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Was the Papal Trip to Iraq Absolutely Necessary?

by Don Aguiar

In Pope Francis' first papal visit to Iraq, it's important to note that violence against Christians in the troubled country had started years earlier – shortly after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003. The insecurity that followed the power vacuum enabled extremist elements to form deadly groups – such as al-Qaida in Iraq – to target those that the Iraqi dictator, who had ruled as a secular leader, had been protecting.

Since 2003, Iraq has been in a state of insecurity that allows terrorist and insurgent groups, tribes and militia to express their intolerance and hatred towards religious and ethnic "others". **When the Islamic State took control of Mosul in the summer of 2014 and began its atrocities against civilians, the ground was already very fertile for the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria to issue a decree that all Christians must either leave their homes, or be killed. Mass exodus followed, leaving Mosul almost without Christians, whose land and property fell into IS hands.**

The choice was between genocide and ethnic cleansing. The vast majority chose the latter, and by October 2014 an estimated 1.8 million Christians and Yazidis had fled their homes according to the UN Human Rights Office and the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq. Branding others as "apostates", religious extremists have justified attacks such as abductions and executions against "others" who do not conform to its takfiri doctrine sanctioning violence against non-believers, as well as the destruction of places of religious significance.

Iraq in 2021 is a state still ruled by the fear of daily attacks by militia, terrorists and insurgents. Small numbers of individuals, operating in cells

and groups, have consistently and deliberately targeted the unarmed population to spread fear and death. Insurgents have conducted attacks using guerrilla tactics designed to inflict ever-increasing losses on the government. Iraq also continues to witness a violent struggle, among state and non-state actors, for legitimacy and influence.

At present in Iraq, there are growing fears among Christians that the string of ancient Christian towns across northern Iraq are losing their traditional Christian character and that their faith is in danger of disappearing from the Muslim-majority country. A steady exodus of Christians that began after the U.S. invasion in 2003 has accelerated since the Islamic State was driven out of Iraq in 2017.

In these circumstances one can appreciate how badly Pope Francis wanted to be able to visit Iraq, something that's been impossible for all popes since John Paul II had to cancel his planned trip in 1999. But was the trip absolutely necessary right now? What is the urgency?

Did Pope Francis have to get this done and over with before March 13, the eighth anniversary of his election as Bishop of Rome? Is that what this is about?

Pope Francis, in his historic visit to Iraq, has sought to lend support to Christians in the majority-Shia country, urged Iraqi leaders to protect all minority rights and sent a message that he himself is back on the global stage after a year cooped up behind the Vatican walls because of the pandemic.

"This blessed place brings us back to our origins," Pope Francis said, surrounded by Christians, Muslims and members of Iraq's many minorities. "We seem to have returned home." He called for

(Contd.. on p. 3)

Khela Hobe - Big Bengal Bout

For better prospects in the BJP, many TMC MLAs and other leaders have forsaken Mamata Didi [the one woman army] but how many of them will be rewarded [or will remain dangling like Jyotiraditya Scindia], will be nice to watch. The biggest loss was that of Suwendu Adhikari – her one time trusted and very capable aide who has boasted of his strong Nandigram bond. He has gone on record to say he will win handsomely by a margin of not less than 50,000 votes or will quit politics. The BJP was naturally elated and felt that Didi will meekly allow her one time aide, a walkover. The party forgot that she is a street fighter who had taken on the might of the Communists.

Mamata Banerji has taken the fight not only to the BJP doorstep but has actually dared all three biggies – PM, HM and her former aide. By announcing that she will herself fight from Nandigram [and no where else] even before the BJP could make up its mind, she has caught the saffron party unawares. Now they are saying that she has abandoned her former constituency for fear of losing it and taken shelter in Nandigram. By saying so, the BJP is admitting that she will win in Nandigram. The BJP is actually stunned because they realize she must be more than confident to take on Adhikari backed by the might of the BJP and money power. They are not yet saying that Narendra Modi, Amit Shah and Mr Nadda will campaign in Nandigram. She has dared Narendra Modi for a one-to-one debate. Remember, in the past, BJP had dared Rahul Gandhi likewise and when he did not take up the challenge they said he was scared. If the PM does not accept Didi's challenge now, will it mean he is scared? BJP needs to answer.

Like the Hyderabad Municipal election, the BJP will place its entire resources at the disposal of the Bengal BJP to ensure that there is a regime change in Bengal. With the Congress and the Communists also in the fray, the BJP fancies its chances even more. The party, in a carefully crafted strategy, has played the Hindutva card to its advantage. Mamata walking out from the dais just because some people in the crowd shouted 'Jai Shri Ram' has given the BJP a handle on her appeasement politics.

VIEWS on NEWS

The incident in which Mamata was said to have been injured appears to be overblown. That she is injured is not disputed but the cause is. Perhaps she went overboard by saying BJP goons pushed her while the truth may lie elsewhere. By saying it was a staged drama; the BJP has shown itself in poor light. It would have been more appropriate if the PM or the HM had to tweet and wished her a speedy recovery. That would have enhanced the stature of these two leaders. Leader after leader called the whole episode a drama. Even the Congress joined the chorus while the official party spokesperson preferred to wait for the investigation. As usual there is confusion in the Congress even over this issue.

Undoubtedly, the election in Nandigram has acquired more interest than the whole of Bengal. The TMC loss in Bengal will first decide the fate of the go-to-man Prashant Kumar who is drawing up a strategy for the TMC. He has decided to quit if BJP crosses 100. On the other hand, even if TMC wins with a majority and loses the Nandigram seat, it will be a huge set-back for Mamata. Now if Suwendu Adhikari loses this election in Nandigram, his political value to the BJP will diminish significantly. Viewed from an independent perspective, Nandigram will be a make or break election for Didi and Suwendu. On the other hand, her win in Nandigram plus majority in assembly, can make her a highly potential opposition PM candidate for the 2024 general elections. No wonder of late, Mamata is being aggressively targeted by the top BJP leaders more than Rahul Gandhi. Now you know why.

India's amazing Test wins

Wrapping the India-England Test series 3-1 within three days, India entered the coveted WTC final to meet the Kiwis for the cup. The manner in which this test was won by an innings and 25 runs shows the total dominance of the Indian team over their rivals who were outplayed in all the departments of the game. This victory comes soon after a convincing win in the second test which was wrapped up within two and half days. To that extent the rival Captain's observation that the spectators



by Marshall Sequeira

were robbed of the full five days play can be seen more as a diversion of attention from the total rout. This would have been true if the home team had to lose. When the home team comes out triumphant, people do not mind if the game is over in two or three days. One should not forget that the visitors had won the first test. The Englishmen, barring a few, looked like members of their A team. Even those would have faced the spin attack better. They simply surrendered, innings after innings, without any resistance or application to remain at the crease. Their bowling was better but the frequent chopping and changing the team composition may have significantly contributed to their downfall. The T-20 is evenly poised.

This test series has shown how you can rise from the ashes. Remember this was the same team which was all out for 36 in Australia and after that, like a wounded tiger, it overpowered the Aussies and then did likewise with the Englishmen. Notably, Axar Patel with 27 wickets in his maiden test series, stands out. Others like Washington Sunder, Rishabh Pant and Siraj performed exceedingly well. The toast of the series was Ashwin with 32 wickets. Virat Kohli fell far short of expectations. Series win saved him from intense scrutiny by his detractors. Remember matches used to end up in dull draws and viewers used to only patronize ODIs and T-20 games. Today things are different with most players being exposed to the IPL. By the way, there was controversy over naming the erstwhile Motera stadium after Narendra Modi – a serving Prime Minister. Normally one end of the wicket is always referred to as the Pavilion end. This time around, one was 'Reliance end' while the other was 'Adani end'. They should have named one end as 'Suit' and the other 'Boot'. Surprisingly Rahul Gandhi did not tweet on this.

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(Contd.. from p. 1)

peace and love, and in doing so realized a dream harboured by John Paul II, who planned to visit Iraq himself, before tensions forced him to cancel more than 20 years ago.

