

# THE SECULAR CITIZEN

Vol.30 Issue No.27 ■ (Total Pages 24) ■ Mumbai, 5 - 11 July, 2021 ■ Rs. 10

A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

## Towards Indian Christian Day: 3 July 2021

*-\*Fr. Cedric Prakash SJ*

Since several years, 3 July has been a significant day for the Christians of India. It is the Feast of St Thomas the Apostle - one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. He came to India after the Resurrection of Jesus, around 52 AD. It is historically accepted that St Thomas was martyred near Chennai in 72AD; 3 July commemorates his martyrdom.

This year has added significance: for the first time Christians from all Churches in India (and also Indian Christians who live in other parts of the world) will come together to celebrate 'Indian Christian Day' (Yesu Bhakti Divas). A Declaration prepared by a small group of initiators of the Day (representing various Churches) states,

*"This declaration of 3 July 2021 as Indian Christian Day (Yesu Bhakti Divas) as an annual day of remembrance, is for followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, of Indian origin, to celebrate the person and message of JESUS CHRIST which was brought to India in 52 AD by one of His twelve disciples, St. Thomas the Apostle.*

*This day, historically observed as St. Thomas Day, commemorates the martyrdom of the Apostle in 72 AD near Chennai. In marking it in 2021 and every year henceforth, we as followers of the Lord Jesus, also preserve our identity within the Indian cultural heritage, while uniting with all who wish to celebrate, irrespective of language, custom, creed, region or religion.*

*The celebration of Indian Christian Day (Yesu Bhakti Divas) on 3 July 2021, will launch the Decade of Celebration (2021-2030) to honour the 2000th anniversary of the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ whose teaching and life principles have helped to shape and transform India and the world".*

Indian Christian Day (ICD) is important on several counts; among them are the fact that it is a grass-root initiative; mooted by a group of lay persons; it

is non-political and seeks no political patronage and above all, it brings together Christians from various Churches in India to love, to serve and to celebrate. The Vision Statement of Indian Christian Day (Yesu Bhakti Divas) states, *"to celebrate the person and message of Lord Jesus Christ which was brought to India in AD 52 by one of His twelve disciples, St. Thomas the Apostle, while preserving our identity within the Indian cultural heritage and promoting unity in India"*. The day itself is meant to be the launch of an annual day of remembrance for the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ who are of Indian origin and all who wish to celebrate the person & message of Jesus the Lord. The initiators of this day are also unequivocal in their invitation to all women and men of goodwill who would like to join in the celebration of the person and message of Jesus. As one of them states, *"in these challenging and difficult times: the world needs more than ever the compassion, the mercy and the courage to stand up for the least, the lost and the last which Jesus radiated all through his life on earth"*

Indian Christian Day this year will herald the launch of a Decade of Celebration: the ten years (2021-2030) would lead to honour the 2000th anniversary of the public ministry of Lord Jesus Christ whose teaching and life principles have helped to shape and transform India and the rest of the world. The success of this movement's impact will be the incremental progress of wide-spread acceptance, appreciation and recognition of the historic presence and influence of the person and teachings of Jesus among Indians.

The day itself will see a plethora of events: locally (in Churches, organizations, areas, districts and even in one's family); State-wise, a national event and a Global event. Because of the pandemic and the fact that numbers are restricted – most of the events planned this year will be (where physical events are planned) with very small numbers or virtually. A website [www.indianchristianday.com](http://www.indianchristianday.com) has been construct-

(Contd.. on p. 3)





### The 26 of July

Come July and the focus is on an important event in the Church Calendar, viz., Parents' Day - celebrated on the 26th of July. The feast day of St. Joachim & St. Anne, the parents of our dear Mother Mary. A day on which all praises are heaped on Mother Mary's parents and on our own parents.

### Time for celebrations

During normal times, there would have been celebrations in every parish community. However, the pandemic has come as a damp squib and put an end to all such celebrations, physically. Of course with the digital platform now in vogue, celebrations may continue to be held virtually. While we celebrate parents day, we need to pause and think. What are we celebrating? Parents' Day - only for one day in a year? Why not throughout the year? And, we need to spare a thought for those who lost their parents especially during this pandemic.

### Life out of gear

The second wave of the pandemic has thrown life completely out of gear. It has taken away spouses. It has swallowed up brothers & sisters. **It has robbed growing children of either one of the parents or even both. It has devoured parents of little children who need their parents most at that age.**

A very sad case of a young, loving couple at Orlem, Malad, comes to mind. They would sell vegetables at Orlem, brought from nearby villages like Manori. **The woman contracted Covid and succumbed to the virus. Soon after, her spouse too was infected by Covid. After battling for life for more than a fortnight, he followed his wife, giving up his breath, leaving behind their two little children, orphaned.**

### Parents' Day - what meaning?



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

What would Parents' Day mean to those children who have lost their parents? What does parents Day mean those who have lost their loved ones, their brothers or sisters? What would parents' Day mean to the two little children of that young couple who have passed away from

this world? It's sad indeed. It seems like **Parents' Day has no meaning without the parents.**

### Is God still in control?

Why would God want children to lose their parents at such a young age? How would these children grow up without their parents? Who would look after their emotional needs? Who will comfort in their sorrows? Why would God want spouses to be left grieving just when they need them the most? Why would God want entire families to be grieving at the loss of their loved ones? Is God so cruel, one wonders?

Does it seem like God does not care? Why, oh why? There seem to be no answers. The amount of destruction COVID has heaped upon humanity, is tremendous. It has traumatized entire families. **In the midst of all this destruction, God is still in control. He cares.**

### What is God's plan?

Against such a sad background, one wonders, what is God's plan? Coming back to the deceased young couple from Orlem who have left behind their two little children. **The woman's sister, while sharing about the death of this couple during a special prayer service held at our parish church at Orlem recently, says she's taking care of the children and they seem to have taken the death of the parents quite well. The family, though, is in shock, she says, but they have not lost faith in God. They have put their trust in God's plan.** And we ask ourselves, what is God's plan for us?

### Facing the future

Who knows what thoughts could creep up in the minds of those children as they grow up in life? In the absence of their parents, what would be their feelings when they interact with other children wishing their parents on Parents Day? It certainly would be painful. Nobody would really understand what goes on inside their minds and hearts. It is only those who have lost their own parents would know exactly how it feels.

### God losing His loved one

Looking from a different perspective, how does God feel about losing a loved one? Well, God did feel the pain of losing his only begotten son, but He did it for the sake of our salvation. How did Jesus' mother feel at the time while she was holding the lifeless body of Jesus in her lap? God gave her the strength to bear the loss of her son, Jesus. **We too can hope that God will provide the strength to those who have lost their parents and their loved ones. With Hope & Faith in our hearts, we can still say, HAPPY PARENTS' DAY!**



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Vol.30 Issue No.27 July 5-11, 2021 Rs.10/-

99, Perin Nariman Street, Fort, Mumbai - 400 001.

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(Contd.. from p. 1)

ed which provides one the possibility of accessing important information, PDF downloads and the opportunities for involvement in the Indian Christian Day.

Since the time of St Thomas, Indian Christians have contributed significantly to the country in every possible sphere. Christians have been an integral part of the freedom struggle and also members of the Constituent Assembly; they have been Ministers in the Central and State Governments, Governors of States, members of the Judiciary and of other Constitutional bodies of the nation. The contribution of Christians to the field of education and medicare is legendary. Some of the educational institutions of excellence are managed by the Christians (as is evident from the leading surveys in the country recently). Be it in academics or research; in literature or in sports; in the promotion of local cultures or the development of languages; in media and the arts, the Christian presence has always been invaluable. This presence is also seen from the white revolution to the green revolution; from botany to architecture; from social forestry to the care of the environment. Christians have worked selflessly for the uplift-

ment of the poor and the marginalized, the excluded and the exploited, the tribals and the Dalits, women and children. In their loyalty to the Constitution, they have been visible and vocal in their stand for human rights of all. Christians have contributed significantly, objectively and with excellence in every field of human endeavour to this great nation!

There is certainly much to be celebrated! The significant contribution of the Christians to nation-building has come in for praise and appreciation from every quarter: there is no doubt about that. In 1964, the Indian Postal Department issued a commemorative Postage Stamp on St Thomas on the occasion of the visit of St Pope Paul VI to India; in 1973, another commemorative stamp was issued on the occasion of the 19th centenary of the death of St Thomas. Apart from these, Christians have been honoured by the nation through the whole range of National recognitions from the Bharat Ratna downwards for their selfless contribution to the nation!

However, what also is a painful fact is that in recent years there has been increased misinformation about the historicity of the message of Jesus in India; besides from certain quarters there are efforts to discredit the Chris-

tians with falsehoods and half-truths. The Christian faith and practice existed in India centuries before European colonization. What is wrongly promoted is the narrative that Christ was introduced to India by European colonialists and to conclude that Christ is against the Indian cultural ethos and people. Indian Christian Day also aims at celebrating the coming of the message of Jesus Christ with Apostle Thomas' arrival in India and to counteract attempts of promoting a revisionist history with solidarity and hope. Besides, given the circumstances today, it is necessary to establish the historicity of Christ in India, to highlight the impact of the person and message of the Lord Jesus Christ on India and to showcase the ongoing contribution of the followers of Jesus to the development and nation building of India.

