

# THE SECULAR CITIZEN

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A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

## Martyr's Day In India... 30th January

*"In the dictionary of Satyagraha there is no enemy."- Mahatma Gandhi.*

Asked to define a Martyr most of us would opine, 'Personnel of the Armed forces & the Police who put themselves in the line of fire, day in & day out that we might be safe' and we would be absolutely right. But a Martyr could also be understood to be someone who is killed or assassinated because, some people do not like the way this person thinks or acts, or because they do not agree with the person's Religion or the faith he professes, or simply because they are troubled by the way this person lives his life, guided by certain values and based on unshakeable principles. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was one such martyr. 73 years ago Gandhi was shot at, not on a battle field, but while he was walking to the dais for his customary evening prayers, in the compound of Batla House, which is now known as Gandhi Smriti... a large mansion in New Delhi. 3 bullets shot at close range, 2 in the chest, 1 in the abdomen snuffed out the life of an Indian, who greatly influenced the world in the 20th century and continues to do so even today. Like us there are 15 other countries who commemorate Martyr's Day on 30th Jan, the day of Gandhi's assassination. Wonder why? Because they are inspired by the persona of Gandhi who sadly in our own country, I feel, has been reduced to photo frames and currency notes. Here is a man who preached tolerance and forbearance throughout his life, & who pursued the propagation of Ahimsa or Non-violence not only as a political instrument, but also as a personal weapon. During the time that Gandhi lived, all over the world, violence was the preferred way of dealing with situations. Yet Gandhi single handed got his Indian brethren to move away from this culture, which sadly we observe making a strong come back in society.

Just take a look around and you will find that a small argument which can be easily resolved by talking to one another, or by persuasion, or even by just walking away from a volatile situation before it gets out of control, is handled in a violent manner. On social media platforms, hooligans who do not really have the guts to face the person they're targeting, go ballistic with their hate filled tweets, posts and emojis. Not to be outdone, TV studios conducting supposedly non-judgemental debates, on topics concerning the well-being of the Nation & even Newspapers reams, are making use of loud shouting and intimidating; insulting language to get their message across. Out on our streets, in public transport vehicles & in our housing societies people have forgotten that a word called 'Courtesy' exists. From refusing to acknowledge the presence of seniors, to abusing one another with obscene words & gestures, our means of Communication have become decidedly decadent. We are becoming increasingly aggressive, rough with one another & our only intent in every altercation seems to be wanting to give, 'Tit for Tat' forgetting Gandhi's simple directive that, "An eye for an eye will make the whole world blind."

In the year 2017, I was offered the opportunity of representing Canossa High School, Mahim, at the 3rd National Peace Conference, conducted by the Universal Solidarity movement. This was held in Goa from the 30th of Jan to the 1st of Feb. It was a time of enlightenment. Soul searching sessions with well chosen & well prepared Resource Persons including Mr. Tushar Gandhi, the great grandson of

(Contd.. on p. 3)



# If there are no Crowds, Is It Still South Bombay

by Don Aguiar.

A tour bus agent desperately tried to discern which passers-by were from South Bombay and which ones were out-of-towners. Newlyweds from the suburbs, hoping to celebrate their nuptials with a special dinner, had to settle for McDonald's. Four homeless men sat on a sidewalk, sharing cigarettes and a pipe filled with marijuana.

This is South Bombay, jarringly quiet beneath street lights. South Bombay needs a crowd, which is as much a part of its character as the incessant lights.

"Look around," said Manish Sharma, 54, from Bihar, who has been selling souvenir hats and T-shirts on the sidewalk in the area since 2004. "Without the Movie shows, the office workers, the tourists, the crowds, you got no South Bombay."

The throngs of visitors — the trademark of the famous neighbourhood for more than a century — are gone. The air is no longer thick with the aroma of pav bhaji, Idli Vada and biryani. Movie theatres are closed. Office buildings are nearly vacant. And there is an eeriness to the emptiness, helping to stir the faint fear that South Bombay could slip back to its 1970s self, a seamy neighbourhood known for open crime, drugs and sex shows.

The neighbourhood's transformation — from gritty to "Disney" — was a significant chapter in the city's revitalization, even as detractors criticized the new South Bombay as losing its edge. South Bombay has an outside share of the city's economic activity, despite occupying only 0.1 percent of the city's land mass.

Before the pandemic, South Bombay, where Navy Nagar, Cuff Parade and

Colaba meets Apollo Bunder, Museum, Churchgate and Nariman Point Sea face, helped to draw a crush of tourists to the city. A record 66.6 million visited the city in 2019, with many making their way to a show, the New Year's Eve celebration or to a little patch of sidewalk just to stand and experience the excitement. That level of tourism is not likely to return until 2024, according to one forecast.

South Bombay is now a microcosm of the city's struggle to survive the pandemic, as restaurants and businesses closed and residents lose their jobs. There are no crowds to shield and disguise the population of homeless people living there on the street.

South Bombay has always been Bombay on steroids, so whatever is happening in Bombay City is amplified in South Bombay.

Beginning in October, overnight counts tallied by the municipality reported that the number of people sleeping on the street in South Bombay was roughly double the 2019 levels, and many are "much more aggressive with passers-by or are ignoring social distancing.

Despite the shortage of tourists, a tour bus agent, still searched for likely customers, passing out pamphlets and wearing a placard around his neck bearing his name. He says "People came from all over the world to South Bombay, and now they're just not coming".

Visitors have slowly returned, especially on nights and weekends. And the district has re-emerged occasionally as a central gathering spot for events.

Still, the district feels empty by South Bombay standards. About 108,000 pedestrians pass through the area each day compared with 380,000 be-

fore the pandemic. December too did not bring a holiday bump, given the pandemic restrictions.

The office towers largely remain empty, and most of the hotels in the area have partly closed, at least temporarily, as have clubs like Wellington and the Yatch. Most Restaurants too have not yet reopened.

The top-grossing theatre in the country, remain partly closed because of city restrictions on movie theatres. The annual New Year's Eve outing, which draws big crowds at Apollo Bunder, Nariman Point and Chowpaty, had to bring in the New Year earlier than required due to COVID time restrictions this year and few believe any substantial comeback in the area will happen before that.

During the British era, it became a cultural hub full of theatres, music halls and upscale hotels, as well as the city's main gathering spot, but by the 1970s, the area had grown increasingly seedy — rife with sex shops, peep shows and adult theatres. It became synonymous with the city's decline through the 1970s and 1980s as crime rates soared, before city and state officials in the 1990s took over the revitalization of Colaba.

Now, South Bombay may feel sketchier without the festive crowds, but the sharp decline in visitors and workers has actually caused a drop in crime.

Roughly 80 percent of its businesses are now closed or inactive, including theatres when the lockdown came.

There isn't a single area that went so quickly and so hard from everything blooming in full to everything shut down. It was a major economic engine, and it has completely shut down.

There are people who say it's going back to the way it was in the '70s, but some rather believes South Bombay will bounce back with the return of Movie theatre, tourism and hotel use and office workers.

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the Mahatma and interactions with kindred spirits, all looking to be agents of change, caused a change in my mind set too. When the academic year began in June 2017, a 2 day seminar was conducted for the Staff, by Fr. Varghese Allengaden, founder of the USM which is based out of Indore, M.P and I was asked to spearhead the USM in School, as Coordinator, a role I gladly accepted. Since then I have found a myriad opportunities that helped me delve into the person of Gandhi, to try & understand his sublime thoughts, his deep desire to see people live in harmony, his creative ideas & the dreams he dared to dream for the children & youth of India.

"Be the change you want to see." This oft repeated quote of Gandhi seems to have been drowned in the cacophony of violence ricocheting around us. The paradox of our times is that, while we have made forays to the moon we have also let the malaise of evils such as Corruption, Bigotry, Gender inequality amongst others, dictate our lives. I have in the last 4 years understood this quote to mean that, 'If I want to change the world, I must begin with myself & this change must start with the way I think'. I am sure we can all agree that Character cannot be built by mortar & stone, it cannot be built by hands other than our own. It certainly cannot be obtained from the pages of

academic books. It must be generated from within, by observing & listening to the right persons, by reading good material. I would recommend making the 3 C's of CHOICE, CHANCE & CHANGE, our mantra in life. Simply put they mean: We must make the choice, to take the chance, if we want anything in life to change. It is pertinent to remember that all our knowledge, or the degrees we accumulate will be in vain, if we fail to translate them into peaceful living. By peaceful living I don't mean turning a blind eye to the wrong that is happening around us, by making trite statements like, 'It does not affect me so why get involved' or 'I would have done something but I don't want to escalate the situation'. Rather we need to have the courage to step in and stop injustice, wherever & whenever we can, & to continually pray for the wisdom, to know what to say & do in difficult situations.

