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A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY

The Omicron Variant - How Worrisome?

by *Don Aguiar.*

I heard a very interesting analogy today,

A 10 floor building did not have a lift, so people had problem climbing up and down. Specially the elderly and the kids, so the society started exploring options. Finally they got some donkeys, who could carry people up and down. The donkey owners would charge people for carrying them up and down for a fee and would also pay 10% to the society from the revenue they earned. It was a very happy situation for all involved.

After sometime the society management changed, the new management decided to install a lift for carrying people up and down. All hell broke loose and everyone started protesting, this is not fair, society will lose revenue, the donkey owners will be jobless and no food for them (human rights issue), the donkeys will be worthless (animals rights issue), all were angry. Society management clarified, the lift is available to all but the gentlemen who wanted to use the donkeys could still do it. But no, the agitation continued and so finally the new management had to succumb to the pressure. The final arrangement was arrived and so anyone who wanted to climb the building could still use the donkey. The donkey would carry a person, go in the lift and carry people up & down. All were happy.

Disclaimer: any resemblance of this with the present Pandemic situation - the pharmaceutical companies, WHO, the governments, media and we the people - is a mere coincidence.

Every few months the world learns of a new variant of the coronavirus. While most of those variants turn out to be, inconsequential, some, like the Delta variant, are immensely consequential. The latest B.1.1.529 now known as the Omicron variant, bears very close watching because of concerns that it may spread more quickly than the Delta, possibility even among the vaccinated. It is essential that world leaders re-

spond quickly and aggressively even before all the data about this variant emerges.

In the days ahead, as information builds, it will be tempting to give into fear or indifference. We cannot succumb to either. The global community must take each variant seriously. Acting early is far superior to waiting until all the facts to be in. it may turn out that the variant is not more contagious or that it responds perfectly well to our current vaccines. In that latter fortuitous scenario, the current response may seem as an overreaction. But if this variant, with all of its concerning features, turns out to be as contagious and immune evasive as many experts worry it might be, waiting until all the facts are in will leave us hopelessly far behind.

How worrisome is Omicron? Three key questions help scientist understand how consequential any variant might be.

The first question is whether the variant is more transmissible than the current prevailing Delta strain. Second does it cause more severe disease? And third will it render our immune defences – from vaccines and prior infections – less effective (a phenomenon known as immune escape)?

On transmissibility, the data while early, looks worrisome. This new variant appears to have taken off very quickly in South Africa, with early national data suggesting the variant already makes up the majority of sequenced cases in the country. It's possible that this early data will be revised as epidemiologists look closer at factors other than transmissibility, such as whether an early Omicron super spreader led to the variant appearing more highly contagious than it really is. While this is possible, the more likely scenario is that Omicron does spread more easily than Delta.

Because the variant is so new, scientist simple do not

(Contd.. on p. 3)

Trinamool on the rise

Mamata Banerjee led Trinamool Congress [TMC] is on the rise and looking at the recent rush to join the party, it can throw a serious challenge to the saffron brigade. She has shown her might in her home state trouncing the BJP which was eyeing 200 plus seats to unsettle the didi and capture power in that state. She has proved to be a very astute and capable leader the moment she dislodged the Communists from West Bengal while decimating the Indian National Congress, she has not looked back. The challenge by the saffron brigade was brushed aside with the 'insider/outsider' bogey. People have seen her honesty and therefore trust her to deliver. She has unmatched sway over the Bengali masses and it is highly unlikely if any other political party can make a dent in West Bengal for a long time to come. Her sway on the Bengali community is akin to the hold the Dravidian parties have over the Tamil people, in Tamil Nadu. The regional sentiments are very high in the Eastern state as well and she was quick to capitalize on it to her advantage.

A number of BJP leaders, sitting MLAs as well as others, have deserted the party to strengthen the hands of this puny leader. The recent entry of Pavan Verma [one-time aide of Nitish Kumar of Bihar] and a very popular ex-cricketer Kirti Azad into the party has strengthened her hands. More and more such leaders will be seen to join the TMC in the run up to the next general elections in 2024. She has already roped in ex Goa CM Luizinho Faleiro into the party along with Leander Paes. Both are popular figures who will inspire other leaders in Goa and elsewhere to join and strengthen the outfit. Slowly but surely the didi is making her foray into other states by extending the TMC reach. By the time next general elections are due, she would have moved significantly out of her comfort zone. She has already disturbed the Congress Party and the Gandhi parivar is viewing her suspiciously. They are not willing to give Mamata any space but her charisma is such that she is bound to succeed and draw more leaders from the BJP and other parties.

With the Congress party losing its

IEWS on NEWS

flavour with the people of the country it looks like it has lost the will to take on the BJP and strive to dislodge it – so says didi. No other political party is keen to align with the Congress as they feel that such a move will alienate them from the masses. To that extent Congress has become an untouchable for other parties. Mamata sees this as her great opportunity to grab that space and project herself as the face of the opposition to take on the BJP. Her simplicity and honesty will take her to greater heights as there are no leaders on the horizon to challenge the BJP leadership.

The Gandhi parivar looks at Mamata with suspicion as they feel that she is a challenge to Rahul Gandhi who has failed to rally the opposition parties in his quest for opposition unity. Mamata used to be subservient to the Gandhi family and invariably made a courtesy visit to meet Sonia Gandhi whenever she was in Delhi. Things are changing now. During her recent visit to Delhi a journalist asked her if she will continue with her practice of visiting the Gandhis. This time she was uncomfortable with the question and said it is not mandatory that she should visit Sonia Gandhi every time she came to Delhi. These are changing times and Mamata Banerjee now sees herself as a national leader and with some effort, can emerge as an alternative to Narendra Modi in the 2024 elections. This is something that the Gandhis are wary about and they are in no mood to give that important space to Mamata while the latter is beginning to believe that, that space is rightly hers. She may not be entirely wrong but the coming months will settle this issue once and for all.

Major climb down

Reading the writing on the wall, rather belatedly, the BJP led Centre which is famous for its arrogance, caved in to the vociferous demand of the Sikh farmers by repealing the farm laws. Time and again the BJP maintained that repeal of the three laws was out of question and the government would be ready to discuss the provisions of these



by Marshall Sequeira

laws, clause by clause, to find which of these are not acceptable to them. They thought that as usual, they could tire out the farmers but little did they realize that these farmers from the North are made of sterner stuff. Their tenacity and resilience by staying put at the Delhi borders for one full year under inclement weather must be admired and in the process some 700 odd farmers lost their precious lives during this period. During the last Republic Day farmers were not allowed to assemble at the historic Red Fort and there was some trouble resulting in some police action. Though the farmers denied any involvement, they were branded with all sorts of names saying the agitation is choreographed by the banned Khalistani elements known for its seditious agenda. In doing so, the government tried to tarnish the image of the farmers in the eyes of the general public so that the sympathy garnered by the farmers would be diluted. Nothing of this kind happened.