Pope Francis in his first official speech, addressing Iraqi President Barham Salih, other government leaders and diplomats serving in Iraq at the Presidential Palace, called for solidarity and the need to rebuild well, so that all can enjoy a dignified life. "May there be an end to acts of violence and extremism, factions and intolerance! May room be made for all those citizens who seek to cooperate in building up this country through dialogue and through frank, sincere and constructive discussion." **He tried to make the most of the moment, and said that "the greatest blasphemy" was the act of "hating our brothers and sisters."** "Hostility, extremism and violence are not born of a religious heart: They are betrayals of religion". "We believers cannot be silent when terrorism abuses religion." He also spoke of injustice and the dispossessed. "All too many people lack food, medicine, education, rights and dignity," and denounced the trend to manipulate religion to suit the nefarious ethos of terrorism. "Our gathering here today shows that terrorism and death never have the last word."

None of Pope Francis's journeys have taken him as close to the site of the roots of monotheistic religions as the windswept plain in southern Iraq with the remains of a 4,000-year-old temple dedicated to a moon god. It was in Ur that the faithful believe God revealed himself to the Prophet Abraham, known since as the father of monotheistic religions.

It was here, last Saturday 6 March, that pope Francis made a pilgrimage in the footsteps of Abraham and spoke within sight of the ziggurat there, a stepped pyramid topped by a temple — the remains of the neo-Sumerian capital where tradition has it that Abraham was born. "Here where Abraham our father lived, we seem to have returned home," and that God, who had promised a 100-year-old Abraham that he would have children, told the prophet to look up to the sky and count the stars. "In those stars he saw the promise of his descendants — he saw us," surrounded by Muslim and Christian leaders and representatives of ancient religious minorities, the pope said.

Pope Francis visited the cities of Erbil, Mosul and Qaraqosh, where he renewed his call for fraternity, hope and peace. He then travelled to Mosul, where, in the midst of the devastation wrought by ISIS, he prayed for peace for victims of the war in Iraq and throughout the Middle East. At the Church of the Immaculate Conception,

in the northern Iraqi town of Qaraqosh, the Pope met with members of the local Christian population, urging them to rebuild their communities based on forgiveness and fraternity. **He said in his homily, "Today I can see at first hand that the Church in Iraq is alive, and that Christ is alive and at work in this, His holy and faithful people."**

Since, everything went well and everyone returned to Rome safely, this 2021 papal visit to Iraq will be racked up as a monumental success. And, hopefully, that will open the door for greater international assistance, friendship and confidence for that badly battered country and its people.

Over the course of three days, the pope travelled across the country as no foreign head of state has done for years. He went to several different towns and cities in full view of all. The pope's visit is a show of solidarity with the country's remaining Christians, whose numbers have shrunk to less than one-third of the 1.5 million who lived there in Saddam Hussein's time.

One thing is for sure, this pope is showing the world what it means to put aside fear and take a risk on building peace and friendship. And, in these circumstances, it looked like a huge risk.

Women's History Month!

by DR. HAZEL COLASO

During the month of March, we give extra attention to the amazing accomplishments of strong and determined women! We have just celebrated International Women's Day on 08 March 2021. But since 1987, the United States proposed and was adopted by the United Nations, that March should be designated as Women's History Month! - Every woman has a story to share; and what a better way to remember this month, for the Blessed Virgin Mary also has an incredible event to relate – The Annunciation – the Noble Gift of her Son Jesus (Luke 1:26-38).

History and Theme for 2021:

Women's History Month grew out of a weeklong celebration of women's contributions to culture, history and society; originally organized by Schools in California in 1978. Presentations were given, and hundreds of girls participated in a "Real Woman" essay contest! Parades were also held.

The theme for 2021 is a continuation of 2020's "Valiant Women of the Vote: Refusing to Be Silenced!" This theme recognizes the 'Battle for Women's Suffrage' gained in 1920 through the 19th-amendment. So now we can proudly celebrate women in sport, arts, science, politics, law, finance, economics, and other fields!

NAWSA and World Wars!

The National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), with 2 million members joined forces with women Doctors! At its December 1917 meeting, NAWSA pledged \$175,000 to sponsor an all-female team of Physicians, nurses, and support personnel to build Staff and Hospitals in occupied France – The Women's Oversea Hospital Units!-78 women Doctors, and their skilled assistants risked their lives under NAWSA's suffragist banner in World War I.

The Soviet Union especially mobilized its women – Upward of 800,000 would enlist in the Red Army, more than half serving in front-line units. The most dreaded were the female pilots, the 588th-Night Bomber Regiment, which the Nazi's called the Nachthexen or Night Witches! They flew more than 30,000 missions and dropped more than 23,000 tons of bombs; 30 of them were killed, and 24 received the Hero of the Soviet Union Medal, the nation's highest award for valor, in what was referred to as the Great Patriotic War! The Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS), units of anti-aircraft women popularly known as Ack-Ack-Girls served with their male counterparts. By the war's end, more than 74,000 British women were serving; 399 were killed or wounded in combat. Also, tens of thousands of American women courageously served as nurses, with more than 1,600 earning medals and citations-all in the spirit of the legendary Florence Nightingale! Virginia Hall, the 'Limping Lady' organized sabotage and rescue operations in occupied Normandy, paving the way for the Allied invasion – D-Day!

US Patent report 2020!

According to the above report, more women are filling for patents. Below are 'seven wonder women' who have made our lives easier and safer through ...

*Disposable Coffee Filters – Melitta Bentz launched a line of drip-coffee makers and filters in 1909. Her company now produces nearly 50 million coffee filters daily.

*Modern Dental Fillings – Dr. Sumita Mitra began exploring nanoparticles and their potential use in Dentistry. Her research led to the development of Filtek, a much stronger tooth-like composite filling. As a tribute, she was inducted into the National Invention Hall of Fame in 2018.

*Non-Reflective Glass – Katharine Blodgett in 1918 specialized in mono-

molecular coatings which led her to create super-thin glass coatings that prevented glare and reflection. Engineers use this technology on periscopes and airplane spy cameras. Later, this knowhow became a popular coating for microscopes, glasses, projectors and more.

*User-Friendly Diabetes Testing – Helen Free created one of the first urine-based medical tests in 1956 – Clinistix, a home test for diabetics to monitor excess sugar their urine.

*Dishwashers – Josephine Cochrane patented the first mechanical dishwasher in 1886, marketing it to Hotels, Restaurants and Hospitals – now purchased by Howard Manufacturing Company.

*Home Security Systems – Marie van Brown's invention is utilized by Doctors and Businesses to prevent or to stop robberies. A number of Security System creators recognized her device as the grandmother of their security tools!

*Modern Medical Syringes – Letitia Geer revised the syringe's design which could be operated with one hand! The US Patent Office accepted Letitia's unique application, for which she was awarded a patent in 1899.

Conceptual Conclusion – In the celebration of Women's History Month, there are at least four ways to intellectualize their great historical adventure! *Study women who have made history, created inventions, or spread exclusive ideas! *Learn about the important roles that females have played in society! *Research the current issues girls especially face in the modern world! *Interview significant women in your life to learn their stories!

As Scripture declares: "Strength and dignity are her clothing; and she laughs at the time to come! She looks well towards her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed!" (Proverbs 31:25-28).



Step-motherly treatment for EPS pensioners continues

As of now, there appears to be no immediate relief for lakhs of pensioners under the Employees Pension

Scheme 1995 (EPS- 95) after Union Labour minister categorically stated in the Rajya sabha, that any increase in the minimum pension of Rs 1000/ p.m. of pensioners under EPS -95 will amount to compromising on the viability of the scheme and putting an additional burden on the exchequer. It is pertinent to note that the minimum pension of Rs 1000/p.m.came

into force only from Septembet 2014. Prior to that, lakhs of pensioners were receiving a measly pension of around Rs 300/ p.m. The central govt it seems has all the money in the world to pay the 6th and 7th Pay commission recommendations, as well as the increase in dearness allowance from time to time to state and Central govt pensioners, except to those under the EPS-95 scheme. Why has nothing been done over the past 25 years to work out a viable scheme to end this step-motherly treatment? And how does the govt expect pensioners under EPS- 95 to survive on a measly Rs 1000/ p.m. when the cost of living has hit the ceiling and taxes are being relentlessly imposed on the common man.

—A. F. Nazareth,
Alto Porvorim, Goa

Interaction programme by Maharashtra Christian United Forum



Mumbai, March 12: The meeting & Interaction programme of Christian leaders of all denominations was convened by Smt. Janet D'souza convenor of Maharashtra Christian United Forum at Islam Gymkhana Mumbai with the Newly appointed President of Mumbai Congress Shri Bhai Jagtap, Shri Nasim Khan Former Minority Affairs Minister and Working President of Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee and Shri Charan Singh Sapra Working President of Mumbai Congress.

