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A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

THEY Killed Him Slowly With Their Bloody Minded Malice

by Don Aguiar

Questioning and doubting what's going on these days does not make you "anti" anything. Nor does it make you a conspiracy theorist. Actually, questioning IS and SHOULD be, the place of REASON. The fact that questioning has become TABOO, should in fact, SEND CHILLS UP EVERYONE'S SPINE.

They took a good kind man who spent his entire life in the service of others and killed him. He was arrested in connection with the Elgar Parishad gathering of December 2017 in Bhima Koregaon, a place he never visited in his life. He was accused and jailed under Unlawful Activities Prevention Act for his alleged involvement in a blast case near Pune. He was accused of being a terrorist, but did not get a chance to defend himself against those charges. He had denied the charges.

Evidence was planted to incarcerate him and others in the Bhima Koregoan case, showed forensic investigations. Flimsy charges filled the charge-sheets.

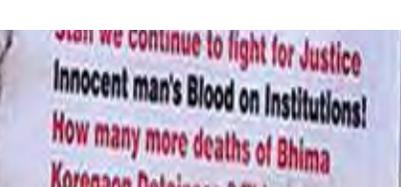
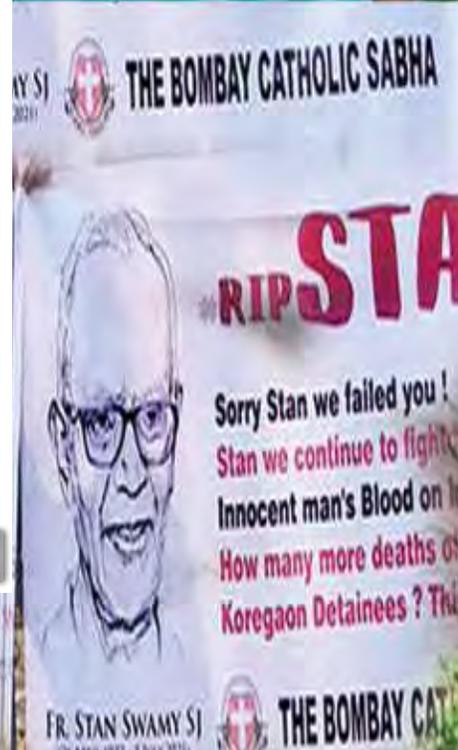
Even the last hearing, when he begged to be allowed to return home to Ranchi – the court admitted that they could see how far gone he was, but they couldn't give him bail. The investigating agencies and the prosecution had insisted that the 84 year old and seriously sick Jesuit priest was too dangerous to be released on bail!! This was very strange and totally inhuman.

Fr Stan was a frail 84-year-old, soft spoken Jesuit priest who worked for most of his life among the Adivasis of Jharkhand. He was involved in promoting the rights of Dalits and Tribals in Jharkhand. He worked with the poor and downtrodden, because that is the true calling of Jesuits, and it is one of the main teachings of Jesus. If he asked for justice for the tribals, it was mainly about protecting their land rights, against the arbitrary depriving of their livelihoods, and about proper implementation of laws.

He organised Adivasis around their Constitutional rights for decades, he had filed a path breaking Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the Jharkhand High Court (High Court, WPC (PIL) No 4212 of 2017) exposing the incarceration and praying for the release of about 4,000 tribal youth languishing in prisons of Jharkhand. **Rulers of the India of today see this as the greatest threat, citizens who believe in the Constitution, communities who organise, individuals who refuse to be silenced.**

For demanding the enforcement of these very rights of Adivasis, Fr Stan was deemed an anti-national. He had also filed a public interest litigation in the Supreme Court against the arbitrary rounding up of Adivasi youth, under charges of being Maoists and Left-wing ter-

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The Real Freeing Of The Jailbird

“The caged bird sang and his spirit soared” – this comment, displayed on the main gate of Holy Family Church, a Jesuit-run Parish at Chakala in Andheri East, is probably the most succinct comment on the untimely passing of one of the most vocal social activists of our times. All that Father Stan Swamy, the Jesuit jailbird, endured right through his imprisonment constitutes a bold statement on the state of affairs in the judicial system of the country: those who are easily bought are able to dominate the scene with equal ease and drown those who just can never be bought! In the circumstances, jailbird Stan has a long way to go before his soul can really be said to be at last free, the reasons for which are not far to see.



There are extremely significant theories surfacing in the media, both print and electronic, in relation to the incarceration of Father Stan—bail obtained with relative ease by less deserving undertrials; liberty unlimited gleefully enjoyed by those who rightfully ought to be behind bars, and so on. And all this under the patronage of the very persons who authoritatively ought to uphold the rule of law as equal to all!

It is reported that “the Bar Association of India [BAI], which has attorney-general K.K. Venugopal as member and honorary chairman, has attributed Father Stan Swamy’s death in custody to “cruel and unusual institutional mistreatment. In a statement issued through (its) General Secretary Anindita Pujari, the association said on 8 July (that) the death of the Jesuit tribal rights activist had “brought disrepute to the Indian legal system and is a failure of the administration of justice” (*Matters India*, 9 July 2021). What is galling, however, is that such theories are being advanced when the victim of the non-bail tactics of those concerned is no more. Wouldn’t the outcome have been different if what is being discussed in the open today had been argued in court while the victim was still around?

All said and done, would that the Jesuits, the Church in India and BAI, led by Advocates K.K. Venugopal, Anindita Pujari, Mihir Desai and Olaf Albuquerque, along with former top cop Julio Ribeiro and other conscientious individuals jointly drew up an effective strategy. **The focus of such an exercise would have to be threefold: to speedily look into all the irregularities emanating these days and take up issue with the courts urgently in a bid to obtain due justice for Stan posthumously; having those guilty of the undue denial of bail for Stan brought to book; and, thirdly, to secure justice for Stan’s fellow accused.** Needless to say, only such concerted action would make a truly fitting tribute to the departed soul and to the tribals for whose sake Father Stan Swamy suffered so much unto death. Indeed, only then can it be freely said that “the caged bird sang and his spirit soared”!

—Ladislaus Louis D’Souza
Malad

Betrayal in politics

Judas took 30 pieces of silver for betraying Jesus, then he repented and gave up his life. These were the headlines of a news report recently in the Herald - Goa newspaper. It was with reference to the ten Congress MLAs elected by the people in the Goa Assembly Elections in 2019, who defected to the other side to form the government. The new report further poses the question, “What did it take for Congress MLAs who betrayed their mandate? And did they even think of repenting?”

The report goes on to give a very good insight into the dirty minds of our dirty politicians. Politics is dirty, it is said that it is getting murkier by the day. It took 30 pieces of silver for Judas to betray Jesus. Our modern day politicians today take crores of rupees to betray the trust the public repose in them at the time of elections. And talking of repentance, for them, there is no such thing as repentance. Our politicians don’t seem to have a conscience, or rather, should we say, it’s dead? The reports rightly says, when Judas did awake to his conscience, he threw the money back and committed suicide. But the hard core politicians that they are, they are made of sterner stuff. They could drive everybody else to suicide in order to be in power. For them, it is power at all costs. Our elected representatives - MPs, MLAs have become just like any other commodity to be bought from the store. Or rather should we say, they are slaves, to be auctioned to the highest bidder? The reports adds, when these MLAs took that decision to defect to the other side, it was all about their self-employment. Over the past couple of years people have been struggling to find employment, many have lost their jobs on the contrary. Are these politicians bothered about unemployment and money in the people’s pockets?

The tragedy is, our democracy today has been turned into a sham, a cruel joke on the people of this country. Who can save our country, one wonders. As one of the ministers in Goa recently stated, it’s time for a political revolution. A mass movement is the need of the hour!



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rorists. Almost all of this activity of Fr Stan is a matter of public record. Thus, he was not an underground guerrilla waging war against the state. But the state brought the full power of its draconian legal weaponry against this frail man.

His repeated bail pleas on health and humanitarian grounds were rejected. Ironically he died on the eve of his bail hearing. He was suffering from Parkinson's disease, making him unable even to sign his own vakalat-nama. His request for a sipper and straw were denied. Once in prison and branded an accused - that too a terrorist - means a sentence to oblivion. However, in Fr Stan's case, it was a systematic denial of justice, and a progression of deteriorating health to the point of his death.

Since he was arrested under the draconian Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), it was easy to refuse bail. That 1967 law was amended most recently in August 2019, with support from Opposition parties, even in the Rajya Sabha. The law makes it easy to brand an individual as a terrorist with no proof or evidence. And then the individual can languish as an

under-trial. It is telling that for eight long months while he was incarcerated, the state did not find time to ask Fr Stan questions regarding his involvement. Could it be that the state knew the truth better than us?