Why did the government climb down from its pedestal? The farmers had remained steadfast in their demands and conducted themselves well. The farmers, facing many odds, continued with their agitation. All attempts were made to show them in poor light but they continued to maintain their dignity. Though the government did not want to succumb to their pressure the government had no option. Four farmers lost their lives when the SUV purportedly driven by the kin of one of the ministers at the centre. This put the government in a fix as the UP elections not too far away. Good sense prevailed and in a dramatic fashion the Prime Minister suddenly declared that the farm bills will be withdrawn hoping that the agitation will stand dissipated. It did not. The farmers now want the MSP to be legalized and with UP elections not too far away, the Modi government is in a fix.

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(Contd.. from p. 1)

have adequate data yet to assess whether the new variant causes more severe disease. Answering this question will require careful case tracking in hospitals along with expanded viral sequencing efforts, both in South Africa and elsewhere. A key part of this analysts is ensuring that countries are doing adequate testing of a broad sample of people. It will most likely take weeks to sort this out.

Immune escape is the big concern. It's extremely unlikely that Omicron will render the Covid-19 vaccines completely ineffective. And right now, there is not much data on how much the vaccines may be effective against this variant, although there is reason for concern. Omicron has a large number of mutations, including the spike protein that the virus uses to bind to and enter human cells. These areas of the protein are critical for vaccine – induced (and infection-induced) antibodies to protect against the virus. Even small hits to vaccine efficacy will leave us more vulnerable to infection and illness and can make it hard to contain the virus.

In the absence of clear instructions from WHO and other agencies, coun-

tries will do what they feel is the best strategy. A predictable strategy needs to be developed for India to deal with new variants in the wake of the Omicron variant, instead of formulating a separate approach for each event. There is a need to have a consistent and clear laid out strategy in place and should use this opportunity to develop it by drawing out a plan to sequence all positives to track the new variant.

The Indian government must support ongoing studies that help researchers answer the key questions about how transmissible the variant is, whether it causes more severe disease and whether it can evade immunity. This will give health authorities a more complete picture as quickly as possible.

India has so far detected a few case of the newly-discovered, highly transmissible Covid-19 variant Omicron and has put in place stricter guidelines for travellers coming from or transiting through 'at-risk' countries by announcing a travel ban against foreign nationals coming from some African and other countries which will slow the spread of the virus into India by a modest amount at best, but sends a negative signal to South Africa, which has done an extraordinary job in first identifying

the variant and then quickly sharing the information with the global community. Whether the travel ban will be worth it or not is far from clear.

With increased testing to help detection it is important to be aware that any level of testing would not detect every single case. Hence there is a need for preparedness to deal with the cases that might already be in the country or would come through despite the testing, but there is no need to panic.

It has been a long pandemic this far, but let's remember that – the world has the means to manage this variant. Let's use them

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Allow not Humanity to get Corrupted

O 9 December is marked as 'International Anti-Corruption Day'. The day was designated by United Nations General Assembly in October 2003, after the Convention against corruption. The day was adopted after having been negotiated with the member states and came into effect in December 2005.

The 'United Nations Convention against Corruption' is an international anti-corruption multilateral treaty. This is the only legally binding treaty of the kind in the world. Raising awareness about corruption, in view of combating and preventing it, is the objective of the day as well as of the Convention.

International Anti-Corruption Day emphasizes the rights and responsibilities of all persons and sectors. It invites States, government officials, civil servants, law enforcement officers, media representatives, the private sector, civil society, academia, the public and youth to play their role in dealing with corruption.

The word 'corruption' means 'dishonest and immoral behaviour or activities'. It is aimed at acquiring illicit benefits or personal gains. In the public forum, it is undertaken by a person or an organization holding a position of authority. It is an abuse of power and is a criminal offense.

More often than not, corruption is understood as having to do with money only. But, it is not so. Corruption is a 'perversion' of thought, word and deed, at its core. It includes bribery, lobbying, extortion, cronyism, nepotism, parochialism, patronage, influence peddling, graft, misappropriation, and the like, as well.

Corruption is a complex phenomenon. It affects all areas of the society. It involves all countries, too. It soaks up social, political, ethical, spiritual and economic arenas. Corruption demoralizes democratic institutions, slows down

economic development and contributes to governmental instability.

Besides, corruption distorts electoral processes, perverts the rule of law and creates bureaucratic marsh that survives on bribes. Foreign direct investment is discouraged, small businesses within the country, like 'start-ups', do not take off and economic development gets stunted, all because of corruption.

The theme of the United Nations for anti-corruption of the year 2021 is 'Your right, your role: Say no to corruption'. A six-week campaign that started at the beginning of November aims to highlight the role of key stakeholders and individuals in preventing and countering corruption in line with the above theme.



Fr. Dr. M. D. Thomas

International Anti-corruption Day is geared towards 'reporting corruption, exposing corrupt activities and risks that may otherwise remain hidden'. It also aims at keeping the public sector honest, transparent and accountable. It helps stop dishonest practices and ensures that public sector employees act in the public interest.

In addition, preventing corruption unlocks progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals as per the United Nations. It helps protect our planet, creates jobs, achieves gender equality and secures wider access to essential services, such as healthcare and education.

'Speaking up and saying no to corruption' requires protection from retaliation. The United Nations Convention against Corruption lays emphasis on the responsibility of Governments to put in place effective whistle-blower protection. Policies, measures and systems have to be in position to the above effect.

'Ombudsman' is a government official who deals with complaints made by ordinary people against public organizations. Ombudsmen are indepen-

dent, free and impartial and they do not take sides. The idea of 'ombudsman' emerged from Nordic countries. The word means 'representative'.

Further, the word 'ombudsman' derives from Old Norse words 'umboth' and 'mathr', meaning 'commission' and 'man', respectively. Sweden created the office in the constitution of 1809, appointed by the legislature. Sweden is the first country in the world to appoint an independent official as ombudsman, to investigate complaints against government officials and agencies.

In India, law minister Ashok Kumar Sen first proposed the notion of constitutional 'ombudsman' in early 1960s. The terms 'Lokpal' and 'Lokayukta' were brainstormed by Dr L. M. Singhvi, as well. The Indian 'Ombudsman' is known as the 'Lokpal' or 'Lokayukta'. Retired Supreme Court judge Pinaki Chandra Ghose was appointed the first Lokpal of India by a committee consisting of the Prime Minister, the Chief Justice of India and Lok Sabha Speaker on 23 March 2019.

As per the annual Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International, Denmark is the least corrupt country in the world, followed by New Zealand. They stand ranking consistently high in international financial transparency. The most perceived corrupt countries in the world are Somalia and South Sudan, scoring 12 out of 100, in 2020. India is ranked at 80th position out of 180 countries in 2019.

Within India, Maharashtra has the highest reported corruption cases in 2020, followed by Rajasthan. Kerala is found among one of the least corrupt states in the country. Considering India in general, the amount of Indian black money currently present in Swiss and other offshore banks is estimated to be 300 lakh crores, equivalent to 1.5 trillion US dollars.

Some of the specific causes of corruption in India are excessive regulations, complicated tax and licensing systems, numerous government departments with dense bureaucracy and discretionary powers, monopoly of government controlled institutions on certain goods and services delivery and the lack of

(Contd.. on p. 10)



Need to make people aware of Corona rules

During these times of Coronavirus and the Omicron scare, we need to be more vigilant and follow all rules related to Corona strictly.