Gandhi was one person who realized the power & potential of children & youth, to bring about social change, in a peaceful manner. As a teacher I have accepted the truth that, since I work daily with young minds & hearts, they are mine to make or mar. Hence to parents of young children & to youth reading this, here is an appeal, something I believe Gandhi would have wanted me, 'A Teacher' to extend to my students--- Become self Reliant, Be Tolerant of all Religions & Follow Moral Values. This would be the best gift you could give yourselves & make the world take notice of you, like

they did of Gandhi, who as a global phenomenon, influenced people & nations to fight for civil rights & freedom. As future citizens of the most populous democracy, and of a world that today has turned a global village---challenge yourselves to be the change the world wants to see, implement new ideas, set high ideals for yourselves & for others, build upon your inherent talents & capabilities, to create a positive environment of growth & acceptance.

The indecipherable Albert Einstein, often referred to as a mad scientist, shared a poignant, dismal truth, "The world is a dangerous place to live in not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it." But I see a silver lining in another truth... that the amount of good in one warm hearted person, is enough to go over all the cold hearted people in the world. On this 73rd death anniversary of the Father of our nation, let us all...children, youth, adults & even senior citizens, pledge to allow Gandhian Principles to benefit ourselves and the nation, in order to elevate it, thus making true what Gandhi believed in, namely.... "The golden way is to be friends with the whole world and to regard the whole human family as members of one family."



by Ninette D'Souza

# What will be the fate of Joe Biden?

by Fr. F. M. Britto

The world congratulates Joseph R. Biden Jr when he took over as the 46th President of the United States of America on January 20. Not just the US, but the whole world longs to see what sort of president he will turn out to be in the coming days.

He has already met opposition, both before and after the election, from his predecessor Donald Trump and his supporters. The divided nation and Trump's supporters are a threat to Joe Biden's taking over the White House. We have to wait and see whether the path for the new president is smooth or dangerous, as it had been a challenge to the earlier US Presidents.

In America there is also a superstition of the Curse of Tippecanoe, which has frightened Americans for decades to come. According to this curse, in 120 years the US presidents, who had been elected in the year ending with zero, have died during their term. It is also known as Tecumseh's Curse or the 20 Year Presidential Curse, Zero Year Curse, or the Twenty-Year Presidential Jinx. It is the pattern of deaths of the US presidents elected in years that are evenly divisible by 20 since the 1840 election. Due to the four years term of these presidents, many US elections are taking place in years ending with zero. Joe Biden had been also elected in 2020.

"Ripley's Believe It or Not" claims this pattern of death. The cartoon 'Strange as it Seems' by John Hix prior to the election of 1940 titled 'Curse over the White House' said, "In the last 100 years, every US president elected at 20 year intervals has died in office." Journalist Ed Koterba noted in 1960, "The next president of US will face an eerie curse that for more than a century has hung over every chief executive elected in a year ending with zero."

The origin of this curse is alleged that the Native American tribes' confederacy leader Tecumseh and his men faced the aggressive US military

troops in 1811 led by General William Henry Harrison. The battle at the Tippecanoe River defeated the Shawnee leader Tecumseh, killing his younger brother Tenskwatawa. Thus the Native American tribes lost their territory to the mighty US force.

According to a legend, Tecumseh cursed then that every American President elected on a year divisible by twenty and ending in a zero will die before completing his term. According to the folk tale, the "curse" happened because the Native Americans were so angry that they cursed the name of William Henry Harrison.

Then in 1840 William Henry Harrison was elected the 9th US President. But he died in 1841 itself due to Pneumonia. His death is the first one attributed to this curse, since he died within a month of taking office in 1841. He was the first president to die in mid-term. At the age of 68, he was then the oldest US president.

The next president elected 20 years after this in 1860 was Abraham Lincoln. The 16th US president was assassinated during his second term in office on April 15, 1865 by John Wilkes Booth, becoming the first US President to be assassinated.

After 20 years in 1880 James A. Garfield was elected as the 20th president. During his first term itself, after six months on Sept 19, 1881, he was assassinated by a delusional Republican lawyer.

The next president to fall victim to the curse was William McKinley, elected after 20 years in 1900. The 25th president was assassinated within six months of his second term on Sept 14, 1901 by an anarchist Leon Czolgosz.

Warren G. Harding, one of their most beloved presidents, elected then in 1920 died of heart attack during his first term on August 2, 1923.

Then after 20 years, Franklin D. Roosevelt, who got elected as the 32 president in 1940, died of cerebral haemorrhage on April 12, 1945. The only American president, who served



four terms, had led America to significant victories against Japan.

After 20 years John F. Kennedy, then the youngest American president, was elected in 1960. The first Catholic US president was assassinated on Nov 22, 1963 during his first term at Texas by Lee Harvey Oswald for reasons still not clear.

Running for re-election in 1980, President Jimmy Carter was asked about this curse at a campaign in Dayton by a high school student. Carter replied, "I have seen those prediction. I'm not afraid. If I knew it was going to happen, I would go ahead and be president and do the best I could till the last day I could."

But Ronald Reagan was elected in 1980. The 40th president was seriously wounded in an assassination attempt by John Hinkey Jr on March 30, 1981, within months of his 1981 inauguration. But he did not die in office. Reagan, the oldest US president elected at that time, also survived from colon cancer while in office. He also showed symptoms of Alzheimer's disease in his first term itself. After completing his two terms, Reagan died at the ripe age of 93 of pneumonia on June 5, 2005.

The 35th President Kennedy was the last president to die in office elected with the 20 years term. After that no president had died in office, even elected on 20 year marks. The only president who died in office without being elected in a "cursed" year was Zachary Taylor, who was elected in 1848 and died in 1850. The curse that has haunted the White House for the last 200 years seems to have ended.

Columnist Jack Anderson wrote in

(Contd.. on p. 5)



## East Indians should learn from the Goans

It is very disgusting that when a person dies in an East Indian Catholic family, tea, snacks (sandwiches, patties and cakes) and soft drinks are served to the people at the grave-

(Contd.. from p. 4)

'Reagan and the Eerie Zero Factor' that the 40th US president had either disproved the superstition or had nine lives. It was also reported that the First Lady Nancy Reagan had hired psychics and astrologers to try to protect her husband from the effects of the curse. Many also think that the "curse" was broken or lifted when John Hinckley tried to assassinate Reagan when the president left a hotel in Washington D.C.

Twenty years after Reagan, George W. Bush was elected in 2000 the next president. He also survived two terms, in spite of the assassination attempt on him at Georgia, where a live grenade was thrown at him by Vladimir Arutyunian on May 10, 2005.

The new President Joe Biden falls next in line. On Nov 7, 2020 he was declared elected. Since both Reagan and Bush had survived, the "curse" seems to have been broken. But at the age of 76, Biden is the oldest US president in history so far. At this age it is doubted whether he will run for another term. Let our prayers be: May the Lord grant him good health, long life and protect him from all evil forces. As he begins his presidential journey on Jan 20, 2021, let the second Catholic US president prove to be a blessing for his country and the world.

yard after the burial. Then the people who have attended the funeral come to the house of the deceased member where again snacks, soft drinks, alcohol, and dinner is served. This is ridiculous! We are supposed to be mourning for the deceased member of our family but instead of mourning, we are having a grand party. Goans, Mangaloreans and other Christian communities do not do all this; it is only the East Indians (original inhabitants of Mumbai who got their name from the East India company of the British) do it. We East Indians should learn from the Goans, Mangaloreans, and other Christian communities and bury the deceased member of our family with respect instead of having a grand party at home after the funeral.

Then again after the month's mind Mass and after the 1st anniversary Mass, snacks and lunch just like that of a wedding are served to neighbours, friends and relatives either at home or in the church hall.

With all this eating, drinking and merry-making, I don't think the soul of the deceased member will rest in peace.

P.S: The East Indians are a community of Roman Catholics who are the original inhabitants of Mumbai. They got their name from the East India Company of the British who had converted a large number of local Marathi-speaking people to Christianity.

—*Jubel D'Cruz,*  
*Mumbai*

## How safe is Covid -19 vaccine?

Both manufacturers of Covid-19 vaccines 'Covishield' and 'Covaxin' viz Serum Institute of India (SII) and Bharat Biotech International Ltd resp-

ly, have advised people against getting vaccinated, if they are allergic to several factors which include ingredients of the dose or those who are on blood thinners, bleeding disorders and other health-related issues. The question is how is the common man expected to know which are the ingredients in the dose that trigger allergies and a host of side effects that are alarming and life threatening. The manufacturers have undoubtedly played safe by warning people against side effects, but the list of such adverse reactions is too serious to ignore, considering the number of people who have succumbed worldwide after getting vaccinated. Lately, around 23 people died in Norway after the first dose, a Portuguese nurse died 2 days after being vaccinated, and now it is reported that more than 12,000 people in Israel have tested Covid-positive after the first dose. Clinical trials are still on in laboratories to prove the efficacy of these doses. So, in such a frightening and uncertain scenario, the overall feeling is that it would be better to play safe and refrain from being vaccinated, till the situation is under control.

