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The Virus Surge And Vaccine Skepticism

By Pachu Menon, Goa

With the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic having pushed the state to the wall, it is time the government gets over its evasiveness on the matter and comes to terms with the grimness of the COVID situation in Goa.

Fears about the graveness of the emerging COVID scenario in the state has been compounded by news that the COVID bed capacity at Goa Medical College and Hospital, Bambolim, and South Goa District Hospital, Margao, has reached saturation point.

The alarming figures of recent infections notwithstanding, it is dismaying to have the state continuing to do nothing to allay fears of another devastating rampage by the coronavirus.

Despite warnings by medical experts that the worst is yet to come, the state government seems to have taken a very casual approach to the whole issue.

The abject failure by the government to enforce strict adherence of the safety norms by the public is indicative of this indifference on the face of an inconceivable devastation.

Let me quote from an article that I came across recently:

“India went into COVID-19 lockdown in March 202, forcing people to take the threat of the illness seriously. A year on, pandemic fatigue has set in, markets have opened up and precautions taken by people have also slackened visibly.”

It is extremely difficult to understand as to how most of the people could be biased to ignore the risks of the pandemic! Is it plain foolhardiness or is there

some underlying psychological factor which induces such reactions in the people!

If we are to believe that ‘in the face of uncertainty, we are biased to perceive the world as we would like it to be’, then all the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle would seem to fit in the right places.

We are not ready to accept the fact that we are in a hopeless situation where an invisible microbe has turned our world topsy-turvy. Attributing the daily spike in figures of infections to the over zealousness of an obsessional media that has nothing but the juggernaut of the coronavirus to report about, people continue to feel that it is more of a hype that anything else.

No doubt emotional causes influence a person's outlook on disease prevention!

But what we are seeing here is an offshoot of the herd-mentality. “If he can, why not me,” seems to be the motivating factor inducing people to come out in large numbers and enjoy life, the risks posed by the virus notwithstanding.

With such an attitude in evidence it is difficult to see curbs by the government on any activity that could push back efforts by the state to limit the effects of the pandemic prompting people to forgo such detestable habits.

As a predator that can camouflage and strike at will, the virus continues to baffle scientists. The killer virus is mutating and the discovery of the newer strains confirms that the fight against the tormentor-in-chief is far from over.

However, while the level of insouciance exhibited by people is a matter of concern; how long can the ex-

(Contd.. on p. 3)

Did India Have a Vaccine Strategy?

by Don Aguiar.

What has happened, is happening, since our pandemic began, is that very many people have become very ill, very many people have died, very many people live neither ill nor dying but very frightened.

Sad Demise



Fr. JERRY SEQUEIRA SJ

the Superior of Jesuit Community and the Parish Priest of St. Ignatius Loyola Church, Ahmedabad, (Guj) 73 years age, 54 years in the Society of Jesus, 42 years as priest, has gone to his eternal abode at 12.10 am (18th April, 2021), in Sola Civil Hospital, Ahmedabad. He was tested positive for Corona and was undergoing treatment.

May he enjoy the eternal happiness to which he has been called to and intercede for us from above. Fr Jerry was also a former Provincial of the Gujarat Jesuit Province. Do remember in prayer his bereaved family and other near and dear ones - for the Lord's strength to bear this great loss!

Fr. Jerry is elder brother of Mr. Anthony Sequeira, Chairman, Christian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

RIP

The educated among us recognise that we have so ill-treated our earth that this situation was inevitable. Children especially have realised this, and knowing that the earth they will inherit is in dire straits they have made lots of noise and actions towards returning it, and us, to viability.

While it is true that never within memory has such a widespread calamity visited us, never have so many people either individually or as organizations so clubbed together to lessen the pain and suffering it is causing.

Heroism is almost the badge of our tribe today. Yes, we have to contend with the very rich and very selfish and very politically minded social leaders, as **until now, the story about India's vaccine strategy was a nuanced one, with several possibilities. Last week, it became apparent that India's strategy, if it ever had one, has failed. The war is over, and India has lost.**

India, had several vaccine manufacturers, but the biggest one was a company called the Serum Institute of India (SII).

When the pandemic hit, SII saw an opportunity and stepped up. SII was manufacturing the vaccine at full speed. Since it went ahead even before the vaccine was fully tested, SII had accumulated a stockpile of several million vaccines in its warehouses by the end of 2020.

Keeping space with the pandemic sudden rapid growth the company had stepped up, resulting in a couple of problems.

Problem 1: Money.

In fact, for a long time, news about whether SII would receive funding to scale up and manufacture the vaccine was quite murky. In one interview back in April 2020, Poonawalla said

that "(the government) are very happy to share some risk and fund something with us, but we haven't really pencilled anything down yet". **There are no news reports to be found about any funding for SII from the Indian government.** Around the time, the Department of Biotechnology had helped fund a Phase-III clinical trial for the vaccine developed by SII.

In August, SII, for the first time in its history, went for external funding. It spoke to private equity investors, raised \$150 million from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and even invested \$100 million of its own money.

Earlier this month, SII asked for financial help from the Indian government to the tune of Rs 3,000 crore (~\$400 million). As of till date and time, there has been no official response from the government to SII's request.

Problem 2: Who gets the vaccines?

The deal that SII had struck with the Indian government was that India would purchase the first 100 million vaccines at a price of Rs. 200 (\$2.66) each. This was one of the lowest prices in the world. And the only reason that SII signed on with the Indian government at this low rate was based on the understanding that it could sell subsequent doses on the private market at a higher price.

However, SII was not unduly worried because it had already received purchase orders from several countries—including Saudi Arabia, Brazil and Morocco—for millions of doses. All of this would help fund SII and enable it to scale up. Morocco had signed a supply contract for 20 million doses back in August 2020.

Problem 3:

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cuse of a tottering economy be professed as a justification by the government for allowing the public the liberty to act in contravention to all the safety guidelines prescribed!

Nevertheless, when it is more than obvious that 'crowds' have profusely contributed to the sharp increase in COVID cases, steps should have been taken to nip this issue in the bud.

Having earned the 'distinction' of being the only state in the country to not to have imposed any sort of travel restrictions within its territory despite the steep rise in infections reported nationwide, the state government ought to have excelled in 'crowd management' to keep the lethal effects of the dreaded virus at bay.

Just by saying that both people as well as the government of the day share the responsibility of keeping the ever-increasing COVID-19 numbers under check, the CM cannot just wash his hands of the intricate matter that the state's fight against coronavirus has evolved into.

Even after so many casualties, when the 'possibility' of imposing certain 'stricter' restrictions to curb the spread of the disease in the state is

only under consideration without any indications of the directives being implemented any time soon; it speaks for the tardy progress made by the government in the matter of containing the charge of the coronavirus.

Given these conditions, opting for the vaccination should have been seen as the one shot to restore normalcy in lives upended by the pandemic.

With the Centre coming out with new proposals to speed up the vaccination drive across the country, the lukewarm response reported in Goa is however a matter of concern.

Under these circumstances, the Union Health Minister's remarks about some states playing vaccine politics and spreading panic among people to distract attention from their failures in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic only adds to the confusion.

