombings of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 proved beyond doubt that the mad scramble for weapons with an eye on gaining military supremacy will one day wipe out the human race. The 'viral warfare' is only taking us a step closer to it.

Recently I came across a blog post which contends that: "Most wars are not fought for reasons of security or material interests, but reflect a nation's spirit. Motivations related to a nation's 'spirit', such as the standing of a country or revenge, have been the principal causes of most wars." (Quoted from Richard Ned Lebow's blog)

The killing of Osama Bin Laden in Pakistan by United States Navy Seals and the 'surgical strikes' carried out by Indian armed forces on terrorist camps in Pakistan which readily comes to one's mind do make these arguments plausible enough to be believed!

However, the futility of armed conflicts is not lost on anyone.

-THE END-

Life and death are two faces of the human coin evidently. All humans born don't live, but all die. In 2020 death seemingly is around us visibly more than ever before - not only due to this raging Corona Pandemic. Unaccounted causes and reasons have brought death closer to human life day to day. According to the 'Lancet' a premier medical publication of the UK, Corona deaths are not the biggest in number as yet - Heart failures, accidents, illness, suicides still rule the roost, more than the 'Pandemic'. But, the fear of Corona is far ahead due to social media and all kinds of awareness. In truth all the measures that are in place as a preventative are not sufficient, because the virus and its spread are too complicated and we are too negligent. More than death, life is now very trying and uncertain, thousands of people are displaced, livelihood and free movement is lost and commerce in all its facets are disturbed - common people are in desperate circumstances.

Most people have experienced recently unexpected deaths in unusual numbers - God's tryst with circumstances and due to many causes that are ruling today. Fear is natural, but not really called for.

POTENTIAL VIEW : The human view on life and death is enigmatic, yet it lurks somewhere in the mind of every normal human. In my three scores and ten years now, death has ever fascinated me. Particularly in the last ten years, I have come in sight of it and my fear has reduced a great deal. I somehow am convinced it is not very different from a normal parting - say of some one whom we know, departing for a far off land. The only strange thing is we lose all further communication and no one from the other side communicates as to what happens after death. However, I have no doubt deep down that death is the

other face of life.....a continuing of life. In the life after; It could well be 'From darkness to light,' naturally. "Death is NOT the last sleep, It is the final awakening".

Those who have gone before us we call 'dead'; but this a half truth, as some of them are more alive and active than those who are alive. Only those who are inactive and a waste are truly dead. What we know of our life after life on earth is largely imagination and irrational.

POSITIVE THOUGHTS : Dr. Kubler Ross and Dr Raymond Moody, two all time greats on death research, have projected death as a door to a realm of beauty, bliss and splendour. Baha'u'llah, the founder of the unique 'Bhai Faith' all over the world now, in his writings quotes, " O son of the Supreme! I have made death a messenger of joy to thee. Wherefore dost thou grieve? I made light to shed on thee it's splendour. Why dost thou veil thyself therefrom?" Those facing the critical vagaries of life need more thought now.

Death is the termination of all biological functions that sustain an organism. Your lost friends are not dead, but gone before, a stage or two, you will travel in the steps they trod. I believe in death, I believe it is part of life. I believe that we are born to die, born to die a little each day, to die that we may live more fully.

I believe that every time we pass from one stage of life to another, something in us dies. Something new is born. I believe that each day we are creating our own death by the way we live. Death is not extinguishing the light. It is putting out the lamp because the dawn, the sun has come.

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