All he was doing was asking for enforcement of the rights of the poor. At worse, he was dissenting against the apathy of the state. He was not a militant. In life, he did not get justice. But will his death further freeze dissent? Or will ordinary folk stand up and be counted?

Fr Stan suffered painfully before he succumbed. His illness and death could have been avoided. Arguably, it was the inherently pathetic conditions at Taloja jail, followed by an obdurate web of deceit woven by the jail bureaucracy and the National Investigation Agency (NIA) that simply did not admit to this condition. The state and the judiciary stand guilty.

While Arnab Goswami got instant hearing and a terror accused who is involved in the killings of 40 people got bail on health grounds, both being charged under the same law as Fr Stan, Fr Stan was denied bail for 7 months for being a human rights activists who fought for the rights of the

tribals for more than 30 years. The case against him was dubious. He died after his bail was rejected. Is this justice?

The prolonged torture Fr Stan faced, at his age and in his condition even in the face of all the protests, was deliberately imposed by the State, and done so defiantly, blatantly, and openly to make a point and an example. It was premeditated. And it was bloody minded malice baring its fangs from the highest level.

He was fighting for the rights of the Adivasis and the state just did not like it. The state wanted to tell the citizen "you TOE our line or see what we can do". Specifically application of UAPA amendment of 2019 which in short says that you are guilty till you can prove your innocence, will be applied, and we will incarcerate you till Kingdom comes.

Fr Stan defiance was of an epic level. He stuck to his convictions to the very last. All the might and power of the State could not break an 84 year old man with so many ailments, infected by Covid-19.

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Oppression is the furnace where the faith of Christians is forged to unbreakable steel. What did the State achieve by murdering Fr. Stan? Millions more rising up even stronger in their faith. And unbelievers even more resolute in standing next to them through whatever they can muster up in their own small way.

Our system failed to bring up the issue of Fr. Stan Swamy arrest which was doctored by evidence of fabricated Malware inserted into his Laptop. Our Cardinals failed to put pressure for his release when they met the Prime Minister. It is still not clear for what purpose these Cardinals went to Delhi. Our legal system has failed to show justice. Even our Christian Lawyers could not fight the institutions or the Government. **The Government has shown that no matter who you are, we know how to throttle your voice, put you behind bars and KILL YOU. Don't speak for Tribals we know what is right.**

The death of Fr Stan is the consequence of an authoritative state's cold blooded and inhuman behaviour. Protesting against atrocities, voicing for common causes, working for up keeping the democratic values, relentlessly contributing for uplifting the status of countrymen.....are these wrong? Is it a sin to be a human rights activist..?

Democracy fails to provide opportunities for expressing big NOs and it tends to be extremely intolerant, when autocracy makes inroads into democracy under the guise of the same democracy....! Distorted democracy is the death knell of the democracy envisaged by great exponents of our constitution. In a nutshell, many fail to understand how can a civilized and democratic country throw a noble person to death like this...?

Tragic and shameful too, a black stain on Indian democracy. The independence of the institutions UAPA must be

reviewed for its proneness to rampant abuse. Those behind hounding him to death need to be held to account.

Fr Stan words of calm strength and conviction must guide us as his loss consumes us and exposes the depth of cold cruelty of the Regime. While the NIA directly under India's Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is the agency that has been particularly venal in this case, the conduct of Maharashtra's jail authorities and bureaucracy that has laced their defence of prison conditions with falsehoods not borne out by fact, needs special focus.

Prison conditions, absence of autonomous monitoring, the intermittent gaze by the Judiciary are all issues that come to the face and fore. If Fr Stan death is not to be in vain, each and all

of these need to be made into a vivid people's campaign. To begin we must come with an unequivocal demand for the repeal of UAPA.

One of Fr. Stan's last messages from jail was "What is happening to me is not something unique happening to me alone. It is a broader process that is taking place all over the country. We are all aware how prominent intellectuals, lawyers, writers, poets, activists, student leaders – they are all put in jail just because they have expressed their dissent... I am ready to pay the price whatever may it be."

In his life and in his martyrdom, Fr Stan has become an inspirational role model for all those who are struggling for human rights, specially the rights of the Tribals, in India today.

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Indian Christian Day???

A news item on the MATTERS INDIA Portal on 3 July made interesting reading! It declared: "A Declaration prepared by a small group of initiators of this historic day (representing various Churches) states, "This declaration of 3 July 2021 as Indian Christian Day (Yeshu 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, Saint Thomas the Apostle.

"This day, historically observed as Saint 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" (*Cedric Prakash SJ, Matters India 03.07.2021*).

With due respect for the acumen and intentions of the organizers of this day, whoever they be, it may be said that there is obviously a slip between the cup and the lip here! The translation of **INDIAN CHRISTIAN DAY** into Hindi reads as: भारतीय ईसाई दिवस whereas YESHU BHAKTI DIVAS would literally translate in English as *Christ Devotion Day* or *Christian Worship Day*. Of course, terming the day as CHRISTI BHAKT DIVAS, i.e. Christian Worshippers' Day or Day of Christ Worship would also not be appropriate as the Lord is reported to be have 'bhakts' in North India running into thousands who merely worship Him but are not Baptized Christians per se.

Essentially, if this day is to become one of lasting significance and make due impact rather than yet another day when the apparent feel-good factor surfaces for a day, it is vital that a notification is issued by those concerned clarifying as follows:

- a) correct meaning of the day's title—correcting or changing it if necessary;
- b) what exactly this day is all about: **a day that celebrates our identity as Baptized followers of Jesus Christ and our Constitutional right to practise and propagate our Faith?** Or a day to hold some extra-special Christian religious devotions, or what?

— *Ladislaus Louis D'Souza Malad*

Fr. Stan Swamy will always be remembered for giving a voice to the Adivasis

Fr. Stan Swamy was a humanitarian and a man of God whom our government could not treat with humanity. He was not a part of the Bhi-ma-Koregaon violence and had been arrested by the NIA (National Intelligence Agency) in a dubious case of the Elgar Parishad violence. He will live in our hearts as a hero, the brave dissenter who stood against the fascist Modi government at the cost of his life. Narendra Modi and Amit Shah have Fr. Stan Swamy's blood on their hands. The country will never forgive them. The death of Fr. Stan Swamy on July 5 will haunt the Indian judiciary forever. May his soul rest in peace.

Fr. Stan Swamy wouldn't have survived for long. It was inevitable. His

death was a murder and nothing else.

But the prolonged torture Fr. Stan Swamy faced at his age and in his condition, even in the face of all the protests, was deliberately imposed by the State, and done so defiantly, blatantly, and openly to make a point and an example. It was premeditated. And it was bloody-minded malice baring its fangs from the highest level.

But Stan Swamy's defiance was of an epic level. He stuck to his convictions to the very last. All the might and power of the State could not break an 84 year old man with so many ailments infected by Covid.

He won in the end. And like Gladys Staines, the widow of the late Graham Staines who was burnt alive along with his two sons, I am sure he was true to his faith by forgiving his oppressors.

What did the country achieve by murdering Fr. Stan Swamy?

Fr. Stan Swamy was targeted because he stood in the way of the persecution of the tribals. He was also working for communal harmony. That's where he became a nuisance for the government.

Fr Stan Swamy died a martyr's death sacrificing his life in the battle against injustice.

He was not anti-development. He was against the grabbing of the Adivasi land. He was against displacing people in the name of growth and development. He will always be remembered for giving a voice to the Adivasis.

—*Jubel D'Cruz, Dombivili, Mumbai*

Nationwide support for Fr Stan Swamy

I feel it both right, and pertinent to mention that 'Vjdyajyoti journal for theological reflection, Delhi, has in its February 2021 issue, published 2 letters and a poem written by Fr Stan Swamy, during his incarceration in Taloja jail. The first letter was written after 25 days, the poem after 75 days and the second letter after 100 days in jail. In both the letters Fr Stan has

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Wednesday 30 June 2021 marked a year since the legend, ANTHONY PARAKAL, went to his reward, with over 4,000 “Letters To The Editors” [LTTE] of esteemed publications under his belt! As in the case of his funeral, so did the Anniversary pass off quietly on account of the never-ending pandemic.

Though fellow parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Orlem (Malad West), we were formally introduced to each other by Sister M Lissy, a Daughters of Saint Paul nun involved in the media apostolate, at my home in Mithchowki. Simple and unassuming by nature, Parakal, a devout Catholic, came across as a delightful conversationalist, subsequent Sunday encounters often bordering on his health condition (deteriorating eyesight... etc), vis-à-vis his desire to live at least until the age of 95 years. He was wont to say: “My mother died at age ninety! Shouldn’t I surpass her age!?!”