The forum consisted of Rev. Fr. Simon Lopes Jt. Secretary of Archdiocesan Board of Education, Shri Albert D'souza Advisor to the Higher Education Christian Colleges and Chairman Model Co-op. Bank Ltd., Paster David Tribhuvan of New life Group, Shri Vincent Mathias Founder Chairman

Christian Chambers of Commerce & Industry, Raphael D'souza President of Bombay Catholic Sabha and various heads of Churches and N.G.O's working for Christian in the city of Mumbai.

Various Issues and Concerns were raised by the Community like renewal of lease of Institution implementation schemes of the government for minority action in case of Persecution of religious places & people, allotment of Burial places, Representation of Christian in government as well as party positions etc.

Mr. Bhai Jagtap assured the Forum of resolving the issues put up by them taking delegation in the concerned ministers and also assured Representation to the Christian Community.
(By Ronida, Mumbai)

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Palm Sunday, Prelude To His Passion

Sixth Sunday in Lent



Palm Sunday begins the celebration which opens the Church's liturgy for Holy Week.

The Christian Faith is comfortably unchanging. The nature of salvation and the history of Christ's Passion to the Resurrection is the basic tenet of the faith. Jesus, is the atoning lamb of God. The Acclamation this Sunday says that God had exalted His Son and bestowed on him a name above all names. (Phil. 2:9)

"At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth." (Phil. 2:10) Palm Sunday is the time to prepare: a prelude to his Passion, Death and Resurrection.

Jesus prepares his messianic entrance into the city of Jerusalem, the city of "his father David" (Lk. 1:32). The crowd followed him through the heat and dust of the noon day sun, and when they reached Bethphage close to the Mount of Olives, the Lord Jesus stopped. "It was two days before Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread" (Mk. 14:1)

On the first day of Unleavened Bread when the Passover lamb is sacrificed the disciples of Jesus asked him, "Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?" (Mk. 14:12)

Jesus took aside two of his disciples and instructed them: "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the householder. "The Teacher says, where is my guest room where I am to eat the Passover with my disciples?" (Mk. 14:13-15). This

was done and completed according to the wish of the Master.

Two other disciples were sent to a village opposite the Mount of Olives. "You will find an ass tied, and a colt with her, untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'the Lord has need of them', and he will send them immediately." (Mat. 21:1-3).

Jesus was calmly preparing his entry into Jerusalem. He was going to manifest the coming of the kingdom "by the Passover of his Death and Resurrection" (CCC.560). At this point it would be a welcome insight to recall the words of the late Pope John Paul II: "The whole Christ's life was a continual teaching: his silences, his miracles, his gestures, his prayers, his love for people, his special affection for the little and the poor, his acceptance of the total sacrifice on the Cross for the redemption of the world and the fulfillment of Revelation. (John Paul II, CT9).



BY MELVYN BROWN

Jesus sat in deep thought in the house of Simon at Bethany. The Christ of faith, from Jewish prophet to Christian savior, was now at the peak of his mission to inaugurate the kingdom of God on earth. Jesus of Nazareth

would have to endure all the pain and suffering that he was able to bear. A woman stepped into the room where Jesus sat at the table. In her hand she brought "a jar of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the jar and poured it over his head" (Mk 14:3).

Many of those present in the room were not too pleased at the woman's action. "Why was the ointment thus

wasted? For this ointment might have been sold for more than three hundred denari, and given to the poor". (Mk. 14:4) On hearing this Jesus turned to them and said, "...she has done a beautiful thing to me.... For you always have the poor with you... but will not always have me". (Mk. 14:7)

This woman was special to the prelude of Christ's Passion. And Jesus added, "She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burying". (Mk. 14:8) Then Jesus went on to say, "And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her". (Mk. 14:9).

In the meantime the crowds outside waited to witness and join in the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. They brought fresh green palms, and their voices were loud in praise of the Lord our God. "...they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord". (Jn.13:12-13).

Father Aniceto Nazareth – A Gem like no other!

■ nnumerable are the people who will grieve the passing of Father Aniceto Nazareth into eternity. Priests, nuns and lay folk alike will miss the man who made music flow like a paen to the Lord and like a shower of soothing comfort on troubled souls!

Long innings...

From Organist at the 38th International Eucharistic Congress at the Oval in 1964 to Director of the Papal Choir for the Apostolic Visit of Saint John Paul II to Bombay in 1986, Aniceto could be said to have come a long way! Father Aniceto made music come alive not merely by his compositions and conducting but by giving choristers a kind of a grounding in the nuances of sacred music that emanate from understanding what the Liturgy was all about.

Not one to hog the limelight, Aniceto studiously trained laymen and women to conduct choirs as was evident from the fact that we had no less than 4 lay persons conducting the huge 5-voice choir that lead a massive congregation in active participation in the Pontifical Mass at Shivaji Park with such verve that, after the dust had settled on the Papal Visit, on the request of a large of choristers, he decided to form what came to be known as the PROCLAIMERS choir which went about demonstrating across the archdiocese how soulful choral singing could lead the congregation to benefit tremendously from active, wholehearted participation in the celebration of the very source and summit of all Christian worship, viz, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Along the way he so encouraged more layfolk to take to conducting, that I myself had the joy and privilege of conducting the Proclaimers in singing BLESSED ARE



YOU LORD, HOLY, HOLY HOLY and YOU ARE A CHOSEN GENERATION in several parishes.

Creativity in Liturgy & music!

Father Aniceto was an organist par excellence! Any wonder then that he conducted Keyboard workshops that went on to help a number of youngsters to learn to play the Organ at a measly fraction of what one would pay professional trainers. As a composer he was without peer in that he showed us how to take the classics and adapt them to church music needs – as he did with Handel's Hallelujah for the Gospel acclamation!

The passionate love of Father Aniceto for music was inseparable from his love for the Church's Liturgy. Deeply desirous of infusing all and sundry with that love, he went on to initiate the BASIC COURSE IN LITURGY that made the Liturgy of the Mass come through as so meaningful as to instil in those

of us who participated in that course a lifelong love for the beauty and nuances of the Mass. As one of the 10 to have graduated with Honours from the course, I had the joyful privilege of being one of the four to speak at the graduation function presided over by Bishop Bosco Penha, my topic being "Dabar" – the 'good word'!

As grateful hearts made graceful music...

The function held at the Seminary three years ago to felicitate him on his 80th birthday was an amazing experience, witnessing not merely lay-folk but priests and bishops putting in their best into the choral music festival that the evening turned out to be! It was obvious that Father Aniceto Nazareth had had a tremendous impact on a cross-section of Catholics, an impact that wouldn't be forgotten in a hurry. Clearly, his departure from our midst leaves a void difficult to fill – for the simple reason that they don't make liturgists and musicians like him anymore!

Until we meet again!

Au revoir Father Aniceto! As you ascend the stairs to your rightful place in the presence of the Lord, there to rest in peace, may the angels go with you, singing with you as you go to take the place where Heavenly music waits for the golden Midas touch that the Lord himself has blessed your fingers with! Indeed! Though our hearts ache at your going, we rejoice that He, who you lead so many to make music to, has called you out of darkness into his marvellous light!! And when you are finally in His presence, remember before him us whose lives you've so lovingly touched by showing us the reality of His presence in Time! Amen! And until we join you in your Heavenly chorus.... Hallelujah!!



by Ladislaus L
D'Souza

The Teacher & The Peon

(Concluding part of the Trilogy “Love’s Dark Secrets” & “Love Jihad- Catholic Style”)

*Tubal Cain was a man of might
In the days when the earth was
young.*

*Tubal Cain faded into the twilight
By the queen bee he was stung!*

The first two lines of the verse are from a poem that I recall from childhood. The second two lines are my own creation in adulthood. Who was Tubal Cain anyway?

If we take the Genesis account of creation literally, then he is the seventh generation offspring of Adam and Eve, the son of Lamech and Zillah. He is described as “the ancestor of all who work copper and iron” (Gen 4:22). He is therefore believed to be the first iron smith or metallurgist, a profession that required immense physical strength.

Why then has Tubal Cain faded into the twilight, and who is the queen bee that stung him? As the human race evolved into a patriarchal society, it was characterized by male physical strength – that of the iron smith, the warrior and the hunter. Where are they today? Brawn has been replaced by brain. One does not require physical strength to be a metallurgist. Nor to press a button, to release a missile or a weapon of mass destruction. Not even for meat. You can pick it off the shelf in a supermarket or a butcher’s shop. The physical strength of Tubal Cain has become redundant. He has faded into the twilight.