With reports of shortage of vaccine pouring in from some parts of the country, protests from certain quarters against the Centre's decision to export COVID-vaccine with the demand that the drug should first be made available free of cost to all Indian citizens hence sounds quite justified.

But considering that nearly half of the country's population is yet to get over

its reservations and get inoculated, initiatives like the 'Tikka Utsav' mooted by the PM should see a definite change in mindset among people vis-à-vis the vaccination.

As per theories making the round of the social media, safety perception increases risk appetite. That is to say that people become more careful when they sense greater risk and less careful if they feel more protected.

It would however be wrong to contend that people in India have been getting lax in following COVID appropriate behavior due to a false sense of security from vaccines considering the general inhibition shown for getting vaccinated.

But here in Goa, the theory could well be flung out of the window. No matter what the risk, people have been endangering others by their irresponsible behavior.

'Defying COVID protocols' is trending now in the state!

However, it is rather unfortunate that no state has been thorough in its pandemic preparedness and continues to experiment with 'strategies' to contain the spread of the disease in an impulsive manner. ●

The Indian government hadn't signed any purchase orders with SII. Even in early January 2021, India's largest vaccine manufacturer had no idea how many vaccines the Indian government would need and by when. SII note "They (Indian government) have to still sign a purchase order with us, and tell us where to send the vaccine, and 7 to 10 days after that, we can deliver the vaccine. We have already offered to them in writing a very special price of ₹200, only for the government, for the first 100 million doses and then the price will be higher or different". **The vaccines were ready. 50 million of them. But the Indian government wasn't.**

Far from investing in capacity or brokering deals to tap unused vaccine manufacturing facilities, as the Biden administration has done in the U.S., the Indian government been slow even to sign purchasing contracts with manufacturers.

Problem 4: More vaccines were needed.

SII was manufacturing close to 60 million doses a month. It needed this number to be much higher to have any hope of meeting India's requirement. Then the company had a fire in its factory, which Poonawalla later said cut short its plans to expand production.

India had an entire year to scale up manufacturing capabilities across the nation, all to produce the vaccine at a war footing when it was ready. But it didn't.

Meanwhile, in India, as the coronavirus cases rose, the Indian government on 11th January 2021, finally placed an order with SII. It was its first purchase order. It ordered 11 million doses.

India quickly suspended exports on all vaccines. Countries that had booked vaccines with SII much earlier than everyone else were told to wait. India's needs had to come first. One of them

was Brazil, where 3,000 people die from the coronavirus every day.

The government seems to expect Indian manufacturers to produce vaccines on spec, jump through various regulatory hoops and then break all their other remunerative contracts in order to give the final product solely to the Indian state — at grossly insufficient prices.

Few days back, SII received a legal notice from AstraZeneca, the developer of the vaccine, over delays. I don't have to tell you what this does for India's largest vaccine manufacturer's credibility and reputation as a supplier and manufacturer.

India's method of developing the vaccine for its citizens is one of the oldest in political theory—it's about the relationship between the state, capital, and the free market. All these entities are quite complex and often exist with a great deal of tension between them. Even more complicated is the fact these entities also operate together—and often have orthogonal goals.

The Indian government has shown its citizens that it has refused to understand the rules of the game and play by it. It has refused to acknowledge that private players operate in a free market and to act as a buyer while also providing capital.

This kind of regulatory uncertainty, bullying, lack of foresight and urgency, and contempt for legitimate profit-making attitudes are at the root of the country's growth and investment crisis. Now the citizens of India will have to suffer the consequences.

The Indian government has treated private companies like the SII with a mixture of disdain and ownership, and by the end, it's clear that nobody is a winner. Not the Indian government. Not SII. And certainly not India's citizens. It's going to be a rough few months ahead.

Stay safe and take care.

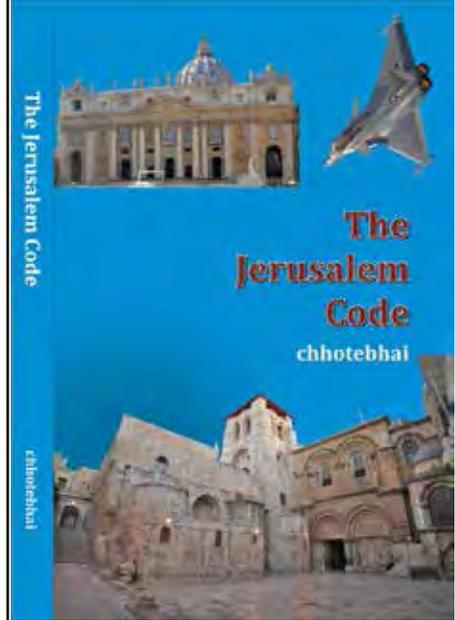
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Are vaccines Safe to Take?

I took my first shot of the vaccine (Covishield) a few days ago and found it not painful. I did not even feel dizzy, nor was there any side-effects.

A week has passed and I am still hale and hearty.

—*Jubel D'Cruz, Dombivili, Mumbai*

On misleading BSE sensex figures

I've been keeping track of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) sensex levels since the past 2 years or so, and have found it not only amusing, but also baffling, to see how the sensex keeps fluctuating from day to day without rhyme or reason. With Covid-19 cases on the upsurge in the country, one would have expected to see the sensex crash to levels it had tanked during the first wave of Covid, last year. Instead what we have witnessed over the past few months is an unprecedented and record-breaking sensex rise, to levels of 50,000 and more. A hue and cry is raised when all of a sudden the sensex crashes by a few thousand points, citing an upsurge in Covid cases, only to rise steeply in the next few days ----Well-manipulated figures to hoodwink the people.

Investors in Mutual funds in particular paid a heavy price during last year's sensex crash, as Mutual Fund houses were quick to lower their NAVs, interest dividends and even stopped paying monthly dividends for a few months. Even after the

country's economic situation started to improve and the sensex started to rise, NAVs were slow to keep pace with the rise, with the result that investors were unable to recover their losses. Even today, the NAVs are not in proportion with the daily sensex figures. Nevertheless, It is a lesson for all investors to be more wary of these mutual funds in future and not to be misled by sensex figures, that do not even reflect the country's economic position. It's a 'heads I win, tails you lose attitude' of these houses.

—*A. F. Nazareth, Alto Porvorim, Goa*

Hats off to Mamata!

Paschim Bangal chief minister Mamata Banerjee has given a formidable fight to Shah and Modi, the killers of democracy in India! The election campaign is formidable because Modi-Shah have pots of money (recently through PM Care Fund), ED to 'purify' corrupt MLAs of TMC, and all the democratic institutions like Election commission at their service. Plus the Gunda Giri is everready! To fight such an election is a real work of the level of Mardani Jhanshi! She was attacked fatally yet riding on a wheelchair she has done the campaigning! Really hats off to the fighting spirit she has shown right from the beginning of her political career. She has compelled Modiji to leave aside his job as prime minister in the midst of chaos created by Corona pandemic and rush to Paschim Bangal calling her "Didi Didi!"

If there is any chance for the opposition parties to form the next government at the centre in coming years, she should certainly be one of the Prime Ministerial candidates!

Inquilab zindabad!

—*Michael G. Vasai.*

Social media - a dangerous platform?