On 4 December 2020, the 'Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity' of the Vatican, gave to the Church a path breaking document "*The Bishop and Christian Unity: An Ecumenical Vademecum.*". *The document spells out various dimensions(dialogues) by which a genuine Ecumenical Spirit can be fostered and ultimately move towards the prayer of Jesus, "that all*

(Contd.. on p. 4)

(Contd.. from p. 3)

may be one". The Vademecum emphatically states, "The Dialogue of Life includes the opportunities for encounter and collaboration with other Christians in pastoral care, in mission to the world and through culture. These forms of ecumenism are here distinguished for clarity of explanation, but it should always be borne in mind that they are interconnected and mutually enriching aspects of the same reality. Much ecumenical activity will engage a number of these dimensions simultaneously. For the purposes of this document distinctions are made in order to help the bishop in his discernment. (#15). Further adding, "Ut unum sint teaches that "There is no important or significant event which does not benefit from Christians coming together and praying" Christians from different traditions will share a concern for the local community in which they live and the particular challenges that it faces. Christians can demonstrate their care by marking together significant events or anniversaries in the life of the community, and by praying together for its particular needs. Global realities such as warfare, poverty, the plight of migrants, injustice and the persecution of Christians and other religious groups also demand the at-

tention of Christians who can join together in prayer for peace and for the most vulnerable." (#19)

There was certainly no connection between the Vademecum and those who initiated the idea of Indian Christian Day. Strangely enough the movement towards this day began early in 2021, a little after the Vademecum was promulgated in the Catholic Church; interestingly enough, the spirit and the thoughts (in a very primary way) of the vademecum began to be actualized in India. Since early February monthly virtual 'Concept and Vision Meetings' have been held which have brought in several eminent speakers from the different Churches besides hundreds of participants from everywhere. Among the speakers from the Catholic Church were Mr. John Dayal, Bishop Thomas Dabre of Pune, Archbishop Thomas Macwan of Gandhinagar, Archbishop Anil Couto of Delhi, Bishop Agnelo Gracias of Jalandhar and Archbishop Peter Machado of Bangalore. The underlying message in these preparatory meetings were clear: Christians of India need to come together to celebrate the person and message of Jesus Christ and in doing so ensure that the Constitutional values – which are also in the Gospel of Jesus- of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity become an intrinsic and non-negotiable dimension for all Indians – so that in the years to come peace, joy, harmony and pluralism reign in our land!

The conclusion of the Ecumenical Vademecum has a meaningful but apt prayer for Indian Christian Day: "Father Paul Couturier (1881–1953), a Catholic pioneer in the ecumenical movement and particularly of spiritual

ecumenism, called upon the grace of Christ's victory over division in his prayer for unity which continues to inspire Christians of many different traditions. With his prayer we conclude this Vademecum:

**Lord Jesus, on the night before you died for us, you prayed that all your disciples may be perfectly one, as you are in your Father and your Father is in you. Make us painfully aware of our lack of faith in not being united. Give us the faithfulness to acknowledge, and the courage to reject, our hidden indifference, distrust and even enmity towards one another. Grant that we all may meet one another in you, so that from our souls and our lips there may ever arise your prayer for the unity of Christians as you will it and by the means that you desire. In you, who are perfect Love, grant us to find the way that leads to unity, in obedience to your love and your truth. Amen".**

Come 3 July 2021, Indian Christians are called in a very special way to celebrate in unity (one in heart and one in mind), their faith: to love and serve others; to give and not to count the cost; to be a witness to justice and truth -just as Jesus would have done and expects his disciples to do likewise today! Let us NOT shy in doing so!

*\*(Fr Cedric Prakash (GUJ) is a human rights, reconciliation and peace activist/writer. Contact: cedricprakash@gmail.com )*

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## Why do miracles take place only at retreat centres and not in our local parish churches?

Why do miracles happen only at retreat centres and not in our local parish churches? This is a big question mark!

People witness miracles and get healed only at retreat centres when they attend retreats and one day prayer services. They do not witness miracles and get healed in our local parish churches, in spite of praying the whole day long.

The reason for this is because retreat centres are anointed places unlike our local parish churches where people do not repent for their sins. The Holy Spirit dwells only at retreat centres and Marian shrines.

At retreat centres, we pray for more than seventeen hours a day without taking a break in between, except for lunch, tea and dinner and not get exhausted because our Lord Jesus Christ is present there in the Blessed Sacrament. He sees the cries of people and heals them instantly.

"Pray, pray, cry to the Lord to take away your pain, give you that peace and happiness, just pray and keep crying. The good Lord will always listen."

People also repent for the sins they have committed at retreat centres unlike our local parish churches where people go for confession to a priest without being sorry for their sins. After the confession they go back home and commit the same sins over and over again.

Nothing about repentance is

also preached during the homily.

As a regular retreatant at the Tabor Retreat Centre, I have witnessed several miracles. I have seen the face of Jesus

on the Host and real blood dripping from it. I have also witnessed the wine during offertory time turning into blood.

A lot of miracles are also witnessed at Marian shrines like Mount Mary's, Vailankanni, Karjat, Irla, Fatima, Lourdes and Garabandal because these shrines are anointed with the power of the Holy Spirit.

—*Jubel D'Cruz, Dombivili, Mumbai*

## New hope for PMC bank depositors

At long last the RBI has come to the rescue of the beleaguered Punjab Maharashtra Co-operative Bank (PMC) by granting an 'in principle' approval to 2 financiers, Centrum Financial Corporation and Bharat Pe, to set up a Small Finance Bank (SFB) to be merged with PMC bank. This comes as a god-send and a big relief for the 9 lakh depositors of PMC bank who have their life savings in fixed deposits, locked up for almost 2 years. A few of the depositors have unfortunately ended their life in desperation, while many are still struggling to make a living. However it is still not sure whether the hapless depositors will get back all their money, or part of it, and how long will they have to wait after the new amalgamated bank starts functioning. For this to happen, the finance companies are given a time frame of 120 days to draw up a plan of how they propose to function, in addition to meeting all the stringent requirements of the RBI.

Only after this they will be granted a license to start operations. Surely by any reckoning, the 2 financiers will not let go of this golden opportunity and rare privilege gifted by the RBI, realising that they are both non-banking finance corporations that only give loans and receive deposits, but don't offer savings and current account services. Until then, one can only hope for a quick and smooth sailing.

—*A. F. Nazareth, Alto Porvorim, Goa*

## The Sao Joao feast

While the feast of Sao Joao (St. John the Baptist) is celebrated across the Catholic world on the same day (June 24), Goa is the only place in the world where it is marked by leaping into wells. On this day, groups of Goans go around singing traditional Konkani songs accompanied with musical instruments like the ghumat, mhadalem, kansallem and the guitar.

Sao Joao is also a celebration of thanksgiving for newly-weds, and for families with babies born during the preceding year.

—*Jubel D'Cruz, Dombivili, Mumbai.*

## No frills service at St Peter's Bandra

I have been watching my parish online mass from the beginning of the pandemic. But recently, for some novelty, I began watching online masses streamed on YouTube by other parishes. I was quite impressed by the mass at St Peter's Bandra, as it was somewhat different and very apt during the pandemic. What is most impressive is that during the entire mass only the celebrant is visible, except for readings. Even here, the lector is seated near the choir, close to the lectern. He just slips in and out unobtrusively. From the pandemic point of view, this is highly recommended. During the reading the celebrant is seated on the opposite side

(Contd.. on p. 7)



# Social Media Allows Everyone to Create their Own Fairy Tales

by *Don Aguiar.*

Every society/government tells itself fairy tales. About its history, its origin, its great leaders, its glorious past..... Noam Chomsky calls them, “necessary illusions” as he describes them in *Necessary Illusions: Though Control in Democratic Societies*. Or we call them “approved conspiracy theories” – or just lies.

Every new arrival into any society is given mother’s milk, stirred and shaken, with a sufficient dose of whatever is needed to convey the emotional essence of the fairy tale. The child is helpless. To survive, swallowing the milk is choice less. The same was done to the mother when she was also small and helpless.

Soon, more and more details are added to embellish the fairy tale and establish its “truth.” Every culture, every government has its own version. One society might insist that there is a God in the sky who is superior to all and everything. That his earthly lieutenants are superior to ordinary sinners. That even a God-fearing sinner is superior to any non-believer.

These Gods will vary from one society to another, but the key ingredient of the story will be the same: a supreme male at the top of an imaginary pyramid, setting in stone the basic acceptance of hierarchy, obedience, and control. The “rules” of this holy game are so unnatural as to ensure failure. This results in guilt and shame – and our enslavement to the system is complete. Order is further maintained by the primitive Pavlovian trick of reward or punishment whatever.

Only when we have been forced to repress our natural intelligence and accept these stories as “the truth” we are then accepted into the group. As “one of us” – true believers in the lie.

Always remembering that continuing membership is conditional on remaining faithful to the basic fundamentals of the fairy tale. Deviance is punishable in so many ways: by exclusion and threats to our material or psychological wellbeing, even by death.

Now that all the sheep are herded into a well-ordered group, the fairy tale can be endlessly embellished in the interests of the existing hierarchy and the status quo.

The list of accepted beliefs is endless but is always based on a hierarchy that needs to be obeyed and respected to ensure that “good,” that’s us, wins over “evil,” that’s them. That however we define what is “right” wins over “wrong.” Above all that our fairy tale is better than their fairy tale. So superior in fact that we need to be prepared to sacrifice everything, even our lives if necessary, if violence is required to prove it. Such a sacrifice is “heroic” and the depth of our loyalty to it further confirms its superiority.