What is the role of the queen bee - the feminine? Men are inclined to work in short bursts of intense energy. After that they need to rest or take a break for a cigarette. This attitude is even expressed in male sexuality. In contrast the queen bee, the female psyche, is more disposed to diffused and sustained energy, again also characterized in their sexuality. The modern

world is more attuned to diffused and sustained energy, be it the operation of a computer or a factory assembly line. The man soon gets bored as he seeks novelty, but a woman can continue pursuing the same monotonous action without ennui.

This is one of the reasons that many employers prefer women. They tend to be more loyal and persevering, not seeking change and novelty the way men do. The queen bee has triumphed over Tubal Cain, reducing him to a mere drone.



by chhotebhai *

As a natural consequence women today are in many areas better employed than men. Going by the results of public exams, they are also doing better in education. The bottom line is that, given equal opportunities in both education and employment, the feminine is the stronger sex. Verily, Tubal Cain has faded away.

These changed equations have had a huge impact on the marriage market, and get accentuated further in small communities, like the Catholic Community in India. In my previous article I had referred to the book on Mixed Marriages (MMs) in the Agra Ecclesiastical region by Rev Dr. Maxim D’sa. He had identified 28 factors that result in MMs. I will dwell on just two – education and employment.

My first experience of Gender Disparity (GD) in the Catholic community is when I was working in then Bombay in 1971-72. I was then living in Vakola, Santacruz (E) that had many slums. I was active in the Legion of Mary and made weekly visits to those living in the slums. I was surprised to find many families with house-husbands. The women were away in the Gulf region, mostly working as housemaids,

and sending money home. How much of that money was spent on the home or on booze was a moot question. The woman had become the provider and the man the dependant.

A few years later I became the Founder Secretary of the U.P. Regional Youth & Vocations Bureau. One of my first observations again was of GD. The girls were far better educated and gainfully employed than the boys. There were reasons for this, other than what is applicable across modern society. The girls studied in convent schools/hostels, where they got personalized attention from the sisters. In contrast in parish schools/mission hostels, there was usually just one priest and possibly a seminarian doing regency, to minister to them. It was never the same. So girls easily outperformed the boys of the miniscule community.

Then came employment. At that time church-run institutions were the major employers of youth. Most Catholic institutions stopped at Class 12. At that point a girl could get admission for teacher’s or nurse’s training and get gainfully and respectfully employed; both in church run institutions and outside. What of the boy who had passed Class 12? At most he could get a job as a peon or a driver, unless he was lucky enough to go to a technical institute run by the Salesians.

The sum total was that the girl was a teacher at a desk in a classroom, while her brother was employed in the same institution sitting on a stool outside the Principal’s office. A further consequence was that the girl had a higher emotional quotient than the boy. I know times have changed and both job and educational opportunities have increased. Yet the GD is still very marked. This is evident again in parish choirs and youth groups. The girls vastly outnumber the boys.

(Contd.. on p. 9)

This obviously has a disastrous effect on the marriage scenario, resulting in 50% MMs in the community, as we have seen earlier. It also results in frustration and resentment among the boys, in turn leading to anti-social tendencies. A vicious circle. Strange though it may seem and maybe possibly politically incorrect; but my experience says that the church in its pastoral planning, has to make a conscious effort to win back its young men. It must be a pastoral priority.

This GD obviously has a huge impact on choosing a life partner, and the resultant high percentage of MMs. There is another factor that has emerged in modern times. It is what we call the Office Romance. People working together get attracted to each other and choose to marry, regardless of religion or other factors. This has its own inherent dangers. Why?

Because at the workplace one is performing a role, not being one's self. One cannot fart or burp at work, let one's hair down or put one's legs up. The worker is role playing; hence the true self is not revealed. A worker who is objectively calm with his/her colleagues at work, may be subjectively short tempered or insensitive at home. This is human nature. So in office romances, the dark side of one's personality is not revealed. This again is reflected in social media profiling, where one puts one's best foot forward. Making life choices based purely on office romances or social medial profiles could be fraught with danger.

Youth animators, family counsellors, parents and pastors need to understand these changed equations to help young people make the correct choice in life. For Tubal Cain has faded into the night, as have knights in shining armour. And teachers and peons are a horrible mismatch.

•The writer began his community service through the Legion of Mary in 1969.

This Saint goes Marching in...!

As the third of four children, Jose Luis Sanchez del Rio was born on March 28, 1913 in Sahuayo, Michoacan, Mexico. His family affectionately called him Joselito. He attended school in his home town and later in Guadalajara, Jalisco. He was remarked as a "normal, healthy kid, with a joyful character."



José prayed the Rosary daily. He wrote a letter to his mother, saying that he was ready to fulfill the will of God to whom he dedicated himself. His father attempted to raise a ransom to save him, but was not able to appease the government in time thus failing to secure the release of his son.

The history of the Catholic faith in Mexico dates back from the period of the Spanish conquest in 1519 and has continued right into the 21st century. The Mexicans inherited the Faith and the Spanish language. All went well until there was a Civil war that lasted from 1926 -29 when the government became Anti- Church. They eliminated church privileges and seized church properties throughout the country. President Plutarco Elias Calles, in 1924, focused on the Roman Catholic Church, he closed religious schools and convents, and exiled or executed priests. This was painful for the Christians or Cristeros. The Cristeros were rebels in Mexico

The wicked officials wanted to make an example of Joselito for others. People recalled the gruesome events that took place on the evening of 10 February 1928: "Consequently they cut the bottom of his feet and obliged him to walk around the town toward the cemetery. They also cut him with a machete (sword) until he was bleeding from several wounds. He cried and moaned with pain, but did not give in. At times they stopped him and said, 'If you shout, "Death to Christ the King", we will spare your life'. José would only shout, 'I will never give in...' 'Viva Cristo Rey!' meaning Long Live Christ the King.

and little Joselito was one of them. He believed in Jesus and strongly wanted to support his faith. The Government officials captured Jose and ordered him to renounce his faith in Christ, under threat of death. He refused to do that. To frighten him and break his resolve, he was forced to watch the hanging of another Cristero that they captured, but instead José encouraged the man, saying that they would soon meet again in Heaven after death.



by:
Dr Jeanette Pinto

Jose Luis Sanchez del Rio aged 14, is the newest recently canonized Mexican saint, and the Patron of persecuted Christians- children adolescents. He is a powerful example of youth, bravery and faith. He was tortured and put to death by government officials because he refused to renounce his Catholic faith. The Government wanted to stamp out and crush religious freedom in Mexico. Truly Jose Luiz Sanchez, a light that shines in the darkness, goes marching in to Heaven.

Then they threw him in prison. Here

Making Electronic Vehicle - A Dream Come True

Though a shift to EVs in the near future has been planned, questions on the transition from fuel to electric power as well as impact on the automobile sector and the consumers are yet to be answered in affirmative. At present, the Central government has the power to fix the basic prices of fossil fuels. What will be the situation when the responsibility for last-mile delivery of energy to vehicles falls on the States? There is no guarantee that they will be able to cope with the logistical implications of such a shift.

The Government of NCT of Delhi announced the Delhi Electric Vehicle Policy on August 7, 2020, with a vision to promote adoption of electric vehicles in the city and to make Delhi, the EV Capital of India. The Policy aims to achieve the overarching objective to improve Delhi's air quality and create an entire supply-chain ecosystem for this new segment of vehicles. In order to significantly benefit Delhi's air quality, the policy intends to deploy 25% of all new vehicles to be battery-operated vehicles by 2024. India's capital is already suffering because of pollution problems and this move could reduce the level of pollution and helps out easy breathing for the people of Delhi. It is time we should plan out such an initiative in other metro cities as well and do a world of good for making it a dream come true from the environmental point of view. The go green initiative and the Swachh Bharat initiatives are taking the country to the next level and Electric vehicles will be a right step in the right direction.



