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A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

When Party Politics Corrupts!

by Dr M. D. Thomas

Sir John Dalberg Acton, 8th Baronet, a prominent historian and liberal Member of the Parliament, UK, of the 19th century, remarked, "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely!"

When a person has 'power' over people or things, it makes him/her corrupt. Power has the 'power' to morally destroy the nature of the one who holds it. It fills one with arrogance, which ultimately knocks one down. No doubt, power is the sure way to corruption.

'Politics' is the means to gain power. It often involves 'highhanded' ways. One's own self becomes the focal point in life. It goes to the point of self-absorption. Everything else matters hardly anything. No wonder, 'good sense' is bound to be at a loss then.

The word 'politics' might have been innocent and good in its original intent, but it is no longer so today, all the more so in India. It is perhaps the most abhorred as well as disastrous word in all the various languages of the world. I suppose, that is why the word is more used in the pejorative sense.

Of late, 'politics' stands for the most 'polluted' reality in the human civilization. For that reason, it is the most refrained from by the sane sector of the world, with a hand full of exceptions, worldwide. That adds to why the sector should be corrupt, although in more or less degrees.

'Political party' is an organized group of people or bodies, who seek to capture political power through an election, in order to run the affairs of a country. 'Democracy' demands the presence of more than one party, a few or many parties and, therefore, there are 'political parties', in a clearly plural way.

'Political parties', through interested candidates, contest elections, in view of gaining sanction from the people to rule over them. The mandate they gain thus, irrespective of affiliation to different parties, would

mean a 'return of service to the people', manifestly so.

But, as far as 'party politics' is concerned, it often coils around 'political parties' rather than the 'good of the general public'. When party becomes the centre of attention in politics, it is sure to bounce back from the idea of serving the people. It is like 'pushing the ladder out when one has reached the roof'.

No wonder, 'party politics', sooner or later, becomes a filmy 'game of hero and villain' among political parties, that too, at the cost of the people, whose wellbeing they are avowed to. Well, that would amount to state that 'party politics corrupts', even though it shouldn't be so.

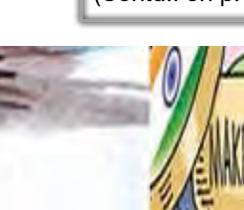
By and by, political parties get so self-possessed that they tend to think of a 'one party rule' and of wiping out the opposition party or parties. The idea of 'congress-mukt bharat' or 'opposition-free India', for that matter, has to be understood from this perspective, well, a sharp violation of the democratic ethos.

Politics is the easiest job one can get today, that too, in India. For the most part, it does not require any qualification of any sort. Of course, criminal background adds to the merit. There is no age limit either. Even if incapacitated and rendered worthless, one could very well prefer to die on the chair.

'Changing the party' seems to be a major business of crores today. 'Leaders' are being sold and bought, like instant coffee, in terms of money and power. Swapping over to another party from the terrace of one party is to bluntly bluff the people who voted him/her up and is indeed 'perversion'. But, that is what it is.

The corona virus times of India has gone to the history how the 'party politicians' mismanaged or failed to manage the state of affairs, to the point of acute non-availability of hospitals, beds, oxygen, ventilators, medicine, ambulances, and the like, for the dying citizens. Claiming the opposite is the irony of the reality.

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Baba Ramdev's agenda?

The celebrated Yoga Guru has once again landed himself in a controversy and it is hard to believe that his video against allopathy which has gone viral was off the cuff. It gives a feeling that the exercise was carried out with a definite purpose in mind knowing well that it could boomerang. And indeed it has! In his video he has mocked and ridiculed the medical and scientific fraternity with his sarcastic comments. He went on to say that the doctors trying to cure the patients suffering from the corona virus could not save themselves with a pointed reference to the many casualties among the medical fraternity. These comments, at a time when the entire medical and paramedical force is relentlessly trying to do their best under the given circumstances, point out to something more sinister.

Not surprisingly, the Indian Medical Association [IMA] has taken umbrage at the insensitive comments from someone who is respected internationally. Such people need to weigh their words when dealing with such a delicate issue at a time when the whole country is going through a challenging period in its history. Being an educated community, the doctors have voiced displeasure in a dignified manner. They have demanded that he retracts his comments and also issue a written apology. They have also appealed to the PM who has been praising the medical fraternity ad nauseam. Now it is up to the PM to issue a statement and stand by the doctors or his laudatory messages will sound insincere. The Baba tried to wriggle out of the situation saying he was only reading a WhatsApp message which is untrue. He was indeed mocking the allopathic doctors holding them directly responsible for all the Covid deaths.

A reluctant and half-hearted apology showed that it was a planned affair. Within days, his trusted aide Balakrishna came out with some weird theory that there is a conspiracy to convert India to Christianity and malign yoga and ayurveda. This theory obviously has been floated to save the Baba from the very embarrassing situation that he has landed himself into. In trying to give a communal colour to the conspiracy theory, an attempt is being made to curry favour with the Hindutva hotheads. Not surprisingly, there is not a single word from the BJP or RSS leadership. BJP is running the government and glorifying

VIEWS on NEWS



by Marshall Sequeira

the medical community for their selfless service at the cost of their own lives. The Prime Minister has been in the forefront of the campaign lauding the yeoman services of the medical community whom he repeatedly refers to as frontline warriors. Why is the BJP leadership quiet? Just a letter from the health minister is not enough. Uttarakhand chapter of IMA has appealed to the CM that Ramdev should be booked under the Epidemic Disease Act. The Chairman of the Patanjali group in his tweet has tried to create communal disharmony which is seditious in nature. Some Hindi chats on WhatsApp have dragged the likes of Mother Teresa in its attacks on Christian community. The source of this is obvious and the very fact that the government is not uttering a word is confirmation of the fact that it is all part of a larger agenda. Silence by RSS and BJP is intriguing as it would have otherwise filed a case of sedition as they do in case of journalists. Ramdev's toolkit is genuine and not fake.

Imagine if the doctors were to abandon their work pan India demanding the arrest of the Guru for his indiscretions. Doctors are educated, non violent and peace loving people – true to their profession. The IMA has taken up this matter in a dignified manner with the authorities and it is up to the government to show on which side of the divide it is on. The Home Minister who is always proactive in such matters is practicing the art of silence ever since the Bengal election results are out. The PM, who has taken full control of the pandemic war room so to say, should show that he stands by the doctors. If he remains silent, people may be forced to believe that the conspiracy to convert India to Christianity is actually the other way round; to make India a Hindu Rashtra. Allopathy was just a ploy.

Choksi's forced Sojourn

The Modi government is facing a series of setbacks with the Indian judiciary putting it in the dock at every opportunity and there is nothing that the likes of Modi and Shah can do. Even in Bengal, Mamta Didi gave them a drubbing at the elections. The stock of the Modi government today is lowest in seven years. Some dramatic things could divert public attention. They thought Mehul Choksi could be it. Much as the Indian authorities may remain silent, it is more than apparent

that the Indian Intelligence Agencies had a role to play in the Honey trap that the fugitive may have been lured into for a Caribbean Sojourn. If at all India had a role, it looks like it was not a very smooth affair. The claims and counter claims make things murkier for the world at large. Be that as it may, things did not go as they were planned out to be. Things have become complicated and the Indian Jet [sent post haste] with some officials on board may have to return home empty handed after a week's Caribbean holiday.

Choksi disappeared' from India like many others leaving the Indian authorities sucking their thumbs. It looked like he had made his plans well in advance - Antigua as his new home. Within a few days he could set the process of citizenship in motion. It did not take long for his case to be favourably considered. The Indian government initiated the process for extradition of the fugitive which was contested by the accused with all sorts of excuses. The case is still sub-judice and from the way things were moving, India felt it could get stuck like the Mallya and Nirav Choksi cases. The government wanted some 'sensational' news to be dished out to the people of India getting restive with government's non-performance.

The Indian government must have diplomatically kept the Dominican government in the loop and persuaded them that they should ensure a smooth passage to India through the deportation process. Perhaps they had forgotten to factor the judicial process. Add to this, the opposition leader of that country intervening in the court proceedings forcing the case to be adjourned indefinitely. The Indian government claims that Chocki's Antigua citizenship is 'flawed' as it did not fulfill the process of law and therefore the fugitive continues to be an Indian Citizen. One thing the government has not explained. If Choksi 'fled' the country, why on earth the Modi Government Issue an NOC to allow the Antigua government to consider his application for citizenship. Something is simply not adding up.

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A healthy debate among the political parties, in principle, is part of the game. But, the 'pull and push' among them, to the point of filling the public space with 'indecent and hostile remarks', end up as a major insult to the public as well as an out-and-out violation of the spirit of the Constitution.

In point of fact, the 'party in rule' has to be above party politics. They have climbed up the ladder of politics to be at the helm of affairs. They have to be 'common persons'. Stooping so low as to zero the opposition down, without any rhyme and reason, as party workers do, is to defy Constitutional protocols.

It is too appalling to note that the 'public space' of the country is too full of conversations that are 'issueless' and so filthy and worthless, so much so that sensible citizens feel ashamed of hearing them from their leaders. The 'dignity and decorum of public life' seem to have very badly eroded.

Besides, public persons, by and large, are engulfed by wrong priorities. Symbols of vain glories, like statues, temples, parliament house, bullet train, and the like, are the interests of the common persons. Basic necessities for the lives of the citizens, like food,

clothing, shelter, health and education are ignored.

The entire attention of the ruling dispensation is capturing the support of the people, by hook and by crook, in view of perpetuating the chair of power. Planning and decisions are geared towards appeasing or befooling people. Kumbhs or rallies are cases in point. Biased policies and practices seem to run the show.

As power increases, the moral sense of the powerful diminishes, necessarily so. Highhanded ways become their privileges. As the ethical fibre gets weakened, 'polishing the image' of the party and of their party men becomes a fascination. The countrymen are left to their own fate, die or live, they may choose.

Party politics is intended to a blessing for democracy. In the interaction of diverse perceptions, views and opinions, a 'crossbreed and richer perspective' is supposed to evolve. The best of the country thus arrived at is oriented to enrich the country, in favour of the wellbeing of one and all. But, it is not easy to happen.

How could public persons leave the constitutional office, off and on, for party work and election campaign? How could they afford time, language, gestures and remarks that are in no way

becoming of ethics and protocols? Bengal elections, as a blatant case in point, would speak volumes, for all times.