There is no doubt today, the Internet rules the world and social media has indeed become a very powerful tool in everybody's hand. The younger generation has taken to social media just like the fish to the water. Everything and everyone has a good side & the bad side, it is said. The internet & social media is no different.

We may have witnessed or heard of several instances of the positive effects of social media. When appeals for help appear on social media one will find a number of people eager and willing to help. However, it seems like the negative effects far outweigh the good. We have seen how people so easily get fooled by certain posts and they end up in disappointment. We see how people blindly forward certain posts without verifying, without applying their mind, without giving a thought to the consequences of their actions. It is sometimes frightening to note the power of social media, it's like a dangerous platform for misuse. One small spark is enough to start a major fire. One only hopes against hope, that better sense prevails, not just on the youngsters but on the elders as well. We need to control social media rather than allow social media to hold us to ransom.

—*Melville X. D'Souza Orlem, Malad West.*

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Joseph was not an old man but as young as Mary. Joseph did not simply control his passions assiduously nor was he made devoid of his libido by an angel. He sublimated his passions with his prayer and his will power and that's how he is a model for all of us!

Joseph, The Chaste Spouse Of Mary

St. Joseph's year (3)

-Fr. Michael G., Vasai.

Mary and Joseph had taken child Jesus to the temple to be offered him there when he was twelve (Cfr. Lk 2.48-50). On their way back each of them thought that the child must be with the other but when they reached home they found that child Jesus was missing! In their search for him they walked all the way back to the temple once again! After three days they found Jesus sitting with the chief priests and the teachers of the law discussing theological issues. When Mary asked the child, "Why did you behave this way with your father and me?" The answer Jesus gave was: "Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" Of course Mary contemplated the mysterious answer of Jesus. In fact it was mischievous and irritating one. Jesus should have at least said, "Sorry" and then perhaps explained why he waited in the temple without informing. But instead he simply blames them for searching for him elsewhere! Walking, searching, hunting with a fear in their hearts, it was a terrible experience for both.

Joseph really got a headache. As he reached home he went to rest. Mary sensed. Joseph was trying to make some sense of the happenings. She sat on his bed, placed his head on her lap and began to give a little massage on his forehead. But just after a few minutes of that comfortable position Joseph suddenly got up with the jerk and took his head back on his pillow! What went wrong? Only Mary understood what was going on in Joseph's mind.

Joseph was greatly careful not to entertain any sensual feelings.

This is a very delicate situation we are imagining in the life of the Holy family. Some of my readers might be scandalised by just imagining Mary sitting at Joseph's bed. We 'divinise' the saints and make them inimitable for us poor humans. In this article an attempt is made to picture Joseph in a human form in order to understand the heroic sacrifices he has made as the chaste spouse of Mary! He was living with Mary, a beautiful lady. She was his lawful wife! He was living with her in the same house day and night in a formal way and casual way at least for last twelve years! He was sleeping in the same house with all privacy and informality; and yet he never touched her sensually! Is it possible for a man like Joseph? He did it heroically and protected her virginity and own chastity! His behaviour is called in Indian languages *Asidhara*, walking on the sharp edge of a sword! Was it for this difficulty that Protestants 'exempt' the couple from the vow of chastity after the birth of Jesus?

When I speak to the youth on sex education I present Joseph as their model. Specially his message is required for the humanity when so much violence against women and girls is taking place. Many different forms, including domestic violence, sexual assault and harassment, child marriages early and forced ones, sex trafficking, so called 'honour' crimes and female genital mutilation. It is rooted in the gender inequality that women face throughout their lives from childhood through to old age. Woman is looked at as a sex object or worse a sex toy!

In some Indian communities perpetrators, believing in *Manusmriti*, think that violence toward women and girls is

normal or appropriate behaviour, supported by society's approval. It is one of the most widespread violations of human rights. It is time to say 'enough is enough'.

Joseph is the model who never looked at Mary with lust.

THE HUMAN SEXUALITY

It is said, 'Birds do it, bees do it, and men do it any old time. But women will only do it if the candles are scented just right -- and their partner has done the dishes first!' It is a stereotype phrase, sure, but is it not true? Well, study after study shows that men's sex drives are not only stronger than women's, but much more straightforward. The sources of women's libidos, by contrast, are much harder to pin down. It's common wisdom that women place more value on emotional connection as a spark of sexual desire. Women also appear to be heavily influenced by social and cultural factors as well. (Cfr. Edward O. Laumann, PhD. *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States*)

Once again I cannot help but compare the efforts of Mary and Joseph in cooperating with God in his plan of the Holy Family! Joseph was not an old man but as young as Mary. Joseph did not simply control his passions assiduously, nor was he made devoid of his libido by an angel. He sublimated his passions with his prayer and his will power and that's how he is a model for all of us!

**WE ARE ATTRACTED TO YOU,
JOSEPH, MAKE US LIKE YOU
CHASTE**

Healed In The Name Of Jesus



GOD knew somebody had to do it: to heal in the name of Jesus.

Peter and John, disciples of Jesus had been arrested on the imputation that they were spreading the story of Jesus's resurrection. Overnight they were both put in jail. It so happened that the next day a gathering of all the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem were meeting; so the people brought the two arrested apostles before the council, with the blame that a cripple had been healed by them.

The disciples faced Annas, the high priest and Caiaphas in the midst of scribes, elders and the curious crowds. The high priest questioned them; "By what power or by what name did you do this" (Acts 4:7). With courage and boldness, the apostles stood before those present and faced the members of the council. It was Peter, inspired by the Holy Spirit, who spoke to them; "Rulers of the people and elders if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a cripple, by what means this man has been healed, be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth...for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:8-12).

Peter, John and other apostles became the standard bearers of the risen Lord. "By the name of Jesus Christ" they would reach out to the masses. The apostles were the first missionaries, the first spiritual crusaders of the

Word – and, the first among Christian martyrs. In the First Letter of John, he informs us that we are called 'children of God', and by the name of Jesus, "so we are" (1 Jn. 3:1)

The Lord, in his own words makes a statement of trust, a pledge of faith in his love for us; he declares, "I am the good shepherd". The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep... I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father...this charge I have received from my Father". (Jn. 10:14-18)

The tapestry of Christian Faith is unique: The Lord is our shepherd, we are called the children of God, and the gospels give us the divine Word to evangelize. In Scripture reading we hear of the testimony given by Peter to the council of Jewish leaders.



BY MELVYN BROWN

We were told how the Holy Spirit came upon Peter to give him the courage to be bold. The crux of the faith is this: we are confided in with the promise of trust in Jesus, the good shepherd; the power of the Holy Spirit to inspire and guide us; and the divine Word of God to propagate the Christian belief. "They departed and went through villages, spreading the gospel and healing everywhere". (Lk. 9:6)

The Resurrection of Christ is indisputable. It is a serious historical event to preserve and to talk about, especially to the non-believer. The story of the risen Christ is a celebration of victory

for all time. "O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever!" (Ps. 118:1).

For centuries the Church has taught doctrine, and its teachings have been the ultimate strength of our Catholic faith. The death and resurrection of Jesus is apparently the greatest teaching to show us that death is not the end, that the soul lives on while the body serves only as a container. God is merciful and by the sacrifice of his son Jesus salvation was given to humankind. John was baptizing in Bethany beyond the Jordan when he saw Jesus, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn. 1:29).