C.K. Subramaniam

Future India will ride in electric vehicles (EVs) if one goes by the pronouncements of the country's policymakers. The air will be cleaner. The noise level as well as the oil import bills will be down. And, if everything goes according to the Central government's reported plan, India will be a manufac-



turing hub for EVs, just as China is of many industrial products now. But how near that future seems is an important question. Charging the battery can pose the most serious difficulty in the daily use of an electric car. Any kind of fast charging is unlikely to make an inter-city ride in India trouble-free. Any difficulty in this regard caused by an EV-related problem will be seen as an attack by the government on mobility, which can invite a backlash. EVs, as mentioned earlier, are an object of curiosity and will have to wait for quite some time to gain wide acceptance. The right thing to do is to first familiarise Indians with electric two-wheelers, especially scooters, as China did, and then go in for small cars before thinking of bigger vehicles. An ideal substitute for diesel and petrol in this transition stage, and even in the longer run, is compressed natural gas. Vehicles running on CNG are low on carbon emission and running cost. Use of hybrid technology also deserves encouragement.

It is unclear whether the planners

have given serious thought to the implications of the switch from fossil fuels to electricity. Total electrification of the country is yet to be achieved, and even in electrified areas, the quality of power supply is not up to the mark. What will be the annual power requirement if millions of vehicles start running on electricity? And will all the additional power be generated from renewable sources? There is little sense in reducing carbon emission from vehicles by using electricity generated from polluting sources.

An important and contentious issue that has to be discussed in this context is the revenue side of fuel sale. The Central and State governments' budgets depend to a large extent on the income from the taxes on petrol and diesel. Will any State be willing to forgo such income in an EV scenario? The revenue earned from taxes on petrol and diesel by the government of Kerala as early as 2016-17 was close to Rs. 7,000 crore. The annual income of all States put together from fossil fuel sales is above Rs. 1.9 lakh crore. The loss of this income can upset the States' budgets.

The first EV that appeared on Indian roads was a compact car. It offered meagre comforts, but was priced high. Naturally, public response to the vehicle was not positive. That fear, or suspicion, of the unknown still remains. Price and costs of servicing are very important issues from the consumer's point of view. Electric vehicles do not require servicing or change of parts as frequently as diesel and petrol cars. So how will the manufacturers keep the dealers, who currently earn a substantial part of their income from the servicing of vehicles and the sale of spare parts, happy? And they too, would not like to lose the income from the sale of spare parts. Obviously, they will price EVs high and allow the dealers to take a cut.

(Contd.. on p. 13)

Condemned for his Christian activism

(Bl. Marcel Callo)

By Fr F. M. Britto

“Do you like to become a priest?” His mother once asked young Marcel Callo. “No. I don’t feel called to the priesthood. I think I can do more good by remaining in the world.” That’s what he did.

In a farmer’s family Marcel Callo was born on Dec 6, 1921 as the second of nine children to Marcel Callo and Felicita Maria Giuseppina. Leaving the meagre acres of land in Brittany, his father got employed in a chemical factory in Rennes city, France. Since his elder brother went to become a priest, Marcel Callo helped in household chores and took care of his younger siblings. While in the school, he became an altar server and a Scout. From childhood, he was a leader, a perfectionist, enjoyed games and fun.

To help out his family, the 12 years old Callo worked as an apprentice in a printing store; but he did not like the vulgar jokes of his senior fellow workers. And they ridiculed him as a “Jesus freak”. His pious mother taught him a short prayer of consecration to the Blessed Mother. He joined his parish’s youth movement, Eucharistic Crusade, whose motto was, “Pray, receive Holy Communion, offer yourself up and be an apostle.” The 14 years old boy then joined the Young Christian Workers, who were called “Jocists” (JOC). Since the work was apostolic, he liked it. His natural leadership qualities began to shine. Like a normal youth, Callo enjoyed organising sports, trips, movies and dance parties at the JOC centre.

Here he met Marguerite Derniaux. Falling in love with her, the 20 years old Callo got engaged to her. He confided to his friend, “My love is pure and noble. I wanted to find real love. I had to perfect my heart before I could offer it to the one whom Christ has chosen for me.” And they enacted a strict spiritual life between them by attending



the daily Mass and praying the same prayers every day.

But their marriage never took place. During the World War II, the Germans invaded France. His city was bombed, killing his sister Maria Maddalena. Callo helped clean the rubble in his city. With his friends he visited regularly the railway station to assist the refugees fleeing from Eastern Europe due to the Nazi invasion. They helped many escape the Nazis by giving them their Red Cross armbands.

The Nazis arrested the 21 years old Callo on March 19, 1943. When he left home, he told his family, “I am leaving, not as a worker, but as a missionary in the service of my companions.” He was taken to Germany and enrolled to serve the war. Though Callo thought of fleeing, he was afraid that those at home would get arrested due to him.

Callo was made to work in a factory that produced firearms which were used against his countrymen. He suffered depression for a few months. Soon he discovered a priest who celebrated Mass indiscreetly in the barracks. Revived by the Eucharist, Callo cared his deported companions. Here he organised the Christian workers. Everything for him began to revolve around Jesus.

He wrote to Marguerite, “One day Christ told me I was not to give into despair; that I should take care of my fellow workers.” To his newly-ordained brother-priest he wrote, “He has marked out the path for me, and now I am walking in it. With Him, you can bear everything.” Once again he became their leader. And he continued to raise his companions’ spirits and urged them to pray with trust. He told his mates, “It is in prayer that we find our strength.” He first looked to God and then he looked outward to show mercy and love to his people.

His religious activities came to be known to the Nazis. They considered these as secret organizations against them. Condemning, “You are too much of a Catholic,” the court banished him to the concentration camp in Austria on Oct 7, 1944. Here Callo was forced daily rigorous labour of 12 hours, seven days a week, with little food or water and was also abused and beaten.

After contracting tuberculosis, fever and dysentery, the 23 years old Callo died on March 19, 1945. He was buried in a mass grave outside the camp at Mauthausen and his remains were never recovered. His companions testified that Callo bore everything patiently.

Pope John Paul II beatified Callo in Vatican on Oct 4, 1987, since he died due to the hatred for the Christian faith. His feast day is the same as that of St. Joseph. On the feast day of St. Joseph he was arrested and exactly two years after he left home, he died and like him he has become a model lay leader. Callo has become the patron of young workers, prisoners and those affected by depression. His excessive Catholicism has become an example to the modern youth.

Remaining true to her one love, Marguerite never married. She died in 1997, ten years after his beatification.

The difference between in-laws and outlaws?
Outlaws are wanted.

Alcohol is a perfect solvent. It dissolves marriages, families and careers.

A fine is a tax for doing wrong.
A tax is a fine for doing well.

Archaeologist: Someone whose career lies in ruins.

There are two kinds of people who don't say much.
Those who are quiet and those who talk a lot.

They say that alcohol kills slowly.
So what? Who's in a hurry?

Alcohol and calculus don't mix.
Never drink and derive.

One nice thing about egoists.
They don't talk about other people.

A man who wants a pretty nurse must be patient.

A man who leaps off a cliff, jumps to a conclusion.

A man running in front of a car gets tired.
And a man running behind a car gets exhausted.



War does not determine who is right.
It determines who is left.

A man who drives like hell is bound to get there.

A lion will not cheat on his wife, but a Tiger wood!

Toilets are a great place to think. No wonder they are called "Sochalayas".

A grandson asks his grandpa one question while on the way back from school.

"What is the difference between 'wife' and 'girlfriend'?"

Grandpa thought for a minute and simplified the explanation like this: "Listen child, wife is like a TV and girlfriend is like a mobile. At home, you watch TV, but when you go out you take your mobile".

— Contributed by: Jubel D'Cruz,
Dombivli, Mumbai

A lawyer, who had a wife and 12 children, needed to move because his rental agreement was terminated by the owner who wanted to reoccupy the home.

But he was having a lot of difficulty finding a new house. when he mentioned that he had 12 children.

No one would rent a home to him because they felt that the children would destroy the place.

He couldn't say he had no children, because he couldn't lie. *(We all know lawyers do not lie)*

So, he sent his wife for a walk to the cemetery with 11 of their kids. He took the remaining one with him to see rental homes with the real estate agent.

He loved one of the homes and the price was right -- the agent asked, "How many children do you have?"

He answered: "Twelve."

The agent asked, "Where are the others?"

The lawyer, with his best courtroom sad look answered "They're in the cemetery with their mother."

MORAL: It's not necessary to lie, one only has to choose the right words

The British PM and the US President are sitting in a bar. A guy walks in and asks the barman, 'Isn't that The British PM and the US President?'

The barman says 'Yep, that's them.' So the guy walks over and says, 'Hello, what are you guys doing?'

The British PM says, 'We're planning world war 3'

The guy says, 'Really? What's going to happen?'

And the US President says, 'Well, we're going to kill 14 million Pakistanis and one bicycle repairman.'