— *A. F. Nazareth,*  
*Alto Porvorim, Goa*

## Valuable Reading

The Secular Citizen is always welcome. It makes for valuable Reading

— *Leon Bent*

## A Great Contribution to the Society

I have the pleasure of placing on record my appreciation for the great contribution you are making to society through your esteemed publication.

I seek God's blessings upon you and on your complete team for the continued great contribution in making the country and the society more secular.

— *Dr. M. D. Thomas,*  
*New Delhi.*

# Laudato Si on 'Taking Care of the Earth'

by Joseph M. Dias, S.J.

In the immense expanding universe in which we live, our beautiful earth is, probably, the only planet that nurtures life in such an abundant variety of forms, particularly intelligent human life. Today, there is a real danger that this unique planet is being systematically destroyed by us, human beings, to whose care the Creator has entrusted this precious treasure in the vast wilderness of empty, lifeless space. In his latest encyclical, *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis makes an urgent appeal to all humanity "for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet" (No. 14). The reason, he points out is, "Neglecting to monitor the harm done to nature and the environmental impact of our decisions is only the most striking sign of the disregard for the message contained in the structures of nature itself.....Once the human being declares independence from reality and behaves with absolute dominion, the very foundations of our life begin to crumble, for 'instead of carrying out his role as a cooperator with God in the work of creation, man sets himself up in place of God and thus ends up provoking a rebellion on the part of nature'" (No. 117).

Human beings for their own survival have three basic needs: healthy food, clean water and fresh air. All these are provided to us by Mother Earth. The plants and animals give us the food we need. Pure drinking water is provided by springs, lakes, rivers, streams, and wells. Plants and animals, which consume food available in nature, give us our supply of proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and mineral salts. The atmosphere gives us the supply of oxygen required every moment of our lives. To supply us with clean water, nature has gigantic water-purification systems – distillation of an immense amount of water which comes down as rain, mist and snow; decantation of water in huge lakes and other water-bodies; filtration of water in streams and rivers through beds of gravel, sand, and giant ion-exchangers. The air is constantly purified by rainfall and winds all over the planet.

The extensive green grasslands and dense forests absorb huge amounts of carbon dioxide generated by human beings, animals and industries, and release life-giving oxygen into the atmosphere. Today, destruction of the environment by large-scale felling of trees and forests, release of poisonous fluids into lakes and rivers and spewing of dangerous gases into the atmosphere by mills, factories, industries, land, sea and air traffic, is doing incalculable harm to all the life-nurturing systems found in nature. The balance existing in nature is being radically disturbed by human activities. Unless we take immediate steps to remedy the harm done already, scientists warn us, it will be too late to save the environment that sustains life. What are the steps being taken by various nations and private agencies to save the earth for future generations? Is it already too late to save the 'structures and systems set up by nature', which have been rejuvenating the earth over millennia?

In his encyclical *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis calls for environmental education, "which seeks to restore the various levels of ecological equilibrium, establishing harmony within ourselves, with others, with nature and other living creatures, and with God.....This education, aimed at creating an "ecological citizenship" must not be limited to providing information, but must instill good habits.....Only by cultivating sound virtues will people be able to make a selfless ecological commitment. A person who could afford to spend and consume more but regularly uses less heating and wears warmer clothes, shows the kind of convictions and attitudes which help to protect the environment..... Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting which directly and significantly affect the world around us, such as avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, separating refuse, cooking only what can be reasonably consumed, showing care for other living beings, using public transport or car-pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, or any number of other practices. All of these reflect a generous and wor-



thy creativity which brings out the best in human beings. Reusing something instead of immediately discarding it, when done for the right reasons, can be an act of love which expresses our own dignity." (Nos. 210-211) While individuals and small groups can contribute in the above ways to saving the earth, big organizations, institutions, NGOs, companies and governments are beginning to take climate change more seriously and trying to reverse it through greater use of solar energy and wind energy in place of electricity (which involves burning of coal), to reduce harmful carbon emissions; large-scale planting of trees, stopping the emissions of CFCs (chlorofluorocarbons), used in refrigeration (to halt destruction of the ozone layer in the upper atmosphere which protects the earth from dangerous radiations coming from outer space), and other major steps to preserve and restore nature's pristine health. These initiatives need to be multiplied a million times, if we are to succeed in reversing climate change and saving the planet for future generations.

In order to save the earth and all the life-forms it sustains, the general public too, in all countries, will have to be watchful and vigilant and ready to organize effective action to prevent the building of enormous industrial complexes, mega projects, like dams over rivers and giant nuclear power plants, which do incalculable damage to the environment by causing disasters of gigantic proportions, as the world has seen in the following cases: (i) The Great Smog of London in December 1952, which re-



sulted in 12,000 deaths and more than 100,000 getting ill. It was caused by a combination of industrial pollution, oxides of sulphur and carbon, smoke, fog, mist and high pressure weather conditions. Public outrage after this event led to the British Government passing the Clean Air Act, 1956. (ii) The Minamata Disaster in the mid-1950s, in a small fishing town in Japan, caused by dumping of 27 tons of mercury and mercury compounds by a petrochemical plant. These poisonous substances were ingested by fish and consumed by the people living in the area. Around 2,955 people and the children born, contracted the Minamata disease which caused severe deformities, mental retardation, deafness, twisted limbs, blindness and the death of 1,784 people. After the public protested and filed a number of cases, the company finally quit the place in 1968.

(iii) The Chernobyl Disaster caused by a nuclear accident in April, 1986, at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, near Kiev, Ukraine, which is considered the worst nuclear disaster in history. It killed 30 operators and firemen working at the Plant due to exposure to heat and radiation, plus about 70 others later on. In the surroundings, 335,000 people were evacuated, 20,000 cases of thyroid disease and cancer were diagnosed, plus a large number of trees and animal species were destroyed. The whole world suddenly became aware of the hazards of nuclear power plants, and as a result of the action initiated, The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO) were founded. (iv) The Bhopal Gas Tragedy (Union Carbide gas leak), at Bhopal, India, on the night of 2-3 December, 1984, was caused by the leak of the deadly methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas from the Union Carbide Ltd. (UCIL) pesticide plant. Over 500,000 people got exposed in and around Bhopal, around 2,259 people died and 576,000 were injured. Over 8,000 died within 2 weeks. In addition, over 2,000 buffaloes, goats and other animals perished, while hundreds of trees became barren. A number of court cases were filed against the Company and it was finally shut down as a result.

(v) The Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, Japan, was the scene of an explosion due to a powerful earthquake and tsunami, on 11 March, 2011. It caused an enormous amount of human suffering and 54,000 people had to be evacuated from the area. Large stretches of land became uninhabitable due to radioactive material released. On account of this tragedy, public sentiment all over the world turned against nuclear energy. (vi) The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill which took place on 24 March 1989, when the oil tanker, Exxon Valdez struck a Reef in the region of Alaska. Over 11 million gallons of crude oil got released into the waters off the Gulf of Alaska doing incalculable damage to the ecosystem and killing thousands of marine species (salmon, shrimp, rock-fish, sea-birds, sea-otters, harbour seals, bald eagles and killer whales). Several fisheries had to be closed and hundreds lost their livelihood. The outcry by the public led to the US Congress passing the Oil Pollution Act, 1990 designed to prevent such oil-spills in future. Finally, just a few months ago, we were shocked by news of the catastrophic explosion of explosives stored in a warehouse in Beirut, Lebanon, which left hundreds dead and thousands injured leaving the city in tatters and looking like a war-zone. Numerous other catastrophic man-made disasters have occurred in various parts of the world, during the last two centuries due to wars, bombings and explosions which have done irreparable damage to the environment, wiping out huge quantities of plant, insect and animal species, besides loss of hundreds of precious human lives.