When Jesus made entry into Jerusalem on a colt the people who followed cried out "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord..." (Mk. 11:9); the sick, the possessed, the blind, the cripple – healed in the name of Jesus (Acts 4:10). Jesus told the Jews, "Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death." (Jn. 8:51)

The twenty-first century is a critical time for Holy Mother the Church, Bishops, religious, priest and laity are expected to appear confident and strong in the faith – to bolster the image that Christ abides in us and we in him. That violence, death and destruction are looked upon as this era's stations of the faith. The eulogy of our Christian life in these horrific times must be an inspiring message to generations coming after us.

In the name of Jesus, we too, can heal the wounds of this beautiful world, to keep firmly a line in support of a conservative faith in tradition and challenge.

The gravity of any crises can be resolved in his name. Pope Saint John Paul had once said that "We should be aware of what is being done to earth is part of spirituality". The reading in liturgy refers to Psalm 117:8.

"It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in man. "Heal the world in the name of Jesus.

Freedom of Religion: A Paradox?

The Supreme Court of India pronounced a significant verdict on 09 April 2021, "People are free to choose their own religion". The bench of the court was led by Justice Rohinton F. Nariman.

The bench affirmed the 'right of the citizens of the country' to "profess, practice and propagate religion", perfectly in line with the provisions of the Constitution of India.

The judgment came in the wake of a false and funny type of petition by advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay, who claimed that there is 'mass religious conversion' happening 'by hook or by crook' across the country.

Justice Nariman posed a razor-sharp question to the petitioner, "Why should a person above 18 years not choose his (or her) religion"? Exposing the silliness of the petition, he crossed the petitioner asking "What kind of a writ petition is this"?

Stating the petition "very, very harmful kind" of "public interest", the Justice cautioned the petitioner further, saying that "We will impose heavy costs on you...Withdraw it or argue and risk the consequences".

Dismissing the petition, along with the pleas to approach the Law Commission or the High Court, is a major lesson for those that are of the kind of the petitioner.

Quoting Article 25 of the Constitution of India, the Justice questioned the petitioner as regards the 'implications' of the 'freely propagate', along with 'profess and practice', subject only to 'public order, morality and health'.

'Every person is the final judge of his own choice of religion or who their life partner should be' is a question of the common sense of the individuals.

To expect the court 'to sit in judgment of a person's choice of religion or life partner' does not stand to any sound reason. Well, the wisdom of the court is a standing logic for the humans, for



odd as well as even times.

The court has grounded 'freedom of religion' in the fundamental right to 'privacy', which is inviolable, along with 'right to life, dignity and liberty'.

This makes the verdict more sound and effective.



Needless to state that the basis of the petitioner is totally 'imaginary, fake and vicious' that 'there is not even one district in India that is free of black magic, superstition and religious conversion done, by means of intimidating, threatening, luring through gifts and monetary benefits'.

It may be recalled that 'freedom of conscience' is the foundation of 'freedom of religion' that is guaranteed by Article 25 of the Constitution. The 'freedom of religion', in its turn, is further warranted as per the 'secular credentials' of the Constitution, as per its amendment in 1976.

Even before the amendment, ever since its inception, the 'spirit' of the Constitution was 'secular'. The amendment only verbally and legally explicated the mind of the Constitution, as ruled by S. R. Bommai, the Human Resource Development Minister in the United Front government from 1996 to 1998.

The anti-religious riots and violence, like the 1984 Anti-Sikh Massacre in Delhi, the 1990 Anti-Hindu Riots in Kashmir, the 2002 Anti-Muslim Riots in Gujarat and the 2008 Anti-Christian Riots in Odisha, are major anomalies of the above provision of the Constitution.

Besides, the 'anti-conversion laws' in Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, along with the recent 'ordinance' in Uttar Pradesh, betrays the spirit of 'secularism' and violates the 'religious freedom' enshrined in the Constitution, manifestly so.

As a matter of fact, it is too obvious that almost all the major and minor religious traditions of the world are in India. Four religious traditions have India as their birthplace, too. Too often, India is considered a 'religious country' for the presence of diverse religions, along with the profuse religious engagement of the people in general.

In spite of the fact that the Hindu population amount to nearly 80 percent, the overall minority communities are majority groups in different states, regions and districts of the population in India. In addition, to think that the so called minority communities are a threat to the so called majority community is nothing less than a ridiculous argument.

The root of the problem in our country is this that 'we the people' have not acquired the required 'maturity' as citizens of the same country to 'peacefully co-exist' and 'harmoniously live together' with all religious and social communities in India, honoring their differences.

We the citizens fail to rise above the petty majority-minority considerations,

(Contd.. on p. 9)

(Contd.. from p. 8)

because, since time immemorial, we have been too much habituated to discriminatory and divisive policies and practices, both in organized and unorganized ways. It is high time we got rid of the heavy hangover of the same.

A fairly high percentage of people in India are either owners or beneficiaries of the west-generated technological gadgets and facilities, along with education. But, we have not been fortunate enough to grow beyond selfish, petty, jealous, communal, discriminatory, divisive and raw ways of thought and behavior, in view of an inclusive attitude to one and all.

As 'we the people', we are called for holding on to our 'Constitution as the most sacred book' and abide by the great 'values' enshrined in it and the 'spirit' that emerge out of them. Therefore, it is our 'ethical, human and spiritual duty' to honour the 'right to life, dignity, privacy and liberty' and, as a result, 'freedom of religion', necessarily so.

We need to come out of the predicament of considering the other as 'this and that' and boost up our 'sense of togetherness' as 'citizens of one nation', by staying tuned to each other. Only then, the great ideals of the country, such as 'unity in diversity' and '*vasudhaiv kutumbakam*', will become a reality for us.

The verdict of the Supreme Court has alerted us to come back to our 'common grounds' and remain tuned to our 'shared ideals'. It is a motivation for 'we the people' to be 'humane' enough by respecting one another as human beings. At any rate, 'religious freedom' shouldn't be allowed to become a 'paradox'.

The author is Director of Institute of Harmony and Peace Studies, New Delhi, and has been committed to cross-cultural perspectives, inter-faith relations, constitutional values, national integration and social harmony, for the past over 40 years. He contributes to the above cause through lectures, articles, video messages, conferences, social interactions, views at TV channels, and the like. He could be contacted at 'mdthomas53@gmail.com'.

PRAYER IN THE TIME OF PANDEMIC

We come to you today

dear heavenly and loving Father
as your children, as one family:
with deep faith and a total surrender to your will

We come to you today

at a time when our world is gripped with the pandemic COVID-19
It is more than a year now :we are tired, afraid and uncertain
Thousands(including our loved ones) have died everywhere and many more are affected

We come to you today

trusting in your loving providence
fully assured that you care for all of us
and that you will protect us from every danger

We come to you today

imploing that you heal all those who are affected in any way
that you comfort all those who have lost a loved one
and give the much-needed hope to the faint of heart

We come to you today

praying that you bless all the scientists, caregivers and the support staff
those in authority, those entrusted with our well-being
and all who are giving of their best to address this serious reality

We come to you today

pleading for the humility to be cautious and prudent
to be responsible citizens and not gamble with the lives of others
to be able to discern the truth from the false and not be spreaders of fake news or the virus

We come to you today

asking for your mercy on the poor ,the vulnerable and the excluded
the daily wage earners, the migrants, the unemployed, the hungry
those who are lonely, aged, infirm and who are unable to cope with this pandemic

We come to you today

thanking you for your blessings and seeking your strength
that inspite of all our fears and the difficulties we face
we may only see and accept your hand at work today
Mary our Mother, Health of the Sick
intercede for us, to Jesus your loving Son!