Governance is oriented to the welfare of the citizens. When constitutional institutions, like ec, ed, cbi and it, along with tons of money flow against other party or parties, thinking of good governance, I think, is a mere fancy. Political parties need to see their faces in the 'mirror' and rise above the disrupted mindset.

'Do power, politics and party politics corrupt'? The above reflection tells the story. But, governance shouldn't be left like a derailed train. Party politics has to be redeemed. Ethos and ethics of competence and confidence, along with simple, un-assuming, straight forward and transparent ways, have to take over.

The author is Director of Institute of Harmony and Peace Studies, New Delhi, and has been committed to cross-cultural perspectives, interfaith relations, social ethics, 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'.



Fr. Dr. M. D. Thomas

Losing a Loved one - to COVID

Coronavirus strikes

When the coronavirus struck certain parts of the country some time in early 2020, we thought it was still too far away to touch us here in Mumbai. Even the government did not give it a serious thought. **The first wave of COVID-19 claimed a number of lives but still that was far away from us.**

Death at close quarters

Then came the so-called second wave. Little did we think that this second wave would indeed turn out to be more threatening than the first. It is only recently that we felt COVID-19 has indeed struck, and how! A number of our close relations have succumbed to the virus. Spouses have been lost to COVID, a number of people known to us have become victims of this pandemic. Many of our near & dear ones have been lost to COVID. **There we are - we now see death at close quarters.** Until then, it was just somebody who had passed away.

Losing someone of your own

Who can feel the pain of losing a spouse, of losing a mother, of losing a father, of losing a brother or a sister, of losing a daughter or a son? **It is only when one loses somebody of his own that her or she understands what it means to lose a loved one.** As someone who has lost a spouse, I fully understand what it is to lose a spouse of 30, 40, 50 years of togetherness. The shock is terrible to bear. In a matter of a few weeks I have witnessed the death of a relative. I have witnessed the death of a good friend. I have witnessed the death of a couple of others closely known to me. What can I offer them, but condolences? Who can fill the void left behind? **What does it mean going back to an empty home where every nook & corner reminds you of your loved ones? Whom does one talk to - the blank, empty walls?** There are some who have a young daughter or son to look after, how is he or she going to man-

age? Some who have a little daughter or son, how does one cope up? Those who have growing children to look after, what happens to their upbringing? These are fears which one to grapple with.

Words of comfort

So, what happens in a situation like this? Yes, relatives, friends, acquaintances will offer their condolences, words of sympathy. Some will offer their support by way of food, etc. Friends & relatives would offer Masses for your loved ones, all with good intentions, of course. Covid has of course restricted visitors.

Moving on in life

There would be some who would tell you to 'move on in life', get over it! Oh yes, move on - what is it that we are talking about moving on? I was watching a video for bereaved families, and the commentator says, when someone you love dies, there is no such thing as moving on. Is it just another object? What does it mean to move on? This concept of moving on friends, is something that may not sound too comforting. As they say, easier said than done! Of course, that does not mean one grieves forever. **Death does not end love.**

Taking control

Another video I came across says, we need to understand, what has happened is totally out of your control. Maybe we have done our best but could we have done something more? At the end of the day, it is perhaps God who is in complete control. **He holds the steering wheel in His Hand.**

Deciphering God's plan

The most soothing words I hear is, surrender. Surrender to God's will, surrender to God's plan. Surrender, surrender, yes, do I have a choice, I ask myself. What is God's plan, I ask. When your plans have got derailed after the loss of a spouse, of a father

or a mother or a daughter or a son, what plans are we talking about? **Why in the first place, would God snatch away a Loved one? Why? Why? Why? Difficult to find answers to such questions.** Couldn't God have saved that loved one? The other day, I attended an ONLINE Memorial Mass and the one of the readings of the day was that of Lazarus being brought back to life by Jesus. Just as Martha said to Jesus, if you had been here my brother would not have died, I said to Jesus, if you were present in my life why didn't you prevent the death of my spouse? Jesus went to the grave of Lazarus on the 'fourth' day and he brought Lazarus back to life - rise! he says to Lazarus and Lazarus rises up from the grave. **With childlike innocence and confidence, I said to Jesus, wake up my spouse, tell her to rise and come back to me! And there was complete silence.** I said to Jesus, but not my Will, let your Will be done. Is it complete surrender then, perhaps what we need to do? Difficult, though it may seem!

Uncertainty of Life

So at the end of the day, what is in store for us? **Life is uncertain! Death will come like a thief in the night. One does not know when, how, where, why the call will come.** All your riches, all your wealth, all your money is worthless before death. Like God said, you fool, tonight you will be called to eternal life, then whose will all those riches be?

God will make a way

Well, God's ways are not our ways. It is said, **God will make a way, where there seems to be no way.** We cannot see a way in the situation we find ourselves in. Our heart is broken, our dreams are shattered, our life is torn into pieces, the road below our feet has crumbled, **And yet, we are told, we need to trust God. He will make a way where there seems to be no way! Well, do we have a choice? It has to be His way, or No way!**



Melville X.
D'Souza
- Orlem,
Malad West



Confusion over Covishield, Covaxin

The ever-changing recommended time interval between the first and the second dose of the Covishield vaccine has created a lot of confusion among people in India. The revised time interval, however, is not applicable to Covaxin. India is currently using only these two vaccines for its inoculation programme.

The gap between the two doses of the Covishield vaccine has been increased for the fourth time in a row. This practice will discourage people from getting vaccinated. Many people are still unsure about getting vaccinated.

The government of India needs to broadcast clear messages to people so that its vaccination programme remains unaffected. It should also pay attention to the irresponsible statements made by government representatives. Only senior doctors should be allowed to educate people about the virus.

—*Jubel D'Cruz, Dombivili, Mumbai*

Unemployment in our country - scary scenario

The newspapers (The Free Press Journal June 2) recently carried a very disturbing front page report on the job scenario in the country today. According to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), one crore have been rendered jobless in the country on account of the second

wave of the pandemic and around 97 percent of households' incomes have declined since the beginning of the pandemic last year. So, here we are, the job scenario is really scary. One cannot help going back to the time of the 2014 General elections when the nation's youth were promised 2 crore jobs a year. Down the line however, instead of creating jobs we have witnessed a decline and today we seem to be in the pits. Not only the youth are struggling to find jobs, those in well placed positions are struggling to retain their jobs. And the government is all at sea, not knowing how to tackle this situation. But of course, they have COVID-19 to blame. One begins to wonder, does it really bother the government or our politicians? It seems they are only interested in the number of votes they can garner, the number of seats they can muster, the number of states they can capture. What are jobs to them, to hell with the jobs, and what does the economy mean to them, to hell with the economy!

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

Lessons for World Environment Day

Every year on World Environment Day, June 5, we are called to protect and save our planet from environmental and ecological degradation, brought about by the unbridled and over-exploitation of nature and the natural resources by man. The rise in emission of greenhouse gases has resulted in global warming, climate changes, and rise in sea-water levels. The destruction of forests has impaired the ecological balance and caused a loss of biodiversity. Even the air we breathe is polluted. In the encyclical 'Laudato Si', Pope Francis

reminds us repeatedly, that the earth is God's gift to humanity and therefore our responsibility is to protect our "common home" by working together as a family for a sustainable and integral development. The encyclical is based on St Francis of Assisi's 'Canticle of the sun' that praises God through the elements of creation, like 'Brother sun. 'sister moon' and our 'sister and mother earth'. The encyclical assumes greater importance in these times of the pandemic where man, humbled by the micro-organism 'corona virus', is made to realise that if he needs to survive on this planet, he cannot forget that he is part of the natural habitat, with an obligation to co—exist with the plant and animal life, and other species in the surrounding environment— a harmony that God intended at the time of creation.

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

Criteria for evaluation of Std XII students

Now that the cancellation of Std 12 board examinations is a fait accompli, it will be necessary to formulate a criteria for evaluation of students in a fair and transparent manner. Undoubtedly this is going to be an onerous task and cannot be fool-proof. But then board examinations too, are not an accurate barometer of intelligence.

While some boards have a robust internal assessment system, others do not. State boards, because of the large number of students and poor teacher--student ratio, have to rely heavily on final examinations. So the same yardstick cannot be used for all boards. The evaluation therefore must be on the basis of whatever data that is available. Students must not be made to suffer for lack of data. I suggest that while evaluating a student all available data should be considered, while data not available should be ignored.

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The Central Vista

A new parliament house project known as The Central Vista is a pet project of Modi to usher it in as one of his many signature moves using the occasion of India's 75th anniversary of independence. The Unity Statue of Sardar Patel is done. It is 182 meters (597 ft) high and the total cost of the project was estimated to be about ₹ 2,063 crores in 2019; by the time it was completed it was much more. The Bullet train is coming. The total cost of the project is pegged at Rs 1.08 lakh crores; by the time it is running it might be doubled! And now The Central Vista! The mega construction project proposed in 2019 will cost over Rs. 20,000 crores on completion by 2024. It will cover an area of 64,500 square meters. The Project aims to redevelop a 3.2 km stretch between Rashtrapati Bhawan and India Gate that was designed and built in the 1930s by the British.

Does India's glory lie in a mere structure as grandiose as these? All of these monuments are exorbitantly costly and unnecessary. Certainly Chaiwala Modiji will be remembered long in history but as what? As Mohamud, Shah Jahan, Ashoka or a Hindu Rashtra Raja who converted Ganga-mata into a flowing hearse of the Corona victims (Cfr. Poem by Parul Khakhar)? What is the teaching of *Bhagavad Gita* regarding *amaratva*?

Totally Anachronistic!

India today is one of the worst affected countries with GDP -7! Covid cases total is over 2.7 crore!! Covid has claimed over 3.5 lakhs lives and threatens to claim many more in the 3rd wave!!! It is certainly the wrong time when lakhs of citizens are dieing for want of vaccines, oxygen and hospitals, to pour much-needed money into a vanity project. It reminds one of Emperor Nero who was playing



fiddle when Rome was burning! There has been widespread condemnation against the Narendra Modi government's obsession to continue investing time and money in the expensive Central Vista Project. But who listens? With the absolute majority established in the Lok Sabha the PM cares a hang for the criticism.

The Central Vista will include a new Parliament house, residences for the Prime Minister and the Vice-President and new multi-storeyed buildings that will become the offices of various ministries. In fact all these buildings do exist today and are serving the need. There is no urgency to build new ones.