And the guy exclaimed, 'A bicycle repairman?! !'

The British PM turns to US President and says, 'See, I told you no-one would worry about the 14 million Pakistanis!'

(Contd.. from p. 10)

The consumer, on the other hand, would be interested in being fully informed about warranty. Currently, many companies offer eight years' warranty, but there is a clear possibility of this working to the consumer's disadvantage. One has to get the EV serviced by the dealer for eight years (unless the warranty policy states otherwise), obviously paying high rates, if one should continue to get the benefits of warranty. A potential buyer has an array of questions about the product itself. The first, of course, is safety, given the recent trend of heavy spells of rain and flooding. The battery and motor of an EV have to be protected from any contact with water. Will the production quality of all vehicles be good enough to stand the Indian test? The power of a mid-size electric car's battery is about a hundred times that of an MPV driven on fossil fuel, and the battery is normally placed under the floor of the car.

There have also been cases of electric cars exploding or catching fire for no obvious reasons in Canada and the US. The key components of an EV are the battery and the motor. In order to benefit fully from the EV ecosystem, entire batteries should be made in India. The technology to make highly efficient batteries is available in some industrial countries. It is not advisable to depend on imports of batteries, for all of the producing countries are India's potential competitors in the EV sector, unlike in the case of crude oil suppliers. What India needs is advanced technology, either home-made or imported.

As a tourist to Agra, I was surprised to see Electronic autos were plying between the hotel complex to the Taj and back and it was introduced providing protection for Taj from pollution. Electronic Tuk-Tuk Auto in Agra is pressed to service from the environmental point of view. These battery operated rickshaws of Agra are part and parcel the system in UP for taking care of tourism in this part of the country. We should have been working on the answers and not questions on war footing to make our dream project come true.



Ingredients:

- 50 gms soaked fenugreek (methi) seeds
- 250 ml milk
- 250 gms whole wheat flour (gehun ka atta)
- 200 gms ghee
- 200 gms sugar
- 50 gms crushed almonds (badam)
- 1 tbsp powdered edible gum (gaund)
- 1/2 tsp cardamom (elaichi) powder
- A pinch saffron (kesar) strands

Method:

1. Take a pan, dry roast the wheat flour over a slow flame while stirring continuously till it turns golden brown. Keep it aside.
2. Heat the ghee in a pan, add the the fenugreek seeds and roast it over a slow flame while stirring continuously, till it turns golden brown.
3. Add the gum into it and roast till the spluttering stops.
4. Add almonds and roasted wheat flour into it and mix well.
5. Put off the flame and allow it to cool.
6. Add the powdered sugar, cardamom powder and saffron to the roasted mixture and mix well.
7. Divide the mixture into 30 portions and shape each portion into round laddus using your hands.
8. Store in an air-tight container.



An American Paradigm for India!

The 46th President of the United States of America, Joe Biden, who has assumed office on the 20th January in the 21st year of the 21st century, has made a 'hop, step and jump' in good governance, along with his stature of leadership, on the 6th day of March 2021.

The three areas through which he displayed his 'hop, step and jump' are these. One, he 'congratulated the Indian-Americans' at NASA for their outstanding contribution. Two, he has 'appointed persons of Indian origin' to several key positions of his government, too. Three, he had declared his will as the President when he won the elections to 'unify than to divide and thus to restore the soul of America', as well.

In a virtual interaction of video conference with the NASA team, the President complimented profusely for the successful, landing of the six-wheeled rover on Mars on the 18th day of February 2021 and for giving the country a 'dose of confidence', that too, at a time when the nation's reputation as a scientific leader has been tattered by the pandemic of corona virus.

Having been thrilled at the pivotal role played by the Indian-American aerospace engineer Dr Swati Mohan, by being the 'eyes and ears' of the Perseverance rover mission of NASA, Joe Biden was full of praise for the 'incredible honour' and confidence she brought to America, in line with other Americans of Indian origin, his Vice President Kamala Harris, his speech writer Vinay Reddy, and the like.

"One of the reasons why America is 'such an incredible country' is we're such a diverse country. We bring the best out of every single solitary culture in the world here in the United States of America, and we give people an

opportunity to let their dreams run forward," Joe Biden said, affirming the brilliant and sublime culture of 'unity in diversity' the United States of America has been proudly living for centuries.

Secondly, the Biden administration seems to rely on the maxim that 'in America everyone should be given the opportunity to go as far as they can', without being discriminated as citizens on any ground. A major application of this maxim was in the area of appointing to key positions persons of Indian origin as experts in public service, like AmeriCorps, the federal agency for volunteering and service.

While Sonali Nijhawan was named as Director of AmeriCorps State and National, Preston Kulkarni was appointed the new Chief of External Affairs. They are scheduled to support the agenda of the administration in some of the most urgent challenges of the time, like COVID-19, economic recovery, racial equity and climate change. In sum, some 55 persons of Indian origin were entrusted with the prime positions of America, in almost all sections, and it is highly creditable for America as a world leader.

Thirdly, in his victory speech, the then President-elect Joe Biden stated, "I pledge to be a president who seeks not to divide, but to unify", to 'heal America', to 'restore the soul of America' and to 'rebuild the backbone of the nation'. "I am humbled by the trust and confidence you've placed in me," the 77 year old and seasoned democrat told the gathering, affirming his profound sense of humility and conviction.

Inviting the attention of the citizens to the fact that America is under the surveillance of the whole world as a 'beacon for the globe', Biden proceeded to confess that he wished to 'lead not

by the example of our power, but by the power of example'. The power of example that he emphasized America and its new leadership was vouched to be is that of 'unifying and strengthening the nation', by consolidating the diverse possibilities spread over not only within the various cultures of America but even in the entire world.

The threefold pro-Indian measures of the American government, I am sure, are such that every Indian, especially the Indian government and those of the rightist ideology, would be on the top of the world in praise of the Indian origin being recognized elsewhere. In fact, it is a matter of great credit that they got themselves culturally acclimatized to the new ground and excelled overwhelmingly in the interest of the nation they are currently part of. It is natural for anyone to feel elated about the fantastic recognition the fellow citizens who migrated from India to America receive in the country of their new belonging, as well.

Having been mesmerized by the American episode of leadership, I am sure, it is high time we considered how we Indians are habituated to behave towards people of foreign origin of any sort in India. 'Sonia Gandhi' is a very blatant case in point. It is obviously true that she came to India legitimately as the wife of an Indian citizen, who was one-time Prime Minister of India, and as the daughter-in-law of the preceding Indian Prime Minister. She was full of India in almost the entire way she conducted herself. All the same, not only Indians but almost the whole world is a witness to the ridiculous and unashamed sort of arguments that have been rising from Indians, mainly the politicians, as to her Italian and Christian origin.

Besides, the Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Parsi and Bahai traditions are being argued out as of non-Indian

(Contd.. on p. 15)



Fr. Dr. M. D. Thomas

(Contd.. from p. 14)

origin and are discriminated, and even ill-treated, as almost second class citizens, in various ways. The staring and eternal fact is that not only Aryans but even Dravidians and Tribals seem to have migrated to India at different times of the history, as per the latest research. That would amount to state that India is a land of non-Indians. When the relatively later come group begins to claim to be the original inhabitants of the land and to downgrade others, the irony of the fact is definitely at its culmination, manifestly so.

Discrimination and division have been very patently part of the mainstream tradition of this land, unfortunately so. Of late, India seems to be becoming highly notorious for discriminative and divisive policies and practices, in diverse disguises. Considerations of high-low, right-left, right-wrong, dark-fair, this caste-that caste, this party-that party, this religion-that religion, this ideology-that ideology, national-anti-national, and the like, are polluting the religious, ethical, spiritual, social, cultural and national air of the country, to the point of defeating all good sense, I think, irredeemably so.

In addition, the exceptionally singular contribution the religious communities of foreign origin and minority communities in India have made to the country, to the point of hugely enriching the nation, though is very apparent, is never acknowledged and is conveniently ignored. Education, medical care, social uplift, gender balance, constitutional values, inter-faith relations, social ethics, etc are outstanding souvenirs of those communities, to the visibility of the entire world. Even the British, Arab, Mughal, Turk, Greece, France, Portugal, Shak, etc have left their indelible character in making the India of today much better than before. To say the least, considering the multifarious developmental gadgets from the west widely spread over the country, it is next to impossible to identify what is purely Indian in India today.