In effect, once we have sacrificed that natural intelligence in order to “belong,” we can be relied upon to give carte blanche to “our great leader.” For Germans in the 1930’s, Hitler was “good.” For India presently from 2014 onwards, Narendra Modi is “good”. For Americans, Truman’s decision to nuke Hiroshima and Nagasaki was “good.” (And for most still is!). For Europeans, the barbarism of our colonial leaders was “good,” – as was the slave trade that was embedded in it – until they proved how really good they were by changing their minds, well sort of.

Anything goes. The death and destruction based on this competition between fairy tales is unimaginable.

If you happen to be identified with “the land of the free and the home of the brave” fairy tale, the reality is less po-

etic. Nothing much exceptional there!

Based on the fairy tale, the leaders of whatever ideology has power can lie, for the common good, of course, knowing the seeds have already been sown for the sheep to bray on cue.

During this process, each one of us is not only conditioned to accept the values and beliefs of the society we happen to be born into, but also to identify with them as who we are. They become our identity. We just accept that “I am” those beliefs. “I am” this religion or that religion, this nationality or that. All the ugly prejudices that blight our world are indoctrinated into us, not just as “ideas” but as who we really are. Similarly, we identify with our well-trained “personality” – a well-rehearsed cabaret we become an expert at performing. “My ego” – that twisted entity struggling to keep our heads above the stinking dishonesty washing all around – is “me.”

Now we have social media to amplify all the contradictions. Everyone is now watching the Indian Covid-19 catastrophe or the casual murder of a minority bearded man by the communal brigade on a public road in UP, which before was so easily buried in some official report, is today seen by billions around the world. The CAA oppression of the students, or the Farmers protest in North India.... The endless list of corruption and ugliness by the politicians that totally undermines the official fairy tales are obvious everywhere.

There are strong reasons why the idea of social media is so attractive. It democratizes the task of presenting a formal argument by providing a way of assembling and presenting information across the media in order to make a point.

(Contd.. on p. 7)

# Lockdown woes

Stay at Home, Stay Safe is the message we hear each day,  
There is an unseen virus lurking around, let's keep it at bay.  
Our daily routines have been affected, it has taken time to adjust,  
It's killing many people, business have gone bust.  
We can walk the empty streets that are within our gates,  
Greet friends and neighbours, who may not be our best mates.  
But it's interesting how people's lives can be,  
When you take time to talk and share.  
Inside the house is polished and the furniture dusted and glows,  
The garden is weed-free, cupboards rearrange, items in a row.  
Old receipts and papers sorted and committed to the bins,  
With so much time to spare each day, where do we begin?  
Be thankful for our homes, our families and friends,  
What is happening around the world is hard to comprehend.  
Our village life-style and all it offers gives us a feeling of security,  
And we will adjust to these difficult times because of our maturity.  
Someday this all will end.

— Jubel D'Cruz

(Contd.. from p. 6)

Every medium has people who use it masterfully and the social media presentation is no exception. But for the most part, today social media is used to deaden dialogue and not further it. What we then have is the spectacle of the social media creating their own story in minute detail, with little regard for the audience ability to believe it as fact or fake.

We now live in a world with presenters and listeners, where anyone with a story and political backing gets the floor. The social media presentation demands a toed line, if not discipline. Today the visual nature of social media presentations represents the triumph of shallow aesthetics and ethics

over brain dead meaning.

Social media allows everyone to create their own fairy tales and that is what presently we the people of India are experiencing from the present elected government. These home-made, unofficial fairy tales are called conspiracy theories. A few believe that a hidden cabal of paedophiles are ruling the world, or that India has to be made a Hindu Rashtra without further delay or that tens of thousands of scientists are secretly conspiring to pretend that Covid-19 is a pandemic or Covid-19 is caused by bats or laboratory manufactured. If you want to really see how this all plays out, and how "God" is really lurking beneath these fact-free ideologies look around to search the facts.

## Thanksgiving

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be Praised Adored, Glorified and Loved today and everyday throughout the world, now and forever.Amen!!

Ask St. Clare for three favours two impossible and say nine Hail Mary's and the above prayer for 9 days with a lighted candle and publish on the 9th day your request will be granted no matter how impossible it is

—Ms Victoria Vaz, Andheri



(Contd.. from p. 5)

of the reader. Altar servers are conspicuous by their absence.

Singing is minimal-- only the entrance and last hymns and the post Communion hymn. The responsorial psalm ,gospel acclamation, and antiphon is recited, not sung. And there is no organist. Also, the Spiritual Communion prayer and the prayer for relief from Corona virus are different( StPeters is a Jesuit institution).

I would like to commend this mass to other parishes. During the pandemic safe distancing is of paramount importance for the safety of the clergy and others. Far too many priests have succumbed to covid and we need to take all possible precautions. To the very devout this mass may seem a bit cut and dried, but it's just what the doctor ordered, in the pandemic.

—Prof Robert Castellino, Malad

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# Goa's Monsoon Saga

**K**nown once as the season of romantics, monsoons today conjure up visions of natural fury and devastation. Always looked at with some sort of skepticism, rainy seasons fail to enthuse people any more.

In fact after the sweltering heat of the scorching summer, the wet spell should have come as a welcome relief. Yet, it is a feeling of anxiety that greets a prolonged downpour these days!

Besides, the scenic vistas of lush green landscapes that was an inevitable aspect of very monsoon some years back is now replaced by the 'excesses' of the labors of development essayed by regimes over the years which have unfortunately gone on to eclipse the beauty of the natural settings.

It is not that continuous rainfall is a sudden manifestation of monsoon these days; it was seen even earlier! But it is the destruction that it now invariably brings along with it that is more concerning.

For that matter, there is nothing 'seasonal' about rains now!

Blame it on intermittent depressions in

the oceans or the changing pattern of monsoons if you may, but of late rain-falls have become round-the-year occurrences!



by Pachy Menon

Yet, the state doesn't seem to learn from past experiences and continues to plod along unmindful of the dangers lurking around the corner.

It is just the initial days of rains, but the way Goa has gone down under says a lot for the state of 'adequate' preparation that Goa is in in order to tide away its monsoon woes.

River Sal in south Goa has been flowing in full spate and has breached its banks, so to speak.

When it is more than obvious that desilting of river Sal will not stop the inundation of the flood plains during monsoons, why are plans for building the Western Bypass sans stilts along the 2.75 km Benaulim-Seraulim stretch being persisted with!

Landslides have been reported from regions across the state. Waterlogged streets are common enough sights; uprooted trees, some coming down dangerously on houses or vehicles, and similar other rain-related mishaps only serve to add up to the monsoon

statistics.

Although the state has been in throes of rapid urbanization for years now, the fact that the infrastructure in most cities is not equipped to withstand the relentless battering by the rains has not been given due consideration.

Within a day or two of the rains the Panaji-Margao highway at the Mercedes junction is already in a precarious situation leading to traffic jams and with serpentine queues building up on either side during peak hours, it is a pathetic exhibition of government callousness.

Potholes on highway stretches across the state are another tragedy of modern day 'public works', and with the onset of rains manoeuvring through them is definitely a back-breaking exercise for commuters.

However, the monsoon woes for Goa do not end there!

At a time when receiving moderate shower with one or two spells of heavy rain is enough to throw the whole state into disarray, IMD warnings of the monsoon uncertainties as it intensifies further is quite intimidating!

The haunting memories of the Canacona flash floods continue to haunt Goans. Besides the news in a section of the press that work finally began at Monem in Cotigao of construction of two culverts which had been washed away is hardly encouraging considering that it took the government twelve long years to respond to some of the disastrous consequences of the 2009 floods.

With widespread flooding reported across the coastal state during rains the last few years, a feeling nurtured by locals that monsoon flooding is the cost of runaway development cannot be overlooked either.

With fields and other green cover giving way to rampant 'concretization' in

(Contd.. on p. 9)



(Contd.. from p. 8)

the state, Goa is bound to drown.

With the state perpetually in an 'excavated' mood, it is the lack of coordination between the different government agencies executing various works that could also be a reason for the 'terra infirma' which allows for nature to play havoc with the region during the rainy season.

Not adhering to fixed time-frames for completing the projects undertaken too contributes to the 'debacle'.

While a whole lot of reasons are being proffered for the flooding by experts, it is the abject disregard shown by the government for searching sustainable solutions to the wet spell problems that comes as a severe setback though.

However, it is the government's readiness to combat the vagaries of nature that has always been a matter of much speculation!

Cyclone Tauktae last month laid bare the state's tall claims about its preparedness for eventualities arising out

of such natural calamities.

But then, even if a heavy shower of a few hours accompanied by moderately strong winds is enough to 'disrupt' normal life in the state, how efficient has the administration been in laying foolproof plans to manage these adversities!

Disaster management is not about having the state electricity department personnel on the field for the entire duration of the rainy season attending to faulty lines and feeders.

Nor is it appropriate to have the fire department staff perennially on distress calls – and that too when the SOS appeals are not fire-related!

These 'emergencies' only mean that the state has not been able to foresee such snags and has not been meticulous enough in addressing these issues in the initial stages.

Procrastination has cost the state dear!

Or is it the 'we- will-cross-the-bridge-when-we-come-to-it' attitude adopted

by the government that is spelling misery for the residents!

At a time when so much of emphasis is being laid on development, it becomes difficult to understand why the government has not thought of upgrading its present 'services' to keep pace with the 'modernization' it has embarked upon!

Every year, with the arrival of monsoon, the Goa government has been issuing safety advisories by shutting down beaches and cautioning people against venturing out into the sea. Moreover, the fishing ban is a yearly 'curriculum' which is being followed very religiously by the state for decades now.