**Fr. Michael G.
Vasai**

A Hindutvawadi Agenda.

The 'heritage' is not only that which belongs to the colonial or pre-colonial period. Our own achievements in the post-Independence period is very much the Indian heritage. We proudly call ourselves a 'decolonised' country. We with patriotic spirit aim at re-writing history on our own terms. In fact in the last 75 years we have created new heritage. Some buildings are architectural feats in the history of modern architecture like the National Museum and the Vigyan Bhawan. They deserve a place in our history. The fear is that the party which aims at wiping out Gandhi-Nehruvian influence on Indian history will demolish them in the name

of the renovation program!

National Archives of India is another delicate and precious treasure to be watched over. Seeing the ruthless communal aggressive activities against minorities in last 7 years of the BJP rule and more recently in Lakshadweep by Praful Patel, the students of Modern History have expressed fear that the RSS related historians can remove some of the most sensitive records of Mahatma Gandhi assassination case, original papers of Sardar Patel, manuscripts of major national movement leaders. God forbid, there is no second copy of many of these files. The Archives is a very authentic place of documents of the entire medieval and modern history of the country. The BJP supported historians or government officials can destroy the records deliberately just in the name of shifting things! Their MPs' like Rakesh Sinha and others of the RSS can distort/destroy the sensitive documents related to the role of Hindu Mahasabha and RSS in communal Riots during freedom struggle, very sensitive maps pertaining to Jammu and Kashmir and all the bordering states.

The entire political career of Mr. Amit Shah presents him as a ruthless man without conscience. The recent events of the Police handling riots in Delhi and U.P. show the Home Minister's

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scant concern for the Constitution, the rule of law or the democratic values. The Communalised staff of the Home Ministry under him can destroy real records in the name of construction of the Central Vista! The invaluable treasure is at their mercy and they can damage the entire archival history of India preserved till now in the present building of National Archives of India, New Delhi!

Only a truly Rashtrabhakta will sense the danger! The historians of the entire country should be united and raise their voice against the demolition work of buildings such as the National Museum, Indira Gandhi National Centre For Art etc. In fact the Supreme Court should take suo moto action to save records from any would be irresponsible or criminal handling of the records. If not the present fascist government can destroy the complete history of the real freedom fighters and replace shamelessly the documents of right wing communal parties and even the dubious ones of Indian left wing leaders! As they vow 'Gandhimukta bharat', They can remove the files related to the contribution of congress leaders like Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, Maulana Azad, socialists and anti communal revolutionaries like Bhagat singh and many others who sacrificed their lives. Once they have decided to create Hindu Rashtra will they have any scruples tampering with any of the historical evidence?

Will The Court Save?

Dr. Bhanu Kapil, Head of the Department of History, B. N. University, Udaipur, Rajasthan (bhanukapil@yahoo.com) has responsibly expressed these fears. We need to raise our voice and file a case for the protection of National Archives and National Museum and other buildings of National importance with immediate effect. Will the court save the heritage? There are doubts. Last week translator Anya Malhotra and historian and documentary filmmaker Sohail Hashmi filed a petition in Delhi High Court seeking a stay on the construction of the Central

(Contd.. from p. 5)

Evaluation: i) The performance of a student at the Std X board exam must be considered . ii) Std XI internal assessment marks along with the final examination results must be considered. iii) Finally whatever data is available in Std XII must be taken into consideration.

Fair evaluation: As students will be evaluated by their own teachers, there is a real fear that they will be over-marked so as to bring good results for the school. To ensure that there is no unhealthy competition among schools to over-mark their own students, the Std XII results of the previous 3 years (average) of a school should serve as a benchmark for evaluation . Let us assume that in a school, (St Peter's school for example) an average of 5% of the students secured 90%+ in the previous 3 years; 20% of students scored between 80% and 89%; 40% students scored between 70% and 79%; 20% of the students scored between 60% and 69% . The remainder 15% scored 59% and less According to the suggested criteria, the evaluation for the current year must reflect the same pattern of marking for St Peter's school.

Now suppose 20% of students from another school , (say St Paul's school) scored 90%+ marks in Std XII in the previous years, then for the

current year 20% of the students from St Paul's school must be placed in the 90%+ category. And so on down the line. This will ensure that there is minimal divergence in the performance of individual schools and students in a school. It will also ensure a level playing field for students and schools.

Finalisation of results: Now that the broad parameters of marking students have been worked out, teachers will find it easier to go ahead with evaluation. First, the subject teachers must evaluate students on the basis of data available . The marks may then be fed into the computer. The computer will prepare consolidated mark sheets along with the percentage obtained by each student. As board examination marking is usually more lenient than school marking, it will be necessary to upgrade the results. In St Peter's school, for example only 3 students may have secured 90%+ marks after evaluation by the school teachers. However , according to the suggested criteria 5 students need to be placed in the 90%+ category. Hence the programmed school computer will upgrade 2 more students who have obtained less than 90% marks. The computer will upgrade marks of all 5 students with the 5th student getting 90% marks. The marks will be increased across subjects. The same procedure may be followed down the line to the last student

—Prof Robert Castellino,
Malad

Vista Project in the midst of a pandemic. The High Court dismissed the petition holding the project as of national importance! The court also called the petition "motivated" and imposed on the petitioners a cost of Rs. 1 lakh! Knowing the context, could the Court doubt 'the ill-intent and lack of bona fides of the petitioners in filing the present petition'? The petitioners could not establish their stand, but should the Court have not considered the issue in a larger perspective?

GOD SAVE THE HERITAGE!

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FCRA Amendments, Stop's NGO's From Distributing Essential Aid

by Don Aguiar.

The Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) was amended at the height of the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic last year.

This legislation brought in by the Indian government is preventing non-profit organisations from supplying oxygen concentrators to those who desperately need them, as one notices the helplessness of the NGO's.

Although the government is fully aware that civil society organisations are crucial for last-mile delivery of services and relief, especially when a pandemic is raging. Yet the restrictive new FCRA rules have left them starved of funds and unable to respond to those in need **as the FCRA amendments will impact reach and functioning as these** changes to the FCRA would deal a crushing blow to the voluntary sector and impact its ability to collaborate and conduct research. **The amendments restrained NGOs, empowered authorities.**

The changes effected through the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2020 would also severely impact collaborative research in critical fields in India as organisations receiving foreign funds will no longer be able to transfer them to smaller NGOs working at the grassroots level.

The FCRA Amendment Bill would initially impact the livelihoods of workers associated with these small NGOs and ultimately lead to the "killing" of the entire sector as caps on administrative expenses would make it impossible for even the bigger NGOs to perform.

As the Covid-19 crisis deepens, there are concerns that the smaller non-profit organisations in rural parts of India will suffer the most without the support of funding from larger groups.

NGOs warn an increase in bureaucracy is adding to delays the country cannot afford at this critical time.

Some NGOs have approached the Delhi and Guwahati High Courts against these amendments as the key elements of these amendments were that they prohibited transfer of foreign contributions by stating that foreign funders can no longer continue the common practice of providing one large grant to an Indian charity with the expectation that it will re-grant the funds to smaller, local charities.

The amendments also provided that any organization seeking registration under FCRA (either prior permission or renewal) must provide identification information for key functionaries. It also lowered the limit on use of foreign contributions for administrative expenses from 50% earlier to 20%.

Another change was that the amendments made it mandatory for recipients of foreign funds to deposit them in a designated FCRA account maintained with the State Bank of India and required that all charities who intend to receive foreign funds will need to open a new FCRA account with a specified bank branch.

The amended law has given greater powers to the authorities to take actions related to non-compliance by empowering them to "freeze" the organisation's remaining foreign funds pending completion of an investigation or by suspending the organisation's registration for up to one year.

The changes mean NGOs operating in India can't distribute any foreign contributions to other groups, and all funding from abroad must be placed in a specific bank account in the capital, Delhi.

At the time of implementation, the Indian government said the new rules were intended to bring "greater transparency" and "stop the misuse of foreign funds by some people."

BUT the legislation has stopped the NGO's from distributing oxygen concentrators from foreign donors and supplying them to the government, because they still are unable to open a new bank account in Delhi, resulting in the amendment costing lives.

India is in the midst of a medical crisis as the death toll from coronavirus continues to climb. The official figures say more than 250,000 plus people have died from the virus but some experts believe the real figure is many times higher. Many hospitals are overwhelmed, and oxygen is in short supply.

The FCRA rules include:

- 1) NGOs and charities have to register under the FCRA before they can function
- 2) Any funding coming from abroad must be put into specific branches of the State Bank of India in Delhi, as notified by the government
- 3) NGOs can no longer distribute foreign contributions (money and supplies) to other charities, so subcontracting is forbidden

The amendment is causing unnecessary delays to Covid-19 relief aid, due to additional form-filling and complex rules around distributing funds and criminalises the acceptance of aid by NGOs even if they're working on Covid-19. The law makes it very difficult for them to be able to even accept

(Contd.. on p. 9)

(Contd.. from p. 8)

foreign aid coming in without being in violation of the law.

Even as NGOs face severe fund shortages due to changes in FCRA effected by the Centre last year – which has adversely impacted their ability to reach out to the poor and marginalised in both rural and urban areas during the second wave of the coronavirus in India – the Centre has repeatedly thwarted attempts by Right to Information (RTI) activists to access details surrounding the reasons why the Act was amended as well as the Modi government has also been reluctant to release information as to why the amendment was needed.

While the legislation tried to silence those speaking out against the government if a member of an NGO took part in a protest, it often resulted in FCRA cancellation. But a leader of India's ruling party, the BJP, vehemently defends the legislation and says, "It has been debated by parliament, passed by parliament," "We expect other countries to respect our laws. We are a sovereign country."

Reports suggest the Modi government has been suspicious of foreign-funded activity. In the past he has accused mainstream charities of halting economic growth.

These actions are guided by what the government thinks is in the public interest, namely, the need for imposing a stricter and tougher regulatory regime that will make it more and more difficult for most NGOs to receive foreign funds. Cutting off funds to the NGOs and now asking those very NGOs to help fight the pandemic is quite audacious.

The NITI Ayog is holding online meetings with around 1,000 NGOs to help fight the pandemic on the one hand while on the other hand severely impeding their ability to attract funds from abroad to deliver in areas where the governments reach is minimal if non-existent. It is also quite audacious for them to ask NGOs what they have done to fight the pandemic and mitigate the suffering of people like they did earlier while trying to cut the flow of funds to such organisations.

