



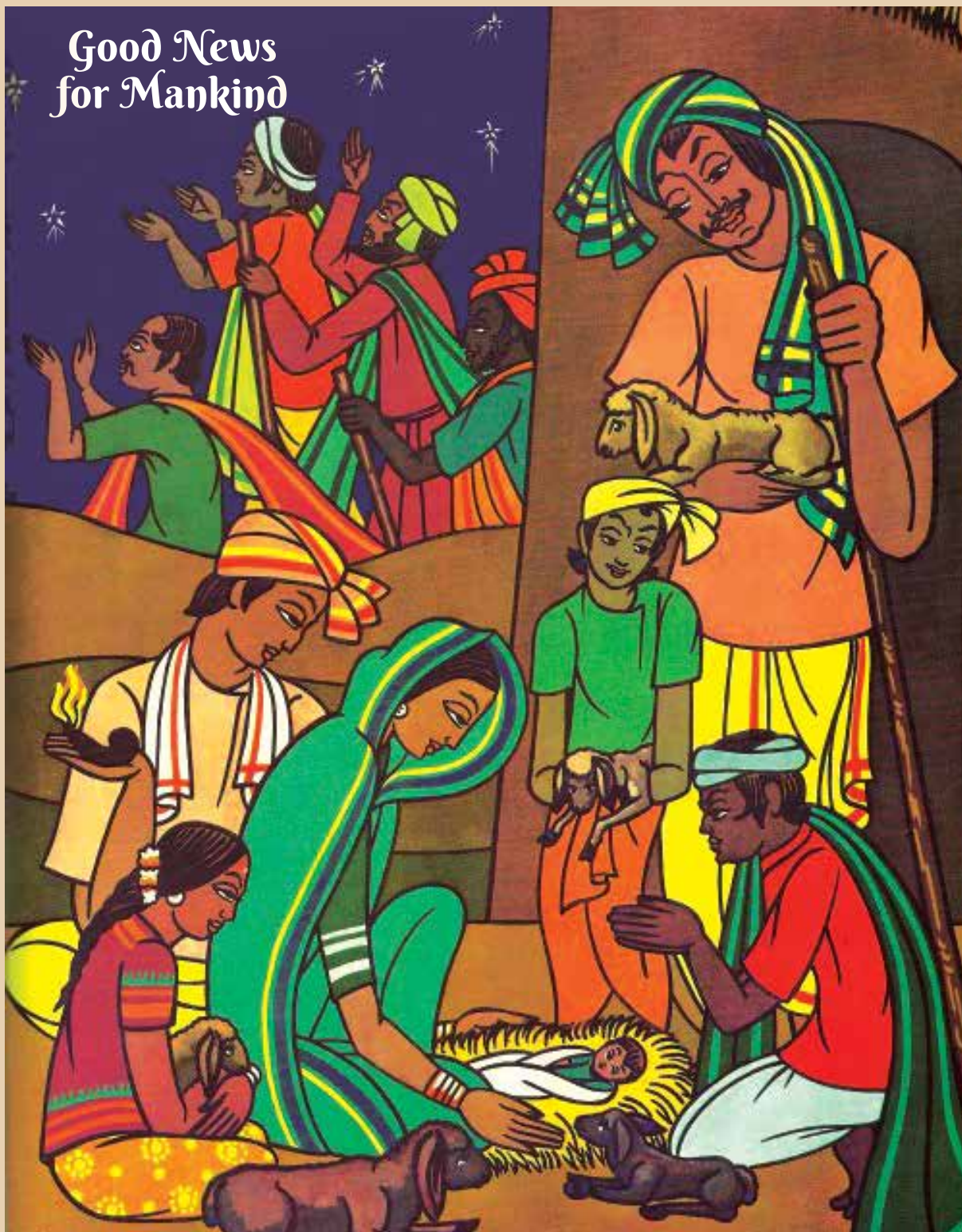
FR

December 2019

# AGNEL

SHRAM NEWS

Good News  
for Mankind



FR. AGNEL  
ASHRAM

# NEWS

December 2019

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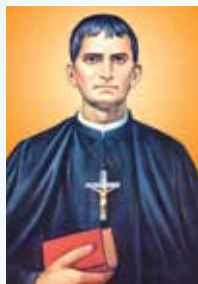
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## VEN. FR. AGNELO'S 151<sup>st</sup> BIRTH ANNIVERSARY Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> November 2020