People are known to wear the mask on their necks. Such careless behaviour will only lead to the increase in the number of Corona cases.

People should continue to follow measures to reduce their risk of getting infected with Covid-19 by wearing well-fitting masks, following hand hygiene and physical distancing, improving ventilation of indoor spaces, avoiding crowded spaces, and getting vaccinated.

—Jubel D'Cruz,
Dombivili, Mumbai

PM's Photograph On Vaccination Certificate

Has it ever seemed odd to anyone that a photograph of the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, gracelessly adorns the Vaccination Certificate

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being given to those who have been vaccinated?

Frankly, there seems to be no reason why the PM's image is needed at all on such a certificate. Au contraire, if at all a photograph does need to be printed on it, it'd have to be of the person vaccinated. After all, it is not that Modi has paid for our vaccine doses from his personal pockets. While we've by and large got our 2nd dose free, we have all paid anywhere from INR 250 to 1550 for the first shot, the certificate for which also senselessly carries the PM's image. In fact even now, while the COVISHIELD Vaccine is being administered free of cost, COVAXIN is believably being administered at the steep price of INR 1550+. And yet the PM's image blatantly stares you in the face. Not done! Not done!!

Put differently, what is it that the powers-that-be want to remind us about by this single act of imaging Modi on our vaccination certificate – of the number of those who were not as lucky as we are, dying as they did due to non-availability of Oxygen, beds, ambulances etc, apart from the lack of infrastructure in terms of carting the dead?

SHAME ON THOSE WHOSE BRAINCHILD THE SAID IMAGING OF NAMO ACTUALLY IS.

— LADISLAUS LOUIS D'SOUZA
Malad West, Mumbai

One nation, one card

We are burdened with a plethora of cards like Pan card, Aadhaar card, Ration card and Covid certificate, which is required to be produced on demand at all entry points. We have to do a lot of paperwork for every little

thing. In addition we are required to update our bank accounts regularly by doing KYC. Yet the big fish get away while the common law abiding citizen is unnecessarily harassed.

To obviate all this we need our own unique card like the social security card, in advanced countries. This card must contain all relevant details of a person beginning from birth certificate and must include Pan and Aadhaar, Covid certificates, medical records like polio and other vaccination shots, all social welfare benefits for poor, like LPG, Mnrega, direct cash benefits, personal and vehicle insurance etc. In addition the card must contain all information regarding Criminal record, Passport, traffic offenses, property owned, marriage certificate, bank accounts, salary and business income etc(as with social security cards)

Initially the card may be optional for 2 years but it must be made mandatory thereafter as it should gradually subsume all other cards. The 12-digit Aadhaar card is ideally suited to be our own unique card as it can easily be curated to include all these details. This card will do away with the necessity of filling of forms for everything.

Considering that we have the best IT brains in the world, the roll-out of such a card should not pose a big problem. The benefits will be innumerable for the people and the nation as the corrupt will find it difficult to circumvent the system.

—Prof Robert Castellino,
Malad.

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Christian Media Out On The Streets...!



By **Ladislaus Louis D'Souza**

Taking a cue from the Holy Father's message for World Communications Day 2022, the Indian Catholic Press Association [ICPA] chose "**Hit the streets – listen, encounter, engage!**" for its 26th National Convention of Christian Journalists (NCCJ) on 01 December 2021! As for the venue of the event, Saint Paul's Media Complex, Bandra West, Mumbai, a place of greater significance could not have been chosen - for the simple reason that Saint Paul's Institute of Communication Education [SPICE], the star of the media complex, is not just another media college but a place where those preparing to enter the multifaceted world of the media are trained with a thoroughness that embodies the kind of orientation needed today! A thoroughness that comes precisely from hitting the streets in a bid to **listen, encounter and engage** – a thoroughness that Blessed James Alberione would have approved and which the Apostle Saint Paul would

have delighted in! That such thoroughness comes precisely from hitting the streets in a bid to listen, encounter and engage people is what media education is all about, SPICE leading the way! Significantly, it was only on 28 November that the Pauline Family in Bombay, the parent body of Saint

the ICPA to think in terms of conscientiously going beyond "reportage created in newsrooms". The encounter such interaction entails includes relating to reality at its grassroots, buoyed by a sharp sense of "curiosity, an openness, (and) a passion" that has journalists willingly go where no one dares go and desirous of seeing and doing things not many would bother about. Now isn't this reminiscent of the founding of the Union of Lay Pauline Cooperators by Blessed James Alberione on the premise of enabling lay people to go where priests and nuns cannot go and do what they cannot do?



**ICPA President :
Ignatius Gonsalves**



**ICPA Secretary:
Fr. Suresh Mathew**

Paul's Media Complex, celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the earthly passing of the Founder of the 10-entity worldwide Pauline Family into heavenly bliss!

Catching the bull by its horns - As a matter of fact, both the theme and the venue challenged the members of

As believers, Christian journalists in every stream of the media have a special obligation to enter every situation as it really exists and thus bust the tendency to risk showing the world things only through the eyes of the powers-that-be. India is a surefire case of this anomaly. When the pandemic was at its peak with people factually dying for want of oxygen, the world was being officially

(Contd.. on p. 7)

(Contd.. from p. 6)

bombarded with lies to the contrary, generally by the government itself and by some sections of the media, both print and electronic. Demonetization was clearly a kick on the shin for the lower middle-class and to the down-to-the-dregs poor and thus a slur on the nation's economy. Yet, it was the 'you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours' media that highlighted the official line and downplayed the reality of the havoc it being caused to the lives of the working class. It is the partisan attitude of pretence that the Christian journalist is called to continue to eschew, come what may.

Apt occasion - It is also significant that the ICPA event which couldn't be held in the Press Month, February



Ladislaus Louis D'Souza

2021, on account of the pandemic-lockdown took place during the Season of Advent when Christendom avidly prepares for the coming of the Redeemer at Christmas and at End-times. Indeed, a true blue Christian journalist is one who understands that the Word becoming flesh that Christmas celebrates has much more significance than just a doctrinal incarnation of God as man. Rather, believing that the word became man is itself packed with responsibilities that one can never easily shirk. If, "in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God..." (Jn 1:1), it follows that the journalist is conscious of the use of every word

in his or her communication. Looked at from a wider perspective, every untrue utterance is essentially an affront to the Eternal Word, even as all truthfulness expressed, be it in word or graphic form, from the editor's desk or the reporter's smartphone, be it via a pen, a computer or a microphone, is an expression of the very truth that the Word per se embodies. That is where the listening aspect of Pope Francis' call comes in. What do we Christian



Mrs. Susan Coelho presenting a token of appreciation to the Chief Guest Hon. Justice Aloysius Aguiar

journalists do with when what we hear or read turns out to be crappy? Do we stand up and dare to expose the rot in evidence à la Stan Swamy? Or is sweeping it all under the carpet our style of reporting? It may be emphasized here that the **ICPA assemblage was unanimous in its view that the media—read Christian media—had failed in this regard as a watchdog.**

Further, when occupying positions of responsibility do we dare to look for an encounter with the Word in what we've read irrespective of the writer's status and thus engage both reader and writer in experiencing the goodness of the Word-made-flesh on paper or the computer screen? Or do we care to compliment merely the well-known and the famous on account of their status? Perhaps we do this at the cost of ignoring those who have had the courage of their convictions to risk sharing the stories of those who are oppressed? Turning a Nelson's eye to

those suffering the consequences of the way the environment is treated by those who imagine they were born to own and rule the Earth can hardly be considered becoming of a member of the Indian Catholic Press Association!