The razor-sharp question that arises right in front of us is when is our country, especially the custodians of the administration, governance and leadership, going to be mature enough to acknowledge and recognize the qualitative contribution of all individuals and communities in India, who have contributed to the making of the 'India of today'? Without living the values enshrined in the Indian mottoes of 'satyamev jayate' and 'vasudhaiv kutumbakam', along with the Constitution of India, I don't think, our country is going to arrive anywhere worth the while. India requires doing a major homework in sharpening the 'ethical fibre' of life. In line with this noble task, the American leadership is a great 'paradigm for India', for 'unifying, restoring and strengthening its soul', by living truly democratic ways, undeniably so. The author is Director of Institute of Harmony and Peace Studies, New Delhi, and is committed to communal harmony, national integration and social wellbeing, as a scholar, speaker, writer and social analyst. He could be contacted at 'mdthomas53@gmail.com'.

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Church in India Clarifies the Ethics of Covid-19 Vaccine

Bangalore 9 March, 2021 (CCBI): The Conference of Catholic Bishops of India published the document "A Catholic Ethical Response to Questions about Covid-19 Vaccines", which clarifies that all vaccinations recognised as clinically safe and effective can be used in good conscience with the certain knowledge that the use of such vaccines does not constitute formal co-operation with the abortion from which the cells used in production of the vaccines derive.

The Church in India urges that every individual must diligently follow current public health preventive guidelines for the Covid-19 pandemic in order to protect oneself and others around them. This is a reflection of our solidarity with others who can be protected by these actions. Stigmatisation of individuals who are ill or unvaccinated is harmful to the individual and society.

"It is important for individuals to access reliable information from valid sources and disseminate only such information, cognisant that false information is detrimental to efforts to control the pandemic. We must search within ourselves and as institutions, for ways in which we can enhance the collective effort to address the pandemic for the benefit of all, especially the poor, vulnerable and marginalised" explained in the document published by the CCBI.

*Fr. Stephen Alathara
Deputy Secretary General, CCBI*

*Conference of
Catholic Bishops of India*

Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - GROOMS

7206. NEW DELHI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor (Born in October 1995), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 43 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. Computer Engineer, working as a Project Manager with Paytm. Contact email : dcosta.ria@gmail.com

7135. U.S.A. : Mangalorean RC Bachelor, (Born in June 1990) Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.E. in Electronics & Telecommunication (EXTC), working as a Senior Software Engineer. Contact email : ryandcunha01@gmail.com

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

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

7207. CHANDIGARH : Anglo Indian Catholic Divorcee, (Born in April 1972), Ht. 6' 1", Wt. 80 kgs, Very Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., MFC, MA English, Teacher by profession. Contact email : vishalsud81@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

7202. MUMBAI : Keralite Syrian Catholic Bachelor (Born in May 1973), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 73 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A.,

English Literature, Profession : Consultant Administration. Left Hand & Leg is weak due to earlier motor bike accident. Contact Email : josephmullakara1973@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 Computer Engineer in USA. Contact email : willatauro@gmail.com

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

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

7180. U.K. : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1982) Ht. 6', Wt. 77 kgs, Fair, Edn. Chartered Accountant, Profession : Director Insurance Company. Contact email : russ_dsouza@yahoo.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

7168. USA : US Citizen Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in June 1985) Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 73 kgs, Fair, Edn. M.Sc., working for a Global Pharmaceutical Company. Contact email : lspinto84@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

7159. MUMBAI : Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1982) Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 65 kgs, Ethical, Healthy, Simple, Sober, Wheatish, B.E. Software Engineer, works @ Mumbai, 9224335003,

mariosofttech@gmail.com seeks matrimonial alliance from Mumbai based Catholic Spinster. Please exchange relevant information.

7045. CANADA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Divorcee, (Born in September 1985), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 68 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., Hotel Management, having permanent Resident. Contact email : bmathias88@gmail.com

7136. HYDERABAD : Anglo Indian RC Bachelor, (Born in July 1988) Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 80 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Post Graduate, having own business. Contact email : phillipctocher@gmail.com

7175. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in July 1989) Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 74 kgs, Wheatish, Edn. B.Sc (H.C.M.) Hotel and Catering Management, 2nd Photographer / Merchandise Sales Dept., Contact email :

osbertagneloalmeida@gmail.com

7172. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in August 1992) Ht. 6' 1", Wt. 90 kgs, Fair, Edn. Graduate, Diploma in Social Communications in Sophia and then done a Fellowship with Piramal House of Leadership. Working with an NGO - sports foundation. Contact email : florencemendonca@rediffmail.com

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7199. BANGALORE : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1990), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 53 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Master's in Mass Communications (NTU, Singalore) working as a Senior Manager of Corporate Communications in **SINGAPORE**. Contact email : mafern.2121@gmail.com

7205. NEW DELHI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1996), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 38 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. BDS, Bachelor in Dental Surgery, woking as a Dental Doctor in **PUNE**. Contact email : mariadcosta0505@gmail.com

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

7204. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster (Born in October 1989), Ht. 4' 11", Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Graduate, PGD in Broadcast Journalism, working for National News Channel in **BANGALORE**. Contact email : stacypereira89@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

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

7194. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in July 1989), Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 55 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.B.A. (HR), HR by profession. Contact email :

dsouza.elvina3@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

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

7179. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in May 1994), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 45 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Bachelor of Pharmacy, working in an MNC as a Project Lead. Contact email : lin.r80@yahoo.com

7143. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1987), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 75 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.A. (Literature) working as a Sales & Marketing Manager. Contact email : irisedsouza@gmail.com

7174. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1990), Ht. 5' 6", Fair Complexion, Beautiful, Edn. B.Com., MBA, PGDM, working for a Ad Agency in Toronto, **CANADA**. Contact email : roshanmehra@hotmail.com

7142. MUMBAI : Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1981), Ht. 5'3", Wt. 62 kgs, Very Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA (HR) working as a HR As-

sociate. Contact email : sunrays1227@gmail.com

7173. BANGALORE : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1989), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Bachelor of Engineering in EEE, working as a Sr. Engineer. Contact email : clara.kalare@gmail.com

7141. MUMBAI : Affluent business family Protestant Spinster, (Born in November 1995), Ht. 5', Wt. 55 kgs., Fair complexion, good looking, Edn., M. Pharma, Student. Contact email : saloni.1995naik@gmail.com

7170. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in August 1996), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 80 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Graduate, working for Bank. Contact email : jenniferdmello25@gmail.com

7139. MUMBAI : Maharashtrian Protestant Spinster, (Born in May 1993), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 47 kgs, Fair Complexion, good looking, Edn. B.Com., working as a Sr. Advisor in MNC. Contact email :

shirley.jadhav@gmail.com

7166. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Christian Parents seek alliance for their daughter, (Born in May 1992), Ht. 5'4", having completed her BCAF, presently working with MNC in Mumbai. Contact email : ste004ffy@yahoo.in

7137. MUMBAI : Karnataka Protestant Spinster, (Born in January 1996), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 54 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as an Accountant. Contact email : sujatareddy209@gmail.com

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Mangalore Ladies Knit to Keep Soldiers Warm

- Ivan Saldanha-Shet.

March 8, International Women's Day...the zest of this day brought well motivated women of Mangaluru to "Lucy's". Unassuming shop/outlet, with a warm large heart and concerned about the welfare of all levels of people of our great nation - India. A 'presentation' of the efforts the group is putting in for the Army personnel struggling in the cold of our borders in the North, really came as a pleasant surprise. Collaborating in many ways including mustering raw wool materials with Cecilia Shresta (called -Leela), are Sabrina Hougard of 'Soulo Conversations' (a group of women empowering and motivating women); giving much needed support are Dr.Kalpna Ashfaque, Cauvery- women's branch of Lions and Ms Nirmala Pai of Inner Wheel (branch of Rotary club) and their teams.

The presentation highlighted the hard work and effort by 36 volunteers at "Lucy's" to knit 172 solid sets of scarves/shawls and cowls from virgin wool for the heroic defense personnel on the freezing borders in the North East facing hostile enemies amidst the severe cold. These brave hearts alert 24x7, to protect the millions of people in India in peace and happiness. Indeed the thought and action of this great effort here in Mangalore is a good start with plans for bigger ventures. Indeed it is a contribution to take note, appreciate and emulate.