Parakal did not live to even hit the magical figure of 90! Yet, in his 89-year lifespan, he did achieve rare “mini-celebrity” status among media-persons of the pre-internet and SMS era in his ardent bid to change the world through his LTTE. Written over a period of six decades, his letters covered a wide range of topics and problems confronting the common man, to the extent that he could well be compared to the late cartoonist of great renown,

Shri R.K. Laxman whose sketches were inimitably self-expressive.

From the steady growth of Parakal's fame streamed a rising flow of people from all walks of life across the city into his home with their grievances. They would discuss with him issues like the need of more public transport facilities for the purpose of reaching the workplace on time, better allocation of BEST bus routes vis-à-vis burgeoning populations in certain localities and so on. His 15 December 2003 letter in the TOI concerning the irregularity in



the height of railway station platforms elicited a prompt acknowledgement from Mr Shailendra Kumar, the then CPRO, WR, Churchgate on 28 January 2004 confirming that “apropos of the complaint of Mr Anthony Parakal, the Western Railway will be raising the heights of several platforms between Churchgate and Virar. Contract formalities for Malad station are under completion.” This, Parakal noted in one of his files, was his last social commitment that he ensured fulfilling. Incidentally, Parakal's association with the Indian Railways stems from the time he, as its employee, was first posted at Jhansi, from where, weather conditions not suiting him, he sought a transfer. Posted to Bombay [now Mumbai] in 1953, he was appalled at what he saw: poor amenities, proliferating slums, water supply problems, diseases like leprosy and what have

you—a stark contrast to God's own country, Kerala, where he hailed from!

Parakal's letters, the first of which appeared in the TOI in 1955, were taken note of not merely by newspaper readers but by the high and the mighty too. And so it is that his files contain personal acknowledgements from people of renown like Morarji Desai, Gulzari Lal Nanda and Rajiv Gandhi to name a few.

In 1993, the *Limca Book of Records* as well as the Indian edition of the *Guinness Book of World Records* featured Parakal's Letter Writing feat; in 1999, the All India Press Writers Association honoured him with the *Knight of Conscience* award. Parakal and others of his ilk like Dr Leo Rebello, Abubaker Thwahir and K.R. Prithviraj whose names often graced the LTTE sections of newspapers, were also members of the All India (Press) Letter-Writers' Association [AILWA]. At the 12th annual AILWA meet, Dr Rebello reportedly lamented, “*We are torch-bearers but editors call us epistomaniacs!*” However, the chief guest of the event, Justice (Retd) Bakhtawar Lentin addressed the letter-writers as “**the conscience keepers of the nation**”, a nomenclature over which Parakal is said to have unabashedly exulted!

Incidentally, with his last LTTE published in the TIME magazine on 12 December 2005, Parakal is said to have hung his boots ostensibly to “pick arguments” with his wife! And, now, the piece de resistance! **Why did this man slog it out writing letters to the editor** (on his manual typewriter, no less!) even as he simultaneously, ensured that his two daughters and son were educated well and then well-settled in life? The answer stands out crystal clear in his note bringing to a formal close his mission: “Due to failing memory and deteriorating health...I have given up my over 50 years' practice of writing 'letters to the editor'. At the end, I feel very happy that I have done enough, that too within my limited economic resources....**What motivated me to**

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write on social causes is my belief that one should not live merely for oneself but also for others, without which we cannot live in a peaceful society." Such nobility! Indeed, they don't make Letter Writers like Mr Anthony Parakal anymore!!

And now, for the 'how' of the pursuits of Parakal who, from the very start, vividly demonstrated his acumen. Not for him the passing fancy of seeing his name in print at the bottom of a letter. Not for him the cheap thrill of being a member of a professional media organization with a mere "workable knowledge of English" (whatever that means!) as certain so-called professionals would claim to have today. Rather, he chose to ensure that he articulated his view on a chosen topic or issue in *correct* English. **To improve his proficiency in the language, he consciously made it a practice to visit the People's Library at VT [now CST - Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus]**



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

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

Say this prayer nine times a day for nine days.

— *Fatima D'Souza, Goa*

and read extensively. For the same purpose, until the last, he would "read the papers every morning and scan the news on TV. My regular habit of watching an English movie everyday, which I started primarily to improve my English, still continues. I also pray because to me life is all about discipline. Mostly I catch up on old times with my wife," he once chuckled!

In time, Parakal's motives came to be well appreciated and his efforts amply rewarded! On 8 May 2005, he was conferred the first ever **SECULAR CITIZEN LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD** that comprised of a cash prize of INR 50,000, a shawl, a trophy and a citation. The Examiner, the official organ of the Catholic Archdiocese of Bombay, conferred on him the prestigious **GOLDEN PEN AWARD!**

Rest in peace dear comrade! And as you do so, do consider penning us occasionally some wisdom from above via an 'LTTE'!

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expressed his gratitude for the overwhelming solidarity shown by many during his days in prison which gave him immense strength and courage. He ended his poem with the beautiful words "A caged bird can also sing". During Fr Stan's stay in jail, various Christian organisations also expressed their support to Fr Stan by lodging their protest, asking for his immediate release. These included the 'Conference of the Catholic Bishops of India' (CCBI), All India Catholic Union (AICU), Jesuit Conference of South Asia, and several other dioceses. A human chain protest in Ranchi was also led by Archbishop Felix Topo and aux. bishop Theodore Mascarenhas. Even today, there is nationwide support of Christians, non-Christians and some political party leaders who have hailed the virtues of Fr Stan and condemned the inhuman treatment to him in prison. While a few have asked for his canonization, hailing him as a martyr, there are some who would even like him to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for his life time dedication and fight for human rights. Let us therefore not be misled by a few into believing that Fr Stan died several deaths after being wrongly implicated and sent to jail, just because eminent persons who passed out from Jesuit institutions and other Christian institutions in the country remained silent while Fr Stan languished in prison, because they feared the wrath of the authorities.

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

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Thank you, dear Fr. Stan, you will live forever!

Dear Fr. Stan Swamy,

On 5 July, you completed your pilgrimage here on earth! Thousands feel your loss everywhere; a light has gone out of our lives and there is darkness everywhere! There is spontaneous outrage because of what led to your death; most regard it as institutionalised murder! I am sure that you will not want us to mourn your death; as we look back, we also celebrate your life of commitment; the rich legacy you have left us all. We are overwhelmed with emotion; our hearts are full as we say *"Thank you, dear Stan, you will live Forever!"*

"Thank you, dear Stan, you will live Forever!": we thank the Almighty for the Gift of You to so many people everywhere: particularly the excluded and the exploited, the Adivasis and Dalits, the poor and the marginalised, the voiceless and the unlettered; to all those who are denied their legitimate rights; and also, to the Country, the Church and the Society of Jesus.

"Thank you, dear Stan, you will live Forever!": we cannot help but think of your incredibly committed and simple life-style. Your frugality was known to all. You lived your vow of poverty to the fullest and in a most edifying manner; your material needs were few; your actual possessions were even less. The media had a field day, when some time ago, the 'authorities' came to seize your possessions- they got almost nothing!

"Thank you, dear Stan, you will live Forever!": you were an extraordinary person; in a selfless manner, you gave and did not count the cost! As a young priest, you lived in an interior Adivasi village sharing a small room with one of the local families. During that time, you mastered the Ho language, studied their culture and customs, ate their food and even sang and danced with them. Insertion into the tribal way of

life was always paramount to you and also 'your forte'! You believed in youth, gave them a sense of identity and helped them to critically analyse what was happening to their tribal society. With the generosity and help of the locals you also built your own residence which was an 'open house' to one and all! All through your life you mentored, trained and accompanied many women and men!

"Thank you, dear Stan, you will live Forever!": the world has today celebrates your amazing work on this earth! You were an Adivasi rights activist, working on various issues: land, forest and labour rights; questioning the non-implementation of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution, which stipulates setting up of a Tribes Advisory Council with members solely of the Adivasi community, for their protection, well-being and development; your work also involved opposition to the setting up of 'land banks',



BY FR. CEDRIC PRAKASH SJ

free up land belonging to the community in favour of the corporate sector Besides, you helped form a group called the 'Persecuted Prisoners' Solidarity Committee' that sought to do a study of the nature of undertrial prisoners (3,000 Adivasis illegally put in jail) and to have recourse to justice. Your work necessitated expressing dissent with several official policies and laws, which you were convinced were violative of the Constitution. The Adivasis and other excluded, who have been consistently denied their legitimate rights, saw in you a person who left no stone unturned, to champion their cause.