Amen.

**(Prayer composed by Fr Cedric Prakash SJ(29 March 2020)
1st revision(1 May 2020) 2nd revision(15 April 2021)*

Variance In Vaccination

Vaccination is a safe and effective way to prevent disease and save lives – now more than ever. Today there are vaccines available to protect against at least 20 diseases. As covid-19 cases are again on the rise in India, it is time for massive acceleration of vaccination.

Eventually, all adults are to be inoculated; observation time after vaccination can be reduced or even removed as we have seen that there is no major untoward event after inoculating more than 2 crore people. This will avoid crowding at the centre; vaccination camps can be conducted at industries, big apartments and shopping malls; vaccination can be done on Sundays too, which will benefit office-goers. Since the government has fixed an affordable ₹250 for the vaccine, private hospitals can handle the situation comfortably. However, the number of cases are increasing during the second wave and that is causing concern.

To encourage others to get vaccinated, we should be convinced first that it works. However, we never got any assurance from the reliable sources that it works as it is intended; still I took it; now we do not know whether we are safe or not? The reason being the virus is undergoing culturalization inside my body; no expert is confident enough to stay that this works or it doesn't; give one source which we can use to convince others to go in for the vaccination at the right time.

We are ready and willing to lead by example -- but there too, it is assured that it will behave the same way with others, as it behaved with one and all; even our friends on the group are reluctant to say what they underwent post-vaccination; there is



no confidence building effort from any quarters; apart from that, the spike is higher in the age group which was not authorised to take the vaccination; while the aged and old are maintaining the instructions of safe living, the youth and the middle aged are thronging the streets unmindful of the consequences ; the recent religious gatherings, throwing caution to the air, does it really augur well for the country?

Why are we not taking the due care to stop the outbreak and spreading of the virus? Where is the problem? we are trying to fulfill our wishes at any cost and so ego is the problem -- give it up; think of your neighbour as your family - protect him/her as much as you protect your near and dear; so it is not the reluctance to get vaccinated

that is causing the spreading of the virus, it is the ego within us; give it up; start believing we will be safe and so will my neighbour -- friendly or otherwise; then see the results -- we might not even need the vaccine. Let us face the present situation with a brave heart and boost our confidence level just like boosting our immunity.

As covid-19 cases are again on the rise in India, it is time for massive acceleration of vaccination. I suggest the following measures: involving more private hospitals for vaccination; massive publicity by the government through the media to create aware-

ness through the services of film personalities, politicians and sports persons; removing the co-morbidity clause for those above 45 years as it consumes more time to verify this.

For the past few weeks, the daily statistics regarding the virus indicate that the city has touched a new mark in the name of the second wave. True, the numbers are alarming in metropolises such as Mumbai and even less so when you compare them with figures from abroad, but it cannot be denied that the scourge is holding its own in the city. This is despite the best efforts of the front line health workers. What should the city be doing to gain further ground against the Coronavirus?

It is seen in daily reports that a significant chunk of new cases is contributed by those coming into the city. There is no way this can be prevented – most of the migrants are employed here. All championing of lock downs and insisting on physical distancing is only by the affluent. The less well-off cannot afford such luxuries. The initial few weeks of lock down was essential chiefly for the administrative machinery and infrastructure to gear up but now such measures have no meaning. It is far better to focus on battling the disease than shying away from it.

Secondly, the city has to get going on its vaccination drive. There was sound logic in such prioritization but when those whom it was meant to benefit do not take to it, what can be done? Statistics indicate that there has been poor response from those for whom the first batch of vaccines were intended. If the demand for the first dose was poor, it has been abysmal for the second. Under such circumstances, why restrict the availability?



C.K. Subramaniam

(Contd.. on p. 11)

With more people vaccinated we can at least ensure that the virus when it attacks will be less lethal and that means fewer deaths, and probably less people getting infected. This will eventually lead to a further reduction in cases. Ground reality seems to indicate that the good Indian 'jugaad' has already kicked in— reports are doing the rounds of how influential people not in any way connected with health care or civic services are managing to get ahead in the vaccination queue. This however is not a bad thing for the vaccine has to start reaching more people. Why not then throw it open to all?

The second phase of the vaccination drive may have commenced with great euphoria, but much confusion prevails. There is still speculation about administering a second dose of vaccination for senior citizens and they are just waiting for their turn to come after 42 days of cooling time. Again, there is a shortage of vaccines at many centres, resulting in closure of many vaccine centres. Let us clear about all doubts and wait with baited breath for the second dose in time.

Vaccines will ensure a decisive victory for the country over the coronavirus pandemic. The time has come to understand more, so that we may fear less. Life is a series of natural and spontaneous changes. Resisting them will only create sorrow. Let reality be reality. Allow things to flow naturally forward in whatever way they like. The chief danger in life is that we may take too many precautions even after inoculation is over. Wearing masks and washing hands all have become part and parcel of our regular routine. We were all waiting for V-Day with baited breath when the nation will announce and now that has come as a reality. Genie will be out of the bottle and Corona will take its place. Once bottled, it will be thrown in the deep sea never to be found again. Mankind will surely emerge triumphant and science will not fail us. Life's a fight; a good fight of faith.

Psychological Issues Due to Covid

The Health Outreach Initiative of the Archdiocese of Bombay organized an interesting talk by reputed Social Psychologist Dr. Harish Shetty on 11th April. The talk was about strategies in coping with psychological issues due to Covid.

There are two main triggers for depression during these times. The first is our fear of either ourselves or our family getting Covid. The second is a pervading sense of loneliness and isolation. This leads to depression, anger, frustration and, at times, escalates to violence within the family. Dr. Shetty said that while the Government is going all out to prevent the spread of Covid and attending to the physical health of people infected by the virus, the mental health of the population is unfortunately ignored and this may have serious repercussions in future. It is therefore important to address this issue.

- Dr. Shetty clarified that fear is good because it ensures that we take precautions such as wearing a face mask, maintaining social distancing and washing our hands. However, the problem arises when the underlying fear is not expressed and escalates into anxiety.
- Regrettably the second wave brings back memories of the first wave in full force. He narrated an incident when he was approached by a disturbed seventeen year old boy whose parents were constantly quarrelling. Dr. Shetty explained that fear leads to heightened irritability and quarrels. The boy was told that he had to be a psychologist himself and advised to approach each parent separately, ask them what was troubling them and reassure them. The mother was afraid about how the family would cope if she died of Covid. All he had to tell her was, "Don't worry mom. I am there for you." The father was afraid of losing his job. He reassured his father that there would be different avenues of earning an income

should the need arise which the family could arrive at after a brain storming session.