But should the state government be seen limiting itself to such cursory roles only!

From now on - and with climate change intensifying heavy rain events - monsoons can only get more calamitous. The state has to wake up to the harsh reality before it is too late!

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—Simon, Dadar

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# Ginger a day keeps sicknesses away

**P**eople have used ginger in cooking and medicines since ancient times. It is a popular home remedy for nausea, stomach pain and other health issues.

Ginger is a flowering plant that originated in South-east Asia. It is among the healthiest (and most delicious) spices on the planet.

It belongs to the Zingiberaceae family, and it's closely related to turmeric, cardamom, and galangal.

The rhizome (underground part of the stem) is the part commonly used as a spice. It is often called ginger root or, simply, ginger.

Ginger can be used fresh, dried, powdered, or as an oil or juice. It is a very common ingredient in recipes.

Ginger is one spice that is highly under-rated all over the world. We know that it is a great spice for meals, and is used for the famous ginger tea, gingerbread, and the like, but some people don't know how much of a big

deal it is.

Nutritionists have often asked us to eat lots of fruits and vegetables, but some might have failed to mention that spices like ginger are unbelievably healthy. Hence, we should add them to the vegetables and other healthy things that we eat daily.

Ginger is a strong spice with great taste and lots of medicinal value. It has been used to cure lots of ailments and health conditions for many centuries. It is a nutrient-dense spice that contains lots of vitamins, minerals, and components like shogaol, gingerol, and zingiberene. It is an immune booster, improves brain functions, and has anti-diabetic functions.

Shogaol is a cancer-preventive substance, and its analgesic powers also protect one against heart diseases.

Gingerol reduces inflammation and other swellings in the joints and body. Its bio-active functions include reducing nausea and vomiting, especially as it concerns morning sickness.

Zingiberene is the substance responsible for the typical ginger flavour, and it supports digestion.

There are several benefits associated with eating ginger. The more often you eat this spice, the more benefits your body gets, and the healthier you become.

Eating ginger every day doesn't mean chewing on a piece of ginger every day of the month. You can incorporate small pieces of this spice in your tea, meals and snacks.

Ginger is a major content in every traditional recipe for a cold or the flu. The powerful spice can help you recover from the precipice of a bad cold and protect you against catching one in the first place.



by Jubel D'Cruz

Ginger's antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties boost the immune system and prevent you from catching some illnesses and viruses too.

Ginger also helps relieve menstrual pain and eating it every day may help make it easier for you when it is that time of the month. Ginger works well to relieve abdominal pains, so there is a lot to gain from this spice.

Ginger contains powerful anti-inflammatory properties that reduce symptoms related to arthritis, reduce inflammatory elements in the blood, reduce swellings, and reduce other diseases' risk.

If you suffer from constipation and painful bowel movement every time, then making ginger a part of your daily consumption can right the situation and help you make the process easier.

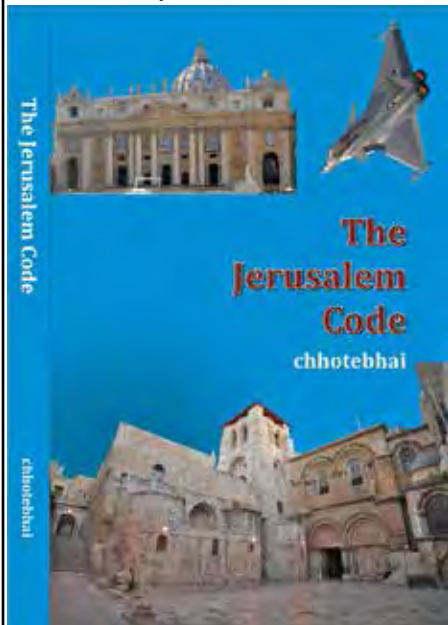
The components of ginger help reduce the triglycerides levels in the blood and protect you from 'bad' or LDL cholesterol. Taking ginger every day invariably saves you from inflamed arteries, heart attacks, and stroke.

Pregnant women, chemo patients, and any other person who feels nauseous often can get relief by consuming ginger every day. Whether you opt to consume ginger tea, chew the spice directly, or place it in your meal, it will reduce your feelings of nausea in no time.

Ginger has components that work wonders to ease limb and muscle pain. If you suffer from recurring pains, eating ginger every day will gradually ease the pain until it disappears.

## The Jerusalem Code

by Chhotebhai



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**DIVO Konkani Weekly**

Published from Mumbai

27th year of regular publishing

*Subscription rates:*

One year by post Rs. 500

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constable responded, "Not at all. I'm just flattening the curve".

\*\*\*\*\*

**Difference between sun and bun**

Sun rises in the east and sets in the west. Bun rises in the yeast and sets in the waist.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Tongue Twisters**

There was a fisherman named Fisher,  
Who fished for some fish in a fissure,  
Till a fish with a grin,  
Pulled the fisherman in,  
Now they're fishing the fissure for  
Fisher.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Egg-cellent Puns**

These egg puns are ideal for casually slipping into conversations for a little egg-stra fun!

- Egg-sactly
- Egg-citing
- Egg-static
- Egg-stravagent
- Egg-splosive
- Eggs-ercise
- Egg-ceptional
- Egg-streme
- Eggs-aggerate
- Egg-cellent

--- Sent by: Jubel D'Cruz

\*\*\*\*\*

Father in law: You are a good drinker, but you never told us?

Son in law: Your daughter is also a good blood drinker, did you inform me ever?

\*\*\*\*\*

The similarities between Wife & Helmet:

Both will save your life if you let them sit on your HEAD

\*\*\*\*\*

**From the emotions of sad husbands...**

We wish that for marriages - there would have been be a scheme of loan.. so that if we could not pay the installment, they could have taken our wives..



\*\*\*\*\*

It feels like you have got bitten by a snake when your father in law asks that our daughter is so innocent like a cow..

\*\*\*\*\*

**Wife: at vegetable market-**  
Should we buy 2 kgs of Pea?  
Husband: Yes, why not..

Wife: I am not asking your advise, I am asking you because you will have to open them to get the pea? So should we buy 2 kgs or less?

\*\*\*\*\*

Which are 3 letters can change a Girl into a Women:  
Kid: hmmm, Well it is AGE..

\*\*\*\*\*

Why on wedding ceremony boy sits on right side and girl on left side?  
Wise Man: Because as per Profit & loss a/c rule, All incomes are on Right side and all expenses are on left side..hehehe

\*\*\*\*\*

Men are most daring creature on the earth..

Him: Why?

Me: No matter how big letter you writing in the warning on Whisky or cigarette pack, they will buy the so boldly.. Cheers..

\*\*\*\*\*

Priest to drunker: You will go in hell if you will not quit drinking.

Man: The person who sells the alcohol- Priest: yes, he will also go to hell.

Man: The person who sells food and snacks outside the shop? Priest: He will also go to hell.

Man: Ok, perfect - then hell is heaven..

\*\*\*\*\*

Dr. Never sleep with tension. Patient: Then should I drop my wife to her mother's home?

\*\*\*\*\*

Shopkeeper: What you need?  
Husband: I need power to fight with

my wife.

Shopkeeper: Ok, you should buy a quarter of whiskey, with some ice and peanuts!

\*\*\*\*\*

Imagine the moment when you are flying in plane on very high altitude and from the window, you see a man flying with air bags with a board saying: **I was your Pilot!**

\*\*\*\*\*

On the wall there was a note - Dogs are peeing.

But a man still did it.

Another man asked: why you are doing so?

He replied: See I am doing and it goes to dog's credit.

\*\*\*\*\*

In marriage, daughter runs and goes back to her room..

Mother stops her on the way and says: please do not go back, just go with your hubby.

Daughter: Please leave me, I am just going back to take my phone charger, it is gonna die!

\*\*\*\*\*

- Through Apple - Vitamin
- Through Vitamin - Power
- Through Power - Work
- Through work - Money
- Through Money - Love
- Through Love - Marriage
- Through Marriage - Wife
- Through Wife - Tension
- Through Tension - Illness
- Through Illness- APPLE

\*\*\*\*\*

Whenever, there is fight with wife - Than it feels like I should suicide..

But.. I stop myself by thinking - There are very less tigers in the world..

\*\*\*\*\*

Shelly: Why it is feel like husband and kite seems alike..

Alia: Why?

Shelly: Because, both are kept loose, flies here and there!

\*\*\*\*\*

No matters, how good work, noble cause you do... people always remember those who dies after borrowing some dollars!!

\*\*\*\*\*

My train of thought just ran off the track.

\*\*\*\*\*





# Baked Katori Chaat

## Ingredients (for Katoris):

2 cups maida  
 1/2 cup cooking oil  
 1/2 tsp baking powder  
 1/2 tsp ajwain  
 Salt to taste  
 1 cup milk for baking the katoris (if frying them, use water)  
 Oil for frying

## Stuffing for 10 Katoris:

2 large boiled potatoes  
 3 large tomatoes  
 1.5 cups boiled chickpeas (garbanzo beans)  
 3 onions  
 6 tbsp sprouts  
 2 cups beaten curd  
 1 cup tamarind chutney  
 1 cup green chutney  
 1 tsp red chili powder (to sprinkle on top of the chaat)  
 1 tsp pepper (to sprinkle on top of the chaat)  
 3 tsp chaat masala (to sprinkle on top of the chaat)  
 4 tbsp finely chopped coriander leaves  
 1/2 cup sev (the one available in bhel-puri shops to sprinkle on top of the chaat)

## Method:

Let's begin with the dough. If baking the katoris, use milk or curd to knead the dough. If you are frying them, use water to knead it.  
 Wash and pat dry a muffin pan. Turn it upside down and grease it with oil. Roll the dough into a circle, big enough to cover the outer side of one muffin mold. Preheat the oven at 350 degree F.