In the final analysis . . . - Jesuit Social activist Cedric Prakash SJ who bagged the ICPA Father Louis Careno Award 2021 spoke about the need for journalists to be courageous yet compassionate communicators. Freelance journalist, Advocate and Human Rights Activist Sister Sujata Jena of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus & Mary, who was given the ICPA Award for Best SC-ST Reportage 2020-2021, dedicated her award to the dalits, tribals and other voiceless she indefatigably fights for. So the question now is: **How do we in practice listen, encounter and engage the hearer, the reader and the viewer in today's ethos?**

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Crusaders for Social Justice bag top ICPA Awards

By Joaquim Fernandes, & Ashley D'Mello

Mumbai, Dec 1, 2021: Social Justice Crusader, Father Cedric Prakash, SJ appealed to all journalists to stick out their necks and fight for a just, free and equitable world. Accepting the Indian Catholic Press Association (ICPA) award on December 01, Father Prakash said "We

globally.

The ICPA awards this year were drawn from different parts of the country, Gujarat, Orissa and Jharkhand in India which has a population of over 1 billion persons and over a hundred thousand registered publications. There are over 300 languages and a thousand dialects in the country.



need to wake up now, to be visible and vocal, to use our God-given talents for a more harmonious and peaceful world."

The veteran human rights activist said "Millions of our country's women and men continue to live on the peripheries of a highly exploitative and exclusive society which caters to the whims and fancies and greed of a privileged elitist section of society." He called upon the media to fight a relentless war on behalf of the poor and the marginalized. He asked media persons not to get carried away by electronic gadgets and to concentrate on their core concerns of fighting for human rights.

Fr Cedric Prakash SJ, who is based in Ahmedabad, received the ICPA- Fr. Louis Careno Award. The award was instituted by the ICPA with the support of the Mumbai province of the Salesians of Don Bosco in memory of Fr Louis Careno, a Salesian missionary. Fr.Prakash has played an important role in the country and in the church through his bold writings against communalism and fundamentalism which are gaining ground

The awards were part of the 26th National Convention of Christian Journalists with the theme "Hit the Streets- Listen, Encounter and Engage" based on Pope Francis's message this year for the World Communication Day that focuses on "Come and See (Jn:46): Communicating by Encountering People Where and as They are" and was held at St. Paul's Media Education Center, Bandra, Mumbai, India

His Eminence, Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Archbishop of Mumbai and President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India congratulated the ICPA members. He stressed the importance of the word of the Gospel on issues of social justice and human rights.

Earlier in the day, former High Court judge, Aloysius Aguiar addressing the audience said, "Journalists must act as watchdogs when human rights and other basic rights are being trampled upon by the state and the powers that be. As news hounds they can sniff out stories that are not just sensational but which expose the rot in society, in the government

and even in the Church and religious institutions.

The second winner was Sr.Sujatha Jena, a Catholic Nun-Journalist-Activist belonging to the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary, Bhubaneswar, Odisha. She has been regularly contributing to major national and international news portals on human rights and Dalit issues. She made a passionate plea to continue the fight against discrimination for the weaker sections of the society. The SC/BC Special Award was instituted by the ICPA and sponsored by the CBCI office for Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes to promote the welfare of the marginalized peoples.

The third award for the best Hindi Writer/Institution known as the Swami Devanand Chakkungal Award, went to a magazine 'NISHKALANKA' edited by Fr. Justin Tirkey SJ

It is a Catholic Hindi publication from Ranchi, Jharkhand, celebrating its centenary year. From its inception the Jesuit owned magazine has been published by the Catholic Press Ranchi (established in 1920). The magazine has been a vehicle of information on religious, socio-economic and politico-cultural matters of tribal and other marginalized groups.

All the awards were given to the recipients by Hon. Justice Mr Aloysius Aguiar, (Retd. Judge of the Bombay High Court) and Bishop Salvadore Lobo, Bishop – Emeritus of Baruaipur (Ecclesiastical Advisor to the ICPA). Mr Ignatius Gonsalves, ICPA President while speaking drew parallels from the civil rights movements in the USA led by Martin Luther King and its Indian counterpart led by Ambedkar.

Mr Mohan Shivand, Former Editor of the Readers Digest, voiced his alarm at the rising tide of anti-democratic forces in the country.

Dr Shaison P. Ouseph, an internationally acclaimed documentary filmmaker gave his experience of the rising tide of anti-democratic forces by narrating his experience. He was given telephonic threats after he posted a critical film on YouTube and was forced to delete it from the digital platform.

Nearly 40 Christian journalists attended the convention held after a gap of two years, affected by the pandemic.

Perpetua's Book - 'Beautifully Broken'

In Mangaluru, November 27, 2021, was a unique day at 'The Bharath Academy' Mangalore, as it held the first ever 'Literary Day', with the Book Launch of talented young authors. The aim of this fest was to encourage reading among children from a very young age and to inculcate sparks of creativity in them so as to become budding authors, poets and public speakers. The fest attracted young children from in and around the city and people. The enthusiasm of several great and generous folk contributed to the unique positivity and future of the effort. One of the book released was "Beautifully Broken" By Perpetua Pereira, a gifted School girl prodigy, which may be termed her major maiden work of solid 160 pages beautifully done, captivating readers, very noteworthy. Let us zoom into this rare book and get inspiration from the budding author while she gets popular with all looking up to her making it big and going places. It is a thrilling experience to get to know and admire.

The young author, about the Book

From the author's views : In my childhood circumstances helped me see that pain exists in all of us, and yet, the worst experiences remain our passionate companions for life. The scars in the heart makes one realize that in the end, only I can heal myself. Experiences teach the lessons that one never wants to learn. Though now, all those haunting memories are dead, making room for new ones to come..... It is difficult, forced to battle the feeling of being present but not seen; the feeling of being heart broken with no more heart to break; feeling of dying inside with eyes wide open. Whether it is pain, fear, love or betrayal, this book has it all to remind you that you are NOT ALONE.

The one liners, written hoping to sew together the torn walls of the heart, for some answers never satisfy. But,

watching so many others battle fierce wars within themselves created an undying urge to share my own one liners with the world because – if they could help me heal, they could help many more too. Rarely our thoughts are shared, but now I want to share it all. I never thought my heart would make it out into the world and ultimately into



your hands but It will, it can make me glad. Hope you find hope from my lines to make it your own. Use what you need now, save the rest for a later time of need. Read, heal, remember YOU are never alone. Live to be happy, be happy to live.