- Dr. Shetty further said that when sharing our fears, our minds become creative as the block created by anxiety is removed.
- He went on to narrate another incident involving a teenager. As the father was working from home, he wanted to coach his son in physics which upset the son as the latter resented his father not spending time with the family during normal times. Dr. Shetty explained to the boy that dad was slogging late in the office for the betterment of the family and suggested that the family should bond together by sharing stories of their lives – stories of incidents and not stories of 'glory' or achievement. The entire atmosphere in the family changed. Father and son got closer during physics coaching.
- Dr. Shetty then touched upon relationships within the family where some of the members are elderly. In one instance, the son treated his father like a child and refused to tell him about the current Covid situation within the country and worldwide. The son was advised to be open with his father and give him the information sought. The truth may cause turmoil initially but the person is then at peace.
- Lastly he advised that one should take care of one's physical health by eating healthy foods and exercising. He humourously stated that one should not try any stunts which could land us in hospital where we may contract Covid. He narrated how an elderly lady landed up in hospital after climbing a stool in order to clean a speck of dirt on the fan. Was the speck worth being hospitalized? Instead he suggested ten minutes of family yoga after prayers with emphasis on breathing exercises in order to find peace and handle the "emotional hijacking" caused by the pandemic.

—*Monica Fernandes*

It took 6 weeks for 17 lakh Mumbai-kars to take Covid Vaccine

It took 1 day for 35 Lakh people to take a dip at Maha Kumbh.

So it is proved people are interested in next life than this life!



Funny Riddles

- 1. What do you call an ant who fights crime?
A. vigilanty!
- 2. Why couldn't the astronaut book a hotel on the moon?
A. Because it was full
- 3. How do you throw a party in space?
A. You planet
- 4. Why did the cabbage win the race?
A. Because it was a-head
- 5. What does a book do in the winter?
A. Puts on a jacket

--- Contributed by: Jubel D'Cruz, Mumbai

A husband and wife had a fight.

Wife called her mom: He fought with me again, I am coming to stay with you.

Mom: No dear, he must pay for his mistake. I am coming to stay with you!

A guy sees his mother in law riding a bicycle. "Where are you going?" he asks.
"To the cemetery" she replies.

"And who is going to return the bike?"

I came across 6 men beating up my mother in law. My wife asked "aren't you going to help?"
I said no, 6 should be enough.

A rich mother in law has 3 daughters who are married off to 3 men....

She wanted to test whether her sons in law really cared about her or not. So she devised a plan. She invites her first SIL for a run and after reaching a river she purposefully slips into the river's current. Without any hesitation first SIL jumps into the river and saves her. The very next day he receives a brand new Audi car and \$10mn in cash with a note "thanks for saving me-MIL". She now invites second SIL for run and does the same, without hesitation he jumps in and saves her. The next day he receives same model car, \$10mn and note saying "thanks for saving me-MIL". She now invites her final SIL and does the same when she reaches the river but this time the son in law just ignores and walks back to his home. The very next day he receives 2 brand new cars and \$20mn in cash with a note "thanks for saving me-FIL".

As I was picking up my mother in law from the airport, I asked her, "So, how long do you think you'll be staying with us?"

She answered, "Well... for as long as you like."

"Not even for coffee??"

A lawyer named Strange was shopping for a tombstone. After he had made his selection, the stonecutter asked him what inscription he would like on it.

"Here lies an honest man and a lawyer," responded the lawyer.

"Sorry, but I can't do that," replied the stonecutter. "In this state, it's against the law to bury two people in the same grave. However, I could put `` here lies an honest lawyer"."

"But that won't let people know who it is" protested the lawyer.

"Certainly will," retorted the stonecutter. "people will read it and exclaim, "That's Strange!"

The following is a courtroom exchange between a defense attorney and a farmer with a bodily injury claim. It came from a Houston, Texas insurance agent.

Attorney: "At the scene of the accident, did you tell the constable you had never felt better in your life?"

Farmer: "That's right."

Attorney: "Well, then, how is it that you are now claiming you were seriously injured when my client's auto hit your wagon?"

Farmer: "When the constable arrived, he went over to my horse, who had a broken leg, and shot him. Then he went over to Rover, my dog, who was all banged up, and shot him. When he asked me how I felt, I just thought under the circumstances, it was a wise choice of words to say I've never felt better in my life."

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

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

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

Witness: "Yes."

Coroner: "Why?"

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

World Health Day 2021!

The above Day is observed on 07 April; but lets make 'Health' a part of our daily routine! The Theme for 2021 is, "Building AHealthier World ForEveryone"!

Disease pattern in India is shifting from communicable to non-communicable disease (NCD) types like hypertension, type-2diabetes, and obesity. Below are 15 tips for a 'healthier heart'!

*Restrict salt to less than one teaspoon a day (2,300mg). *Limit alcohol intake to 2 pegs (60ml) or 150 ml of wine perday. *Avoid all forms of tobacco, especially smoking. *Maintain an ideal body weight – shorter the waistline, longer the lifeline! *Check blood pressure, blood sugar and serum lipids twice a year. *Manage anxiety and stress throughyoga. *Practice Catholic spirituality through Bible reading, Eucharistic Adoration, and Divine Mercy Chaplet! *Sleep well for at least 7 hours. *Take your regular medications. *Exercise frequently, like walking 30 minutes 5 days a week. *Undergo the 6-Minute Walk Test (6MWT) – 500 meters in six minutes without any cardio-respiratoryproblems. *Remember the rule of '80' – Maintain your diastolic BP, fasting blood sugar and LDL (bad) cholesterol and weight circumference below '80'. Walk with a speed of at least 80 steps a minute. *Other fun workouts include dancing, aerobics, gymnastics, swimming, biking, and hiking. *Eat in moderation with more of greens, bycutting saturated trans-fats, refined white foods (sugar, flour and rice), as also packaged and processed diets. *Consume probiotics like yogurt and pills.

Christ had warned, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6: 21).

—Dr. Hazel Colaso,
Memphis, TN. USA.

Why do we need the police?

The police authorities are considered as one of the most significant sections of the society. These officials happen to be for the protection and peace in the society. They are considered as the most appropriate person at the time of crisis and danger in the country. But sometimes they take the law into their own hands and beat up people for no fault of theirs.

During the lockdown, some of them never allowed people to walk on the roads, even to buy essential commodities like vegetables, milk and bread. And if you question these idiots, they beat you black and blue and even put you behind bars.

They also threaten shopkeepers by demanding haftas. They are the most corrupt people on the earth. Such personnel should be removed.

— Jubel D'Cruz, Mumbai

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PRAYER & THANKSGIVING

Prayer To The Holy Spirit

(if you are in difficulty, You can say this prayer)



HOLY SPIRIT, You who makes me see everything and shows me the way to reach my ideal. You who gives me the Divine Gift to forgive and forget all that is done to me and you who are in all the instances of my life with me. I in this short dialogue want to thank you for everything, affirm once more that I never want to be separated from you no matter how great the material desires of this life may be I want to be with you and my loved ones in your perpetual glory to the end and submitting to God's Holy will

—R. D. D'Souza



Thanks to
Sacred Heart of
Jesus
& St. Jude
for the favours granted



May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, loved, glorified & praised throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. Sacred Heart of Jesus, Thy kingdom come. St. Jude worker of miracles pray for us. St. Jude helper of the hopeless pray for us. Amen.