The fear that the Modi administration 'erected hurdles' for Covid-19 relief is now materialising as the FCRA

amendment has a damaging effect on the ability of foreign funded NGOs to channel Covid-19 relief and aid from abroad. While international donors are raising millions, the Modi administration has erected hurdles for overseas organizations and guided money toward officially endorsed groups.

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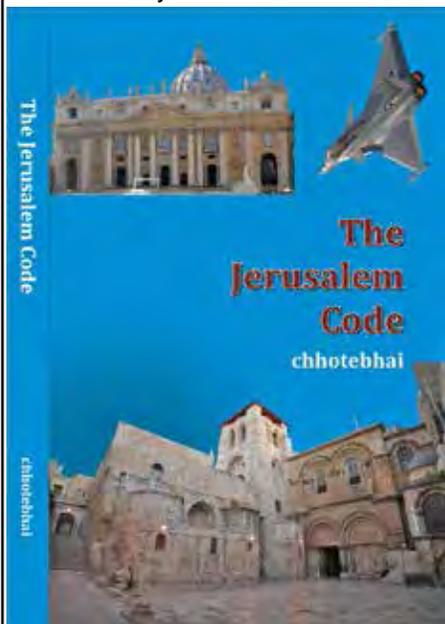
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by Chhotebhai

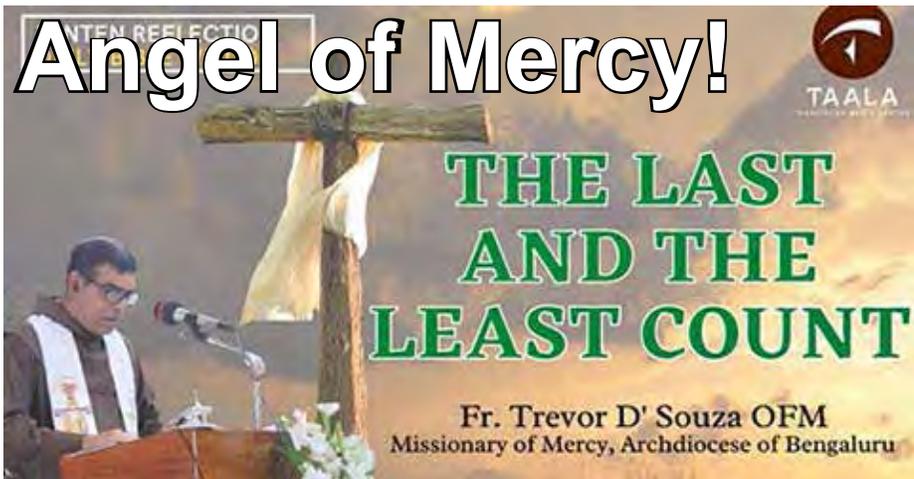


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Father Trevor D'Souza is a simple Franciscan friar of Saint Anthony's Friary, Koramangala, Bangalore whose expertise in the field of religious economics is legendary in religious circles in India. A qualified Chartered Accountant, he has been skilfully conducting innumerable seminars on finance matters for priests and religious across the country, demonstrating how accounting which has become the hub of their ministry in relation to investment planning, budgeting, auditing, depreciation, taxes, TDS and a plethora of allied matters, is not "Judas' work" as such but an inevitable part of the mission of Christ.



by Ladislaus Louis D'Souza

daily BLESSING PRAYER SERVICE FOR PROTECTION & HEALING, of which at the time of writing this article, 58 sessions held to date [55 with the blessing of salt, water & oil) have benefitted innumerable people. Thirdly, he has initiated a special MEMORIAL MASS, some 17 of which have so far covered the souls of no less than 417 individuals who, having died during Covid times, have been buried without the benefit of a Funeral Mass.

The immense consolation Father Trevor's three-pronged strategy is bringing people across the country and the globe

is commendable as is evident from the views and sentiments expressed by participants at the end of every Memorial Mass, tearful thanks flowing from the heart!

Strong foundation

Basing the celebration of the entire ZOOM Mass on the twin **Faith-Resurrection** precept, Trevor D'Souza OFM—ordained priest in March 1993—empathizes with those who've lost their loved ones and have, in addition, faced the ignominy of not even having so much as a last glance at their face, with protocol restricting the numbers of mourners permitted worsening the trauma, the burial itself characterized by unseemly haste.

Dwelling on **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 & John 11:20-27**, this 'Angel of Mercy' gently leads participants in perceiving

that their grief ought not to be like that of those who have no hope. Catholicism teaches that the Resurrection is everything for the believer, Saint Paul clarifying that "if Christ is not risen our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain" (1 Cor 15:14). Further, with Jesus himself asserting, "Whoever believes in me will never die" (Jn 11:26a), we sure have the hope of living our lives with the promise of Salvation constantly before us! **"Do we as baptized Christians really believe this?"** he asks. Indeed, 'do we believe' has been the battle-cry of this genial friar at each Memorial Mass, in repetition of Jesus' question to Martha when she said matter-of-factly to him: "Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died" (Jn 11:21)! The rest is Gospel history!

Grief gratified

Father Trevor [Mob: 9481326855], a worthy son of the Poverello of Assisi, doesn't stop here but proceeds to link the expression of a Christian's faith at the recitation of the Creed at Sunday Mass. He does this by backing his reflections on the faith-resurrection perspective with an in-depth understanding that came from a gut-conviction when, standing by his father's coffin in July 1990 in Belgaum, he found himself questioning the purely intellectual treatise he had submitted as his assignment on the 'Resurrection of Jesus' during his priestly training and for which he is said to have earned exceptionally good marks. With death suddenly a stark reality, he saw vividly and conclusively the link between the spectre of death and Jesus' assurance of eternal life.

Consoling closure

Dwelling on the deep significance of the affirmation "*I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting*", Trevor, a product of Jesuit academic education and Franciscan religious formation, lucidly enables believers to bring about a sense of closure to their grief by reorienting their sorrow to absorb the very hope of seeing each other with and in Jesus standing out as a beacon of light amidst the turmoil of darkness in evidence all around us on account of the fluctuating COVID-19 situation.

Thrice as merciful!

It was on 27 April 2020 that the Holy Father, Pope Francis, appointed Father Trevor as a MISSIONARY OF MERCY for a period of three years—a faculty which empowers him to forgive certain sins hitherto reserved to the Pope. A year down the line the goodly friar, putting his CA precision to further religious use, has come up with *three mercy initiatives* for the benefit of those *infected* with COVID-19, for others *victimized* by it, and for the comfort and consolation of those *bereaved* as a result.

Friar Trevor, brother of renowned educationist and writer Dr Jeanette Pinto of Mumbai, has opened what is termed THE BOOK OF LIFE in which to record the names of those in need of special prayer on account of the virus, over 1800 individuals already sending in names. Next, he has started a

Goa: Rome of the Orient “Roma do Oriente”

by *Philomena Lawrence and Gilbert Lawrence*

Extracts from the book Insights into Colonial Goa

Published by Kindle and Amazon as e-book and paperback

Most non-Goans may find the title of this article strange. Yet Goa, a 3,700 sq. km area on the west coast of India was designated and functioned as Rome of the Orient or Rome of the East from the 16th to the 20th century. To understand this transfer of pontifical power, it is essential to know the history of Rome, the Eternal City in Italy.

Historical Background

Roman mythology places the city's origin to 753 BCE. Since then, its influence grew and culminated when it rose to the status of capital of the Roman Empire. However, by the third century CE, the empire and its capital city were under assault from external and internal forces, which cause the power shift from Rome to Byzantium (present-day Turkey) and the resulting installation of a new capital at Constantinople (present-day Istanbul). The Byzantine Empire (330-1453 CE) was also known as the Eastern Roman Empire. Even though Rome had lost its political and military prominence, the city maintained its position as the religious capital of the Latin Church. The Eastern Roman Empire flourished as a powerful cultural, military, economic and religious force, while its capital, Constantinople, prospered as the center of the Greek Orthodox Church. In the early 15th century, the eastern half of the Roman Empire and its capital were also under increasing internal and external pressures. In 1453, the Ottoman Turks captured Byzantium's capital thereby terminating the Eastern Roman Empire. This event presented Rome with an opportunity to reinstate itself as the major leader of Christendom.

The fall of Byzantium to the Turks also had an impact on the Silk Road --the major East- West trade route, which began in China and ended at various southern Mediterranean ports such as

Antioch, Alexandria and various ports in Lebanon. These ports served the ships that transported the merchandise onwards to ports in Italy --Venice, Genoa, Florence, Rome, and Naples -- as well as Marseilles in France. Trading along the Silk Road trade, especially in spices, was dominated by Turkey and Venice, earning for the latter the titles of Queen of the Adriatic, Spice King of Europe and Richest City-State in the world. It was common knowledge that the price markup for spices, from their production site in Asia to the consumer in Europe, was as high as several thousand percent.

Since Portugal and Spain were located at the western end of the spice route, those two countries bore the brunt of the high cost of transporting the spices. But that did not diminish those European countries' interest in participating in the spice trade. Instead, they hoped to tap into the lucrative market by entering Asia and dealing directly with the spice growers, thereby eliminating the middlemen such as traders, ship owners, caravans, wars, pirates, and brigands. The mid-15th century, during which new rulers controlled the trade route, presented Portugal and Spain with such a fortunate opportunity.

Goa in the Spotlight

During the ensuing Age of Exploration, countries vied with each other to be the first to sail the high seas and reach “the other side” of the earth. Christopher Columbus, who was sponsored by Spain, crossed the Atlantic in 1493 hoping to reach Asia but was stymied by the Americas and the Pacific Ocean. Portugal sponsored Vasco da Gama's voyage around the African continent and across the Indian Ocean. The intrepid explorer successfully landed in India on May 20, 1498. To prevent these sea-powers from claiming each-other's territories and

going to war over territorial rights, the pope arranged for the two countries to sign the Treaty of Tordesillas on June 7, 1494. This document defined the regions of the so-called “unknown” world that each nation could claim as its own possession / colony. With the pope's approval, control over the previously unknown world was peacefully divided between Portugal and Spain.