"Thank you, dear Stan, you will live Forever!": you have taught us all, the true meaning of 'solidarity' what it means to actually walk the talk; that to meaningfully empower the exploited and the excluded, one has to be in solidarity with them, in their struggles and



to accompany them visibly and vocally, with prophetic courage for a more just and humane society. You did this unreservedly to the very end! You worked together with other women and men of goodwill who believed in the values enshrined in the Constitution of India and the Gospel of Jesus; these were your comrades, your companions, your collaborators!

"Thank you, dear Stan, you will live Forever!": we listen to those heartfelt words which you said shortly before your arrest on 8 October 2020 *"What is happening to me is not something unique- happening to me alone. It is a broader process that is taking place all over the country. We are all aware how prominent intellectuals, lawyers' writers, poets, activists, students, leaders, they are all put into jail because they have expressed their dissent or raised questions about the ruling powers of India. We are part of the process. In a way I am happy to be part of this process. I am not a silent spectator, but part of the game, and ready to pay the price whatever be it"*. Yes, you were never a silent spectator!

"Thank you, dear Stan, you will live Forever!": on 21 May, you told the Bombay High Court the suffering you were going through in prison; you said *"I was brought here eight months ago. When I came to Talaja, my full system, my body was still very functional. But during these eight months, I have gone through a steady regression of all bodily functions. Eight months ago, I could have a bath by myself and also do some writing by myself. But these are disappearing one after another. Talaja jail brought me to a situation where I can neither write nor go for a walk by myself or even eat. I am not able to meet this demand. Eating has become a real difficulty; someone has to feed me with a spoon."* You also highlighted the dire conditions in Talaja jail that

(Contd.. on p. 9)

prompted prisoners to help each other in the face of acute economic deprivation. You were profoundly touched by the help you received from your fellow prisoners. You seemed to have an intuition of your impending death: you wanted to be given regular bail and to go back to Ranchi to be in the midst of your people “I want to go to Ranchi to be with my friends.... Whatever happens to me I would like to be with my own”.; if not that, you were very clear about your option: to continue to be in Talaja jail “I would rather die here very shortly if things go on as it is”.

“Thank you, dear Stan, you will live Forever!”: your death seems to have united the major opposition political parties of the country. In a strongly worded letter to the President of India they write, “We are urging your immediate intervention as the President of India to direct ‘your government’ to act against those responsible for foisting false cases on him (Stan Swamy), his continued detention in jail and inhuman treatment. They must be held accountable. It is now incumbent that all those jailed in the Bhima Koregaon case and other detainees under politically motivated cases, misusing draconian laws like UAPA, sedition etc be released forthwith.” Ironically, these political parties could not come together on several key issues which plague the nation; some of them have been responsible for introducing draconian laws like the UAPA! But then your death has provided them at least a cosmetic unity to address a serious reality!!

“Thank you, dear Stan, you will live Forever!”: tributes that have come in from the highest echelons of power globally. A statement from the United Nations said, “High Commissioner Michelle Bachelet and the UN’s independent experts have repeatedly raised the cases of Father Stan and 15 other human rights defenders associated with the same events with the government of India over the past three years, and urged their release from pre-trial detention; The high commissioner has also raised concerns over the use of the UAPA in relation to human rights

defenders – a law Father Stan was challenging before Indian courts days before he died.” The US State Department through its Office of International Religious Freedom tweeted, “We are saddened by the death of Father Stan Swamy, a Jesuit priest & tribal rights activist, who died in Indian custody under charges of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act. We call on all governments to respect the vital role of human rights activists in healthy democracies”. All this has obviously raised the hackles of those who illegally incarcerated you! They were afraid and insecure for what you stood for. They tried to do away with you, not realising that your spirit will never die!

“Thank you, dear Stan, you will live Forever!”: the powers that tried to put you away, to annihilate you, have failed miserably in their evil design. They did not realise that doing away with you would spawn hundreds and thousands of ‘Stan Swamys’ everywhere. Since your death, there have been numerous programmes all over the world: rallies and demonstrations; candle light vigils and processions; memorial prayer meetings and Masses; webinars and articles. Leading dailies and magazines have you on the cover with powerful editorials and op-eds; social media has not stopped talking about you. In several ways you have galvanised people across the board, to celebrate your life and mission; and to condemn the way you were made to die! The underlying refrain everywhere is “I am Stan”; no longer the hashtag #StandWithStan, it has gone way beyond.

“Thank you, dear Stan, you will live Forever!”: a new cohesive, vibrant national campaign is emerging and gaining momentum- ‘**The Joint National Action to Defend Democracy; Defend Right to Dissent**’. The campaign calls for a “repeal of Sedition Laws, UAPA and Repressive State Laws; and demands for the Restoration of the Citizens Right to Bail”. Already on Friday 23 July there is a ‘Day of Action’ planned called ‘Justice for Father Stan Swamy’ which will lead up to a fortnight’s National Action Programme from August 15- 28. Thousands from all over the country are expected to participate. We demand the immediate revocation of the Unlaw-

ful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA); the unconditional release of all the Bhima-Koregaon fifteen and all others illegally incarcerated under the draconian UAPA; we demand prison reforms and better conditions for prisoners. All that you relentlessly worked and died for! Strangely enough, in a lecture on 13 July, Supreme Court Justice D.Y. Chandrachud emphatically stated, “criminal law, including anti-terror legislation, should not be misused for quelling dissent or for harassment of citizens; the Supreme Court plays the role of a counter-majoritarian institution and has the duty to protect the rights of socio-economic minorities. Powerful words, a vindication of what you lived and died for; we need to see now what happens in practice!

Even in prison and from the moment you were hospitalised, you reached out to others -the less fortunate prisoners, your caregivers, in every possible way! You tell us with such conviction and positivity, that even a caged bird sings. As a prophet of our times, you epitomised compassion, courage and commitment. You had the audacity to dare: to walk with the excluded and the exploited and to make their struggles your own. Today you are a martyr for justice and truth. The Adivasis and many others already regard you as a ‘Saint’ But you have not died; you will continue to live in each one of us. Many more ‘Stan Swamys’ will continue to rise until that day when your vision of a more humane, just, equitable, fraternal, free and dignified society becomes a reality for the poor and underprivileged, the excluded and the exploited of India! Yes, you were murdered by the State – we are sorry and sad about that! We hang our heads down in shame but at the same time, pledge to live your legacy in our lives! You have gone to that eternal reward you so richly deserve and from the depths of our hearts we say “Thank you dear Stan: You will live Forever!”

**Your brother,
Cedric**

*(Fr Cedric Prakash SJ is a human rights, reconciliation and peace activist/writer.
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Kanpur Stands With Stan

The citizens of Kanpur stood as one under the banner “We Stand with Stan” at a commemoration cum commitment service held at St Patrick’s Church hall on 9th July. It was organised by the Kanpur Catholic Association (KCA), with the active collaboration of St Aloysius’ School.

Due to Covid protocol the gathering was restricted, nevertheless the hall was full. The keynote speaker was Magsaysay awardee Dr Sandeep Pandey of Lucknow, founder of the Socialist Party (India). Earlier he had launched an online campaign for the release of Stan and other accused in the Bhima Koregaon (Elgar Parishad) case, for which they had been arrested.

Sandeep asserted that when Stan was arrested from Ranchi he did not know anything about the Koregaon incident that was one of assertion of Dalit rights in Maharashtra; while Stan himself was working for the tribals (adivasis) in Jharkhand State, over 1000 kms away. He said that most of the social activists arrested were no where near the scene of the alleged violence.



by chhotebhai *

He further observed that when the Central Government found that it had lost power in Maharashtra it clandestinely transferred the investigation to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) that was under its purview. Sandeep said that though Stan had been incarcerated in Taloja central jail, Navi Mumbai, for 9 months, the NIA had not even once taken him on remand for interrogation. So what was the tearing hurry to have him arrested?

He also drew attention to the fact that Stan was fighting for the rights of 4000 adivasis who had been put in jail on frivolous grounds. As per Article 19 of the Constitution of India, land belonging to tribals could not be acquired by others. This was being flouted blatantly in the

tribal villages of Jharkhand, which was being strongly opposed by Stan.

According to him the conviction rate for those arrested under the draconian Unlawful

Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) was an abysmal 2%; so 98% of those arrested were either innocent or there was insufficient evidence against them. In contrast, in the USA the conviction rate was about 50%, but here it was so much lower because the police had a proclivity for framing people, especially the poor, in false cases.

Ms Subashini Ali, former MP of the CPM also paid homage to Stan. She said that Christians are often seen as docile and turning the other cheek. On the other hand there was Liberation Theology that made a preferential option for the poor, which is what

Stan was following. She also said that Jesus was not a silent spectator to wrongdoing. When he saw the corruption in the Temple precincts he took a whip and chased away those who had commercialized religion. Jesus had also warned that it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven. She also said that this was a stern warning to those bishops who were cozying up to the BJP.