Cover all the muffin molds. Make sure all the canopies (katoris) are clear of each other (not touching each other).

Bake them in the oven for about 15-20 minutes or until the outer covering is brown. Allow them to sit on the counter for a while. Once cooled, remove from the molds.

The baked katoris are ready for filling.

## For Fried Katoris:

Grease a katori, roll the dough in a circle, place it in the centre and wrap the dough around it.

In the heated oil, drop the katori wrapped with dough and fry it.

The oil will start filling up in the katori. So be careful. Using a tong, carefully remove the dough from the katori and after draining all the oil, pull the katori out.

Place the katori on a greased paper towel. Do not touch it because it is still hot.

Keep frying the dough shaped katori in the oil.

Once brown, remove from the oil and drain it on a paper towel.

## Assembling the Katoris:

Chop the boiled potatoes and fry them till golden brown.

Instead of frying, you can bake the potatoes too.

Remove the pulp from the tomatoes and chop them finely.

Assemble all the ingredients and begin filling the good-ies.

Place the katoris on a clean plate.

Pour 1 tablespoon of green chutney and 1 tablespoon of tamarind chutney at the base of each katori.

Then add the following:

1 tablespoon curd.

1 tablespoon boiled chickpeas.

1 teaspoon sprouts

A pinch of salt.

1 tablespoon fried or baked potatoes.

1 tablespoon chopped onions.

1 tablespoon chopped tomatoes.

A pinch of salt.

1 tablespoon curd.

1 teaspoon green chutney

1 teaspoon tamarind chutney.

A little bit of pepper and a little bit of chaat masala.

Top each one of them with sev and chopped coriander leaves and serve.



Sweta D'Cruz

# Dr. VT's glorious service ends....

**-Ivan Saldanha-Shet.**

**M**umbai folk visiting Mangalore for homeopathy treatment always recall a well known name Dr.V T (Valerian Thomas) D'Souza , 1959 to 1992 as chief homeo physician at Fr.Muller's Homeo Hospital; until 2019, Dr VT treated patients from all over at his clinic near Bendurwell - he is legendary. One who loved this city and the people for long, had gone to Mumbai along with his wife Irene, to spend some time with his younger daughter Shantha and family in Navi Mumbai. With the pandemic fall out he had to extend his stay. Age and related factors did not spare him as it has played havoc with many at this time. He was 89 years, but quite fit, his mind was agile. Sadly on the morning of June 15, 2021 after breakfast he suddenly collapsed and suffered a cardiac arrest and passed away peacefully. He leaves behind his beloved wife Irene D'Souza (ex-Syndicate Bank), and two daughters Dr.Prema Saldanha/Dr.Julian Saldanha, Shantha Martin/Dr.Alexander Martin, granddaughter Tanya Martin; and a host of relatives, friends and well wishers all over the world. Dr.V T D'Souza's mortal remains were solemnly laid to rest on June 16, 2021 evening at Paradise Cemetery, Kharghar, under the St.Joseph's Church Parish, CBD Belapur. Thus he rests in His Lord whom he adored and glorified all through his life - his dear soul gains the blessings of heaven.

## **Brief Life - 1932-2021 :**

Valerian Thomas (VT) D'Souza, was born in the heart of Mangalore in October 1932. His education at St Aloysius High School and College



is always recalled enthusiastically; In 1953, in the BA degree (Maths & English) Madras University, he came off with flying colours. His prowess in speaking and writing was superb, the Rector of St Aloysius College Fr E J Jacques. SJ (1949-55) , a person who would not accept a no, made young VT a lecturer in the English faculty. In 1955. Destiny took him to the famed Calcutta Medical College & Hospital. He heartily used to say, in reality, went into Homeopathy to escape being a college professor. In Calcutta he diligently applied himself to the study of Homeopathy, his week-ends, holidays and any spare time was spent as a 'medico volunteer' with St.Mother Teresa of Kolkota in her famous humanitarian works, this gave him added exposure and skill in a systematic manner.

May 1964, he married Irene Lobo from a well known family of Mangalore, Irene, an officer of the Syndicate Bank and a graduate from St Agnes College. They have two daughters, the elder Prema, a Doctor and Professor of Pathology in Mangalore. The second Shantha, well qualified,

is CEO of an International logistics firm in Mumbai. Their respective husbands are both super specialists and reputed doctors. Granddaughter Tanya is on the traditional path to excel all around! Dr V T D'Souza will be deeply missed.

In 1980, he welcomed Mother Teresa at Fr Muller's, VT was surprised that she had never forgotten him and their cordial talk was noted by many. Mother Theresa was to preside over the Valedictory function at Fr. Muller's Hospital on December 28, 1980. This great function of 3 hour's duration where an estimated crowd of 5,000 was present was compered by none other than Dr.VT. The next day when he met the saint Mother Teresa in the Hospital wards, she remembered him working in her Calcutta care hospital, as a student , the inspiration and warmth between these two great old friends is always a point of awe.

Dr V T D'Souza in February 2006 was accorded the 'Rachana' Award for Professional excellence. The citation in part : "Relentless crusade for the Cause of Homeopathy over half a Century, unique committed service in the Clinic of Mother Teresa even during studies at Calcutta. Leadership in South Kanara Homeo medical Association as it's President from 1959 to 1985. Rare professional excellence and valuable papers presented. The public benefits contributed through Rotary, Public speaking and Radio, Feature writing and as a toast master and more.....serving well-ness of humans with knowledge of 8 languages. Commended for years of splendid service and guiding personality". May Dr. V T's memory live long and services to all classes of people remain for eternity.



# Weaponizing Communion – Demonizing People

(A sequel to “Hello ... Can you hear me?”)

A middle aged man with a shock of dishevelled straw-yellow hair approached the altar of the cathedral in London, in wedding attire. He had been born a Catholic and subsequently joined the Anglican Church. He had been twice married and divorced, and now had a child from his current partner. Could such a person get married in a Catholic sacrament of Matrimony? The average Catholic would say an emphatic “No”.

As in my last article, this one also has a Trans Atlantic saga. An old man who had been through much personal suffering, including the death of his son and first wife, was a regular Sunday Mass goer. He always carried a rosary in his pocket and often spoke of his Catholic moral beliefs. Yet he was denied Holy Communion, and the American bishops were conspiring to ensure that he did not get to receive the same; because of his support for pro-choicers; those who believed that it was a woman,

and she alone, who had the right to decide about her own body. Was this fair? Again, a majority of Catholics would probably say “No”.

Yet the Catholic Church in England said “Yes” to the man whose hair looked like a straw hat; and the American bishops too said “Yes” to deny Communion to the old man. By now you would have guessed who these two are – Boris Johnson, the Prime Minister of the UK, and Joseph Biden, the President of the USA. How did this happen?

First the facts. Johnson got married this 28th May in Westminster Cathedral. How did the Church allow it, when lesser mortals in a similar situation have been vehemently denied such a facility or even the admission to Com-

munion? They are the Divorced and Remarried Catholics (DARCs). Johnson was very much in that category.

Nine days later (6th June) was the Feast of Corpus Christi. Rev Sean Hall, a former professor of theology and now a priest in the Catholic diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, had this to say in his sermon that Sunday, as reported by La Croix International on 11/6/2021.

Hall referred to the Last Supper, the first Eucharistic celebration. He describes the recipients as “unworthy”. One was a traitor, another in denial, and the rest were cowards. The one “recipient” who did stand by the cross did nothing to alleviate Jesus’ pain or to plead on his behalf. So who then is worthy? In my previous piece I had already described the Jansenist heresy on “holiness” and Vatican II’s dogmatic teaching on “embracing sinners in its bosom”.



by chhotebhai \*

Hall must have been confronted by his parishioners and some DARCs on the church’s double standards. He laments “that there would seem to be one law for the rich and powerful and another for the rest ... The distress caused to these people is incalculable”. He adds that “The church has lost some excellent people because of its rigidity and coldness of heart towards those who are hurting, and in need of healing, not the wagging finger and judgment of Church law ... its rules and regulations regarding admittance to the sacraments now look ludicrous and unstoppable”.

Across the Atlantic, the antics of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) seem even more ludicrous. On 21/6/2021 Giulia Heyward reported on it in the New York Times.

She said that on 18/6/21 they voted to “begin drafting new guidance (sic) that could deny President Biden and other pro-choice public officials Communion, due to their support of abortion rights”. This move is spearheaded by the conservative Abp Jose Gomez of Los Angeles, the USCCB President. After three days of virtual debate (many bishops were not tech savvy enough to even mute or unmute their mikes) 75% voted in favour of preparing the document, while 24% opposed the move. One may safely presume that most of the US bishops now in office are appointees of either Popes John Paul II or Benedict XVI, both arch conservatives.

Heyward states that though the proposed document will not specifically name Biden (it dare not) “the debate has been heavily focussed on the nation’s second Catholic President, making it clear that he is the motivating factor behind the proposed draft”.

Democratic Representative from California, Ted Lieu, called the bishops “partisan hypocrites”. Sixty Catholic Democrat lawmakers have released a statement “urging the USCCB to not formalize the practice of withholding the Eucharist based on political beliefs”. Is the USCCB stirring up another political storm, probably egged on by Donald Trump, who could hardly be described as being on a higher moral ground than Biden?