In 1510, Portugal established a foothold on Indian soil when it established its dominion over Goa, making it the first European colony in Asia. Goa not only became Portugal's colonial capital, it served as Portugal's military, cultural, economic and religious capital for its several Afro-Asian outposts scattered along both side of the Indian Ocean -- the east coast of Africa, Mid-East, Asian subcontinent, south-east Asia in the Malacca straits, China, and Japan, extending all the way to the Spice Islands.

During the Age of the Absolute Monarch, papal authority was on the decline after Henry VIII (1491-1547; r 1509-1547) formed his own Christian Church in England. In other European countries, the kings encouraged the Reformation by confiscating church properties and persecuting the clergy. To prevent the same disastrous events from occurring in Portugal and Spain, the pope entered into a Padroado and Patranto (patronage) system, respectively, with these countries. The arrangement permitted the monarchs to control the religious appointments, enforce papal edicts and maintain accounts of church revenues in their respective country and colonies.

Travelling by sail boats from Europe to Asia was dangerous as well as a slow process, which took between six months to a year. Portugal could hardly expect to provide direct and timely governance of its Asian colonies. To resolve this important issue, Portugal appointed the archbishop in Goa, who became the ecclesiastical over-

(Contd.. on p. 12)

seer of the entire colonial region. The archbishop's prestigious and powerful role resulted in Goa being heralded as Roma do Oriente, Rome of the East and Goa Dorado (Golden Goa). The city served as a shining symbol for the growing Portuguese maritime empire. In addition to its religious prominence, Goa had financial responsibilities. It levied excise duties on every exported and imported item that passed through its port thereby saving the land-owning locals from taxation. Goa's thriving economy fostered and paid for the construction of administrative, religious, academic buildings as well as port facilities.

Building Boom

Old Goa, the capital, became the focal point of majestic cathedrals and basilicas. The members of nearly all the major religious orders were housed in that city's numerous monasteries, abbeys, convents, and seminaries. The Italian congregation of Theatines built a mini-St. Peter's Basilica which they named the Church of St. Cajetan; the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) erected the Basilica of Bom Jesus to honor St. Francis Xavier, a Jesuit who came to Goa in 1542 and established the order in Asia. To honor the Apostle of the East and Patron Saint of Missionaries, the basilica holds the mortal remains of the saint in a silver casket, which was a gift from the last Florentine Medici – Cosimo III – the Grand Duke of Tuscany. The mausoleum's exquisite silver urn crafted by local artists, who have traditionally excelled in metal work. The mausoleum itself was designed by Giovanni Foggini, a Florentine sculptor; but the ornate decorations are the contributions of Goan and Indian artisans. The religious structures were typically baroque in style with high ceilings, rococo altars, gilt-covered pulpits, and other embellishments. Some religious and secular buildings, on the other hand, were designed in the Manueline-style of architecture, named in honor of the king. It is interesting to note that in the 1500s, Goa's public building boom was paid for by the imposition of an excise duty

on all the goods that transited via Goa's port.

Most Goan structures built in the early 1500s and 1600s have suffered the destructive effects of time. However, some are still standing and are recognized as UNESCO World Heritage sites. For example, the Cathedral Se, as well as churches and convents built in the 16th and 17th centuries across Goa represent an assortment of architectural styles -- Manueline, late Gothic, Mannerist, Tuscan, Baroque, and Corinthian. The unique mix of western architectural styles serves as major tourist attractions and case studies for Indian students studying Western architectural patterns. The beautiful façades and interior decorations of these religious sites are testaments to the artistry and faith of Indian craftsmen. While iron-rich laterite stone, abundant in Goa, is used in the construction of places of worship and family homes, soft basalt stone is used to carve religious figures.

When the architects were planning the future city, they were keenly aware of the tropical island's pervading summer heat and intrinsic charm. The buildings – public as well as private, religious, civic and commercial -- were designed to satisfy the Europeans' appetite for novelty and flamboyance, as a way to make the colonists feel they were still living in Portugal. The plans did not include the building of a palace for a king, but some of the features of the proposed structures reflected a new grandeur identified as Manueline and named for Manuel I, the king of Portugal. The typical characteristics of Manueline architecture: they were monumental in scale and profusely ornamental. The capital was relocated to Panjim in 1843 because Old Goa was mosquito-infested and the above-ground open sewer system overflowed during the monsoon season.

Making Goa into 'Roma do Oriente'

The immediate task the missionaries who arrived in India faced was to familiarize themselves with the religion, philosophy, customs, traditions, and habits of the Goan people. Those

daunting challenges required the friars and nuns to become linguists and serve as translators and diplomats as they promoted a confluence of cultures and races. The fusing of these traits and ways of life gave Goa a unique identity. However, that uniqueness was refreshing to some but disturbing to others, especially to the purists and newly-arrived priests.

By the mid-sixteenth century, Goa reached its economic peak which was deemed the second phase of Golden Goa (*Bangarachem Goem*). The construction of cathedrals, churches, and chapels was in high gear. Goa truly became the "Rome of the East." The clergy spread their message of salvation mainly to the converted; religious services were conducted in Latin, a strange and foreign language to the local people.

Although all the new arrivals can rightfully be considered pioneers, a few were outstanding visionaries who had fire-in-the-belly for change and progress. It is worth noting that in the 16th century, except for Sanskrit, other Indian languages and their dialects were merely oral and did not follow grammatical rules or have a written script. It was up to the missionaries to learn the vernacular, develop a script and grammar for the oral languages. These developments were a prelude to formal communication and facilitated the translation of the Bible and other books on Christian doctrine. As the acknowledged "Rome of the Orient," Goa had to provide leadership not only for Goa and India but the entire orient.

Perhaps the most well-known of the foreign missionaries were the Jesuits, who founded St. Paul College in Old Goa and introduced the printer to India in 1556, a century after it was invented in Germany. That same year, the first book- *Conclusiones Philosophicas* -- was published in Goa. A year later and five years after Francis Xavier had expired, his text entitled, *Catecismo da Doutrina Christa* was posthumously printed. In a short pe-

riod of time, Latin as well as the Devanagari and Tamil scripts were developed for various Indian languages, and books were printed in those languages. Texts on Konkani vocabulary and grammar as well as Portuguese-to-Konkani dictionaries gave a much-needed boost to the native language, which led to a spurt of printed material in Konkani.

Like Francis Xavier, Thomas (Stephens) Estevao (1549-1619), was a renowned Jesuit who arrived in Goa in 1579. He was born in England and educated at Oxford University and in Rome. A gifted linguist, Estevao's focus was on mastering spoken Marathi and Konkani as well as developing the grammar and scripts for the two languages. His first book was titled *Krista Purana* (Discursosobre a vinda de Jesus Christo -- Story of Christ, published in 1616). The book related the events in the life of Christ in the form of a poem, which used a mixture of Marathi and Konkani vocabulary but was printed in the Roman script. Estevao is also the author of *Doutrina Christamem Lingoa Bramana Canarim*—a Christian catechism book written in Konkani and printed at Rachol Seminary's press in 1622. In 1640, he also wrote Konkani-language books such as *Arte da lingua Canarim* in the Roman script. It is interesting to note that the first Konkani grammar book—the first text on the grammar of any Indian language -- was written in Portuguese. In those days the term "Konkani" did not exist. Instead, it was called Canarim. This dedicated priest served as the Superior of the Jesuits in Goa from 1590-1596.

In addition to the Catholic priests who worked in Goa and India, there were also a few Protestant ministers who came to India, and they deserve to be recognized. For example, Calvinist William Carey translated the Bible into 40 Indian languages and dialects. Other scholars who provided the same service included Henry Martyn, who translated the Bible into Hindi, Urdu and Persian; Bartholomaeus

Ziegenbalg is credited with translating the Bible into Tamil, and Adoniram Judson wrote the Burmese version of the Bible. Christian Schwarz was a German Lutheran who served in the courts of Hyder Ali and the raja of Tanjore. Schwarz opened schools in various places to educate both the Hindus and Muslims. Dr. Abdul Kalam, a renowned astrophysicist and future President of India, graduated from Schwarz High School, named in honor of the philanthropic educator.

Richard Humble's article in *The Explorers* includes a community leader's letter to the king Manuel in 1524. It stated, "Within the circuit of the city (Old Goa) there is no unoccupied ground." By 1530, there was adequate construction under way for the capital of the Portuguese colony to be moved from Quillon (Kollam) to Goa. From the small island of Tiswadi, Portugal oversaw the affairs of its overseas territories, which extended from Mozambique in East Africa to the Spice Island of Indonesia. Truly, Goa was "Queen of the Orient" and on its way to entering its second Golden Goa era, which the natives called *Bangarachem Goem*. Portuguese was the "lingua franca" for navigation and commerce; Iberian nobility communicated in Castilian, while Latin and French were exclusively used by wise and learned scholars. Konkani, the native language, received a boost from expert linguists, who developed and promoted its grammar and script. These intellectuals wrote and translated works from Sanskrit, Persian, Latin and Greek into Konkani. With the installation of the printing press in Old Goa -- the first of its kind in Asia—the city became the envy of the plebeians as well as the learned across India and the rest of Asia.

Over the course of centuries, Goa attracted priests and nuns from all over Europe who made enormous contributions to the Konkani community in the fields of religion, education and health. Formalizing the native languages with grammar and a script were a prelude to formal communication and the first steps to translating the Bible and

books on Christian doctrine. The clergy spread their message of salvation mainly to the converted through religious services conducted in Latin, a strange and foreign language to the local people. An author described the Europeans' priorities as "Spices for the king of Portugal and Souls for the King of Heaven." The capital city was truly Roma do Oriente (Rome of the Orient). In 1843, after the plague devastated the Cidade de Goa, the capital was moved to its present site, Panaji / Panjim (Nova Goa). Yet Old Goa continued to be the Ecclesiastical center of the Catholic Church in the Orient. As the acknowledged "Rome of the Orient," Goa had to provide leadership not only for the Indian subcontinent but for the entire orient, from Sofala, Mozambique in Africa to Nagasaki, Japan, in the far-east Asia.

At the peak of the economic boom (1550-early 1800), Old Goa proudly stood on equal footing with contemporary European capitals. Centers of higher learning -- colleges and academies -- were most often allied with Christian religious societies. Particularly noteworthy: The first printing press on the Indian subcontinent produced copies of the Bible and other highly esteemed books, which had been translated into various Indian languages and Persian. There was no language barrier, as the literary texts were written in Portuguese, Latin and Konkani.