In her acknowledgement she conveys : Deep gratitude to the LORD Almighty for HIS unconditional blessings on us all. Sincerely thank my mother Mrs. Mary Joseph, for her love, unstinting support, encouragement and guidance . She bandaged my scars and let them heal. My thanks to my father Mr. Baptist Peter Pereira, for teaching me life's best lessons during my first twelve years of my life and making me strong for life. I'm appreciative of my little brother for being my stressbuster. My unfeigned thanks to my mentor,

Prof Maria D'Costa, for supporting my venture and for teaching me to dream big. It's under her wings that my dream became a reality. My profound gratitude to Rev. Anil Ivan Fernandes, for his counsel and help. My sincere gratitude to Mr. Pran Nayak, for editing my one-liners and for publishing the book in record time in the best form.

Introduction from Mentor and Guide :

Prof Maria D'Costa she says; Perpetua Pereira is a brilliant teenager, talented and mature student extraordinaire....An excellent charcoal artist and trainer, she shares her art and learning across the world. Besides being an intelligent student, she has earned a name as a singer too! Here in the book, Perpetua's one liners in lower case perfectly depict her life and healing, she has found through expression. Deep rooted in faith, Perpetua will shine in life, given her industrious and positive nature. Her multifaceted personality at this tender age, will go a long way in scaling all that was never before. Willing philanthropists have come forward to publish her creations and support her education. She richly deserves all and she is profoundly grateful for all. To echo the poetess, if you can help the lame to leap and the suppressed to soar, you will not have lived in vain. I wish Perpetua leaps and soars to great fame and good fortune!

—Compiled : Ivan Saldanha-Shet.

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Lifelong repentance better than instant death!

(Contd.. from p. 4)

transparent laws and processes.

'Stop corruption, save India' has been a prominent campaign in India. Anti-corruption movement often witnesses a series of demonstrations and protests across India. They have been oriented to establishing a strong legislation, along with enforcement against perceived endemic political corruption.

Misconduct and wrongdoing steals away the valuable resources of the society. Only effective, accountable and transparent institutions can usher in a culture of integrity and fairness. It is the shared responsibility of the nations to fight against this all-round ethical and social menace. It is the duty of every single person, young and old, to prevent and counter corruption, in order to promote resilience and integrity at all levels of personal and social life.

On the occasion of 'International Anti-Corruption Day', it is the duty of all the citizens of India and the world beyond, to resolve to refrain from corruption in thought, word and deed and abide by sound ethical values, so that humanity may not be allowed to get corrupted.

May the observance of 'International Anti-corruption Day' motivate and empower the humans to remain transparent, honest and clean in their ways in life! May the same reduce the intensity of corruption in India and beyond! May it be ensured that our country and the society be better for us to have our being!

The author is Director, 'Institute of Harmony and Peace Studies', New Delhi, and is grounded in the diverse 'disciplines of humanities'. He has been committed to 'cross-cultural perspectives, cross-scriptural values, constitutional values, interfaith relations, social ethics, communal harmony, national integration and social harmony', for the past over 40 years. He contributes to the above cause through lectures, articles, books, video messages, conferences, social interactions, views at TV channels, and the like.

Should death penalty be abolished? Many opting for culture of life, will say, yes; allow colprits to amend their lives.

The death sentence was handed down to the three men convicted for gang-raping a photojournalist in defunct Shakti Mills compound at Mahalaxmi in August 2013. But the Bombay high court on 25th November last, commuted into life imprisonment, the death sentence handed down to the three convicts!

Because death puts an end to the whole process of repentance, suffering and mental agony! The high court said, 'The trio did not deserve any leniency, empathy or sympathy, but an instant death penalty? No! It is more important that



Fr. Michael G. Vasai

they should repent till their last breath for their crime. Right! Jesus said, "Unless you repent, you too shall perish!"

Those of us humans who who are of the opinion of abolishing death penalty should realise that Infact such a life imprisonment with repentance will

be more severe penalty than death itself! I wish a priest or a spiritual leader meets the convicts at this juncture and helps them to repent with hope of forgiveness from God and ultimate bliss of life. The division bench of justice Sadhana Jadhav and justice Prithviraj Chauhan deserve Kudos! They are offering 'purgatory' in the present life itself! Watch their beautiful words: "They deserve imprisonment for life i.e. for the remainder of their natural

life, ... Every day the rising sun would remind them of the barbaric acts committed by them and the night would lay them with a heavy heart filled with guilt and remorse" The society looking at such men who look upon women with derision, depravity, contempt

and objects of desire will a new Outlook towards women. Of course neither the court nor the society should wish them all this mental agony, as a revenge but a chance given to purify themselves and experience the company of the compassionate God.

And God said, No!!

I asked God to take away my bad habit,
And God said, it's not for me to take it away but for you to give it up.
I asked God to make my handicapped child whole,
And God said, his spirit is whole, his body is only temporary.
I asked God to grant me patience,
And God said, patience is a byproduct of tribulations; it isn't granted, it is I earned.
I asked God to give me happiness,
And God said, I give you blessings; happiness is up to you.
I asked God to spare me pain,
And God said, suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to me.
I asked God to make my spirit grow,
And God said, you must grow on your own, but I will prune you to make you fruitful.
I asked God for all things that I might enjoy life,
And God said, I will give you life, so that you may enjoy all things.
I asked God to help me love others, as much as He loves me,
And God said...Ahhh, finally you have the idea.

--- Jubel D'Cruz, Mumbai

He Comes To Do His Father's Will

4th Sunday in Advent

“Yahweh, therefore, will abandon Israel until such time as she, who is to give birth, has given birth. He will stand, and shepherd his flock with the strength of Yahweh, in the glorious Name of Yahweh, his God. They will live safely, while he wins renown to the ends of the earth. He shall be peace.” (Mic.5:2-4).

This is the last Sunday of Advent. We have waited, prepared and prayed. We rejoice in knowing of God's plan to appoint Mary to be the Mother of Jesus.

The Virgin Mary said: “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word”. (Lk.1:38). Be happy, the Lord and Master comes, born in a humble manger.



BY MELVYN BROWN

Raise your voices, the Jewish prophet is the Christian Savior. He has laid the foundation stone of a universal faith, paving the way to the Kingdom of God.

Churchgoers who fill the pews, contemplating his birth and celebrating Christ's birthday, makes the faith monumental and alive, even today, after two thousand and twenty- two years.

What ensues, however, is obvious: the history of God's plan of salvation unfolds with enduring power and consequences for generations to come. The survival of the faith will resonate till the end of time with the Church as the cornerstone of God's divine scheme.

“This is why, on entering the world, Christ says: You did not desire sacrifice and offering; You were not pleased with burnt offerings and sin offerings. Then I said: “Here I am. It was written of me in the scroll. I will do your will, O God.” (HEB. 10:5-7).

Advent is for prayer, sacrifice and preparation for His coming at Christmas. It is the season for serious happy spiritual retreat – to meditate on Christ's response to the Father's plan: on his total acceptance of human form and life; the acceptance to fulfill the message of the prophets, to be born as man so that we can celebrate the mystery of Incarnation; to teach us the ways of God; to give Holy Mother the Church His divine direction in counsel and teaching; to die to the glory of His Resurrection.

“I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all people.”

(Lk.2:10). Let us now meditate on the true celebration of Christmas.

Lift up your hearts and raise your voices in praise of the Living God in Christ. The season of Advent ends and New Life begins in Him.