### PROGRAMME SPECIAL NOVENA SERVICES 12<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020

#### Everyday

**Morning** : 7.00a.m. & 9.30 a.m.: Holy Mass and Novena Prayer in English followed by blessing with the Relic.

**Evening** : 5.30 p.m. : Novena Service in Marathi & Gujarati followed by blessing with the Relic.

**Evening** : 6.00 p.m. : Holy Mass and Novena Prayer in English followed by blessing with the Relic.

#### N.B.

On Sunday 12th & 19th January 2020, all Masses and Novena Services will be held as on normal Sundays.

### 21st January (Tuesday) : 151<sup>st</sup> Birth Anniversary of Venerable Fr. Agnelo D'Souza.

**Morning:** Masses followed by Prayers for favours in English and blessing with the Relic at 7.00 a.m. & 9.30 a.m.

**Evening:** A Solemn Concelebrated Mass will be held at 6.00 p.m. in the Ashram Compound followed by Prayers for favours.

**Most Rev. Peter Machado, Archbishop of  
Bangalore, will be the main Celebrant.**



Thousands of devotees will participate in this Annual Novena and celebration. Over one lakh of favours, some of them truly miraculous such as cure of cancer, T.B., Paralysis etc. have been received through the powerful intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnelo.

Favours obtained and petitions to be placed at the Shrine of Ven. Fr. Agnelo may be sent to the following address :

#### Rev. Fr. Superior.

Fr. Agnel Ashram  
Bandstand, Bandra (West),  
Mumbai - 400 050. India.  
Tel. : 67114000.

**Bus No. : 211 :Special Bus Service to Ply from Bandra  
Railway station (W) to Fr. Agnel Ashram Gate.**

# Christmas Heralds in Peace to all mankind

Christmas is traditionally considered as a harbinger of peace. Christian revelation is full of messages of peace. In the Old Testament “Peace be with you” was a common salutation equivalent to our wishing a good day to our friends. “Salaam Alekum” is its Arabic translation which is still prevalent today in the Arab countries. In the New Testament also, peace is the most desired blessing from God. Jesus himself is called the Prince of Peace and entire mission is geared to restore peace in the embattled world.

What kind of message of peace does Christmas give us? If you want peace be prepared to wage a war. As we are all surrounded by enemies, not to be prepared for war will amount to inviting them to fight against us and defeat us. So peace and war cannot be totally separated from each other, at least in the world we are living in. In fact the whole of progress of mankind is the result of a continuous warfare for survival and improvement of our lives.

There is a type of warfare that is going on in the world that is very relevant to the Christmas season. It is the war at the spiritual frontier against the power of darkness and sinfulness; it is these powers that Jesus referred to, when he declared: “Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the world. No, I did not come to bring peace but war. (Mathew 10, 34).

In fact, this war against the power of sin is long and relentless. It engages us right from our childhood. If we fight valiantly, peace is restored to our lives, but most of the times it is only a relative peace; the war returns soon and we will have to fight new battles till the Lord calls us to our heavenly reward. What then is the meaning of the Christmas message

of peace delivered by the choir of angels to the world. “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to people of goodwill.”

From what has been said above peace appears to be the result of war against the power of darkness and sin. Saint Peter warns us: “Be alert, be on the watch; your enemy the devil roams around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour; be firm in your faith and resist him because you know that your fellow believers in all the world are going through the same kind of sufferings “. (1 Peter, 5, 8-9).