Besides, the individual priests and nuns were natural diplomats who diffused and settled volatile situations with tact rather than with the haughty colonists' attitude. The newly-formed Society of Jesus (Jesuits) is credited with focusing on educating young Goans, and the dedicated nuns lived by the admirable motto, "Earn a living by contributing to the community rather than by being a parasite."

Insights into Colonial Goa, authored by Philomena Lawrence and Gilbert Lawrence, Reviews the Age of Exploration, Capitalism, and Mercantilism as well as the Inquisition in Goa and the contribution of European Christian missionaries to Goa and the orient.

Why didn't the dinosaur cross the road?

Because there weren't even any roads during the Jurassic Period!

Why did the physics teacher break up with the biology teacher?

There was no chemistry.

A doctor asks his patient angrily, "Why did you send my bill back, unopened, Mr. Gunrick?"

Mr Gunrick explains, "But doctor, it was you who told me I must avoid any upsets and stress!"

A skeleton walks into a restaurant. After a while the waiter comes and says: "I'm so sorry, sir. You must have been waiting pretty long."

A guest calls the waiter and complains, "How come there are no chairs at our table?!"

-

The waiter shrugs, "I'm sorry but you only booked one table..."

Optimist: The glass is half full.

Pessimist: The glass is half empty.

Mother: Why didn't you use a coaster!

What to do when somebody is trying to start an argument with you? Simply eat a few cookies. They taste very nice and you can't hear anything over the crunching.

What goes through every village, over mountains, crosses rivers and deserts and yet never moves?

-

A road.

How many gorillas can fit into a car?

Eight.

How many chickens can fit into the car?

None, the car is already full of goril-



las.

I looked at my crush while I was filling her glass with water. The water overflowed and spilled all over my trousers. She looked at me and asked, "What are you doing?" I said, "For you, I will always give 110 percent..."

A girl asks a boy, "Peter, how much do you love me?"

The boy looks her in the eyes, "Look up at the stars, that's how much I love you."

The girl is confused, "But it's morning, there are no stars?"

Boy nods, "Exactly!"

Police officer: "Your car is too heavily overloaded. I simply cannot let you continue like that. I'm going to have to take away your driver's license."

Driver: "You're kidding me, right? The license can only weigh one ounce tops!"

I've always thought my neighbors were quite nice people. But then they put a password on their Wi-Fi.

Bob: "Holy schmoozes, I just fell off a 30 ft ladder."

Jim: "No way man, are you okay?"

Bob: "Yeah, luckily I was just on the first step."

What do you call a typo on a tombstone?

A grave mistake.

When I look at chocolate, I hear two voices in my head.

The first one says: "You need to eat that chocolate."

The other voice goes: "You heard. Eat the chocolate."

"What are you doing in the fridge?"

-

"The recipe said, rest in the fridge for 1 hour."

Insurance clerk: "Where were you born, sir?"

Man: "In the United States."

Insurance clerk: "OK, and which part?"

Man: "My entire body."

Just came home from a training session. Two hours on the treadmill did me really good. If only I could somehow stop the constant beeping and the irritated comments of the cashier.

A boy breaks an old vase at a rich uncle's house. The uncle gets extremely angry and yells: "Do you even know how old the vase was? It was from the 17th century!" The boy sagged in relief: "Oh, good that it wasn't new."

Do you want to hear a joke backwards?

Yes...

Very good, start laughing.

The police stops a computer hardware engineer: "Your light isn't working. You have to get off your bike."

IT guy: "I tried that but the light still isn't working."

"Little Jonny, why did you put your teddy in the freezer?"

-

"I would like to have a polar bear."

A New Normal



We are all excited about the first day of school as we have come back after so long. We could clear our concepts that we have missed out in online classes more efficiently in the off line classes. As educators, teachers have the responsibility to educate and inspire the whole child—mind, heart, and soul. By focusing on the following essentials, we can put more joy into students' experience of going to school and get more joy out of working inside one.

So what can schools and teachers do to bring some joy into children's formal education? Children typically spend from six to seven hours each day in school for nearly 10 months each year. During the school year, children generally spend more time interacting with their teachers than with their parents. What happens inside schools has a deep and lasting effect on the mind-sets that children develop toward lifelong learning. The digital classes were making rapid progress, so much so that students

were finding it tough to keep up with them. Some preferred to attend classes conducted by individual schools, rather than those telecast online.

The fresh bouts of infection in the country make it significantly difficult to set a date for school reopening. Yet, some preliminary thought has been given to how students can return to the classroom safely. This is all the more important as a transition phase seems inevitable – outbreaks cannot be ruled out even if containment is achieved. The second wave of COVID-19 transmission has dimmed the chances of schools reopening in time in the new academic year.

In the new academic year, there will be a need to ensure that children are viewing the digital classes. The challenge, officials say, is how to increase interaction with students instead of sticking to pure digital mode in order to address the learning gaps. As far as technology is concerned, they say they are on a strong wicket, having facilities to provide live classes along with recorded ones. However, mental stress in the absence of in-person education, particularly among primary students, needs to be paid attention to when possibilities of school reopening are being discussed. If everything goes smoothly and vaccination is done for school going children we can think of reopening schools after Diwali.



Jayanthy Subramaniam

The month of June was busy for parents, students and teachers in the past. Parents take one day off to stand in school que to purchase books and cover it in the best way possible. Again, parents opt for a weekend or a Sunday to buy uniforms for their children. Usually, after the summer vacation children put on some weight after enjoying home food and home comfort and so it is needless to go for a fresh set of uniforms in the new academic year. So far such a situation has not arisen as the pandemic

pound people in all places and going to school is just a dream. There is no need to buy bigger size shoes for the new year. We miss the ringing of school bells.

You grow up so fast in high school. It is not something you wait for, it just kind of happens. One day you will look back and be proud of who you have become, but at the same time, you will. Covid 19 has robbed a lot from children in 2020 and part of 2021 already. It has not been easy teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. Virtual teaching can be challenging because it is new; however, it requires the same good old fashion teaching strategies we used in the four-walled classroom: engaging pedagogy, teaching from the heart, involving the family, being accessible, and showing that we care.

During these hard times that the world is experiencing, it is easy to panic and get upset. Especially during the quarantine, when you feel isolated and very lonely. It may seem that your previous life would never return. Those negative thoughts and feelings can really get to you sometimes. The idea of studying at home is good, because we still need to learn, but I don't like it so much. It's difficult to figure out which webpages I need to access, what they write to

me, and what I have to do. It is difficult because we are all learning to work in such an environment now, both teachers and students. Another difficulty is that we need computers, headphones, and microphones.

As you can see, experiencing joy, even in light of all the difficulties we are facing at this time both personally and collectively, can be achieved by some easy modifications to our day-to-day activities. Let your joy be in your journey—not in some distant goal.

Proof Of Divinity

A Short Story

Along the far rim of the eastern horizon a red ball of crimson sun wiped away the grey light of early morning and blazed its way across the open countryside in a first blush of bright daylight.

A young man stood on the front porch and admired the awesome view. He thought to himself of how truly his almighty Father was the Lord of life and all creation.

"May I help you, Sir?"

He turned around and faced the butler of the manor.

"Please, give this note to Miss Butler."

The butler took the note and was about to leave when the young man broke the silence saying:

"Ralph, tell your sick mother I will meet her on Saturday at noon."

"Yes, Sir.....but how did you know my name, Sir?"

"It's a long story. Please, give the note to Miss Baker."

The butler turned and walked into the large sprawling house, wondering how the gentleman knew his name and that he had a sick mother.

When Martha read the note she was amused. Imagine someone, a stranger, wanting to meet you to change your life. It was intriguing. She decided to meet the man at the City Singles Club.

Scattered across the green lawns of the club were tables and chairs, a few with couples and friends whispering and laughing over cups of coffee and

soft drinks. Martha was late on arrival and wondered what she

A waiter padded up to her and smiled. "Miss Baker, please follow me."

The young man sitting at the table stood up to greet her with a broad smile.

"Martha", he spoke her name with confidence. "Do sit down, please." Turning towards the waiter he said: "Thank you, Peter. The lady would like a glass of Jewish wine."

"Yes, Sir," said the waiter and left.

Martha did not waste time. She looked at the man who dared to call her by name and harshly confronted him with a set of stern questions?

"who are you ? "Where are you from?"

"My name is Jesus. I come from Nazareth. Any further questions ?"

Martha smiled and in amusement asked, "You mean the Jesus Christ?"

"Yes."

She stood up shocked. " I must be going, you see, I don't believe in religious things."

" I know. My father told me to show you the Light, the truth and the way."

"Are you serious ? I suppose your father is Almighty God?"

"Yes", he replied seriously.

"Look here, whoever you are, I've had enough of all this nonsense. I must leave."

Jesus stood up and politely went to her side of the table. "We will meet again, yes?"

"I hope not," Martha snapped. She walked out of the club lawns, took a cab and went home, leaving him standing at the table.

That evening at the dining table Ralph, the butler spoke of the young man who had given him the letter.

"Madam, he knew I had a sick mother at home, and he also knew my name...."

Martha smiled. "Someone he might have met in the town may have told him of your mother and also your name."

The next morning Martha went down to have her breakfast, and found a letter on the right side of the table where she always sat for her meals. The letter was from Jesus and he requested her to meet him at the same club at 10 am.

Martha decided to meet him and put an end to this absurd game of lies.

The same waiter guided her to the table reserved for them. Jesus stood up to welcome her. Once she sat down Jesus began with a strange question: " Do you believe in God?"

"I don't think there is a God!" She snapped.

"If there is no God, how did the world come about?"

"You tell me – you're Jesus."

"It was created by my father. He made man and woman from the dust of the earth – and when they die their bodies return to the dust. The Spirit of God returns to the Father. The human body is a mere temple and lives because of the spirit."

"Enough!" shouted Martha. " I did not come to be taught about my faith!"

(Contd.. on p. 17)

"You have many sins to be forgiven and my father has decided upon you to spread the Word and bring fallen souls to him."

" Why me? I am a sinner!"

" Paul of Tarsus was a sinner and so was saint Augustine...."

"But I don't believe in God – and you call yourself the Son of God – making a mockery of Christ..."

"Please," said Jesus, "take this small gift from my Mother Mary." He opened the right palm of his hand in which a golden box glowed with a strange mystical light. "Please, take it."

Martha reached out and took the box from the open palm of his hand – and, what she saw made her faint and fall back into the cushioned chair.