The lawmakers described the USCCB action as “the weaponization of the Eucharist to Democratic lawmakers for their support of a woman’s safe and legal access to abortion, as contradictory. No elected officials have been threatened with being denied the Eucharist as they support and have supported policies contrary to the church’s teachings”. One could also ask the USCCB what action it has taken against drug lords, war mongers, human traffickers, pornographers, paedophile clergy and the ruthless mafia; who could possibly be major donors to church coffers!

(Contd.. on p. 16)

Heyward says that Catholic bishops opposed to this document have said that it has “the potential to create more division and exclusion within the faith community. Bp Robert McElroy of San Diego warned that “we will invite all the political animosities that so tragically divide our nation into the very heart of the Eucharistic celebration ... That sacrament that seeks to make us one will become for millions of Catholics, a sign of division”.

Interestingly, 61% of Catholics over the age of 18 said that abortion should be kept legal. Again, 67% said that Biden should be allowed to receive Communion. Among Democrats the figure was higher at 87% and lower at 44% among Republicans, according to a survey by the Pew Research Centre.

Is all this much ado about nothing? For now, the USCCB has only voted on preparing the document. In November it will review the “proposed document”. Even after that it will only be in the nature of a guideline, and the final decision will be “left to the discretion of the local bishop or the pope”! One therefore wonders if this is just a diversionary tactic, to detract from one’s failures on other fronts?

Yet, what is happening in the USA now is nothing new. It happened 125 years ago with the advent of Americanism – an undefined term. If the USCCB has now taken a sharp turn to the conservative right, the last time it had a spat with the Vatican was for leaning too far to the liberal left! This is found in the encyclical “Testem Benevolentiae Nostrae” issued by Pope Leo XIII on 22/1/1899, addressed to Cardinal James Gibbon, of Baltimore.

The then pope was concerned about the new opinions being expressed that “the church should shape her teachings more in accord with the spirit of the age and relax some of her ancient severity and make some concessions to new opinions. Many think that these concessions should be made not only in regard to ways of living, but even

in regard to doctrines which belong to the deposit of faith”. The encyclical is uncompromising on what it considers matters of faith but acknowledges that “in regard to ways of living she has been accustomed to so yield that, the divine principles of morals being kept intact, she has never neglected to accommodate herself to the character and genius of the nations which she embraces”.

We need to remember that this encyclical was written years before the far reaching changes in ecclesiology of Vatican II. It ends by saying “We are not able to give approval to those views that, in their collective sense, are called by some as Americanism ... For it would give rise to the suspicion that there are some among you who conceive and would have the church in America to be different from what it is in the rest of the world”.

This seems like a comedy of errors, with a complete role reversal. The USCCB today seems to be talking the language of Pope Leo in 1899, and the Vatican today seems more in keeping with the liberal thinking of the condemned liberalism!

It is for this reason that Cardinal Luis Ladaria sent a letter on behalf of Pope Francis, to the USCCB in May, warning that their vote “could become a source of discord rather than unity within the episcopate and the larger church in the United States”.

Let us objectively look at Vatican II teachings, Canon Law and the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) vis-à-vis the Eucharist, especially of its unifying effect.

The Eucharist manifests the unity of the Body of Christ (LG 11). It brings about the unity of the church (UR 2). It is the source of perfecting the church (AG 39). It is the hope and strength for life’s journey (GS 38). Community building must originate in the Eucharist (PO 6). Bishops should live the paschal mystery more deeply through the Eucharist and thus become a firmly united body in the solidarity of Christ’s love (CD 15).

Canon Law asserts that any baptised person who is not forbidden by law may and must be admitted to Holy Communion (Can 912), as it is an action of Christ himself, and of the church (Can 899).

The Catechism describes it as the centre of Christian life (CCC1343). It has been there from the beginning of Christian devotion (CCC 1342 & 2178, cf Acts 2:42-46 & 1 Cor 11:17). It therefore encourages the faithful to receive the Eucharist, even daily (CCC 1389).

I really wonder if the USCCB has bothered to refer to the Church’s own teachings before embarking on its present highly motivated and suspect action against Joe Biden and his ilk?

Finally, there is the abiding example of Jesus himself, who said that the Sabbath was made for man, and not the other way around (cf Mk 2:27). He did not condemn sinners but shared the table with them (cf Lk 15:2). He did not condemn the woman caught in adultery (cf Jn 8:4), or the Samaritan woman who had been through five husbands (cf Jn 4:18). Can we be more sacrosanct than Jesus?

Remember how Pope Francis blessed the marriage of a live in couple that were flight attendants on one of his journeys. He was touching hearts, not flouting rules. He is indeed a pastor with his oft repeated “smell of the sheep”. And sheep don’t smell of eau de cologne!

He believes in the pastoral, not dogmatic approach, to situations. The dogmatist would say “Don’t jump into the water, it is dangerous”. Seeing a man drowning he says “I warned you, now you face the consequences”. The pastor, on the other hand, says, “That man is drowning. I must save him, even at the cost of my own life or reputation”.

I will conclude with some examples of what moral theologians call “situational ethics”. Firstly, Jesus said that

(Contd.. from p. 16)

Moses allowed divorce because of the hardness of their hearts (Mat 19:8). Today it may be permissible because of the complexities and uncertainties of modern life. If I correctly recall, Pope Francis' sister in Argentina is a divorcee, so he understands their pain.

My wife had both her confinements in Catholic hospitals. Both were caesareans. After the second one, while my wife was still on the operation table, a catholic nun came out of the theatre asking me to sign for a tubectomy, while her abdomen was still open, so as not to endanger her life. As a conscientious Catholic I was in a dilemma. My mother-in-law, sensing my confusion, told me to sign. I did.

Another very different example. Yogi Adityanath, the Chief Minister of U.P. is a sadhu who probably doesn't even eat onion or garlic. Yet he encourages the sale of liquor because the Govt desperately needs the money, more so in these corona times. Then there is St Thomas Aquinas' theory of "double effect", used to justify killing in war. Protecting people is the prime motive, but killing others in the process is the unintended "double effect" (CCC 2263). Generals today refer to it as collateral damage.

My parting shot; as per Canon Law only the Pope has the right to judge Heads of State (Can 1405:1)! Perhaps that is why he permitted Johnson's marriage and may not permit the USCCB to get away with their antics of Weaponizing Communion and Demoning People.

*The writer is the Convenor of the Indian Catholic Forum*

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## The Essence Of Faith Is Above Fear

**T**he vision of Christianity is not limited. The concept of Holy Mother the Church is to celebrate love, compassion and forgiveness in navigating the storms of the Soul.

Threats of war, violence, destruction and unexpected misfortune have a seismic effect on most believers. Often among brave hearts fear rears its head, throwing their trust and hope to the wind. Being Christian and Catholic they instantly regain their sensitivity and sensibility by true faith found in their firm belief from prayer and devotion.

Thomas Carlyle, in Heroes and Hero-Worship, wrote: "The first duty of man is that of subduing fear."

Share the truth of the Gospel and proclaim the mystery of Faith. Fear nothing and no one. Pope Saint John Paul II had often instilled in youth and the faithful his famous words: "Be Not Afraid".



BY MELVYN BROWN

Do not fear the presence of other religions as they propagate brotherhood, unity and peace by their own rules and laws.

Pope Francis, in 2016 on his return from Poland (World Youth Day), was asked by journalists to speak about Islam. The Pope said, "Do not equate Islam with violence".

The pontiff went on to clarify: "If I speak of Islamic violence, I also have to speak of Catholic violence." The Holy Father added: "I do not like to speak of Islamic violence because every day when I look through the papers, I see violence here in Italy. And they are baptized Catholics. There are violent Catholics." He went on to say that religions are not at war and want peace."

By way of Catholic violence, the pontiff must have been thinking of Abortion, the Mafia, child-abuse, rape, murder and sex-trafficking. Pope Francis concluded by saying: "We should wait for justice and not judge beforehand."

George Bernard Shaw in his preface to Major Barbara, 1907 had this to say about hate: "Hatred is the coward's revenge for being intimidated".

In 1950, William Faulkner received the Noble Prize. At his acceptance speech at Stockholm he said: "Our tragedy today is a general and universal physical fear so long sustained by now that we can even bear it...The basest of all things is to be afraid."

Human nature is not evil. Evil men rise in many faiths to batter the maturity and sanctity in other peoples' belief, using lies and denigrating them. Do not be afraid of others, only the men who have a moral

defect of their own warped ideas.

Christians and Catholics can reinvent the 21st-century. This will bring about a united effort to overcome fear and to spread the Word of God, the Word of truth and love.

George Eliot, the English writer in 1954 wrote: "To fear the examination of any proposition appears to me an intellectual and a moral palsy that will ever hinder the firm grasping of any substance whatever."

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, known as the Father of the Indian nation, said: "Where there is fear, there is no religion."

The essence of Faith is above Fear.



# Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - GROOMS

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

**7224. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1986), Ht. 6', Wt. 93 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Marine Engineering, working as a 3rd Engineer in Ship. Contact Mob.: 9773541522

**6856. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1973), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 67 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA, working as a HR. Contact email : clifforddsilva@yahoo.co.in

**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

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

**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

**7221. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in May 1985), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working in a Oil rig. Contact email : renithamas@yahoo.co.in

**7172. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Cath-

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

florencemendonca@rediffmail.com

**6904. MUMBAI :** Converted Roman Catholic issueless Divorcee, (Born in April 1971), Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 76 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., MBA, working as a Territory Manager. Contact email :

sudeeptalukdar2003@gmail.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.