In *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis speaks of the need of "ecological conversion". He says, "The external deserts in the world are growing because the internal deserts have become so vast", quoting a homily by Pope Benedict XVI. "For this reason," he adds, "the ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion. It must be said that some committed and prayerful Christians, with the excuse of realism and pragmatism, tend to ridicule expressions of concern for the environment. Others are passive; they choose not to change their habits and thus become inconsistent. So what they all need is 'ecological conversion', whereby the effects of their en-

counter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience. In calling to mind the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi, we come to realize that a healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion, which entails the recognition of our errors, sins, faults and failures, and leads to heartfelt repentance and desire to change." (Nos. 217-218) These initiatives on the part of individuals alone are not sufficient today. The problem we face on a global scale is too big and too complex. Perhaps, it is too late to reverse the damage already done. Pope Francis warns that, "Social problems must be addressed by community networks and not simply by the sum of individual good deeds..... The ecological conversion needed to bring about lasting change is also a community conversion." (No. 219) It is only when the human family learns to commune with nature, to contemplate it rather than exploit it and to regard it as sacred -- being the handiwork of the Creator -- that we shall succeed in saving it and restoring it to its pristine beauty for future generations to love and enjoy. Ignatius of Loyola, Founder of the Society of Jesus, seeks to foster such an attitude when he tells his retreatants, "You must reflect on how God dwells in creatures: in the elements giving them existence, in the plants giving them life, in the animals conferring upon them sensation, in human beings bestowing understanding.....consider how God works and labours for us in all creatures upon the face of the earth, that is, He conducts Himself as one who labours. Thus, in the heavens, the elements, the plants, the fruits, the cattle, etc. He gives being, conserves them, confers life and sensations, etc." (Spiritual Exercises, Nos. 235-236). While the renowned Jesuit poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, expresses the same mystical view when he writes, "The world is charged with the grandeur of God"--thus teaching us that it is with awe, wonder and reverence that we, the only intelligent creaturescapable of acting for good or evil, must learn to contemplate the enchanting and mysterious World around us, whose High Priests and Caretakers the Creator has ordained us to be.

## Some Smart Sayings!

Real BMW! In the brain – fond memories! On the tongue – sweet savories! Within the heart – love factories! So drive a real BMW by praying – (B)less (M)y (W)ork! (B)ring (M)e (W)isdom! (B)urn (M)y (W)orries! And so let me experience Your profound (B)ountiful (M)erciful (W)onders!

Correctly Misspelt? In this COVID-19 pandemic, better stay 'In-dore!' You can't 'Rome' around you know! My 'Delhi' routine is so boring; since I am 'Washing-tons' of dresses! But my savings are indeed 'Dublin!' Because it is my 'Lucknow!' But in Kerala wives are 'Cochin' husbands to cook! And if masks are worn-out, 'Dubai' new ones! 'Iran' out of ideas! And now 'Mysore' throat is due to excessive talking on my 'Mumbai(l)!!

Nicky Nailed! Nicky was a dull student. In a public school he got poor grades; but in a private Catholic school he passed with flying colors! Nick's parents were surprised and asked him about it. He replied, "When I saw a man nailed to a cross at every corner of the school, I knew that teachers don't joke here; for I too would be nailed!"

Jesus Christ! "Though Jesus was in the form of God, He did not regard equality with God a thing to be exploited! But taking the form of a slave, He humbled Himself, and became obedient to the point of death, even death upon a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted Him, and given Him the Name Jesus; so that every knee should bend, in heaven, on earth, and in the underworld, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is LORD!" (Philippines 2:4-11).

—*Dr. Trevor Colaso,  
Memphis, TN. USA.*

## Kolam- Presidency for All!

Kolam is a traditional South Indian art form of drawing geometric patterns on floors as a sign of welcome! It became part of the ceremony at the swearing-in of President Joe Biden and his deputy Kamala Harris scheduled for 20 January 2021 -Atestimony in "Presidency for All"!

In Tamil Nadu where Kamala Harris has her roots, women draw Kolam designs on the ground. These auspicious paintings adorn almost every household; and invite health, prosperity, and help heal divisions. Pictures of thousands of 'Kolam Tiles' were woven together to showcase the multicultural heritage of America. More than 1,800 individuals of all ages, across the U.S. and from India participated in this online initiative; and provided them an opportunity to learn about another's culture and math skills needed to create these visual art forms for this #2021kolam community project!

Traditionally Kolams are hand drawn with rice flower; which incidently also share ephemeral and meditative qualities of Native American sand paintings and Buddhist mandalas! The dots on a Kolam depict hardships in our lives, and the lines drawn around represent the way we navigate and negotiate around our struggles. This should improve and turn our lives into beautiful mosaic works of art! And with the rise of a diverse America, the energy behind this artwork is a reminder of what binds us alltogether!

Here is an inspirational Bible verse especially for women who are the chief architects: "She is clothed with strength and dignity; she laughs without fear of the future" (Proverbs 31:25).

—*Dr. Hazel Colaso,  
Memphis, TN. USA.*

(Contd.. from p. 2)

For now though, there are no crowds, and vulnerable people living on the street are more visible.

A homeless man, 35, sat with three other homeless men sharing cigarettes and a pipe filled with marijuana. A year ago, they couldn't even be sitting here because the crowds were so thick — now there's barely anyone on the sidewalk.

Before Covid-19, homeless men could make 800 to 1000 bucks a day on the street — sometimes a tourist threw them a 1000. But with the pandemic, there's no tourist and no festivities going on, and South Bombay residents are struggling too, so they're lucky if they make 100 bucks a day.

A newly wedded couple from Pune, stood in a nearly deserted pedestrian plaza near Museum on a recent weekday.

Perhaps nothing is more striking about South Bombay than the sheer emptiness of it, compared to its pre-pandemic self, something that was not lost on the newlyweds.

The couple took a few rare days off from their jobs for a brief honeymoon in South Bombay.

"It's definitely not what I expected, compared to the crowded South Bombay you see in the movies and pictures," the newlyweds said.

Knowing South Bombay's reputation for late-night activity, the couple went out after 9 p.m. one evening for dinner and tried some of the popular restaurants, but all were closed.

They ate at McDonalds.

"It's (South Bombay) the same place, but it's a totally different experience," the newlyweds said. "It's totally opposite of what it used to be."



# The Gift of Hearing

**L**ike me, the majority of you would be able to see the print of this magazine and feel its glossy surface. We are able to hear our favourite song and perhaps sing it. Furthermore, we are able to enjoy the fragrance of a mogra flower and relish the taste of a well prepared bhel-puri. The gift of our five senses is something we take for granted.

A teacher once asked her class to name the Seven Wonders of the World. Pat came the usual answers of architectural marvels created by man. One bright little girl, however, answered that the wonders were God's generous gifts of love, laughter and the five senses including that of hearing. For those who are profoundly deaf from birth and their families, hearing opens shut doors to endless possibilities of learning and activity once out of their reach. During these days of online studies, a deaf child is severely disadvantaged. The gift of hearing is indeed one of the seven wonders. Hence the invention of the cochlear implant is indeed a miracle.

The miracle workers at Holy Family Hospital (HFH), Bandra, Mumbai are none other than Dr. Chris de Souza, MS, DORL, DNB, FACS, FRCS, and his team of ENT surgeons, audiologists, a speech therapist, a social worker, a co-ordinator and the nuns of HFH who have extended full support to this noble endeavour. Dr. Chris and his team received a papal blessing dated 11th December 2020 for their work in restoring the hearing of around 200 patients, mainly poor and marginalized children. I quote the blessing below :

## “HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Invokes the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ upon Dr. Christopher de Souza & his Cochlear Implant Team of Doctors and Staff

In appreciation of surgical insertion of hearing devices and other related services to poor and marginalized deaf children.”

The cochlear implant program at HFH

is open to all, irrespective of community, location in India and income group. Each cochlear implant, including training, costs around Rs. 8 lakhs. Generous donors such as Salman Khan, Ratan Tata, and other smaller donors have enabled these operations to take place on underprivileged children. On his part, Dr. Chris waives his charges. A gurdwara has offered its services to provide food and accommodation for Rs. 100 a day for those hailing from other parts of the country. Generous donors have pitched in to defray these nominal costs for those who cannot afford them.

The cochlear implant is a device that directly stimulates the auditory nerve endings through electrical impulses conveyed through tiny wires. It consists of two units. The external unit is outside the ear. Its function is to collect sound waves through a microphone and transmit them digitally to the implant which is an internal device that bypasses the damaged portion of the inner ear. After the operation, extensive

speech training has to be imparted to the recipients.

In India four out of hundred children are born with hearing loss. Regrettably many cases are not detected and the child's lack of response to sound is misinterpreted as low IQ. Experts say that it is better to operate on the child

at an earlier age as a child who cannot hear is unable to learn to talk and it becomes a challenge to teach the child. To address this issue, HFH has an audiology department which is housed in a cheerful room with attractive paintings. It has state of the art equipment that facilitates the very accurate evaluation of the hearing of new born children. This is needed because very small children cannot speak and are therefore unable to tell anyone if they can hear or not.

I was privileged to be invited to a program for children who have received implants and their parents on 3rd March 2020 which is International Hearing Day hosted by HFH . After brief talks



parents of children who have received cochlear transplants were invited to speak briefly. The beaming mother of Mohd Azam had good reason to call Dr. Chris the 'Godfather' of deaf children. Mohd was treated as a Special child prior to the implant. He is now going to a normal school where he is progressing well. The cochlear implant has enabled Radhika to pursue Bharat Natyam. I met Radhika's mother and she proudly told me that Radhika will be performing shortly in Karnataka. The excitement on the faces of the young recipients of the implants was palpable as they came forward with their parents to be felicitated. The children then performed for us. They joyfully danced, sang and recited poems for those present. What a delightful way of celebrating the gift of sound!