In the center of his open palm she saw the wound he bore when the nail was driven through his palm to the wooden cross. Christ had returned as a common man, once again with a message from His Father. The palms of his hands were proof of HIS Divinity.

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7212. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in February 1991), Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Bachelor of Arts, B.H.M.S., Luzern, Switzerland, working as a Restaurant Supervisor. Contact email : noellyn_p@hotmail.com

7213. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1989), Ht.6', Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Sc. in Hospitality Studies, working in a reputed organization. Contact email : merwyn1989pinto@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 : shaun.neo00.outlook.com

7203. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1985), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn.B.E. MBA, working for International Company. Contact email : delphinempinto@gmail.com

7220. MUMBAI : Anglo Indian Roman Catholic Divorcee, (Born in May 1978), Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 76 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA PGDM, working as a HR. Contact email : rodrigsmargaret69@gmail.com

7188. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor (Hearing Impaired) (Born in September 1989), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 62 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. HSC., Dip. in Computer Hardware. Working as a Cashier. Contact email : clifford9948@gmail.com OR 9920331773

7132. MUMBAI : Goan RC Bachelor, (Born in January 1987) Ht. 5'8", Wt. 72 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.A., PG in

Advy. / Graphics & Animation, working as a Graphic Designer. Contact email : dcostastephen03@gmail.com

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

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**

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

6485. MUMBAI: North Indian R.C. Bachelor, (Born in October 1974), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 75 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working for an MNC in Mumbai as Back Office Executive. Contact email : awr88@rediffmail.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

7196. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor (Born in March 1981), Ht. 6', Wt. 80 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., HR Professional. Contact email : denstun@hotmail.com

6250. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in January 1974), Ht.5' 8", Wt. 76 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., working as a Manager. **Contact email : cardoz.clint@gmail.com OR 9833563182**

7175. MUMBAI : Goan RC 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

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7105 MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in November 1991), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 62 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., Microbiology, (Pursuing Ph.D.,) Assistant Professor. Contact email : 1991divine@gmail.com

6642 MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Divorcee, (Born in September 1979), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a Customer Service professional. Contact email : sav_mon@yahoo.com Tel.No. 8291001606

7070. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in March 1992), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 48 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com., CS., working as a Company Secretary in Private Firm. Contact email : smile9920@outlook.com

7214. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1986), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 52 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. CA CFA Ms Finance M.Com., working as a Senior Manager. Contact email : rfernandes020@gmail.com

6831. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1991), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 54 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as an Senior Associate in Insurance Company. Contact email : denidsouza854@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

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, Singapore) working as a Senior Manager of Corporate Communications in **SINGAPORE**. Contact email : mafern.2121@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

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

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

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

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 Associate. Contact email : sunrays1227@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

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

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

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 :

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7191. BANGALORE : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1991), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 57 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.S (Electrical Engineering in US), M.S in Robotics Engineering, working as a Software for a reputed Company in **New York**. Contact email :

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Decalogue Six & Book Six

Lest one go into sixes and sevens over this title; it was occasioned by a recent headline in the Times of India that read “New Vatican Law criminalizes sexual abuse by priests, laity”. It was referring to Decalogue Six, the sixth commandment, “You shall not commit adultery” (Ex 20:14, Deut 5:18). It was also referring to Book Six of Canon Law promulgated by Pope John Paul II on 25/1/1983, titled “Sanctions in the Church”. By the Apostolic Constitution “Pascite gregem Dei” (it means – shepherd the flock of God), Pope Francis, on 1/6/2021, revised this book that is now titled “Penal Sanctions in the Church”.

Lay readers in particular would be interested to know that a plethora of church laws were first codified as late as 1917!

Was it a free for all before that? Thankfully we live in an era where there is some semblance of church law, largely inspired by the teachings of Vatican II.

While promulgating the New Code of Canon Law in 1983 Pope John Paul II had this to say: “The Code therefore demonstrates the spirit of this Council ... This new Code can be viewed as a great effort to translate the conciliar ecclesiological teaching into canonical terms ... The Code is regarded as a complement to the authentic teaching proposed by the Second Vatican Council and particularly to its Dogmatic and Pastoral Constitutions (LG & GS)”. If the Code of Canon Law, old, new or revised, is not seen in the light of Vatican II ecclesiology then it could be misinterpreted or distorted. With this caveat I dare to study the revised Book Six in comparison to the New Code of 1983. For clarity I shall suffix the numbers of the Revised Code with R and the “new” one of 1983 with N. My second caveat is that I am a

layman with no theological training, so I may please be pardoned if I arrive at some wrong conclusions.

Let us first quote some of the revised texts and then try and draw some lessons from them. The first line to strike me was “Any person is considered innocent until the contrary is proven” (1321). This is natural jurisprudence, but it could be used by powerful persons to not relinquish office or accept punishment.

However, the provisions of 1321R, though largely the same as 1326N, add a new clause for graver punishment in the case of “a person who committed an offence in a state of drunkenness or other mental disturbance, if these were deliberately sought so as to commit the offence or to excuse it, or through passion which was deliberately stimulated or nourished” (1326:4R). This is a positive development that would prevent criminals from claiming temporary insanity. Nevertheless, it would have been better if it had specifically mentioned drugs and other psycho tropic substances along with “drunkenness”.

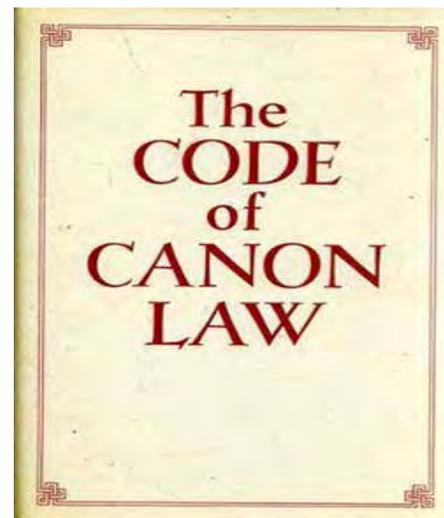


by chhotebhai *

Another positive addition is in 1335:1R that provides for the competent authority to “impose penalties it considers necessary to restore justice or repair scandal”. So other than punishment there is now also a provision for restitution. Accordingly a thief, rapist or paedophile, in addition to facing punishment, would also have to make restitution or compensation. This is again expressed in 1361:4R.

As a student I have a problem with Canons 1365R-1398R where the serial numbers have been changed. This could lead to much confusion later. There does not seem to be much merit in changing these numbers.

A new provision is found in 1371:3R that provides for punishment for perjury (false statement under oath). This is a deep rooted malaise in the Indian judicial system, as the laws of perjury are not enforced, and filing false affidavits is common. In contrast, in England, Jeffrey Archer, famous novelist and Member of Parliament, was jailed for several



years for making a perjurious statement.

Corruption and financial misappropriation are addressed in 1376 & 1377R. Punishment is to be meted out to persons who “steal ecclesiastical goods” (1376:1R). Alienation of such goods was already covered under 1377N. Abuse of ecclesiastical power, office or function, even by acts of omission, are covered by 1378:1R. Culpable negligence is addressed in 1378:2R. So bishops are also brought to account. Canon 1393:2R has a similar provision.

A new provision that sets the cat among the pigeons is this; “Both a person who attempts to confer a sacred order on a woman, and the woman who attempts to receive the sacred order, incur latae sententiae ex-communication (automatic, without an opportunity to be heard) reserved to the Holy See (1379:3). This is an insult to half the members of the church. It is an uncalled for retrograde provision.

We have heard umpteen arguments (based on ecclesiastical discipline, not on faith) against women’s ordination. I will here point out one of the most absurd ones, based on the teachings of St Thomas Aquinas, considered the father of systemic theology. I quote from the “Declaration on the question of the Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood” by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on 3.2.1977.

“The Christian priesthood is of a sacramental nature ... The whole sacramental economy is in fact based upon natural signs, on symbols imprinted upon the human psychology. Sacramental signs,

(Contd.. on p. 21)

says St Thomas, represent what they signify by natural resemblance. The same natural resemblance is required for persons as for things ... there would not be this natural resemblance which must exist between Christ and his minister if the role of Christ were not taken by a man; in such a case it would be difficult to see in the minister the image of Christ. For Christ himself was and remains a man" (No 5).

This "natural resemblance" argument raises more questions than it answers. By this token priests should have long hair and beards, do rigorous manual work (like carpenters) begin and end their ministry riding on a donkey, not having a residence of their own (cf Mat 8:20) and not even a place to be buried in. How many popes, cardinals, bishops or priests bear a natural resemblance to Jesus, a circumcised Jew? As for symbols imprinted on the human psyche, were there symbols of women frontline warriors, fighter pilots or CEOs of MNCs earlier? Times change, circumstances change, the Church too must change with time, to stay relevant. I therefore find the insertion of Canon 1379:3R an insult to womanhood, an insult to Eve, an insult to Mother Mary and an unwarranted retrograde step by a male dominated church. Disappointing.

Canon 1380R condemns the practice of Simony; that of trading spiritual favours for money. This is named after Simon the magician who attracted followers with his wizardry in Samaria. "When Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money" (Acts 8:18). Peter, the other Simon's rebuke is classic. "May your silver be lost forever, and you with it, for thinking that money could buy what God has given for nothing" (Acts 8:20). This begs the question. What about those popes who sold indulgences in the middle ages, something that was a bone of contention with Martin Luther, resulting in the Reformation and the establishment of Protestant churches? If we don't learn the lessons of history we are doomed to repeat the same mistakes.

Canon 1392R provides for penal provisions for those who "unlawfully abandon the sacred ministry for six months continuously" This is in consonance with the

act of a malingerer in civil/ secular service, and to be welcomed.

A contentious issue that has been retained is, "A Person who actually procures an abortion, incurs a latae sententiae excommunication" (1397:2R, 1398N). This provision certainly required revision. The penal provision is disproportionate to the offence; that could have several mitigating circumstances like rape, or the danger to the life of the mother. There was the case of the 9 year old girl who had been impregnated by her step father in Brazil, and had an abortion. The local archbishop excommunicated her. When then Pope Benedict XVI was asked about the rapist he replied that the sin of the rapist was not as grave so as to invite excommunication! In the case of Savita the Indian dentist in Ireland in 2012, she had septicaemia, but was denied an abortion in "Catholic Ireland." Both she and the foetus died, inviting much negative publicity for the "holier than though" Catholic Church.