Earlier Rev Walter D’silva, Principal, St Aloysius’ School, read the Gospel passage of the day on the cost of discipleship from Mathew Chapter 10. Jesus told his disciples that he was sending them out as sheep among wolves, so they needed to be as wise as serpents and simple as doves, for they were sure to be persecuted for pursuing the



path of righteousness. Rev Akshay Nayak SDB, himself an adivasi, described how Stan was following in the footsteps of another great Jesuit, the Belgian Constance Lievens. He said that the name Jharkhand was a misnomer. The area was actually known as Chhotanagpur, covering not just present day Jharkhand, but also parts of Chhatisgarh, Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. He said that it was the early missionaries who brought health and education to the poor tribals and



helped them overcome their indebtedness to the money lenders who were grabbing their lands.

Sardar Harvinder Singh Lard of the Guru Singh Sabha said that those who perpetrated evil were bad, but those who turned a blind eye to evil were

(Contd.. on p. 11)

even more to blame. The Kisan Andolan was proof of people's strength hence he emphasised the need of strong people's movements to counter a dictatorial government.

Janab Mohd Suleiman, who himself had been jailed for over a year, being labelled as a terrorist, said that the present government had destroyed democracy and weakened the judiciary. Its latest attack was on organized labour, even denying them the right to go on strike, for which they could be jailed and penalized.

Sri Arvind Raj Swarup of the CPI drew attention to the preamble of the Constitution that enshrines one's fundamental rights. Sri Suresh Gupta, Convenor of the Kanpur Nagrik Manch (Citizen's Forum) read out the pledge to fight on for human rights and social justice. A resolution was passed demanding stern action against the jail authorities and investigation agency for the custodial death (institutionalized murder) of Stan.

Earlier Rev Francis Xavier and Rev Joel Fernandes of St Joseph's Church led the gathering in prayer. Sri Praveen Dugdung led the choir. The KCA President Sri Noel George and Secretary Agnes Peter were also actively involved.

Special thanks was expressed to Rev Walter for going out of his way to see to all the arrangements and logistics. The service was organized and compeered by chhotebhai, the Convenor of the Indian Catholic Forum. He quoted what Bachi Karkaria had written in the Times of India that same morning, "Father, do not forgive them, for they knew very well what they were doing"!

When the meeting ended two vehicles were parked outside. One was a spanking new SUV that was chauffeur driven to drop a young priest back to his residence about 20 kms away. The other was the tiny Tata Nano in which Sandeep had driven 80 kms from Lucknow, with eight persons seated inside! Wonder which car Stan would have chosen?

Stan Swamy Stands Tall in Death

The Bombay High Court was informed that Father Stan Swamy, 84, passed away at 1.24 p.m. It needs to count for accountability over Stan Swamy's death. The tribal rights activists had pulmonary infection, post COVID-19 complications in the lungs and pneumonia. He also had Parkinson's. The Jesuit priest suffered from a cardiac arrest on July 4 at 4.30 a.m. It was notable that there was a delay of 10 days in taking him to the hospital from jail.

Jesuit priest Father Stan Swamy died at a private hospital in Mumbai on July 5, 2021, when his interim bail plea was scheduled to be heard on the day. The 84-year-old activist, who was suffering from Parkinson's disease, was among several intellectuals in judicial custody for their alleged involvement in the Bhima Koregaon violence. Amid a hearing of his petition seeking bail on health grounds pending before the Bombay High Court, ailing tribal rights activist, octogenarian Jesuit priest and accused in the Elgaar Parishad Koregaon-Bhima case Father Stan Swamy suffered in isolation.

Eighty-four-year-old Fr Stan Swamy, who had been kept on a ventilator after he suffered a cardiac arrest breathed his last at 1.24 pm, an hour before a division bench of the high court took up the matter for an urgent hearing and said that it had precipice and that it would hear Fr Stan Swamy's fresh petition for bail first thing. Fr Stan Swamy was being treated at the Holy Family Hospital at Andheri in northwest Mumbai since May 28, after the High Court ordered him to be shifted there in view of his deteriorating health. At one stage, Fr Stan Swamy had told the high court through a video-conferencing that his health had deteriorated while he was in Taloja prison in Navi Mumbai and that if he was not granted interim bail,



he "would die soon".

Fr Stan Swamy had last week filed a fresh plea for bail in the Bombay High Court, challenging the stringent conditions for bail to an accused charged under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA). Ahead of a hearing on Fr Stan Swamy's fresh petition. When his original bail petition came up for hearing, the HC bench directed the state government to shift Fr Swamy to Holy Family Hospital to itself for a 15-day stay there. Fr. Swamy – as per the undertaking given to the court by his senior counsel Mihir Desai, would bear all his medical treatment expenses.



C.K. Subramaniam

The court directed the hospital to provide an attendant to Fr Swamy in view of his advanced age, besides a policeman for his security. At that hearing, Additional Solicitor-General Anil Singh, representing the NIA had opposed Fr Swamy's plea to shift him to Holy Family Hospital, by arguing that there was no need to admit the accused to the private hospital, since Sir J. J. Hospitals had all facilities to care for patients and noted that admitting an accused to a private hospital may set a wrong precedent. After considering all submissions and arguments made by both the sides, the HC bench had directed the state government to shift Fr. Swamy to a private hospital of his choice and also allowed a friend, Fr. Frazer Mascarenhas to visit him in hospital as per the hospital protocols.

With a deep sense of pain, anguish and hope, we have surrendered Fr. Stan Swamy, 84, to his eternal abode. Fr. Swamy, whose mission was to work among the Adivasis, Dalits, and other marginalized communities so that the poor may have life and live to the full. It is the end of an era and Stan Swamy stands tall in death.

Fun Riddles

1. Why was six afraid of seven?
A. Because seven "ate" nine
2. What do you call a bee that can't quit talking?
A. Blabb-bee
3. Why did the banana go to the doctor?
A. Because it wasn't peeling well
4. What did the deer say when she met her favourite celebrity?
A. I'm a big fawn of your movies

School Life

The most irritating moments:
The morning alarm.
The most difficult task to do:
To find your socks.
The most dreadful journey:
The way to the class.
The most lovely time:
Meeting friends.
The most tragic moments:
Surprise test in the first period.
The most wonderful news:
Teacher is absent.

--- Jubel D'Cruz

Doctor's advice

Wife: Why do you wear your specs only when I come in.
Husband: The doctor has ordered me to wear my specs whenever I get an headache!

Sick and Silly PJ

Teacher: How many letters are there totally in "A.B.C.D"?
Student: 4
Teacher: I meant the complete set, not just "A.B.C.D"
Student: 52
Teacher: What?! How?
Student: Lower case 26 and Upper case 26.

The funny soup

Customer in a hotel: Waiter, this soup tastes funny!
Waiter: Oh!, the chef must have been laughing when he prepared it sir!

Lady next door



Man1: Your kid just looks like you.
Man2: Shhh, not so loud. That's the next door lady's kid.

Man and his son joke

Man 1: My son does not listen to anything that I say.
Man 2: Is he so adamant?
Man 1: No, he is deaf.

Two men in a bar
Two men were chatting in a bar. One says "Where are you from?".

Second man replies "I come from somewhere where we do not end a sentence with a preposition".

"Alright" says the first man, "Where are you from idiot?"

Months of the year

Teacher: What is the first month?
Student: January
Teacher: What is the second month?
Student: February
Teacher: What is the tenth month?
Student: Delivery

From the mouth of kids

Girl: Mom, today the teacher beat me for something that I didn't do.
Mother: That's very bad of your teacher. What was it that you didn't do?
Girl: The homework.

Silly Amy

Teacher: "Amy, what do you call the outside of a tree?"
Student: "No idea miss"
Teacher told angrily: "Bark, Amy".
Amy: "Bow Wow Wow Miss"

Stale

An elderly married couple were walking in the park the other day and noticed a young man and woman sitting on a bench, kissing passionately.

The wife asked, "Why don't you do like that man?"

The husband replied, "I don't even know that woman!"

Husband and Wife

My wife always told me that if I wanted breakfast in bed, then I would have to sleep in the kitchen

Husband: Do you know that John who lives next door has two girlfriends unknown to wife.
Wife: Who is the other one?

Mother in law and the clock

My wife complained the other day that our kitchen clock almost killed her mother.
It fell seconds after where she had been sitting. That darned clock always was slow.

Funny Patients and Doctors

Doctor to a rich man: Do you prefer a local anesthesia?
Rich man: I would rather prefer an imported one.