It is not only children who have benefited from cochlear implant. Implants have been successfully conducted on older patients as well. This is, however, more prevalent in the West and is yet to catch on in India. At the function Dr. Chris spoke about a young lady who was severely hearing impaired. This lady, the sole bread winner of her family, was about to lose her job when she started getting blind. She went through with the cochlear implant and was thus able to save her job.

The cochlear implant unit has been functioning throughout the pandemic. For enquiries, HFH may be contacted during day time working hours at 9820166426/8850417360;email id :cochlearimplantholyhospital@gmail.com. Useful sites to visit are [www.sound-z4life.org](http://www.sound-z4life.org) and [www.cochlear-implant.in](http://www.cochlear-implant.in).



by Monica Fernandes

# Three Cardinals Meet Prime Minister of India on 19 Jan 2021



deeds of some people, the others must not suffer.

With regard to the equitable distribution of funds, a reporter asked whether there was discrimination on the basis of religion and minorities. Cardinal Alencherry said that neither the Prime Minister nor the Cardinals spoke of any discrimination. Cardinal Cleemis said that this is the fund given by the Central Government to be distributed among the poor. What the Cardinals asked the Prime Minister was to make a point of justice so that the funds are fairly distributed. No one should be ignored and this distribution should be done in an equitable manner. The Prime Minister assured the Cardinals that he will look into the matter.

Cardinal Alencherry spoke to the Prime Minister about certain difficulties faced in the Kerala Church. Cardinal Cleemis shared how the issue of poorest of the poor was raised with the Prime Minister. Mention of the promotion of the Dalit people was made with particular reference to the Christians of Dalit community. These are groups of people who need to be treated and brought to the mainstream of society. The Prime Minister was very positive about this and we have assured our support to this where the Dalits can be brought to the mainstream of the society. How and what means to be followed, they were not clear about that but an appropriate study needs to be made about this, to make provisions for them so that justice can be given to them.

Cardinal Cleemis thanked the efforts made by the Honourable Governor of Mizoram for facilitating this meeting. Unfortunately, the Governor could not be present because he is under quarantine in Kerala. It was a very refreshing experience for the Government to invite the three Cardinals and to listen to them. The Governor of Mizoram is very open to all communities and not just the Christians. Since he is the Governor of Mizoram, he understands the Christians very well as there are more than 80% Christians in Mizoram. Therefore, he has learnt to appreciate the work of the Christian community. We appreciate the many efforts the Governor had taken for today's meeting. The invitation for this meeting came from the Prime Minister,

*A Report on the Three Cardinals' visit to the Prime Minister of India by Fr Jervis D'Souza, Dy SG of CBCI*

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi met the three Cardinals – Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Cardinal George Alencherry and Cardinal Baselios Cleemis this morning from 11.15 a.m. for about 45 minutes. When the Cardinals emerged from the meeting, they all commented that it was a very cordial and a fruitful meeting and the Prime Minister was very much relaxed. This meeting was more of a dialogue and a conversation on wide ranging issues.

After the meeting, at the Press Conference held at Mizoram House, His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias in his opening remarks said that the Prime Minister had invited them for a conversation where they reviewed different works in the Church in India, at the national scene and particularly how the Church is working in different fields of education, medical and social welfare and how we can in the future even more collaborate with the Government. His Eminence then invited the press reporters to ask any questions.

In reply to a question whether the Cardinals had asked the Prime Minister about the proposal of inviting the Holy Father to India, Cardinal Oswald said that this was always in the mind of the Prime Minister. He is positive about this and has shared his eagerness to get the Holy Father to India. The Prime Minister has to find an appropriate time when the Holy Father can be invited. Cardinal Oswald Gracias commented that the present health and safety conditions in India do not warrant a visit of the Holy Father.

Cardinal Oswald Gracias raised the

issue of the farmers and hoped that a just solution be found. The Prime Minister stated that the government was making every effort for this.

With regard to the release of Fr. Stan Swamy, Cardinal Oswald Gracias said that the Prime Minister is aware of the situation and is sympathetic. But this is taken care of by an independent agency and the Government does not want to interfere in the matter.

Cardinal Baselios Cleemis shared with the Press what Cardinal Oswald Gracias had shared with the Prime Minister of the massive work and efforts done by the Catholic Church during the Covid pandemic. Rs 152 crores had been spent by the Church to take care of the poor during this pandemic. The different Caritas agencies in India reached out to over 2 crores population. Cardinal Gracias assured the Prime Minister that the Catholic Church will continue to engage in the emergency care for the people of India.

Speaking about the minorities in India, Cardinal George Alencherry shared with the Prime Minister that there should be equitable distribution of goods and services. He also spoke about the new Education Policy with the Prime Minister. Cardinal Alencherry insisted with the Prime Minister on religious harmony. The Prime Minister is open to all that was shared. He shared that much discussion had gone into before the formulation of the policy.

With regard to FCRA, the Prime Minister said that there were so many agencies getting foreign money and not maintaining proper accounts. Therefore, the Prime Minister had to be strict about that, to which Cardinal Alencherry said that we support that. Due to the mis-

# The Farmer's Daughter

## Short Story

**A**rpita was a slim, tall, young woman with long raven black hair, almond eyes, high cheek bones and a fair complexion. Her smile was always bright with a touch of warmth which graced her gentle manners. It was often hard to imagine she was the daughter of a struggling farmer, who was a widower.

After fifteen long years, Arpita returned to the home she had known so well as a growing girl. She stood on the wooden front porch, broken and splintered with the ravages of time. She looked out at the tortured and broken fields, unattended and ignored. Slowly, she turned around to look inside the two small rooms clinging to



BY MELVYN BROWN

so many tender and tragic moments of the past.

The battered walls had weathered the storms, heat and rains of many seasons. The door and windows hung on rusted hinges wrapped in the wild green vines like lovers in the throes of passion.

In a corner of the room the brick-and-clay oven was still preserved by a stroke of nature's kindness. It brought back memories of how she and her mother, morning and evening would sit on the floor and prepare the meals.

Tragedy struck one afternoon when her mother went to rest outside on the rope-bed. The elderly woman passed away having a massive heart attack, lying alone under the summer sun. Arpita had left the house half-an-hour earlier for the open-air market to buy eggs and milk. Her father and Raju, the orphan help were out in the field.

The same year, six months after her mother's passing, Arpita recalled how two men kidnapped her and sold her as a domestic servant to a rich businessman and his wife in Mumbai.

For five years she wondered what might have happened to her father and to the orphan boy. There was no way of knowing.

The businessman and his wife were a good and kind couple. One evening in winter the businessman's nephew came from Punjab to visit his uncle. Krishna was a carpet merchant in the export trade. He fell in love with Arpita and married her. He sent her for a good education to a private college where she obtained her Master's degree in the Arts. She had the freedom to mix in society and made many friends.

The golden years of her childhood had been stolen. She was now home

or what was left of it. Arpita brushed aside the thick cobwebs when she noticed a small wooden box on the floor. Inside was a piece of brown paper, a letter addressed to her from her father.

"Arpita, my little Lakshmi, I will not live to see you. The Union leader of the farmers has warned me to pay him one lakh rupees by the morning, as protection money to keep me alive or they promise to kill me. I will not give them the deeds of the land, and only you know where they are. I have forced Raju to run away before the morning. He did not want to leave me, but I insisted he should leave and go in hiding. Daughter, you know how much I love you – if only your mother had been alive things would be different".

Somewhere out in the open field a barking dog could be heard. Arpita folded the letter and put it in her leather bag. She stepped out of the house and looked around.

In the distance she saw the figure of a man limping and coming towards her. He bore a large smile on his lean and hungry face, clothes in rags and a cloth tied to his head, the man called out "Memshab!"

It was Raju the orphan. Arpita was happy to see the boy who had grown up looking strong, but lean due to malnutrition.

"I work as a coolie at the railway station, and at night I sleep in the waiting-rooms. I was told that a lady was standing in front of the house. I could not believe him. I came running to see for myself..."

"Enough, Raju. My husband will give you a proper job in his export business in Delhi. Come, you must meet him."

Arpita's husband was pleased to meet Raju. He turned to his wife and said, "My dearest wife, this man has the skill of a farmer which he gained from your father. We need farmers to feed the nation. You have all the legal papers for the land, put it in his name."

And so it was done. The farmer's daughter knew in her heart that her parents were proud of her.

(Contd.. from p. 10)

which was very important for us.