I cannot digest the church's double standards when it comes to the taking of human life. On the one hand it condemns abortion outright for that very reason. However, when it comes to taking lives in war (men are the prime movers), then there is another set of rules.

When the "Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World" talks of war it, inter alia, has this to say: "Governments cannot be denied the right to legitimate defence once every means of peaceful settlement have been exhausted... Armed forces should regard themselves as agents of security and freedom... as long as they fulfil this role properly, they are making a genuine contribution to the establishment of peace" (GS 79).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church goes a step further, again based on the logic of St Thomas Aquinas. "The act of self-defense can have a double effect, the preservation of one's own life; and the killing of the aggressor. The one is intended, the other is not" (CCC 2263). "Those who legitimately hold authority also have the right to use arms to repel aggressors against the civil community entrusted to their responsibility" (CCC 2265). Earlier even the death penalty was considered ok in some circumstances (CCC 2267) until Pope Francis

declared it inadvisable on 2/8/18.

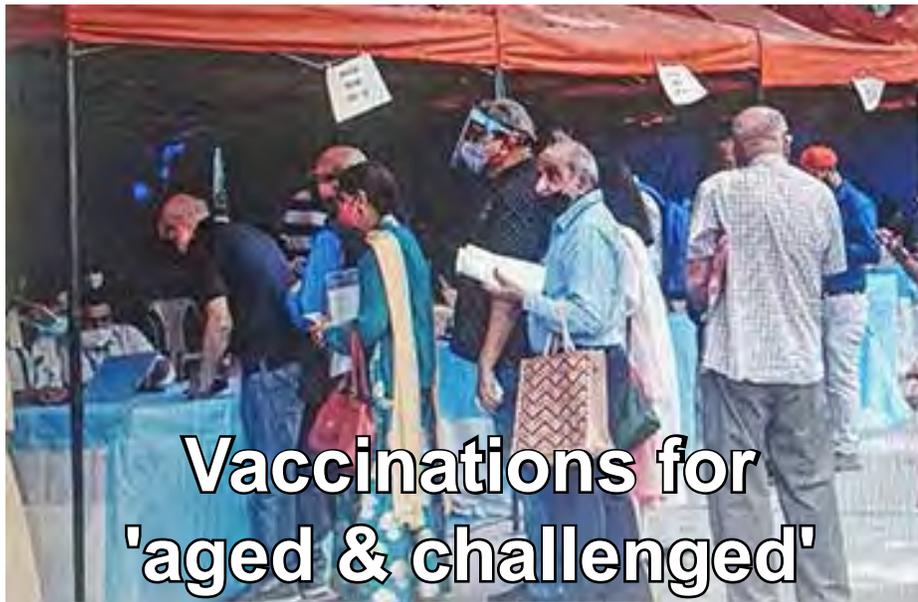
Writing in La Croix International on 4/6/21 Loup Besmond de Senneville says that when Abp Fillipo Iannone, President of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts since 2018 was questioned about some of these anomalies, specifically pertaining to dismissal of priests for sexual abuse he said: "An automatic sentence would not make sense. It is a principle of justice"! Obviously then, the Catholic Church has one set of principles for women procuring an abortion, and another for the violent or heinous acts of men. I don't buy this duality.

The next Canon, 1398, redeems the church's image to some extent. This is what drew maximum media attention. Unfortunately it retains the archaic term, the sixth commandment of the Decalogue. It could have more specifically referred to sexual acts or relationships. It calls for punishment and deprivation from office for such acts against a minor or one who "habitually has an imperfect use of reason" (1398:1R). It also penalizes those who induce or stimulate such persons to expose themselves pornographically (1398:2R). Retention or use of such pornographic context is also punishable (1398:3R)

Senneville states that the revision of Canon Law began in 2007 under Pope Benedict XVI. For a 14 year effort, the minor changes that this revision has affected are indeed pathetic. Had the Vatican functioned a little more efficiently, like a corporate, these changes could have been affected in a month. While the norms regarding paedophilia and accountability are to be welcomed, the one on women's ordination was totally uncalled for, and the retention of the law on abortion definitely needed to be revisited.

Unfortunately, the revision of Book Six of Canon Law, and the ambiguous references to the Sixth commandment of the Decalogue cannot be called a Sixer in cricketing parlance. It seems more a case of hit cricket. It remains to be seen what impact this will have in cleaning up the many acts of corruption, scandal and licentiousness in the church, particularly in India that is reeling with multiple cases against bishops.

**The writer has further developed some of these thoughts in his latest book THE JERUSALEM CODE.*



Vaccinations for 'aged & challenged'

- By *Ivan Saldanha-Shet.*

Vaccination against COVID-19 is now the gold standard against the fearful enigmatic Pandemic sweeping India. All and sundry are clamoring and searching every possible avenue to get the miracle jab by hook or crook. The arena is open to every citizen of India from 18 years upward who are eligible and healthy enough to receive the prophylactic preventive doses. Governments, medical experts and all those with authority are encouraging and spreading a positive message to get the vaccine as early as possible. There are all kinds of facilities to register and achieve the aim online and off. The vaccine is presently in short supply, but all efforts are being exerted to overcome this hurdle. However, giving the jab for the aged, and suffering who are immobile and confined to bed, in institutions of many types and in families at home, is a non-starter with no arrangement as yet - this needs immediate planning.

Neglected response :

The voiceless aged, physically and mentally challenged and many who are immobile / room bound due to natural causes or illness have a right and urgent requirement to be protected with the vaccination, as per prescribed protocol. Government, Officials, NGOs, Trusts and all responsible for such

immobile, unseen and unheard helpless people have not come out and given a proper trajectory to organise teams to go out to them and vaccinate as early as possible and educate them on the facts. Institutions for the aged are at high risk due to hospital stays and frequent changes of caregivers, without checks and the lack of discipline among these young carefree unqualified working groups who do not sufficiently follow COVID behaviour and are negligent. In this case it is vital that the vaccine will come to the doorstep of deserving and rightful persons in a systematic manner without arbitrary delays.

Visibly, managements of institutions and those responsible for the aged, sick and challenged do not seem to be taking up the vital matters of 'in-house vaccination' with the Govt and so on. It may be recalled, that when elections are on hand, innumerable 'angels of goodwill' work for political recognition hand-in-glove, even offering inducements to helpless in institutions and the managements as well, and arrange all that is needed, even transport and so on for the helpless and cart them to the polling booths. But, in this case of vaccination, such zeal is absent. Politicians and the powerful come to the door, get favours, and corner votes they need, by all means. Where is such zeal when the very same people have a vital need?

Potential avenues :

Most well populated districts in India have "Elders Helpline" (1090) , these are run by different entities, some are efficient and resourceful but most are not too active and serve only in name. In the hard times of this Corona pandemic, the scope of these 'helplines' and several NGOs have a lot of potential if they are conscious and responsible to serve the target group. These helplines can be geared up surely to be a hub to channel vaccinations for elders, where required; additional volunteers can be roped in to augment the human resources. The regular staff of care giving institutions too may be considered along with residents/inmates to be vaccinated simultaneously. There is a good database at the disposal of authorities - Adhaar card, election card, PAN card, ration card, Bank account book and so on that can serve as a catalyst.

Some major hurdles have become chronic in care-giving institutions of all categories; surely, these hurdles can be identified and rectified too as part of this programme. Managements, for it's convenience and hidden agenda, are not favorable to allow and open such institutions to transparency of external agencies, not even family members are aware or allowed to participate lest their faults and information spills out. Therefore, those responsible stonewall the action and do not allow and do not come forward to demand the services of vaccination authorities to enter into these institutions run in a closed manner. Also, they do not want their 'modus operandi' known as they trample on all kinds of rules, laws and norms - COVID 19 protocol too is conspicuously neglected. The welfare of the residents/inmates is secondary to the profit and advantage of management in these trying times - any inspection will prove this.

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Keep Fit During Corona Time

For most of the fitness conscious youngsters today, checking their weight is really no big deal, since many might already be having their personal compact weighing scales right in their bedrooms which might be used on a daily/weekly basis to keep track of weight. But back in the 80s & 90s, checking one's weight was no less than a festive event, since they would be checked once in 5-6 months, and that too, amidst all the public glare, and usually done in groups with family and friends, thanks to such life-sized, coin-operated machines which had turned the boring process of weighing into an entertainment.

These colorful and attractive machines were usually found in highly crowded public places like railway stations, bus stands, exhibitions, trade fairs, etc. The best part about these machines was that even when they were idle, they would be glittering with flashy lights, thus attracting passersby who would be tempted to open up their wal-

lets to mainly experience the thrill of it, than to just check their weight.

All that the customer had to do was to stand upon the pedestal in front of the machine and insert a coin. The machine would then immediately become active, and start entertaining the customer by playing various sounds and music, while the rapidly rotating colorful wheels and instantaneous flashing of bulbs would give an impression of travelling in a futuristic spaceship! After a few seconds of intense activity, the machine would finally dispense a tiny card with the customer's weight printed on it. Sometimes, such cards would even have tiny photographs of celebrities along with their quotes/fortune-messages, and were thus popular as collectors items especially among kids, who would then show-off their cards to friends/relatives for the next several days.

The phenomenon was thus very popular during 80s/90s, especially among

youngsters, who looked at the whole process as more of a recreation, than merely weight-watching, and it was very much evident from the sights at railway stations and other public places where not only kids but even grown ups would indulge in a bit of such entertainment, mostly to pass time while waiting for their trains/buses. However, by the turn of the century, as most gadgets including weighing scales became compact and affordable to the middle class, such flashy machines started becoming a rarity at public places due to declining demand. Today, there are hardly any such flashy machines, but in very rare instances when old timers come across them in some remote places, they are instantly flooded with colorful memories of their past encounters with such flashy machines during their younger days, when a visit to a railway station or exhibition was considered incomplete unless they checked their weight on such "futuristic machines" and showed off the card to their friends for the next several days.

Keep Check On Your Weight

—C. K. Subramaniam

In Loving Memory of



Stephen R. Fernandez

Born: 03/09/1967

Died: 15/05/2021

It took our hearts to lose you,
But you did not go alone a part of us went with you the day
God took you home.
If tears could build a stairway and
heartaches make a lane,
we'd walk our way to heaven and
bring you back again.
In life we loved you dearly, in our hearts
you hold a place no one could ever fill.

Still missed, loved and remembered by

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