We are surely blessed as Christians, to receive a direct Command from the

Lord to spread the good news. Jesus said, he came that we should have life. As a Catholic, the importance that you put in your faith determines the kind of life you live. And the celebration of Christmas gives life a new meaning and is unique in every way.

In the Gospel of John, it is mentioned that Christian belief “brings us a peace which the world could never give.” (Jn.14:17).

Christmas is a great gift bestowed on humankind. It is the driving force to enrich awareness and add a larger dimension to the faith.

We must share with others the gift of faith. The happiness that revolves around the story of His birth is positive and precious. Call upon the Holy Spirit to teach us how to celebrate Christmas and show the world that Christ is man's hope.

I give all my readers of the Secular Citizen and members of the Ambassadors For Jesus, the Special Bethlehem Blessing: Jesus loves us all!

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A teacher asked her students to use the word "beans" in a sentence. "My father grows beans," said one girl. "My mother cooks beans," said a boy. A third student spoke up, "We are all human beans."

A lady comes home from her doctor's appointment grinning from ear to ear. Her husband asks, "Why are you so happy?" The wife says, "The doctor told me that for a forty-five year old woman, I have the breasts of a eighteen year old." "Oh yeah?" quipped her husband, "What did he say about your forty-five year old ass?" She said, "Your name never came up in the conversation."

Q: Can a kangaroo jump higher than the Empire State Building?
A: Of course. The Empire State Building can't jump.

Q: Why does Humpty Dumpty love autumn?
A: Because Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.

A man got hit in the head with a can of Coke, but he was alright because it was a soft drink.

Q: What's the difference between a guitar and a fish?
A: You can tune a guitar, but you can't tuna fish.

Mother superior tells two new nuns that they have to paint their room without getting any paint on their clothes. One nun suggests to the other, "Hey, let's take all our clothes off, fold them up, and lock the door." So they do this, and begin painting their room. Soon they hear a knock at the door. They ask, "Who is it?" "Blind man!" The nuns look at each other and one nun says, "He's blind, so he can't see. What could it hurt?" They let him in. The blind man walks in and says, "Hey, nice tits. Where do you want me to hang the blinds?"

Did you hear about the guy whose whole left side was cut off? He's all



right now.

THREE TREES AND A WOODPECKER

Two tall trees, a birch and a beech, are growing in the woods. A small tree begins to grow between them, and the beech says to the birch, "Is that a son of a beech or a son of a birch?" The birch says he cannot tell, but just then a woodpecker lands on the sapling.

The birch says, "Woodpecker, you are a tree expert. Can you tell if that is a son of a beech or a son of a birch?"

The woodpecker takes a taste of the small tree and replies, "It is neither a son of a beech nor a son of a birch, it is, however, the best piece of ash I have ever poked my pecker into."

Now wipe that smile off your face.

Q: What is the tallest building in the entire world?
A: The library, because it has so many stories.

If you ever get cold, just stand in the corner of a room for a while. They're normally around 90 degrees.

Three ladies were on a bus stop bench. One of the ladies looks at the

other and asks her if she is Native American. She says, "Yes, I'm Arapaho." "Is that so?" says the first, "It just happens that I'm a Navajo." The third lady looks at both of them and says, "I'm a Dallas hoe."

Q: Why shouldn't you make fun of a paleontologist?
A: Because you will get Jurasskicked.

Q: Why is England the wettest country?
A: Because so many kings and queens have been reigning there.

Q: What's the best thing about Switzerland?
A: I don't know, but the flag is a big plus.

If the right side of the brain controls the left side of the body, then lefties are the only ones in their right mind.

Q: What did the big chimney say to the little chimney?
A: "You're too young to smoke."

A little girl and her older brother were visiting their grandfather's farm. The older brother decided to play a trick on his younger sister. He told her that he discovered a man-eating chicken. The girl was frightened, and ran inside in fear. Then the older brother heard his little sister scream. He ran inside immediately. She was screaming at their grandfather, who was chowing down on a plate of fried chicken. "What is it?" he asked. The sister turned to him in fear and said, "It- it's- IT'S A MAN EATING CHICKEN!!!"

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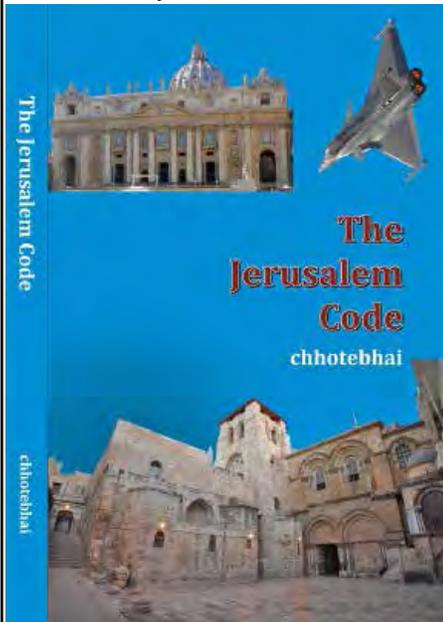
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Thanksgiving

May the Sacred
Heart of Jesus be
Praised Adored,
Glorified and Loved
today and every-
day throughout the
world, now and for-
ever. 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*

*—Flavia D'Souza,
Borivali*



Chicken Malai

1.3 kg chicken, washed and cut
into curry pieces

Marinate with:

2 tsp white pepper powder
1 tsp salt
Keep aside.

Roast:

4 onions, cut into slices
20 pieces cashew nuts
6 green chillies
Fry well for 5 minutes on medium flame and then set aside to cool.
Once cool, coarsely grind first and then add a little water to make a
smooth paste.

In a vessel:

Add oil
6 cloves
6 cardamoms
15 peppercorns
2 tbsp ginger garlic paste
Fry for 2 minutes on low heat, then add the onions and cashew nuts
paste.
Fry for 5 more minutes on medium heat till the paste changes colour.
Add the marinated chicken.
Fry for 5 minutes on high heat till the meat becomes light brown.

Now add in:

1 tbsp coriander powder
2 tsp cumin seeds powder
2 tsp garam masala powder
1 tsp white pepper powder
1/2 tsp nutmeg powder
1 tsp salt or as per taste
Mix well and fry for 5 minutes on medium heat.
Lower the heat.
Add 5 tbsp yoghurt, plus a little water. Beat well and add to the dish.
Cook for 5 minutes on low heat till the oil separates.
Add a cup of water or as per desired gravy.
Cover and cook on low heat for 20 minutes.
Add 5 tbsp fresh cream
Give a mix
Add a little water
Cover and cook on low heat for another 5 minutes
Add 2 tbsp butter
1 tbsp kasuri methi
Simmer for 2 minutes on low heat
Garnish with coriander leaves



by Jubel D'Cruz

Being a mother, they say is the most beautiful experience and God's divine blessing. Every woman at some point of her life wishes to cuddle the piece of her womb in her arms and forget the world. Motherhood, being a heavenly bliss turns out hellish for some and knowingly or unknowingly, all of us are a part of this.

Immediately after a couple enters their wedlock the first question all of us want to ask is, when you are going to announce the big news. Yes, I agree a baby's arrival is a big news, but don't you think as a couple they would have many more other things to announce? Their first trip together, their first house together, their success as a couple, their love, their achievements. All these are side-lined and a beautiful journey of becoming a mother is turned into a battlefield comparing it with other couples who have begun to run the race of marriage.