Say this prayer nine times a day
for nine days.

— Anil A. D'Souza

Covid invasion anew in Kanara

— Ivan Saldanha-Shet.

India has come into a serious grip with a second wave of Coronavirus, there is a sense of fear. Maharashtra and to a large extent Mumbai and suburbs are rapidly getting into a distress situation again. In Karnataka even in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts a sharp spike in Covid cases is on the cards. But of the two districts, Udupi is certainly battling a serious problem with Covid cases from the MIT Manipal campus now a containment zone. Many 'Mangaloreans' ask about the situation in this part of India.

So, as far as Karnataka goes, capital Bengaluru tops the list with its Covid numbers rising alarmingly. The district administrations of both Dakshina Kannada and Udupi are leaving no stone in ensuring Covid protocols are followed. Udupi admin has also warned of a criminal case against mask rule violators, in Dakshina Kannada district, the fine amount has been doubled to ensure that at least the fear would force people to wear masks.



If cases in Udupi have shot up, in Dakshina Kannada it has been escalating one day to the next. NOT letting guard down is most important as of now. But, it is a bitter truth that despite the looming second wave, people do NOT refrain from participating in religious gatherings and cultural events like Yakshaganas in large numbers. Many even point out why only some sections are blamed when massive election rallies are held under the helm of the top leadership with hardly any Covid protocols - Church gatherings continue.

However, huge numbers of violations are being reported and huge amounts collected as a penalty. Amid the Covid pandemic, the district is also seeing a spurt in Malaria and Dengue cases and so far over 180 Malaria and 21 Dengue cases have been reported. Maximum 172 Malaria cases were reported from Mangaluru. Sullia and Bantwal have recorded five Dengue cases. If there is one department that is feeling maximum pressure due to the Covid pandemic is the Health Department. Currently with the Covid vaccination also underway and now with a slight spurt in Covid the work-

load of the Department already facing manpower shortages, has further increased. Of the total 1631 sanctioned posts in the DK Health Department, a staggering 698 are vacant. Presently, the Department has 641 permanent staff while 292 are working on contract basis. The vacant posts include that of senior and junior health assistants, specialist doctors and pharmacists. Even in Wenlock Hospital which serves as a Covid Hospital, of the sanctioned 613 posts, 184 are vacant. Presently Wenlock has 257 permanent and 172 contract staff. Health Minister Dr Sudhaker while stating that he is aware of the vacancies, has said the government would take suitable measures and has asked the district administration to submit a report.

The likelihood of things going out of hand if people let down guard is very real and staring us in the face. Though the Government does not desire a clamping of another lockdown as such, lockdown-like restrictions will be widespread soon it is felt. It is the responsibility of each and every citizen to follow Covid appropriate behaviour for the safety of oneself and also for the safety of others on priority. Let better senses prevail now.

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Please inform us through email: secular@sezariworld.com or through phone: 9820485389 after transferring the same.

The benefits of the banana peel

Banana peels can soothe an itchy mosquito bite. Rubbing the area with the inside of a banana skin can give immediate relief as its sugars help to draw fluid out of the bite.

You can also put an end to your hair and skin issues through the use of banana peels. Using the inside of a banana peel, you may massage it on the areas where pimples, acne and blemishes occur or recur. This natural exfoliating agent contains enzymes that remove toxins from the skin pores allowing you to get rid of zits.

The banana peel also contains an antioxidant called lutein. Lutein is an anti-aging component that can aid in the reduction of fine lines and wrinkles. Gently rub a peel around your face. After 20 minutes or so, wash the peel off with warm water. If you are looking for naturally ways to whiten your teeth, the citric acid content of the peel can remove yellow stains dramatically. Apply the peel before brushing with your toothpaste. Simply rub the inside of a banana peel on your teeth for 2 minutes.

— Jubel D'Cruz,
Mumbai

Matrimonials

Mangalorean RC bachelor, belonging to a highly educated and very affluent family with interests in healthcare, education and many other sectors, Ht. 5',10, fair, handsome, MBBS, managing the family business. Contact: sona68500@gmail.com

Proposals are invited for

Mangalorean RC Bachelor, belonging to a highly educated and very affluent family with interests in healthcare, agriculture and many other sectors, Tall, Fair, Handsome, Holding Doctorate, managing the family business in Karnataka State. (REF:MM104)

Those interested in this proposal :

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- Non registered brides are requested to upload your profile at our website www.royalchristianfamily.com and contact us on our email: royalchristianfamily@gmail.com mentioning REF:MM104 along with your registered ID.

Proposals are invited for

40 years Mangalorean bachelor doctor (Ph.D) Ht. 6" wt. 75 kg Fair., Hadsome. no bad habits. High affluent society well connected. Belongs to highly placed business family in Mumbai (REF:MM103)

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Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - GROOMS

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mrsannieroy@yahoo.co.in

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

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

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

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 : gracion.moras@gmail.com

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

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

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

josephfernandes10@yahoo.com

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

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

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

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

profession. Contact email : rayanvincent@rediffmail.com

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

6531. POONA : TAMILIAN Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in May 1975), Ht. 6', Fair Complexion, Handsome, Edn. M.Com., Having well established business. Contact email : tony137@rediffmail.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

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

7157. PUNE : Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1990) Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 75 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA (Marketing) & M.Com., working as a Senior Executive, Sales and Development. Contact email : amlahenry11@gmail.com

7184. U.K. : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in April 1990) Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a Credit Control in Private company in U.K. Contact email : troyt007@gmail.com

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* Members are requested to inform us when they are settled, so that publication of their details can be discontinued.

If not settled within a year, renew your membership atleast two months in advance to continue the service uninterrupted.

Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - BRIDES

7210. AURANGABAD : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1994), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 48 kgs, Fair Complexion, good looking, beautiful, Coming from business family, Edn. Chartered Accountant, C.A. by Profession. Contact email : putturaurangabad@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

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

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

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

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

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

7195. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in May 1990), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 57 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Com., well settled. Contact email : melinda.522@gmail.com OR Mob.: 9820561036

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

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 Asso-

ciate. Contact email : sunrays1227@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

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

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

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

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

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 Mumb ai. Contact email : ste004ffy@yahoo.in

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Mr Narcissus Neeff As I Knew Him: Heart Of Gold

Obituary

Born: 29-10-42 Died: 8-4-21

Ten years ago in the very month of April, I received a phone call from a gentleman named Narcissus Neeff. He called to congratulate me on an article I had written in *The Examiner*. It was captioned; *The Church Needs an Anna Hazare. Who are you? How did you get my phone number and where did you read my article*, were my queries. He told me that he was a Catholic from Bandra, who rang Sophia College, to get my phone number and that my article had been published in *The Examiner*. I was in the Sophia Polytechnic community then, preparing for a major Total Knee Replacement surgery. Since we had not yet received our copy of *The Examiner*, Mr Narcissus, not only got a copy of *The Examiner*, but also arranged to send it to me immediately. This touched a deep chord in my heart. What's more, on learning that I was recuperating at Holy Family Hospital, Bandra, where I was undergoing physiotherapy, he and his wife Philo came to visit me with a bag of goodies. Such was the largesse of this huge, strongly built, ex-Larsen and Toubro, Parts and Service Department employee, who later began his own business.