A woman went to the Doctor and said "When I looked in the mirror this morning, I saw my hair was frizzy, my skin wrinkly, my eyes bloodshot – what is wrong with me?".
The Doctor replied "Well the good news is that your eyesight is fine".

LOL

Man 1: After buying this new hearing aid, I am able to hear something two blocks away.
Man 2: Cool, how much did it cost?
Man 1: The time is three past ten.

Question: If you catch it, you will throw it away. If you don't catch it, you will keep it. What is it?

Answer: Lice

Santa to Banta: I don't have an internet connection at home. Can you please copy the internet on this pen drive for me?

Fr Stan is in heaven

Prof Robert Castellino
Mumbai

Lord Jesus we thank you for the precious gift of Fr Stan Swamy. Fr Stan was a crusader, fighting for the rights of tribals, dalits, adavisis, the marginalized and the poor. He was the voice of the voiceless. They were his people. He was their people.

Lord, you sent out your 12 Apostles, telling them...."You received without payment; give without payment. Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave.

Lord you sent out Fr Stan, like an apostle, with a mission to reach out to the poor and underprivileged. Fr Stan set out with this mission in mind. He lived and died like one of your 12 apostles. He

lived by each and every word of instructions you gave to your apostles. To the very last day he was faithful to your instructions.

Fr Stan joined the Society of Jesus with one sole intent--'to serve the poor. For 50 long years he served in your vineyard tending to the needs of the marginalized. He believed the

possible, he told the judge, he preferred to be in prison instead of a comfortable hospital.

Lord, when Fr Stan started out he was well aware of the challenges he would have to face. Long ago Lord you told your apostles that they would face persecutions torture and even death. You told them " I am sending you out like sheep among wolves". Fr Stan was aware that the road he had chosen to travel would be full of pitfalls, yhat he would suffer persecution

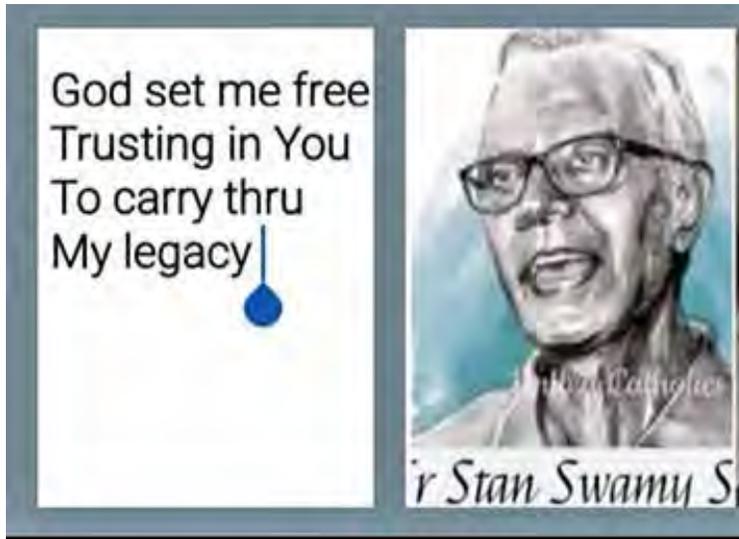
and rejection yet he continued to fight the good fight. He continued to face opposition, to face persecution with righteousness. And when finally he finished the race, the long and tiring race, he could proudly say "I've kept the faith, the unwavering faith"

In the last few months of his earthly life, when he was weakest Fr Stan suffered great privations in prison. But never once did he complain. Lord we thank the people who provided succour to Fr Stan in his last

days. We thank the Jesuit Society for giving us a jewel, we thank the lawyers who provided legal advice, the doctors, sisters and nurses of Holy Family Hospital Bandra, Arun Ferreira and the jail inmates who tended to Fr Stan.

Lord we admit most of us failed Fr Stan in his crusade in fighting the injustices being perpetrated on the poor and marginalized.. We admit, we did not stand by Fr Stan courageously, while he was alive. With some exceptions, most of us lacked the courage to openly profess support to his ideology. We are ashamed and sorry Lord that like Peter who denied you three times, we too denied Stan, while he was alive and struggling for a cause. Forgive us Lord and give us the strength to carry forward his legacy with the same faith and determination he showed.

Finally Lord, we surrender Fr Stan to your loving care. Grant him eternal rest and the ultimate reward he richly deserves.



poor were his people. He reached out to help the poor taking with him no gold or silver, no bags or change of clothes. His needs were simple. The poor looked after him and his needs. When his superiors offered him money for a journey he took the bare minimum amount to travel. Nothing more. And he preferred to travel by the 'general class' in the company of the poorest of poor, his people. Fr Stan never complained. Not even when he was denied a sipper to help him drink, as his hands were unsteady as a result of a debilitating ailment. Lord you told your apostles "when you go to a town and find a house to stay, remain in that house till you leave". And that is what Fr Stan did, till he was taken away forcibly by the police. He never ever wished to leave the tribals. That is why Lord when he was very sick in prison and taken to an hospital, he surprised the Judge when he requested him to send him home to his people and not to a comfortable hospital. But if that was not

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Stan Swamy Pursued the Footprints of Jesus

Father Stan Swamy completed his earthly sojourn and went beyond this world on 05 July 2021, for receiving his eternal reward for the commendable life he lived on earth and for celebrating it with God for ever. But, his going had both 'graceful' and 'disgraceful' dimensions, like the two sides of the coin.

He lived his life heroically for the 'noble cause of the browbeaten' for decades and that was 'graceful' about him. But, we Indians, some responsible people in special, failed to understand him or misunderstood him and misbehaved with him, unjustly so, and that was 'disgraceful' from our part.

The 'disgrace' from our part is in two ways, one of 'commission', on the one hand, and one of 'omission', on the other. The former committed 'crime against humanity' towards him by being active on the wrong side. The latter omitted their role of preventing the crime by being passive spectators of the crime, heartlessly so. In either case, the crime amounted to a 'crime against divinity' in one shot, as well.

This odd episode reminds us of Jesus Christ, who, some two thousand years ago, came down to the world as the Messiah to defend those who were oppressed by the so called powerful of the world. The politically and religiously powerful and privileged people of the time got a shock for life, seeing the Messiah standing on the side of the weaker ones and not with them.

As a result, the 'powerful' of the then society, both religious and political, conspired against Jesus and sentenced him to 'death on the cross', which was the most discreditable death they could conceive of. This was to make their own selves safe and secure and to ensure 'peaceful sleep', well, 'peace of the cemetery'

and 'sleep of the dead'!

Here in India, to be more specific, in Jharkhand, Stan Swamy pursued the path of the Messiah and stood like 'rock' for the fundamental rights of the original inhabitants of India, for several decades. Those with vested interests and power lost their sleep, naturally so. They noosed him in the so called Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), in reaction to the obstruction posed to their private plot.

It may be recalled that UAPA does not believe in the universal norm of the world 'you are innocent until proved guilty'. 'UAPA and its custodians acted on Stan Swamy, in the most brutal manner. Accordingly, he was flatly denied even such a small thing like a water sipper or a straw, which is the most basic need of a frail senior citizen of 84 years with Parkinson! Finally, he had to die the death of the vicious irony 'you are guilty until otherwise proved innocent'. Besides, he had to die like a guilty person, without a trial, with a shackle attached to his ankle even on the death bed, very shamefully so.

Jesus the Messiah made 'history' in the world, even to the point of making a new beginning of the human history, AD (Anno Domini / After the Lord), as against BC (Before Christ). He presented to the world how 'bad' the 'story of a human being' on earth could be. He left with the world a high volume of 'human and divine values' for the humans to live by, too. He became for the world a 'paradigm by himself', as to how 'good' one can be to others, along with a range of lessons to learn from, for all ages to come.

So did Stan Swamy, making a 'history' in India, in his own way, in the footsteps of Jesus. For having left his native land of South India, for having learned the language of the people he



lived for, for being one among them, for advocating their basic rights and needs and thus for living for them the best way possible, he was awarded a 'chit of guilt', humiliation and suffering of the worst order for nearly 200 days. No doubt, he has become a 'case in point', along the lines of his Master Jesus.

Besides, as Jesus as 'Messiah par excellence' in his earthly sojourn, proved to be a 'good shepherd' to one and all, especially to the weaklings, in the world. As a 'great divine pastor' he knew the sheep and the sheep knew him. He was the door of the sheep. He wouldn't allow the 'wolves' to snatch his sheep from his custody, not even one of them. Without doubt, Messiah is a good shepherd in character. He lived for his sheep, nothing less and nothing more.