The Cardinals were asked if any constitutional amendment was suggested to the Prime Minister to allow the Dalit to come to the reservation category. It was suggested to the Prime Minister that the criteria for assistance should be economic and not religion.

Cardinal Oswald Gracias said that he had previously clarified to the Prime Minister that the Church is not political by nature. The Church is not for any political party; it is always apolitical. What we always look for is good governance. We look for the care for the poor, economic growth and development of the people, justice and progress of the country.

Cardinal Alencherry said that the Church is a reality in society and always in dialogue with the Government for the betterment of the poor. Cardinal Oswald Gracias thanked all the press reporters that came for this press conference.

The meeting ended with the mutual thanksgiving and the Prime Minister inviting the Cardinals to approach him if they have any issue to discuss.

## Fused Bulb Concept

A senior executive retired and shifted from his palatial official quarters to the housing society, where he owned a flat. He considered himself big and never talked to anyone. Even while walking in the society park every evening, he ignored others, looking at them with contempt.

One day, it somehow transpired that an elderly person sitting beside him started a conversation, and they continued to meet. Every conversation was mostly a monologue with the retired executive harping on his pet topic, "Nobody can imagine the big post and high position I held before retirement; I came here due to compulsions"; and so on, and the other elderly person used to listen to him quietly.

After many days, when the retired executive was inquisitive about others, the elderly listener opened his mouth and said, "After retirement, we are all like fused bulbs. It does not matter what a bulb's wattage was, how much light or glitter it gave, after it gets fused."

He continued, "I have been living in this society for the last 5 years and have not told anyone that I was a Member of the Parliament for two terms. On your right, over there is Vermaji, who retired as General Manager in Indian Railways. Over there is Singh Saheb, who was a Major General in the Army. That person sitting on the bench in spotless white dress is Mehraji, who was the chief of ISRO before retirement. He hasn't revealed it to anyone, not even to me, but I know."

"All fused bulbs are now the same – whatever its wattage was – 0, 10, 40, 60, 100 watts – it doesn't matter now. Neither does it matter what type of bulb it was before it got fused – LED, CFL, Halogen, Incandescent, fluorescent, or decorative. And that, my friend, applies to you too. The day you understand this, you will find peace and tranquillity even in this housing society."



"The rising sun as well as the setting sun are both beautiful and adorable. But, in reality, the rising sun gets more importance and adoration, and is even worshipped, whereas the setting sun is not given the same reverence. It is better to understand this sooner than later".

Our current designation, title and power are not permanent. Keeping lot of emotions with these things only complicate our life when we lose this one day.

Remember that when the game is over, the king and the pawn go back in the same box...

\*\*\*\*\*

## Story of a Father, Son and donkey

A Father and his son were once going with their Donkey to market. As they were walking along by its side a man passed them and said: "You fools, why walk when u got a Donkey, ride on it

So the Father put the Boy on the Donkey and they went on their way. But soon they passed a group of men, one of whom said: "See that lazy youngster, he lets his father walk while he rides."

So the Father ordered his Boy to get off, and got on himself. But they hadn't gone far when they passed two women, one of whom said to the other: "Shame on that lazy father to let his poor little son walk while he is riding along."

So both Father & son sat on Donkey Then some men said: "Aren't you

ashamed of yourself for overloading that poor donkey of yours ? Do u wanna kill it ?

The Father and son got off and started carrying on the donkey by tying it to a pole  
When they were crossing the bridge the people saw it and started laughing their guts out

The donkey got afraid of sounds and bridge and struggles with the rope and loosened it and fell over the bridge & drowned.

Moral of the story

"Please all, and you will please none."

*Kuch toh log kahenge  
Logon kaa kaam hai kehna  
\*\*\*\*\**

Boyfriend: Dear do you know that exams are like girlfriend?

Girlfriend: How funny?

Boyfriend: Yes, they are tough to understand, complicated, lots of questions and the result is always doubtful..

\*\*\*\*\*

### Definition Of Girl Friends -----

Girl friends are like a net virus. They enter your life, scan your pocket, edit your mind, download your problems and delete your happiness.

\*\*\*\*\*

Girlfriend: One of my ancestors was actually a king.

Boyfriend: I never knew you were a descendant of King Kong. .

\*\*\*\*\*

A Girl is giving directions to her new boyfriend to get to her apartment. She says: "You come to the front door of the apartment complex where I live and look for apartment 14A, and with your elbow push button 14A. Come inside and you'll find the elevator on the right. With your elbow hit 14. When you get out of the elevator you'll find my apartment on the left. With your elbow, hit my doorbell and I'll open the door for you"  
The boyfriend says: "Dear, that sounds very easy to find, but why am I hitting all these buttons with my elbow ?"

"Oh my God!! You're not coming empty-handed, are you?"

\*\*\*\*\*

# The Holy Eucharist - ONLINE or OFFLINE?

**T**here is no doubt that COVID-19 has turned the world upside down. This coronavirus is still striking with impunity, no discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, colour, community, religion, age, gender, whatever. This virus has brought down the mighty from their high pedestal, from their thrones, from their make-belief world. All the wealth & money in the hands of the rich is rendered useless in dealing with the coronavirus.

COVID-19 has had a tremendous effect on several spheres of life one of which, is the religious front. During the Lockdown, all places of worship were shut for almost eight months. **It seemed like COVID-19 had succeeded in pushing mankind far away from their places of worship, far away from God.** Is that so? Many believe that the COVID-19 has actually brought man closer to God. They had begun to come together in prayer before God and started believing in the power of God. For instance, in our homes, the family has been attending ONLINE Masses 'together' as one family. The faithful were deprived of attending Mass in Church but here was an alternative - that of attending Mass ONLINE! The faithful felt that closeness to God. In the circumstances, the feeling was good though! The only drawback was lack of Holy Communion - Spiritual communion being some consolation. *But, that was attending Mass in isolation, only for ourselves, away from the community.* **Pope Francis says, "the forced isolation devised to stop the pandemic was presenting the danger of people living the faith only for themselves - detached from the sacraments, the Church and the people of God."** So where do we go from here?

Churches have now opened for public worship with a limited number of faith-

ful at a time, attending the Mass. What is our response to this development? Are we enthusiastic about attending Mass in Church once again like we did before the pandemic? Or, are we content with the new way of being Christian, that of attending Mass ONLINE? Do we feel like assembling in Church as a community to participate in the passion of Jesus Christ? **Pope Francis says, "as the Gospels show, Jesus' disciples always lived their relationship with the Lord as a community — they gathered "at the table, a sign of community. It was always with the sacrament, with bread,"**

Are we content with the Spiritual Communion that we have got so used to these past several months? Does the celebrant feel good celebrating Mass without the faithful present in Church, to an empty Church? What does the Holy Father, Pope Francis have to say? **"During the Lockdown, the faithful have been encouraged to make an act of spiritual Communion given their lack of access to Holy Communion, but "this is not the Church,"**

What do we feel about our relationship with God when we attend Mass online and when we physically attend Mass in Church along with the community? **The Holy Father says, "One's relationship with Jesus 'is intimate, it is personal, but it is in a community,' and this closeness to Christ without community, without the Eucharist, without the people of God assembled together and without the sacraments, is dangerous because people could start living their relationship with God for just myself, detached from the people of God."**

So what is our perception of being close to God? Does it matter that we do not attend Mass in Church with the community? **"The Church, the sac-**

**raments and the people of God are concrete," according to the Pope. "The faithful's relationship with God must also stay concrete, as the apostles lived it, as a community and with the people of God, not lived in a selfish way as individuals or lived in a "viral" way that is spread only online."**

It is apparent therefore, that Online Masses are not an alternative to actually participating in the Mass in Church, alongwith the community. *The Holy Eucharist is not an event in reel life, it is not a serial which we watch in the media. The Holy Eucharist is something which is "real".* **The Holy Father reiterates that 'Online Mass is NOT the Mass'. Nothing can replicate the breaking of Bread at the Altar. We need to witness that, Live!** We need to eat the Body of Christ there in Church. Only then can we feel that closeness with Jesus Christ. **The Mass is not an event to be viewed, whether 'ONLINE' or 'OFFLINE, it is our participation as a community that makes it "real".**



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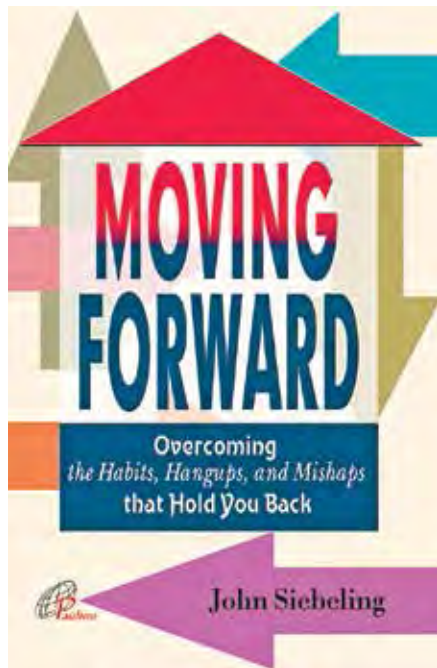
# MOVING FORWARD

By John Siebling

REVIEWED By  
Ladislous Louis D'Souza

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Scripture says: "...the word that goes out of my mouth shall not return empty but shall accomplish my will and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isa 55:11). In a nutshell, living God's word in our daily life is tantamount to moving forward in life, surmounting life's vicissitudes, the Spirit of God's Word constantly hovering over us, guiding and goading us on to live life to the full and thus accomplish the Father's will for us! It is obviously this perception of John Siebling concerning God's word that forms the basis of the book MOVING FORWARD.