In any marriage the first blame is put on the girl if there is a delay in pregnancy. The household and the society do not even bother to understand that the well-being of both the partners is important for conception and not just that of the girl. All the expectations and pressures are on the lady making her feel miserable and guilty.

Probably the lady you are forcing to conceive may have lost her babies to miscarriages multiple times. Maybe she has visited the best doctors and tried out all medicines. Is it her mistake that she is not able to bear a child?

Probably the young girl you are taunting everyday asking for good news, may have lost her first child and is still in trauma trying to recover the loss.



Good News

Is it wrong if she is taking some time to recover herself physically, mentally and emotionally?

Probably the lady you are pestering to go and visit the doctor may have no problems and maybe she is hiding the fact that there are issues with her husband who is not ready to get himself tested and she is suffering quietly to not let her husband down.

That lady who has a special child and whom you are constantly asking to bear another child, may not be ready. She might have decided to dedicate her life for her special angel or she may be facing fears which she never talks to you about.



by Sonal Lobo

That lady you laugh at for not bearing a child may have had battled a dreaded disease. She might have lost her womb or her reproductive organs to a deadly disease which she never prayed for.

That lady about whom you constantly gossip about may have had a traumatic past. She may have been abused and on her own will wished not to bear a child in order to save it from the abuse and ordeal.

It so easy for the society to demand for a baby, but have they been sensitive enough to understand that it takes time? For some, it happens immediately and for others, it does take

time. Elders today tend to generalize and say that this generation wants to enjoy life and are not ready to take the responsibility of a kid. It may be true in a few cases, but it is definitely not right to put all the young couple in the same basket. Above all embracing parenthood is a decision that must be taken by couple but why is it been made a traumatic experience for so many!

Many times, blinded by the want for a child we fail to understand the trauma and pain a woman faces. The society in which we live, we blindly label a woman barren and make fun of her as being incomplete. Motherhood completes a woman but does being unable to bear a child make her any less a woman? We do not appreciate the fact that she is a wonderful wife, a dutiful daughter and a great daughter-in-law. We never acknowledge her talents and her career. At large, she is reduced to her ability to bear a child which is in no way justified.

A woman who is not able to conceive for a long time goes through traumatizing moments. She feels guilty of letting her family down. She feels helpless when she sees her husband playing with other kids. She smiles when she is constantly compared to other women with babies. Every time she sees a baby, she imagines how it would be to have her own. Baby showers and pregnancy announcements make her scared. A woman goes through all this just because of the pressure we exert on her and nothing else.

Being in the same situation, I can totally understand how it is to not have an offspring of my own. After losing our children due to miscarriage, the journey for my husband and I haven't been easy. During all this I have re-

(Contd.. on p. 15)

(Contd.. from p. 14)

alized that no matter what the society says, a little understanding and help from the family members can make a huge difference.

Once on being questioned for not conceiving and was feeling low, I was really touched by what my husband said, and it changed my entire outlook towards my situation. My husband gently told me that children are God's gift and he would give us when he feels we are ready for it. He promptly told me that a little faith in God can make huge difference and no matter who says what my womb will be filled.

As a parent, parent-in-law, or friend, or family, the best thing we can do for couples who are waiting to conceive is not to ask them when they would give the good news but rather gently tell them there will be good news and let us wait. This change of sentence can bring in so much relief to a couple and also boost their hope of becoming parents. Let us stop judging couples without kids but understand them, stand by them and help them in their journey to conceive. Let's take a step further and learn to appreciate a woman for all her other qualities and not only for her ability to bear a child. By doing so, you would be sprinkling a ray of hope and faith in someone's life.

Above all, let's not forget the fact that God has decided everything beforehand. Let us give a chance to God to execute his timetable in our life and not force God to work according to our timelines. Probably then there will be peace and happiness.

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7271. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1991), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 69 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, smart, active. Edn. B.Sc., in Hospitality Administration and Management, working as a Manager - Administration Facilities. Contact email : allyrocks91@gmail.com

7259. USA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in August 1994), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Graduate, working. Contact email : sevu.sequeira@gmail.com

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

7126. U.S.A. : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1992) from Mumbai, Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. (Computers) from Mumbai, M.S. (Information Systems) from US. Possesses H1B visa and is working as a Technical Analyst with an MNC in USA. Contact email : wilfyjoy1315@gmail.com or call +91 98603 02527 / + 91 9970172527

7258. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1993), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Post Graduate, Content Professional in a reputed MNC and freelancing as a copywriter ad social media Professional. Contact email : forheralliance@gmail.com

7244. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in August 1992), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 54 kgs, Edn. Chartered Accountant and M.Com., Employed in one of the Top reputed companies in Mumbai. Well cultured and good family background. Only Child. Contact email : fionadesouza18@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

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7240. PUNE : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in October 1987), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 65 kgs, Very Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA, working as a Finance Executive. Contact email : angelina0134@gmail.com

7234. MANGALORE : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in November 1993), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBBS, MD (ongoing), Doctor by profession. Contact email : samaddy2013@gmail.com

7230. MUMBAI : Silm, Smart, Beautiful Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in August 1995), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working in Pharmaceutical Company. Contact email : alex1947@rediffmail.com

7065. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1989), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 69 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., & Dip. in Clinical Research, working as Business Process Lead in TCS. Contact email : mendonca_luke@yahoo.co.in

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

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

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

Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - GROOMS

6885. USA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in November 1986), Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.E. (I.T.), University of Mumbai, Executive MBA University of Utah - USA, Job : Senior Director of Software Automation in USA. Currently he his in Mumbai. Contact Email :

jane_3105@yahoo.co.in

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

7233. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in March 1983), Ht. 6' 1", Wt. 83 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. HSC, IHM, IT., working as a Instrument Tech., working offshore (Rigs). Contact email : bragandacruz@rediffmail.com

7280. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Divorcee, (Born in December 1972), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 72 kgs, Tan Complexion, Edn. B.A., working as a Manager. Contact email : fernsjohn100@gmail.com

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

7232. GOA : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in July 1980), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 65 kgs, Tan Complexion, Edn. Diploma in Automobile Technology, Self employed. Contact email : darwindsouza28@gmail.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

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@oulook.com

7231. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Divorcee, (Born in August 1970), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Diploma Holder, working as a Manager with a Cruise liner based in USA. Work entails 6 months work and 2/3 months vacation. Contact email : raisaraisa1212@yahoo.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

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

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

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

6585. MUMBAI : Mumbai born and broughtup Roman Catholic Bachelor, Handsome, (Born in June 1988), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 78 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. EXTC Engineering, working as a Networking Engineer. Having

own accommodation. Contact email : 18.elaine@gmail.com

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

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

6707 MUMBAI : Goan RC bachelor, (Born in June 1975), Ht. 5' 10", Wt. 70 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., having own business. Seeks a Family oriented girl. Contact email :

maxabreo@yahoo.com /

maxabreo@vsnl.net

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

6862. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in February 1983), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 72 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., well settled working in Mumbai. Contact email : keith_peter1983@yahoo.co.in