Stan Swamy had avowed to follow the footpath of his Master Jesus. His sheep was the 'aadivaasees of Jharkhand', a highly mistreated, deprived and marginalized group in India. He breathed for them and lived for them. He had the 'smell of the sheep', in the language of Pope Francis. He became a 'good shepherd' or pastor, after the fashion of his great Master. He wouldn't spare any effort to save his sheep from the beastly wolves around them. That was the raison d'être of his life.

Jesus was carrying the heavy cross on his shoulders. The soldiers were

(Contd.. on p. 15)



Fr. Dr. M. D. Thomas

sadistically enjoying the fun. Over and above, they were further persecuting him and beating him up. Moved with pity, some women of Jerusalem started weeping. Jesus knew that he was paying with his life the prize for the evil of the humans. That was the mission from his heavenly Father to be fulfilled, to the core. Jesus turned back and told them, 'do not weep for me, but weep for yourself and for your children'. Well, that is a great point!

Mourning for Stan Swamy doesn't make much sense. He knew very much the 'what and why' of the mission of his life, along with all that he underwent. We need to think for ourselves and for the citizens of our country and of the world society. Stan Swamy is an 'archetype' of the miserable state of our country and of the world. We have a duty to stand for one another, irrespective of affiliation to diverse communities and groups, for those pushed to the margins and are deprived and maltreated in special.

Father Stan Swamy was a 'living martyr' for decades, and during the days of the jailed suffering of 'being guilty without guilt', all the more. Now, he is an eternal martyr. He has to be a perennial source of inspiration. He has to motivate us citizens, to stand up, speak and act for the weaker sisters and brothers of our country and beyond. That is our constitutional duty. Justice, equality, fraternity, love and unity, in line with the democratic and secular credentials of the Constitution, are our national ethos and ethics, as well.

It is high time those who are still in the deep slumber of their 'comfort zones' of the world, safe and secure, to have woken up and come out to the open of the realities of life. For those who are Christians, 'pursuing the footprints of Jesus' would mean advancing the mission that remained incomplete by Stan Swamy. For people of other faiths, inspiration and strength have to be drawn from the respective gods and goddesses, to care for the other.

The citizens of India, our great country, form one community. Attending to one another as members of the same family or community has to be the 'national culture' of our land.

I am sure, the efforts, struggles, suffering and martyrdom of Father Stan Swamy as a 'guiltless guilty' will not go waste. It will produce its fruit in its own time, in diverse ways. It has to do so, too, sooner the better. The 'conscience' of the citizens of our country, backed by their divinely motivated wisdom, has to get awakened towards 'human and divine values', in line with the 'ethos and ethics' enshrined in

the Constitution of our country. The Nobel laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore reminds us, "Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake".

The author is Director of Institute of Harmony and Peace Studies, New Delhi, and is committed to cross-cultural perspectives, Constitutional values, social ethics, interfaith relations, communal harmony, national integration and social amity. He pursues this sacred mission through lectures, articles, video messages, social interaction, views at TV channels, and the like. He can be contacted at 'mdthomas53@gmail.com'.

Matrimonial Proposals

Proposals are invited for

Mangalorean RC Bachelor, 31 years belonging to a highly educated and very affluent family with interests in healthcare, agriculture and many other sectors, Tall, Fair, Handsome, Holding Doctorate, managing the family business in Karnataka State. (REF:MM104)

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

27 years Mangalorean spinster C.A., Ht. 5'5" Wt. 50 kg Fair., Beautiful. well cultured. Affluent society. Belongs to established business family in Maharashtra (REF:MM105)

28 year Mumbai based Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., Profession : a Banker (REF:MM109)

Vasai based affluent business family R.C. East Indian Spinster, 33, years Ht. 5' 2", very beautiful and pretty. MS General Surgeon, Doctor by profession. (REF:106)

Mumbai based now in Dubai Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, 33 years, Ht. 5' 7", Fair Complexion, Edn.

BMS, profession: a Senior Merchantiser (REF:107)

Mumbai based Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, 29 years, Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., C.A., Holding a managerial post. (REF:108)

Mangalorean RC Spinster, 34 years belonging to a highly educated middleclass family based in Mumbai Ht.5'.4" Wt. 78 Kg. Fair Qualified B.E., (EXTC) M.S. Consultant by profession (REF:FM109)

Mangalorean RC Spinster, 31 years Ht. 5".7" Wt. 69 Kgs, Fair. Mumbai based M.Sc., Clinical Research. Profession : Business Process Lead in MNC (REF:MM104)

Those interested in this proposal :

- Registered members of Royal Christian Family can just email us mentioning the respective ref. no. and your registered no.
- Non registered Grooms or Brides are requested to upload your profile at our website www.royalchristianfamily.com and contact us on our email: royalchristianfamily@gmail.com mentioning the respective ref. no. along with your registered ID.

Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - GROOMS

7227. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in August 1990), Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 73 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a Senior HR. Contact email : baptistadarryl@yahoo.in

7226. CANADA : Canadian Citizen Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in August 1990), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 59 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., in Environmental Science and in Energy Management postgraduate degrees from the University of Toronto. Working for a reputed company as Energy Management Analyst in Totonto. Contact email : francisper@gmail.com

7225. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in July 1994), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 70 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. INFT, Profession : Database Developer. Contact email : allan.jones.137@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

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

7220. MUMBAI : Anglo Indian Roman Catholic Divorcee, (Born in May 1978), Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 76 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA PGDM, working as a HR. Contact email : rodrigesmargaret69@gmail.com

7218. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in November 1988), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 68 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., Aviation, working as a Commercial Pilot. 1st Officer. Contact email : dcostajess@gmail.com

7216. MUMBAI : Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1988), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA, HR speacialization, Profession : Lead Recruiter. Contact email : willujames310@gmail.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 i n a reputed organization. Contact email : merwyn1989pinto@gmail.com

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

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

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

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

motorbike accident. Contact Email : josephmullakara1973@gmail.com

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

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

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

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

7183. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in February 1991) Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 86 kgs, Wheatish Complexion,Edn. PGDM and BMS., working as a Relationship Manager. Contact email : ritadhawan10@gmail.com

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

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

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

Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - BRIDES

7126. U.S.A. : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1992) from Mumbai, Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. (Computers) from Mumbai, M.S. (Information Systems) from US. Possesses H1B visa and is working as a Technical Analyst with an MNC in USA. Contact email :

wilfyjoy1315@gmail.com or call +91 98603 02527 / + 91 9970172527

7228. KOLKATA : Anglo Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1988), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 54 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Good looking, Smart, Edn. B.A., working as a HR. Contact email :

advtrresponse85@gmail.com

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

prislolo10@gmail.com

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

frfernandes020@gmail.com

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

mafern.2121@gmail.com

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

7182. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in

October 1992), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., C.A., working as Asst. Manager in TATA Company. Contact : email :

matrimonialp27@gmail.com

6871 MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1989), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 56 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.A. Teacher by profession. Contact email :

andreaandrade310@gmail.com

7066. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in June 1987), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 78 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E., (EXTC) M.S. (International Business Management), working as a Consulting Manager. Contact email :

l2018anselm@yahoo.com

7064. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in May 1988), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 50 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA, working for Private Company as an Accounts Executive. Contact email :

cecrc19@gmail.com

7014. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1992), Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 45 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MMS (Finance) working as a Finance Executive in Limited Company. Contact email :

eva_hpereira@rediffmail.com

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

lgp1891@gmail.com

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

smile9920@outlook.com

7081 MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1993),

5' 3", Wt. 55 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Masters of Dentistry (MDS), Dental Surgeon, Doctor by profession. Contact email :

carlferns93@gmail.com

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

1991divine@gmail.com

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

irisedsouza@gmail.com

7156 MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in November 1993), Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA., working in an IT Company as an Executive Assistant. Contact email :

mumbai.lavi@gmail.com

7145 MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1992), Ht. 4' 11", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., Lecturer by profession. Contact email :

andrea210358@gmail.com

7125. CANADA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in February 1983), Ht. 5' 8", Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.A., working as a Consultant. Contact email :

llmendonca@shaw.ca

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Classmates showcase Govt Service values

-Ivan Saldanha-Shet.

In times when western oriented education appreciates and adores jobs in MNCs and overseas, the values and motivation for senior Govt positions from well qualified is essential and the young should aim for higher Govt posts which is very satisfying. The oft extolled old thought, "Jan ka Seva Janardhan ka Seva" (Service to people is service to God) and the need to serve GOD and man through Government service needs highlighting and the main avenue to improve Govt service delivery to all. Times when Govt service was not on par with other services have long gone, many young have not realised this - the fact is the opportunity to serve in very powerful ways and enjoy a good life and compensation package is second to none. The sensitive grooming in the best traditions of culture by educational institutions and family philosophies definitely have had a strong impact in the past, but got diluted by others. Just as the lockdown in Mangalore was opened up, a rare occasion following all Covid Protocols was held on July 2, 2021 forenoon. Classmates of historic St. Aloysius School, Mangalore, 1979 - 89, gathered in a very organised manner to felicitate and recognise three of their mates, who have achieved great heights serving the Government, the Nation and mainly the people.