Jesus' death on the cross was not without purpose – it was to set us free and enable us to experience life to the full, anything less than that being not of God. For too many of us life seems to keep coming a full circle within the encumbrances of failures big and small, addictions ostensibly too deep-rooted

to root out, restricting, unhealthy financial patterns and other limitations of every size and shape and habits and hang-ups galore from which we just can't seem to break free. Breaking free from any of them starts the same way: by walking in the truth trusting the assertion of Sacred Scripture: "And the truth shall set you free" (Jn 8:32b). John Siebling, Founder-Pastor of the Life Church in Memphis, Tennessee sure knows his Bible and his heart from which flows the text that is all set to help the reader in 'overcoming the habits, hang-ups, and mishaps that hold you back' (cover) and to thus do justice to one's full potential within the framework of God's designs!

**MOVING FORWARD** helps you link your reading of God's Word with your experience of daily living—and how! Each chapter highlights a specific hang-up or habit that holds you back from living life to the full, one of these hold-back issues being the problem of 'unforgiveness'. That's where the chapter "Unlock the door (And throw away the key)" [pp 110-123] challenges the reader, proving to be an astute reconciler like no other! Attaguy, this John Siebling! He unpacks, explains God's point of view about what's bothering you, and points to a way forward in freedom—freedom that can only come from forgiveness going out to the offender from the depths of our being, the forgiver earning in the process the traction necessary to move forward, the zest for living so to say. Practical advice and suggestions for the next steps to take help you implement changes that give you the traction to move forward.

Do you feel stuck emotionally, spiritually, or relationally? Be not disheartened for there is help in the form of practical advice awaiting you in MOVING FORWARD with appropriate suggestions as regards the timely steps to be implemented.

Do you sense the need to be closer to God but feel like you are being held

back by life's struggles? You will find the life-giving teachings of Scripture positioning you so perfectly as to adequately empower you to lay hold of God's best for your life.

Siebling is no ordinary writer-speaker for he has a thriving weekly television programme that averages more than 125,000 viewers eating out of his hands as it were, week after week! And why not! With a passion to develop leaders and impacting generations by way of helping others move forward in life, the author has several books to his credit - *The Holy Spirit Today*, *Fresh Start with God*, *Momentum*, and *Worry Free Finances* to name a few!

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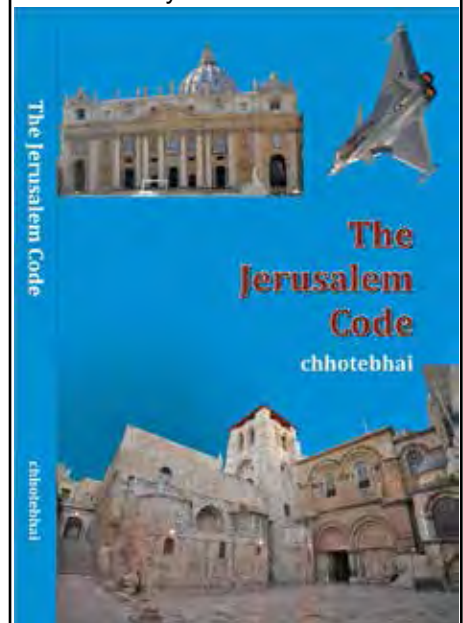
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# " All India Krista Sabha " formed



It is a step in the right direction in these days of communal unrest said, Fr. Edward Jacinto Parish Priest of Our Lady of Magie Church, Gorai.

He was speaking at an inauguration function of a new Christian organization named " **All India Krista Sabha** " at V.V.hotel, Shefali , Gorai Uttan road , Gorai .

Over 50 people from different Gao-thants were present for the meet.

Speakers after speakers spoke

about the need of the hour of such organization to joint the main stream by joining hands with the secular political parties for the betterment of the Christian community in the social , economic and political Arena.

Mr.Desmond L.Godhino a business man was elected President and Mr. Herbert D.Barretto General Secretary , were unanimously elected .

Godhino said, very soon Christian's from different denominations will be elected from grassroots level to repre-

sent different areas of the districts and states .

Barretto, a prominent person of the Community said, that with his all around experience in different fields will do his best to strengthen the Sabha

Aims & objectives of the Sabha:-

- \* To promote, preserve, safeguard the socio economic , educational and General welfare of Catholics and Dalit Christians in General

- \* To seek a place in the political field by having healthy and fruitful communication with different political parties in the interests of Christian community & Church by helping to preserve & promote communal harmony between all communities, caste & creed with the ultimate aim of establishing peace & progress of of our great nation - India

- \* To promote & established units in all Parishes, districts in states by coordinating their activities.

- \* To seek an appointment with the Chief Minister, deputy Chief Ministers and Sharad Pawar to present memorandum listing various demands of AIKS more particularly a place for constructing Bhavan in Mumbai City .

*Herbert D.Barretto  
General Secretary*

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**7151. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in May 1990) Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Masters in Marketing, Working as a Asst. Marketing Executive. Contact email : emanuelfindz90@gmail.com

**7146. MUMBAI :** East Indian RC Bachelor, (Born in July 1988) Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 79 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. (Mech), + PG course in Finance, working as a Asst. Manager in MNC. Contact email : lenin.pdsouza@gmail.com

**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

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**7185. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October

1984) Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working for Bank. Contact email : spydee321@gmail.com

**7152. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in December 1989) Ht. 6', Wt. 70 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., having business. Contact email : emi\_dalmeida@yahoo.com

**7112. MUMBAI :** Converted Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1970), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 80 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., & Masters in International Journalism (UK). Looking for a bride below the age of 42 years (below 40 - 42 years) who is willing to raise a family. Contact by email : decemberwedding08@yahoo.com

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**7144. POONA :** Goan RC Bachelor, (Born in October 1985) Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 60 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Hotel Management Graduate, working as an Executive. Contact email : merrolmenezes@gmail.com

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**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

**7164. MANGALORE :** Mangalorean RC Bachelor, (Born in May 1984 ) Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair, Edn. ITI Course, working as a Techincian. Contact email : raiesh\_dsz15@gmail.com

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**7189. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in July 1993), Ht. 4' 9", Wt. 40 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A. B.Ed., Teacher by profession. Contact email : [dcruz\\_liselle@yahoo.in](mailto:dcruz_liselle@yahoo.in)

**7182. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1992), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., C.A., working as Asst. Manager in TATA Company. Contact : email : [matrimonialp27@gmail.com](mailto:matrimonialp27@gmail.com)

**6860 MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1991), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 55 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.M.M. (Mass Media), working for IT in MNC. Contact email : [lgp1891@gmail.com](mailto:lgp1891@gmail.com)

**7160. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1988), Ht. 5' 7", Fair Complexion, Edn. BMS, working as a Senior Merchandiser in a Global Retail Company in Dubai. Contact email : [prislobo10@gmail.com](mailto:prislobo10@gmail.com)

**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](mailto: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](mailto:wilfyjoy1315@gmail.com) or call +91 98603 02527 / + 91

9970172527

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

[carlferns93@gmail.com](mailto:carlferns93@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](mailto:l2018anselm@yahoo.com)

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

**6504. KUWAIT :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster (Born in June 1980), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 58 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., Computer, Finance, Banking Marketing Course & Airlines Course completed, employed as a Travel Co-ordinator in Kuwait. Contact Email : [lucy777p@gmail.com](mailto:lucy777p@gmail.com) Tel: 00965-60402765 / 9867308911

**7095. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1992), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 55 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com + Import Export Certificate Course, working as a Billing Assistant in Well known Hospital. Contact email :

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**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](mailto:sona68500@gmail.com)

**6642 MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Divorcee, (Born in September 1979), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working

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

**7190. BANGALORE :** Tamilian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1990), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.E., Electronics and communications, working as a Technical Specialist. Contact email :

[jmj.lionofjudah@gmail.com](mailto:jmj.lionofjudah@gmail.com)

**6831. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1991), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 54 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as an Senior Associate in Insurance Company. Contact email : [denisdsouza854@gmail.com](mailto:denisdsouza854@gmail.com)

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# Canada's 105 year old hero connects with Mumbai

- Ivan Saldanha-Shet.