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

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

**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

**7165. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October

1979 ) Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 63 kgs, Fair, Edn. B.Com., Post Graduation in Supply chain & Ship Management, working as an E-commerce online support. Contact email :

examiner4@yahoo.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

**7202. MUMBAI :** Keralite Syrian Catholic Bachelor (Born in May 1973), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 73 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., English Literature, Profession : Consultant Administration. Left Hand & Leg is weak due to earlier motor bike accident. Contact Email :

josephmullakara1973@gmail.com

**7164. MANGALORE :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in May 1984 ) Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair, Edn. ITI Course, working as a Techincian. Contact email :

rajesh.ds215@gmail.com

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

**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**

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

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**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

**7177. PUNE :** Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1991), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Masters in Computer Applications. working for a Software MNC in Pune as a Tech Lead. Contact email : melitta88@gmail.com

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

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

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

**7186. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in July 1991), Ht. 5', Wt. 40 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., working for an MNC. Contact email : dyna911@gmail.com

**7217. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in June 1995), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 77 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., & Post Graduate Diploma in Event Management, working in an reputed Multinational Company. Contact email : naseemdmello786@gmail.com

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

**7181. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Divorcee, issueless (Born in April 1974), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 60 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com., working as a H.R. Contact email : roopaferns@yahoo.co.in

**7176. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in February 1996), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 48 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.A. B.Ed., Teacher by profession. Contact email : ektaseq@gmail.com

**7215. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean RC Spinster, (Born in November 1996), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 54 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. BMS, CWM, pursuing CFA Level 2, working as a Operations Analyst in Limited Company. Contact email : rachel.serrao96@gmail.com

**7193. MUMBAI :** East Indian RC Spinster, (Born in August 1990), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., M.A., B.Ed., working as a Teacher in **DUBAI**. Contact email : marina.rodrigues1954@gmail.com

**7194. MUMBAI :** Goan RC Spinster, (Born in July 1989), Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 55 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.B.A. (HR), HR by profession. Contact email : dsouza.elvina3@gmail.com

**7182. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean RC Spinster, (Born in October 1992), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Com-

plexion, Edn. B.Com., C.A., working as Asst. Manager in TATA Company. Contact : email : matrimonialp27@gmail.com

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

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

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

**7126. U.S.A. :** Mangalorean RC 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

**7178. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean RC Spinster, (Born in November 1988), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 65 kgs, good looking, Fair Complexion, Edn. Bachelor's in Mass Media, working as a Content Writer. Contact email : jcdc0906@gmail.com

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(Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati)

# The Social Activist Youth

By Fr F. M. Britto

**H**e was like any other modern youth: fun-loving, enjoying films with his friends and even loved a girl. Today he is called “a saint for modern youth”. Why?

Pier (Peter) Giorgio (George) Frassati was born to affluent parents on April 6, 1901 (Holy Saturday) in Turin, Italy. His father Alfred was an agnostic and was active in national politics, served in the senate, became Italian ambassador to Germany and owned two noted liberal newspapers. His mother was a renowned painter and saw to the Christian upbringing of him and his only sister.

Frassati was first educated at home, then at a state school and finally in a Jesuit-run institution. Much to the disappointment of his illustrious parents, he didn't fare well in his formal studies. As a boy, he joined the Marian Sodality and the Apostleship of Prayer. As a teenager, Frassati was handsome, energetic, fun loving and full of good jokes. He became an avid mountaineer, athlete and swimmer. He also frequented with friends theatres, operas and museums. But he disliked vulgar films. He also knew German and French. He was attracted towards a girl. But he never dated her, fearing whether his parents would approve her.

From childhood, the wealthy lad had an inclination to help the poor and suffering. Once seeing the son of a beggar without footwear, he took off his shoes and offered it to him. At 17, Frassati joined the St. Vincent de Paul Society and spent his spare time in serving the sick, needy and the demobilized servicemen of World War I.

He enrolled himself for Mining Engineering at the Royal Polytechnic of Turin in 1918 “to serve Christ better among the miners.” His studies did not keep him from social activism. Like his father, he too hated the fas-

cism of Benito Mussolini's regime, but strongly defended the Catholic Faith. In 1919 he joined the Catholic Student Foundation and Catholic Action. He became an active member of the People's Party. He was arrested once in Rome for protesting alongside the Young Catholic Workers Congress.

Frassati helped establish a newspaper, *Momento*, based on Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* principles. He often said, “Charity is not enough; we need social reform.” He became committed to the poor and justice. His parents misunderstood his activism as an obstacle to his future career and as a sign of lack of ambition. His parent's misunderstandings hurt him.

The writings of St. Catherine of Siena impelled him to join the Third Order of St. Dominic (of Osma). He was also inspired by St. Thomas Aquinas. Developing a deep spiritual life, Frassati shared it with his friends. The Eucharist and the Blessed Virgin were the two poles of his prayer life. He went for daily Mass, Communion and recited the rosary. Becoming a fervent admirer of Friar Savonarola, he took him as his personal hero and took the name Girolamo.

St. Paul's hymn of Charity (I Cor. 13) sparked his zeal for fraternal charity. When his father offered him money upon his graduation, he offered it to the poor. He also provided a bed for a TB patient, supported three children of an ill widow, and found a place for an evicted woman. Besides known for his devotion, he was interested in social action.

The 24 years old Frassati fell sick due to polio and died within six days on July 4, 1925. Doctors suspected that his disease was caused from the sick he tended. For his funeral the streets of the city were lined up with a multitude of the poor, whom he had served for the last seven years. His elite family was surprised to see them there.



His cause for sainthood was urged by the poor of Turin. Though buried first in the Frassati plot, later in 1981 his remains were found incorrupt and transferred to the Turin cathedral. Visiting his tomb in 1989, Pope John Paul II remarked, “When I was a young man, I too felt the beneficial influence of his example and as a student, I was impressed by the force of his testimony.” Pope John Paul II beatified him on May 20, 1990. He hailed him as “a joyful apostle of Christ” and “a joyful witness to the Gospel”.

He called him “the man of our century, the modern man, the man who loved much.” “He testifies that holiness is possible for everyone,” he added.

Pope Benedict XVI called upon youths “to discover that it is worth to commit oneself for God... to respond to His call in the fundamental decisions throughout one's life”.

Visiting Turin in Nov 2015, Pope Francis venerated his remains. His remains were moved from Turin twice for World Youth Day: once to Sydney in 2008 and another to Krakow in 2016. Many youths come to his grave seeking favours and the courage to follow his example.

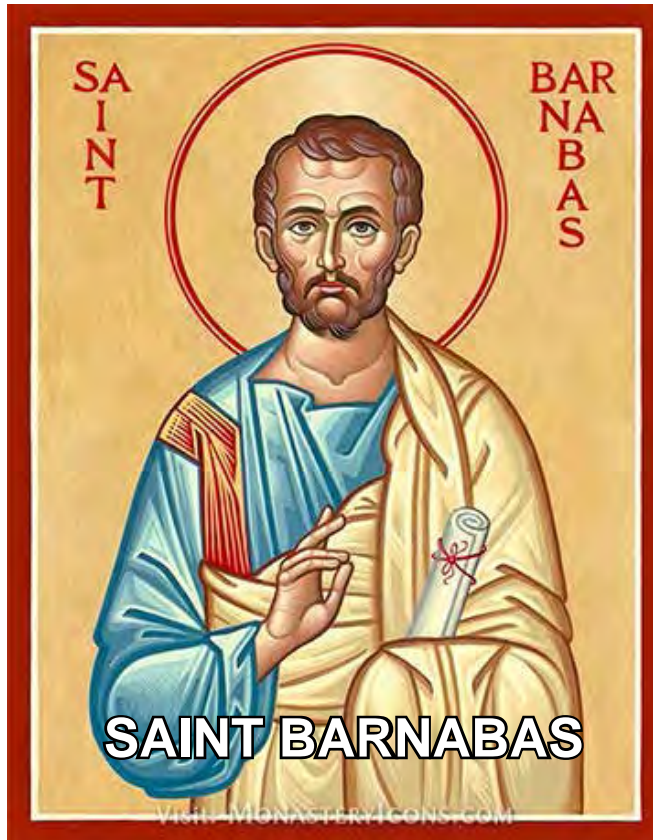
His sister Luciana Gawronska says in her brother's biography, “He represents the finest in Christian youth: pure, happy, enthusiastic about everything that is good and beautiful.”



All that we know of Barnabas is to be found in the New Testament. His original name was Joseph the Levite. Barnabas was born to wealthy Jewish parents on a Greek speaking island, and hence is referred to as a Hellenised Jew of Cyprus. He was often seen amidst the chosen Twelve. He lived with the earliest converts to Christianity in Jerusalem. He persuaded the community to accept Paul who was earlier a persecutor of Christians, but now to accept him as a disciple. He joined the Jerusalem Church soon after the Crucifixion of Jesus. He was a staunch believer in Jesus Christ, preached widely, and founded the Church in Antioch. (Acts 11:19-20)

Barnabas was well known for his encouragement to different people. He belonged to a wealthy family, but his love for the Church was such that he sold all his inherited property and donated the money to the Apostles, to encourage and support them in their work of building the community and the Church. His generosity extended to the local community also.