The leaders of the class group here, placed the great honour of presiding over the day's proceedings on their very own deputy HM and class teacher Sri. Gopalakrishna Bhat (who seemed

like one of them and not a day older). Though, the membership of this august group is a 100 plus, some were present with a few family members. Many members are outside and travel was restricted due the existing pandemic, many all over watched the live cast. The normal protocol of the institution that shaped them was evident, a brief prayer opened the function, those who had passed on were remembered, the welcome address was made and all settled in to know and laud the three achievers being honoured.

About the three grand achievers honoured :

Sri Pradeep D'Souza, Jt Director in Statistics Department : Born in Mangalore, earned B.Sc, M.Sc (Stats) Mangalore Uni(MU), M.Phil (Stats) MU, M.A (census science), and several specialised degrees/courses. He is presently Karnataka govt's Joint Director in Statistics Department and with additional charge as secretary Coastal development, Asst Director Youth and sports DK district. He is also national level referee for Volleyball, Black Belt in Karate, Football state level represented, a director of Govt officers Kanara Co-op Bank and holds several honorary recognised positions. In younger times he also served as lecturer in Puttur College and Besant womens college as lecturer after his Post graduation. Awarded several recognitions and trophies as student and govt official

Sri Rajesh Shetty, Sr Divisional Controller KSRTC Hassan : A native of Kanara, well qualified with Law and Management degrees, he has spear-headed teams overseeing operations

of public transport in Karnataka for long. Core competences and specialised knowledge in analytical skills, strategy development and innovation, communications, negotiation, networking and capacity development. Served as advocate till 1999, Mangalore bar association, Law officer class 2 and later class1. Since 2017 till date as Sr Divisional Controller KSRTC Hassan district. Frequently recognized by various body's for contributions to society in his official roles.

Dr. Ronald Fernandes, Member KPSC : Hailing from and rooted in Mangalore, his career and cultural depth is noteworthy - B.Sc, MCJ (Communications & journalism) MU, PhD Journalism MU, Member of Board of Studies in Journalism at Aloysius, Nitte, Manipal, Agnes and Alva's institutions and served as faculty. Among some of the positions he held are - 1996 - 2018 various journalism positions including Bureau Head in Deccan Herald. Served in multi capacities in Press Club, Red Cross, Chairperson Blood Bank , DK, District Jail committee and so on. Been awarded widely and frequently for his services and duties, to name a few : sarojini Naidu Award for journalism 2009, Sadhana Award for journalism 2011, Karnataka Madhyama award 2011. DK district Rajyotsava Award 2012....Author of 'TV Tolls for teens' 'Mangalore matters' 'Uncovering the urban masks' . Dr. Fernandes has been instrumental in developing various social and philanthropic projects and activities in the region. KPSC - 'Karnataka Public Service Commission' is the state's statutory body for all Govt recruiting.

This class group has collected all those who were a part of the class at any given time and have created a mutual well being action group to ensure all are happy and growing well together. Indeed it is an exemplary group which supports each other in good times and bad as a family and with simplicity, understanding and generosity. The main message to all concerned was that more importance is needed for youngsters to go into Govt jobs. May their plans succeed for better humanity and blessings universally.

Saint Mary Magdalene, Apostle Of Apostles



Feast 22 JULY

It is of utmost importance to understand that Almighty God did not come to earth on a spiritual mission to aid and abide with the rich and pious ; instead, He came to save sinners and to bring salvation and redemption.

Perhaps the concept can be more vividly explained with reference to Saint Paul and Saint Augustine. Paul persecuted, imprisoned and killed Christians before his conversion. Augustine lusted for sex, perversion and the sins of abuse, before he repented and was made Bishop of Hippo and became a saint.



BY MELVYN BROWN

At times a woman can be a sinner, a prostitute, who sells her beauty and body for a life of wine, wealth and song. Such acts are not scoffed at in

our generation, also, we do not stone or kill a woman for being a harlot. If she repents, the woman is always forgiven in the Christian faith.

Saint Mary Magdalene had been a harlot who mixed with rich Jews and Pharisees who were able to give her valuable gifts to win her favors. In the gospel she is spoken about more times than many of the apostles. Magdalene is historically mentioned as a great sinner who came from the village of Magdala, and was converted to Christianity, to eventually become a saint.

Magdalene had a sister, Martha and a brother, Lazarus (the one Christ brought back to life from the dead).

Mary Magdalene is the "Patron saint of brazen women". Her daring to rush

into the dining hall where Pharisees and Jews were speaking to Jesus, she threw herself at the feet of the Lord, pouring precious oil and drying it with her hair, took courage. It is now universally agreed that she is one of the most beloved of saints in the Church.

This woman, Mary from Magdala is the same sinner caught in adultery who the crowds wanted to stone to death, and Jesus saved her life. Thereafter, Magdalene became a follower and close companion of Jesus and the apostles.

Mary was the first to see the Risen Christ. She is the first messenger of

(Contd.. on p. 20)

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Inviting Proposals from Brides for Canada based Mangalorean Groom

We are approaching you with a Proposal whose profile is given below. The Groom is a Mangalorean is a Citizen of Canada. Those interested in this proposal and willing to settle in Canada can contact us at Royal Christian Family. More details of the Groom and his parents with photographs available with us. (ID MM111)

CANADA based Canadian Citizen Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in August 1990), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 59 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., in Environmental Science and in Energy Management postgraduate degrees from the University of Toronto. Working for a reputed company as Energy Management Analyst in Totonto.

Raised and brought up in Canada in a loving and caring family atmosphere with good family values. He is highly self-motivated for self development, determined and dedicated to his responsibilities both in his professional and personal life.

He is a family-oriented person and has strong family bonds. He keeps up with technology developments, economy, politics, social issues, and easily integrates with people from different cultures and backgrounds.

His hobbies include sports, movies, hiking, camping and traveling to explore different cultures and places. He has travelled in Middle East, Europe, North America and South America. He has a passion for fitness and strongly believes in healthy living in a greener planet earth. Proposals are sought from a professionally educated (masters), friendly, independent, suitable Roman Catholic girl up to 29 years, up to 5' 3" tall, with a good family background & values, preferably well settled abroad or India.

Contact : Royal Christian Family Tel.: +91 - 9820485389 / 9820473103 mention Ref ID MM111.

(Contd.. from p. 19)

the Lord to announce his Resurrection to the apostles. Her loyal and faithful love for the Master kept her by his side, becoming a true witness of his Passion, death and Resurrection. When the Mother of Jesus and all the apostles went to the Upper room, Magdalene remained at the Cross fearlessly, wrapping her arms around the base of the blood-soaked Cross of the Savior.

Because Mary of Magdala was a key witness to the Resurrection, in the eyes of the early Church she was to be a very inconvenient woman to talk about. Had an apostle been the first witness he might have been hailed and believed. It was surely a "gender" issue. We agree that because of Magdalene Christianity and the Jesus movement grew.

Almost 2,000 years after her death, Mary Magdalene is now venerated as a Saint. To many of the other believers she is the true Holy Grail.

Pope Francis mentions her in a prayer he composed for the Year of Mercy. Furthermore, the liturgical calendar places her feast on 22 July. Holy Mother the Church in a solemn decree, "Apostolorum Apostola" gave Magdalene the title "Apostle of the Apostles".

In Jerusalem there is a church of Santa Maria Maddalena, close to the garden of Gethsemani which overlooks the Mount of Olives. The church was built in the 19 century, and contains some of the relics of Saint Mary Magdalene. It is on record that thousands of pilgrims from Russia visit the church.

Overcoming obstacles, Mary was known for her love for Jesus Christ. The gospels talk of three women when

it was only one, Mary Magdalene: the woman saved from being stoned; the woman who wiped the Lord's feet with her hair, and the woman who had been possessed by seven devils.

The Catholic Church of this century wholeheartedly accepts Magdalene the penitent as a Saint.

Mary fled Jerusalem during the Roman persecution of Jews and Christians about 41-42 AD. Magdalene spent thirty years of her life in a cave as a mystic.

The Gospel of Magdalene was found in 1982 hidden in clay jars, broken and soiled after 2,000 years. Much of the manuscript cannot be read for the present as Bible scholars and scientist are still working on the shreds of the writings. The early church must have had something to hide and had branded Mary Magdalene a whore.

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