**R**ecently, in Mangaluru, a few super elders have come in for admiration and affection : Miss Ivy D'Souza, celebrated 105 years having been born December 9, 1915; Mr. Joseph (Joe) Gonsalves 99 years old, born January 1, 1922. Both of these are from our city here and active, especially 'Uncle Joe' who concerns himself with social welfare and moves around to assist traffic control. There are many more for sure, the city's well known historian and community genealogist Dr. Michael Lobo of Bijai fame, has come up with more to be highlighted, amazing take a look at one current hero.

January 12, 2021, was the 105th birthday of a gentleman of Mangalorean origin, William Andrade. He was born on January 12, 1916, he is indeed a hundred and five - 105 years old! William Andrade hailed from the coastal village of Kemman in Kallianpur, now in Udupi district – about 40 miles (65 km) north of Mangalore, a historical place known to most Mangalore people.

The Andrade family from which William hailed was one of the leading families of the Kallianpur area. Like most other families of the coastal towns and villages of those times, the Andrades would have been primarily agriculturists. They are likely to have owned acres of paddy fields and coconut plantations – and made their living from the crops that they cultivated. However, some members of the Andrade family did venture into other professions, especially government service.

Early Times : William – like many other young men of his generation, Mangaloreans were moving out in large numbers, Bombay was the biggest attraction, yet William opted for Karachi – and arrived there as a young man in 1940. Karachi was then a part of British India, the second largest city in Bombay Presidency. Before partition in 1947, Bombay, Karachi and Lahore



were closely connected for trade and culture. Exchange of people specially the better educated Mangaloreans and Goans was at a peak.

The early 1940s was eclipsed by World War II, William, then 24 years, landed at Karachi Airport with the Anglo-Dutch Oil company, Burmah Shell, at Karachi Airport. His primary assignment was supervising aircraft refueling operations for all the Allied military aircraft that landed in Karachi en-route to the war-front in the Far East. Soon, William received promotions to Supervisory and Management positions till he retired as Customs Liaison Supervisor at the age of 55 – exactly 50 years ago! Today – at the age of 105 – he has been receiving his pension for 50 years, a world record perhaps, specially as 'Burmah Shell' is no longer in existence!

Bandra Wedding : William married Zena D'Souza at Mount Carmel Church, Bandra, in January 1950, Shortly after their wedding, William took his bride to meet his family members at his native village of Kemman, Kallianpur. Zena D'Souza hailed from a Mangalorean family that had settled in Bombay years ago, she was one of seven children – five daughters and

two sons – of Maurice D'Souza and Kathleen nee D'Cunha. Her father was employed in the Postal Department of Bombay Presidency. The family initially lived near Victoria Church, Mahim, but shifted to Bandra in the 1920s and were near Mount Carmel church. It was a marriage that was destined to last for 68 years – till Zena's death on 1 March 2018.

Model Family : William and Zena had 7 children – four sons Terence (Terry), Clarence (Clarry), Lawrence (Larry), and Christopher – followed by three daughters Jennifer, Nilofer, and Zenwill. All 7 children were born in Karachi between the years 1951 and 1964. For the next 30 years, William and Zena lived in Karachi. Zena taught at St Joseph's Convent, simultaneously working towards a masters' degree at Karachi University. Both were also active in the Mangalorean Association of Karachi. At the end of 1970s, they started the move to Canada. Today it seems many of this family are in Calgary and so on in Canada, in the USA and so on. Life has moved fast for all in this world in the last decade or more.

Grand old Patriarch William Andrade has become a superhero and lives amidst care and love in Calgary, unimaginably fit for his age group. Unfortunately due to this Corona Pandemic and it's virulence, personal contact is restricted for the right needs and no public celebrations are allowed. Archbishop Emeritus of Lahore, Rev Lawrence Saldanha, now settled in Toronto, close associate of the Andrades in Karachi and Calgary over the years, on this great occasion sent a fond tribute to William Andrade, as a special blessing.

Awaited are better times and surely updates will follow. In the meanwhile 'Mangalore Today' and it's readers, along with many around the world extended their very best wishes and prayed that 'All good will follow dear William Andrade and his dear ones too as long as time can tell'. So, three cheers and 'Namaste' at this time of Joy and Happiness.

## Guwahati- A Great motivating city



Your tour of Assam can start with Guwahati from where you can explore the areas in and around for a variety of experience. Most tourists to Assam, however, begin their journey with a mandatory trip to Kamakhya temple, the seat of Tantra powers.

Guwahati is a pet city, much like Bhubaneswar or Kolkata. It has flashes of our cultural life that is akin to ours. When you visit Assam state museum, you find words like 'Gohali' or 'Dhikisala'. Millennial babies will not understand this. Elders will appreciate the fact that we have similar sounding words in Oriya to describe the cowshed and domestic paddy-milling place. The inter-governmental coordination between Odisha and Assam to preserve the Bezbarua House in Sambalpur shows our fraternal affiliation. Called Pragjyotishapur in the ancient times and it is a powerful sentinel of pan-Indian culture. Reference of Kamaksha Devi is often made in our scriptures including that in Mahabharata. Arjuna's two wives; Ulupi and Chitrangada, hailed from the North East.

In a fortuitous visit to Guwahati in the last week of the year, we looked around the city on the day of Christmas. We had no difficulty recognizing the streets and shops we were familiar with earlier; Bamunimaidam, Fancy Bazar, Paltan Bazar et al. GS Road remains the pride of the city and the nerve center of business activities. The mighty Brahmaputra remains graceful as ever. While most of our river systems are deciphered in the feminine gender, Brahmaputra is a masculine water body. It houses

the largest river island of the world in Majuli and the longest river bridge in India in Dhola-Sadiya. People visiting Guwahati avail a sporting cruise in the river or a visit to Umananda temple located on an island.

Though we had paid a visit to Kamakhya temple in the past, we went to the holy shrine once again. There is a pool in the eastern flank of the temple where tortoises have grown to very large size. Devotees buy feed for them and throw the morsels to watch the tortoises grabbing them up. Fishes also join the tortoises to partake in the eatables. Some he-goats were on the loose vying for the food. We fed a couple of them with a banana or two. Unlike the tortoises, these goats will not live for long. They will soon be sacrificed at the altar of the Goddess. In the opposite flank of the temple, there is another pool where the animals are bathed before

being sacrificed. Some fountains spray jets of fresh water to the pool to maintain the pollution level of the water. The head of a freshly sacrificed animal is often found in the sanctum sanctorum. Inside the temple precinct, an old man was vending live pigeons in a bamboo basket. Devotees buy them to sacrifice before the Goddess. How naïve it is to believe that sacrificing the little helpless bird will propitiate the Goddess to grant you a prayer!

Pigeons in a temple are often a symbol of deliverance. On the occasions of Independence Day, trained pigeons are set free as a mark of celebrating freedom. There were other pigeons fluttering around the temple walls and occasionally perched on the devotees

standing on the queue. The practice of animal sacrifice often agitates the mind though we have such customs in most parts of our country. It is one thing to kill an animal for food in a slaughterhouse and another to impute religious motive in it. Faith has often overruled reason and we have no authority to pass a ruling. We have no guts to face the argumentative Indian. Somewhere inside our mind we could see reason for losing it the way in the dreary sands of dead habit. Our inner jest to join the Tagore bandwagon is somewhere halted. Religion remains the opium of the masses because no one can decode the mystery of nature. In our limited life span, we can always extricate a couple of superstitions passing off as religion.

During our stay over a week, we missed cultural events, especially a chance to see a Bihu dance on the stage. Generally, we found the people to be smart and trendy. While they could be emotionally rooted to Bihu, they could easily catch up with the latest in the world of design and fashion. On the day of our return, I visited Vashistha Ashram. The serenity of the place is maintained well. Devotees were enjoying sunshine over the rocks present in the rivulet flowing beside the temple. Before driving to the Airport, we visited the Balaji Temple hailed as Purva Tirupati and repeated an old habit of buying Ladoos. Though we experienced a sense of completeness, we would love to go to the North East again.

While in Assam, you must pick the one item you are going to treasure all your life is the famed Mekhela Sador, a two piece saree. Finally how can you be in Guwahati and not visit the scenic wildlife sanctuary Pobitora. This grassland is home to the Greater Indian One-Horned Rhinoceroses with highest density in the whole world. Surrounded by villages from every side, the terrain Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary is a breathtaking experience.

There are million other things to experience, but for the time being let's enjoy the infectious Magh Bihu celebrations. Guwahati no doubt is a great motivating city



Jayanthy Subramaniam

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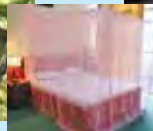
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