"LUCY's" : Cecilia Shresta, lived long with her family in the US, now settled in Mangalore with her husband, among their ancestral roots has a vision. She runs "LUCY's - Knitting, Crochet & Quilting - Classes and Sales." Located opposite the gate of the historical Rosario Cathedral on the ancient road to Hoige Bazar. Gradually many institutions and individuals came in to see and took interest in the "knit and pearl" popularity and it is a rallying point for many good



ideas and projects, with people contributing. These first 172 woolen sets were transported to Bangalore, defense authorities will arrange to send it to the right spots on the borders, for our fighting men.

Ms. Sabrina Hougard of 'Soulo Conversations' explained that knitting and needlework may appear on the decline in popularity among the IT NewGen, yet it certainly is alive and even like old times, men play a role too. The application of knitting regularly has a very constructive and positive impact on the human brain and faculties, coordinating the hands and fingers (like hasta mudras), and pat-



terned eye movements go a long way in mental well being and can prevent and control dementia, alzheimer's and so on. This is a positive, constructive and helpful Occupational Therapy in all ages and challenges the potential.

The name "LUCY's" : The name is primarily of Cecilia's dear mother "Lucy Mascarenhas" (nee Pais, daughter of Martin Pais 1852-1921 of premier city wine merchants hailing from Uruwa).

Lucy, brought up a large family in Bangalore in times that were difficult. It seems her mainstay and deep interest was in Needle work, Crochet and Knitting. Lucy mentored her ideas and skills not only to her children, but to many youngsters she took care of in the 1950s and 60s. She is a well known personality in the Konkani Catholic Community in Bangalore and Mangalore.

The second associate with the name "Lucy" is Cecilia's husband - Dr. Harold (Harry) Shresta PhD, (former professor Arkansas Uni). Dr.Harold's paternal grandmother was Lucy Shresta (1892-1960), the founder of 'Ladies Club' in 1918, still existing on the western road of Lighthouse Hill, Hampankatta, it has given unmatched support to Mangalore and its people, to women in particular. In founding the Ladies Club, she had a unique vision for women of Mangalore. Ms Lucy Shresta spent some time in London with her husband, and is often referred to as "London Lucy". Her ancestral home is the old classic manor house (original name - "INGLEDON"), now 'Roshni Nilaya' that the family gifted away in 1960.

Indeed it is noteworthy that Mangalore is contributing in several spheres to the national effort and women here are positively to the fore, with plans for the future. This is one example but there are many many more for sure and to seek ways and means to help people and our great country - INDIA.

For a working woman, every day is a challenge. Wake up early cook for the family, keep everything ready and rush to work, again come back in the evening and continue to finish the chores and retire to sleep.

Clock seems to tick fast and we tend to forget the basic necessities to smile, rewind and unwind.

World today is definitely changing and the surrounding we are in; a friendly hello and an open smile is doubted and makes us wonder why?

My story is almost the same, every day I get up early and rush to work. At work it is a new challenge every day. Some days are smooth and sails through easily and other days its tuff and hard to comprehend.

It was another Thursday, mid of the week and on waking up late I rushed to work without cooking anything and giving instructions to my husband to make something for himself. Morning breakfast was taken care by the humble oats and afternoon lunch was something I had to take care of.

My time at office was rather hectic, I was reprimanded by my boss and was bombarded with work and in between all this my hunger pangs began to shoot and quickly I ordered something online and continued with my work.

Till afternoon I moved about with a grumpy face and did not take efforts to talk to anyone. After almost 40 minutes I realized that my food hadn't come and that's when I checked my phone and found that the delivery partner had arrived. On peeping out of my work station, I saw a rather old short thin man waiting with a parcel in his hand. Immediately I recognized him and rushed to grab my food.



He Taught Me to Smile

I was angry at him; I choose to ignore him and snubbed. Despite my grumpy attitude he apologized to me and told me he was waiting for me for about 3 minutes. I asked why he hadn't called me, for which he gently smiled and told me that he saw everyone in the office busily working and he did not want to call and disturb me and had left a message for me, intimating about his arrival. He was calm and he smiled and asked me to give him the rating which he felt was apt and left the office with another broad smile.



by Sonal Lobo

There was something about this man that really shook me. The clutter, anger and the mixed thoughts in my heads seemed to have shut for a moment and I began to think about this gentleman. Usually when I order food, the delivery guys hurry since our office is in the 6th floor and they are allowed 10 minutes to deliver or else, they would be charged for parking. Most of them start calling from the lift and turn cranky when we are late even by 2 minutes to pick parcel from the door. This man, who was around 50 was so gentle and considerate, he did not mind about the parking fee but rather respected my time. He smiled, even after I snubbed at him, he chose to smile and was courteous enough to request me for a rat-

ing according to my choice.

The character of this man simply shook me. He wasn't a man with de-grees, he was not working in a posh office but rather roamed around the city carrying others food but he was courteous and put in all the efforts he could in the job, but with a smile. I realized how important a smile was after looking at him. My rather horrible day had turned into a good one and I learnt a lesson for life just by this man's simplicity, honesty and that big wide smile.

I could not do much but I could tip him some extra amount for his brilliant work ethics and thank him profusely in my heart. This simple man had taught me to do my work diligently, despite the hurdles and above all he had taught me to smile.

Sad Demise



Mrs. Mary Margaret Mathias (85 years)

W/o Gregory Mathias
Parishioner of Little Flower
Church, Niddodi
expired on Friday 12th
March 2021 at Niddodi.

Mother of Stanislaus/Lucy,
Denzil/Noreen,
Adv.Genevieve/Adv.Pius,
late Conrad, Lynel/Lloyd,
Rayner/Neelima and late
Longin/Benedicata.

Grandchildren: Sharal,
Samuel, late Nestle, Darryl,
Jason, Pearl, Keith, Kleff,
McNeil, Simran, Greg and
Mithali

Great Grand Children:
Avinash, Ashel and Aaryan

The Freaky February Weather

From time to time, Nature has been sending out distress signals that all is not well with the environment. We have seen flash floods, hurricanes, storms, landslides, etc., around the world, in the recent past. We have witnessed unseasonal, heavy rains right here in the city of Mumbai, in the month of February, just gone by. A newspaper termed it as "Freaky Feb weather in city" (The Free Press Journal - 19 February 2021).

Freaky weather for sure, and indications are, it is going to be this way. Ever so often we hear activists telling us the importance of planting trees yet we turn a deaf ear to these appeals. People in our country still do not seem to have woken up to the changing environment around them.

Recently, an environment activist took up the issue of Tree census in neighbouring Thane district. The civic authorities are supposed to publish a census of Trees every five years. According to a news report, the Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC) have not has not initiated to publish the Tree census since the past 10 years. And the reason cited by them being, non completion of counting process. Should we be given to understand

that Thane is today flooded with a very huge number of trees and the TMC is unable to cope up with the task? We need to get real, leave aside counting, we all should be planting more trees. Such lacklustre attitude on the part of the authorities could only spell environmental disaster.

What about us in Mumbai, do we know how many trees we have in our own housing society compound? Do we know how many trees are there on the street outside our societies? Well, counting the number of trees is not of prime importance. What is important is, can we plant more trees wherever we can?

Environmental disaster is looming large. The heat is threatening to rise this month, we may well see another 'freaky March weather' in Mumbai. The sooner we all wake up, the better will it be. situation seems to be getting scary with the number of COVID cases rising in the city of Mumbai & in the state. The chief minister & other authorities have been appealing to the public to co-operate and ensure atleast the basis precautions are taken while moving out in public but, sadly, all that seems to have fallen on deaf ears. The chief minister has rightly posed the question, "Now, my

question to you is: Should we impose a lock-down?" And he expects the answer from the residents of this city of Mumbai in the 8 - 10 days. By the time this comes into print, the people would have given their answer. The message was clear, 'mask your face or face a lockdown'. What is your answer, people? The choice is ours! It is said that 'God helps those who help themselves', so if we are expecting God to save us, we need to do our bit. Is Mumbai listening?

The authorities seem to have acted rightly, by bringing actor Vivek Oberoi to book, for flouting basic Covid norm by not wearing a mask and breaking traffic rules by not wearing a helmet. The message is clear, all are equal before the law. Yesterday I saw a man wearing a mask below his nose and I said to him, do you know why the government is considering another Lock-down, it is because people like you are wearing their masks below the nose. The man turns round to me and says, 'mera pas nahi hai!' (I don't have a nose). Yes, some people don't have a nose and I wonder now, if celebrities like Vivek Oberoi have a nose to show in public after being caught breaking all basic rules.

—Melville X. D'Souza
Orlem, Malad West

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