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

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7278. MUMBAI : Tamilian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in June 1996), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 60 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA & ranked 1st in the University. Working as a Manager in Private Sector. Contact email : c.m.florence.j@gmail.com

7255. CANADA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1988), Ht. 5' 8", Wt.70 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. CA., work in Finance with a Bank. Contact email : jovita.ad@gmail.com

7279. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in January 1991), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 75 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Post Graduate in Mass Media, working for Media. Contact email : julietdsouza2001@gmail.com

7251 MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic innocent Divorcee (Born in April 1990), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 55 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA, Profession : HR., Contact email : fds140490@gmail.com

7266. MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in May1994), Ht. 5' 4", Wt.52 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com., Handling documentation and business development. Contact email : rohana16@yahoo.com

7248 MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in March 1992), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 59 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA Graduate - Human Resources. Currently working in Mumbai as an Executive for a International I.T. Company. (Full UK recruitment.) Contact email : librans19@yahoo.com or Whatsapp No. 9833116683

7256. WEST BENGAL : Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in August 1992), Ht. 5' 2", Wt.45 kgs, Very Fair Complexion, Edn. M.A., B.Ed., Teaching in High School. Contact email: vict.raphael@gmail.com

7246. CANADA : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in

December 1991), Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 71 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Masters in Global Business Management, working as a Social Media Co-ordinator. Contact email :

francispinto15@yahoo.com

7245. BANGALORE : Gujarati Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1985), Only Child, Ht. 5', Wt. 43 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Tech., Computer Engineering, Architect in German Company. Well settled. Seeks a match willing to settle in Bangalore. Contact email :

pmcandy1957@gmail.com

7238. AHMEDABAD : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1989), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a Sr. Recruitment Consultant. Contact email :

fernandeseugenia58@gmail.coms

7109 MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in June 1986), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA, working as a Associate Consulant. Contact email : helendsz27@gmail.com

7145 MUMBAI : East Indian Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1992), Ht. 5' 1", Wt. 50 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. M.Sc., Lecturer by profession. Contact email : andrea210358@gmail.com

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

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

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

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

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

7095. MUMBAI : Goan Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1992), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 55 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. M.Com + Import Export Certificate Course, working as a Billing Assistant in Well known Hospital. Contact email : perpetuadias7@gmail.com

6831. MUMBAI : Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1991), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 54 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as an Senior Associate in Insurance Company. Contact email : denisdouza854@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

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Care Your Christmas Tree

The Christmas tree is a symbol of familial love and joy. It represents hope and dreams, and all things wonderful. Christmas is synonymous with Santa, cake, cookies, gifts, carols and Christmas trees. Ever wondered why a tree? Why do people bring in trees into their living homes every Christmas?

It is believed that the tradition of decorating a tree at Christmas began in Germany in the 15th century. Traditionally it was decorated with apples, nuts or other foods. In the 18th century, it began to be illuminated by candles. After electricity came to be, Christmas lights took over. Today, a tree is decorated with tinsel, candy canes and more. An angel or a star would be placed on the top of the tree.

People brought decorated trees into their homes. Some also built Christmas pyramids of wood and decorated them with evergreens and candles if wood was difficult to find. It is widely held belief that Martin Luther, the 16th century Protestant reformer, was the first to add lighted candles to a tree. People today decorate their homes with pine, spruce, and fir trees.

People today decorate their homes with pine, spruce, and fir trees. An-

cient people hung evergreen boughs over their doors and windows. In many countries, it was believed that evergreens would keep away witches, ghosts, evil spirits, and illness. Even children from other religions make demands to bring into their living room. In India children use smaller trees, which are not more than four feet in height, while Americans like their Christmas trees to reach from the floor to the ceiling.



C.K. Subramaniam

There is a need for celebrating an eco-friendly Christmas in the city. An eco-friendly Christmas tree at Bengaluru's Mar Thoma Church attracted the maximum crowd this year. Standing resplendent with beautiful ornaments and twinkling lights, the Christmas tree is an integral part of Christmas celebrations. What was once a simple family tradition has today become much more elaborate with many commercial establishments installing huge trees with plenty of lights on Christmas Eve. The festive fervour has transcended religious boundaries, with Christian and non-Christian homes celebrating Christmas by putting up their tree in the festive season.

Though fir is a top selling one across the world, Indian weather is not conducive for its growth. But few coastal

regions grow these trees in abundance. As children we would run to the beach side to get the pine with stiff branches and dark green needles and decorate it for Christmas. It was fun to paint the pine cones which would go in as centrepieces for the tree. But now we settle for the artificial ones as it is hassle-free and easy.

When we think of Christmas, there are a whole range of decorations that come to mind. From the tree, the red and green colours, the holly and the mistletoe, there are many things associated with Christmas. Have we ever wondered what they stand for and are available in plenty in the market? Even Amazon and Flipkart have such items used by children to decorate the tree in a most colourful way.

It's the most wonderful time of the year and when it comes to the holiday season, no one does Christmas quite like the stars. From glass polar bears and penguins to a stranger things-inspired tree topper, celebrities adorned their homes with the most extravagant decorations. Take a look at how the stars decorated their homes this Christmas and New Year season. The decorations of the Christmas Tree include: Tiny stars, Candle or serial light decorations, Jingle bell star ornament and many more lovely pieces which include candy and bell to make the decorations more meaningful. Children enjoy the Christmas week and they utilise the vacation in a most useful way by decorating the Christmas Tree in the most beautiful way.



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— M. D'Souza

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DR. FR.CHARLES VAS S.V.D. (77)
A singing visionary and a dancing missionary
passed away on November 30, 2021 at Mumbai



An evangelist through dance! A bhajan chanting Christian priest! That is what Dr. Fr. Charles Vas is who preaches "God experience through song and dance." For him life is a "melody of love" (Prem Ragini), a love song. Song and dance is natural and universal in character. They know no language, religion, race, culture or gender! In them East meets West, and God meets man! The life and works of Fr.Charles are a ballet of these noble expressions!

Childhood and Training :-

Charles Vas was born to devout parents Late Jacob and Late Seraphine Vas on 12th February, 1944 in Omzoor parish in Mangalore Diocese and grew up in an idyllic and silvanic environment. He has one brother (Adv. Pius Vas) who is a High Court lawyer in Mumbai and three sisters and Fr.Charles is fourth in the row. Two of his sisters are religious nuns. As a young boy Charles Vas took to music by instinct like a fish takes to water. He played side drums for the village music band, sang in the Church Choir and developed a penchant for music.

Generously responding to the divine call for religious and priestly life, he joined the Society of the Divine Word (S.V.D.). While pursuing his priestly studies, he engaged himself in a systematic study of guitar and piano during his philosophical studies at the seminary. Soon after his studies of Philosophy, he commenced his formal training under the renowned maestro Ramakrishna Joshi, a disciple of Pandit Vishnu Digamber, a great exponent of Hindustani music.

Charles Vas was ordained a priest in the year 1976, after which he continued his studies and presented his "doctoral" thesis "East meets West" to the Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, Miraj, which awarded him a doctorate in music in 1983.

Dr.Fr.Charles Vas was the director of Sangeet Abhinay Academy - a religious institution of song and dance in Mumbai.

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