Barnabas became closely associated with the Apostles especially Saints Peter and Paul. Both Paul and Barnabas were charismatic leaders and were very successful in preaching to the gentiles. When a dispute arose regarding the observance of the Mosaic law of the Jews, Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem, where a conference of the Christian Apostles



called the Council of Jerusalem was held in 50 CE. Here it was discussed and decided that pagans or gentile Christians did not have to be circumcised to be baptized.

The fervour of Barnabas and Paul to build the Church was so great that after a miracle took place at Lystra, the people were very excited that they wanted to offer sacrifice treating them as gods. However, the two told the people, "We are of the same nature as you, human beings. We proclaim to you good news that you should turn from your idols to the living God." (Acts 14: 15)



by:  
**Dr Jeanette  
Pinto**

The successful preaching of Christianity at Antioch to non-Jews, led the Church at Jerusalem to send Barnabas there to oversee the movement. He found the work very extensive. Seeking help, he went to Tarsus in search of Paul who he knew quite well by now and admired. He wanted Paul, to assist him. Paul

returned with him to Antioch and together they labored for a whole year. At the end of this period, the two were sent up to Jerusalem (44 AD) with contributions from the Church at Antioch for the relief of the poorer Christians in Judea.

The Christian Church is indebted to this great Apostle. We can learn from him kindness, generosity and being an encouraging person to others. His life is an example for all of us to emulate. Barnabas had set his eyes on Jesus and moved from town to town to spread the word of God. He was single minded

in his mission, seeking no praise. We owe Saint Barnabas credit for the word "Christian," namely the followers of Jesus Christ.

We learn from the Acts that Barnabas was an important early Christian missionary and one of the Apostolic Fathers of the Church. He was a good man filled with the Holy Spirit and faith. He was a well-respected person of the first Christian generation, and he dedicated his life to the Lord. He was kind and showed much readiness to put aside his Jewish prejudices. Nothing is known for certain about the circumstances of his death. It is however believed that Barnabas unfortunately met a sad end, he was bound with a rope by the neck, and then dragged to a site where he was burned to death. Catholics celebrate the memory of St. Barnabas on June 11.

Sources:  
*Catholic News Agency, Internet.*



## Magical Yoga Wave

look on life. By weaving some of the timeless wisdom of Yoga into your classes, you will further support your students in applying the wisdom of the ancient scriptures to their practice and to their lives off the mat. Furthermore, if you teach your Yoga classes in a disciplined manner, with a higher goal in mind, your students will pick up on how you approach your own professional role as their teacher, and they will quite naturally apply the same dedication to their own practice.

Teaching Yoga classes in a disciplined manner, with a higher goal in mind, the students will pick up on how teachers approach their own professional role and they will quite naturally apply the same dedication to their own practice. The lesson to be taken home is that never impose any yoga posture to its entirety in the beginning. Let the yoga practitioner adopt it slowly and gradually in the guidance of his trainer. Exercises like this lead to a better life and focus in spiritual practice in order to reduce suffering and increase happiness. This kind of exercise may increase our capacity to feel at ease and at peace with ourselves and who we are. The flower opens on its own without force. Patience is everything.

**P**racticing yoga on a regular basis helps in achieving mental discipline, which will eventually become a part of your routine. You will notice the positive change in your work, habits, and lifestyle. You will begin to appreciate these changes and also be grateful for having rewarded yourself with a good habit for life. In order to truly benefit from a regular Yoga practice, the students need to apply consistent effort in a disciplined manner

At a time when covid19 cornered the world, yoga came to our rescue to keep oneself fit at the time of pandemic. India made it mandatory to learn the art and



*Jayanthy Subramaniam*

taught the magical yoga wave to the universe and thus enjoying the fruits in a very big way. No doubt yoga is a light, when once lit will never dim. The better your practice, the brighter your flame. The fundamental purpose of yoga is to foster harmony in the body, mind and overall fitness. As a peace loving country we live in a state of maintaining harmony and that provides us a better frame of mind.

Yoga and meditation are food for mind, body and soul. This International Yoga Day, pledge to make yoga, not just an activity but a lifestyle. All this bringing of the mind into a higher state of vibration is included in one word in yoga. Music and Yoga are a part of your daily life, bringing peace, happiness and good health always. Yoga is not just what you do on the mat or the rope. It's how you live your life. How you react when things don't go your way. Yoga is reaching for the stars with your feet firmly on the ground. Yoga is not just fancy poses. Being light hearted and strong and by staying committed to your decisions and being kind enough to humanity. Then Yoga is a way of life for your entire lifetime. We live in another covid19 world and yoga proved to be a companion during a critical time.

Clearly, a balanced practice of Yoga postures, breathing exercises and contemplative techniques lends itself quite easily to improving one's physical capabilities and mental out-

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# Journey from Scars to star-

## My journey after recurrent miscarriages

**B**eing an only child, I never knew what life's struggles were about. I was blessed with the most loving parents, wonderful upbringing and the best of facilities one could ever ask for. Despite being the apple of my parents' eyes, they ensured that I was taught to live a life of empathy, mutual love and discipline.

I was blessed with a wonderful husband, who loved me and encouraged me to be my best. It was beautiful and yes, I lived a fairytale life.

After two years of marriage, we decided to extend our family and have a baby. I never knew it could turn out to become so challenging. After a struggle of eight long months, I was pregnant. This was the most beautiful news for me and my husband. Being pregnant for the first time, we were very cautious. We took all precautions to be safe and cared for the little one in my womb.

Being on the heavier side, I was very always cautious of my weight and having read a lot of things about how weight could affect the unborn baby, I was always cautious and troubled.

The first three months of pregnancy flew smoothly with continuous bouts of terrible nausea but overall, it was a pleasant period, or I just thought so? One Saturday morning in the 4th month of my pregnancy, for reasons unknown I lost my baby. This was a major blow to me! The months following this mishap were not easy. Though physical healing was fast, emotional healing was painfully slow. Yet, in a few months' time, I recovered and resumed my earlier lifestyle.

My lifestyle was not worth appreciating. It was filled with junk food, lack

of exercise and miles away from God. This continued for couple of months. Suddenly society started pressurizing us to have a baby. That's when I realized I had to lose the excess weight I was carrying. Unfortunately, my lack of dedication along with the norms in the society regarding my age and other criteria put me in a dilemma. At last, when I made up my mind to take my weight loss goals seriously, I became pregnant again!

Though this news was good, I was confused since I was intent on losing weight and pregnancy meant a full stop to my weight goals. Yet, with a strong heart I went ahead with the pregnancy and gave it my best shot. Since I had a history of miscarriage, I was advised complete bed rest, a protein-rich diet, injections, medicines and the like. However, despite all these efforts I suffered a miscarriage in my fifth month of pregnancy and

lost my baby again. It was something my family and I could not stomach. It was horrific and beyond what I had expected. My family and friends were shocked, and I was in deep remorse. I thought this was the end of my dreams and wishes.

People around me were sympathetic. Some were genuinely concerned while others were looking for reasons to find faults. One of the harsh comments I received was about my weight – that it was my weight that had caused the loss of my babies. Though this comment was hard to swallow, it awakened a sense of guilt and shame in me. I started blaming myself for the whole episode. However, after a visit to my doctor and on his assurance that the miscarriages had nothing to do with my weight, I was relieved. Yet, I knew I had to take things seriously and change my lifestyle.



The journey after the miscarriages was hard but in a way it was beautiful. I discovered a lot of things and learnt some of the most important life lessons.

I realized that miscarriage was not God's plan. Many of them around told me it is God's plan you need to accept it. As much as I accepted it, I realized it was the devil's work and I had to resist it. I decided to face the situation with faith and seek the support of the almighty. I learnt that it was ok to talk about miscarriage, but not negatively. I learnt to talk to other women and share the good news that, miracles happen and nothing is impossible to the almighty.

I started treating my body with respect. Our body is God's temple and we need to respect it and take care of it. No, not just physically but emotionally and we need to stop speaking negative against it. Most importantly I learnt not to base my decisions on what others said, but pray to God dis-

(Contd.. on p. 24)



by Sonal Lobo



(Contd.. from p. 23)

cern what is right and act accordingly.

The days following the miscarriage were not easy. There were aches, pains and frustrations. But slowly I started to heal. I started reading my Bible, I started listening to the word of God and spending time in prayer. This became the best remedy for my wounded heart. My growing intimacy with God made me realize that miscarriage was not his will for me but devil's evil design. I also realized When we have faith in Him, things will change, and miracles do happen.

Further, I decided to take my weight loss goals seriously. Though my weight had nothing to do with the miscarriage, I decided I need to treat by body with respect and not continue with an unhealthy body. I do not mind how many months it would take and who would be disappointed, But I would reduce my excess weight and become a healthy mom. I have begun

taking baby steps and the results are beginning to show. I am sure I would be able to lose the excess baggage of my body soon.

Next, I decided to write about issues which are considered taboo. Earlier I was very diplomatic and was worried about what others would think if I wrote on sensitive issues. But after my miscarriage, I realized that it is necessary to write about everything more so about issues that you feel and care about. I have begun to write about topics which are sad along with topics that are happy. This decision is indirectly empowering me and making me a strong voice to bring out the issues which are otherwise considered to be non-existent.

Though for many people around me, my loss was miserable, I began to realize my scar was turning out to be a bright star, because my Jesus was comforting me. Losing a baby was hard but the days that followed turned

out to be better. I began to change my unhealthy lifestyle and started heading towards a healthy one. I have begun to pursue my interests and most importantly I have begun to trust and rely on the Supreme Power. For many people God may be fiction but after my miscarriage, he has turned into a reality. My spiritual journey has made me hopeful, joyful and given me a reason to live and love again!

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