Slowly, a friendship developed over the years. I was in far away Patna and yet we spoke over the phone occasionally. When I returned to Mumbai, we spoke more often and even had heated discussions about the Church and Religion and Spirituality. After many requests, I finally visited him in his home and gradually experienced the **HEART OF GOLD** enshrined in his giant body. Narcissus was a *man-for-others*, what every true follower of Jesus ought to be. He went out of his way to do good deeds at great cost

to self. He gave generously to others, not out of his plenty, but out of the little that he had. It always reminded me of the widow's mite. He gave his all generously to others-time, energy, money and much more!

Despite his kink about the Latin rite, as all of us have our own eccentricities, he was a very spiritual man. He always had religious stories to regale you with, and medals and pictures and prayer leaflets to give you before you left his home, not to speak of the little treats and gifts he made his wife Philo, to keep ready for you. A surprise visit resulted in him opening his purse and giving you money. On my refusal, his pat reply was, *This is only for the taxi fare back to Sophia's*.

A simple, humble, intelligent, hard-working layman but a genuine, authentic Catholic-universal and open to helping and loving all. Goodbye dear Narcissus. I shed a tear when I heard about your crossing over to the other side. I will miss the arguments and many will miss your help here on earth. Our loss is Paradise's gain. God blessed you with the last sacrament. Your cancer detected only four months ago, helped you to prepare well to meet your God. You suffered a lot, above and beyond towards the end, but never a question or complain. **Your will O Lord be done**, was your mantra. Amply blessed, you had the good luck to see your three daughters married and your grandchildren as well. Your funeral during this special Planetary Evolution will be remembered. Enjoy the company of OUR FATHER in heaven.

Dr (Sr) Mudita Menona Sodder
RSCJ
Mumbai.

THANKSGIVING

Thanks to
Holy Trinity, Holy Family,
All Saints, All Angels & Archangel
for the favours granted

— Wilfred Martis

THANKSGIVING

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, loved, glorified & praised throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. Sacred Heart of Jesus, Thy kingdom come. St. Jude worker of miracles pray for us. Jude helper of the hopeless pray for us. Amen,

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

"Holy Spirit, though who makes me see everything and shows me the way to reach the ideal. You who gives me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and are in all instances in my life with me. I, in this short dialogue want to thank you and confirm from you once more that never want to be separated from you, no matter how great the material desire may be. I want to be with you and my loved ones in your perpetual glory. Amen"

Say this prayer nine times a day for nine days. By the eighth day your prayer will be answered. It has never known to fail. Promise to publish this or distribute this as soon as your favour has been granted

—Wilfred Martis

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World Language Days!

Dr. Hazel Colaso
Memphis, TN. USA.

Languages are the most powerful instruments of preserving and developing our heritage! They serve not only to encourage linguistic diversity and multilingual education, but also to advance a fuller awareness of cultural traditions! They also inspire solidarity based on tolerance and dialogue between individuals and nationalities.

International Mother Language Day!

United Nations International Weeks and Days are occasions to educate the public on issues of concern; to mobilize political will and resources; to address global problems; and to celebrate triumphs of humanity!

So, UNESCO promoted the global celebration of *International Mother Language Day* on 21 February 2000. The Theme for 2001 is: "Fostering Multilingualism For Inclusion In Education And Society"!

English Language Day!

It is celebrated on 23 April since 2010. It also coincides with *William Shakespeare's Birthday*, and *World Book and Copyright Day!* His quote from *Romeo and Juliet*, "What's in a rose? A rose by any name would smell as sweet!" – Should set aflame our house, just as we need! – With love for family, neighbor, enemy and your special 'sweet'!

English is the most widely spoken language – A large part is due to the British Empire (*Commonwealth*); to its numerous scientific, literary, poetic, and visionary authors; and to the economic clout of the USA!

Mahatma Gandhi, father of our nation commented: "English would still be retained as a cultural language just as French is to Europe. I am not anti-English, but I am anti-untruth and against injustice. It is derogatory to the dignity of mankind and to India to entertain hatred towards the Englishman. My at-

titude to them is one of friendliness and respect ...!"



English today has an official status in at least 75 countries, with a total population of over 2 billion. It is also taught as an alternate 'second language' to people like Chinese, Indians, Japanese, Korean, German, Russians, Spanish, etc.

English is one of its six *lingua francas* of the UN Secretariat. UN Staff have a unique and diverse representation; and are in the forefront in its International affairs, effectively contributing to the realization and purposes of the *UN Charter!*

World Konkani Day!

It is celebrated annually on 09 April, by all Konkani lovers since 2015. It is in memory of noted Konkani author and activist, *Shenai Goembab* (25 June 1877 to 09 April 1946). He is credited with having written 7 Books in the Latin Romi script, and 22 in the Devanagari script. His works in Konkani comprise short stories, dramas, novels, poetry, essays, history and philosophy!

In Abu Dhabi a *Konkani Cultural Day* was held in April 2018. Besides, a *World Konkani Day* was observed for the first time in January 2020 in the financial capital of Mumbai! A further event was conducted in Belgaum city. Its Bishop Rev. Peter Machado revealed that Konkani speaking people comprised besides Christians, Gaud Saraswats, Konkani Marathas, and Bhatkali Muslims. In 1987 Konkani in the Devanagari script was made the of-

ficial language of Goa.

According to the 2011 census, Konkani speaking citizens comprise 2.3 million in India. The Roman Catholic *Diocese of Mangalore* estimates their population in South Canara District to be 3,60,000 out of a total of 39,57,100; or approximately 9.5%. Other regions having a significant proportion of Mangalorean Catholics are Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata, and Delhi; with off course renowned personalities! In fact, there are a good number of these *Mangalorean diaspora* scattered across the globe, especially in the UK, USA, Canada, Africa, Mauritius, Australia, and New Zealand.

However, there was a despondent period in the glorious history of the Mangalorean Catholics. In 1784 the tyrant *Tippu Sultan* rounded over 60,000 of them and incarcerated them for 15 years at Seringapatam in Mysore. Many had to walk the rough terrain of the Western Ghats. Of these only 15,000 to 20,000 made it out alive after Tippu's death in the Forth Anglo-Mysore war in 1799. Thanks to the British! This episode had a deep impact on the 'Literature of Mangalorean Catholics'! The bi-centennial of their release was celebrated with much fanfare on 04 to 11 May 1999. According to the Mangalorean geneologist, *Michael Lobo*, the present Mangalorean Catholic community is descended from this small remnant. Yet they became a prosperous and influential community of coffee planters, tile manufacturers and agriculturists.

On 26-27 January 2008, a Konkani cultural affair, *Konkani Nirantari* was held in Mangalore by a Mangalorean organization, *ManddSobhann*. It entered the *Guinness Book of World Records*, for non-stop singing of Konkani Hymns. They sang for 40 hours, surpassing the previous record of 36 hours held by a Brazilian Musical Troupe.

So now we can proudly exalt you: "*Dev BohreKaroun! May God BlessYou*", (as Holy Scripture declares): "May the Lord bless and keep you; make His face to shine on you and be gracious to you; turn His face towards you; and grant you peace!" (*Numbers 6:24-26*).

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