This relentless spiritual war against sin does not jeopardize our peace except when we yield ground to it. As long as we fight with our full trust in God, our peace remains intact and grows with every victory we gain. As St. Paul tells us at the end of his earthly life: “As for me, the hour has come for me to be sacrificed, the time is here for me to leave this life, I have done my best in the race. I have run the full distance and I have kept the faith” (2 Tim, 4, 7). With a peaceful conscience Paul confesses that he fought his battles till the end of his life and maintained his faith.

Peace is broken when there is a conflict between what we believe and what we practice. When Jesus tell us that he has come not to bring peace but war he means to teach us that there should be no compromise with the powers of sin but only a relentless war against them. His will be the final victory when with His grace, all men give up sinning and reconcile themselves with God. Hence, the Christmas message of peace is an invitation to all to give up sinning, to put up with a relentless war against the powers of darkness and to come out victoriously with Christ the conqueror of sin.



# The Gift and Fullness of the Incarnation

-Leon Bent

The fiery finger of God wrote this thunderous line regarding the Incarnation, in Mark 1:15, “The “kairos” or special time of God’s Blessing has come: The Kingdom of God is near!”

“For God so loved the world that He gave his only Son, so that, everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life” (Jn.3:16)!

This “Everybody’s text” or the golden phrase, is the very essence of the Gospel, and its central verse. It tells us that the initiative in redemption lies with God. The basis of Salvation History is the love of God. This passage is a foundational element of the faith that, those who believe in Christ have a proven path to Heaven.

Christmas is a time to come into the light and to embrace the gift of eternal life. That’s worth hearing about a thousand times: The gift of the Incarnation!

“For me, this verse encapsulates the Gospel of Christ in one elegant and pregnant sentence, a phrase that reaches to the heart of God, explaining the essence of history and saving grace in twenty-five succinct words. The key action words stand out with stark clarity: loved, gave, believe, perish, and have. The loving act of God in history, opened an otherwise locked and bolted door, providing humankind with an escape from damnation, offering eternal life” (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI).

***How was this Great History-Changing Event brought about?***

The Annunciation stands at the heart of the drama of salvation: Without the Annunciation, no Cross and Resurrection; without the Annunciation, no Church or Sacraments; without the Annunciation, no eternal life! St. Bernard of Clairvaux caught the essence of what was really at stake on that first Annunciation Day: “The

whole of creation was waiting to be redeemed, hanging on the response of the Blessed Virgin Mary”.

The Annunciation is the announcement that Christ has come to His people, and God will dwell among us. This Proclamation begins to reveal the salvific plan God has for His people, in announcing the coming of the God-man. God’s plan was to become incarnate and take on human flesh, which will be united to His divinity! By the free and complete gift of Mary’s humanity to “incarnate” the Son of God, Jesus Christ experiences all our joys, tribulations, and sorrows. His Incarnation gives us a perfect embodiment of how we are to live our lives. Consider it this way: It is one thing to understand sacrifice in the

**God’s plan was to become incarnate and take on human flesh, which will be united to His divinity!**

abstract. But, witnessing the self-sacrificing gift of another for us makes the conception of sacrifice much easier to understand, and provides an example of how to sacrifice. This is precisely what Christ

does for us in the Incarnation!

**In 2016, the Feast of the Annunciation fell on Good Friday, a rare and special occurrence because the day falls on the correct date according to patristic tradition. March 25th was set as the celebration of the conception of Jesus Christ, because Christ died on the Cross on March 25th!**

**The conjunction of the Annunciation and Good Friday, however, is particularly fitting for, in a way, we are able to contemplate the fullness of the Incarnation as God sees it, that is, outside of time. In this lens, the words in Revelation about the “Lamb slain from the beginning of the world”, makes sense (Revelation 13:8). The Annunciation and the Crucifixion are intimately linked and parallel each**

**other. Mary's 'Yes' to God makes no sense without the Crucifixion, and the Crucifixion would not be possible without Mary's 'Yes.' In the Annunciation, Mary's fiat gives to us our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Likewise, immediately preceding Christ's salvific act on Calvary, Jesus Christ gives Mary as Mother to us (John 19:26-27).**

The mystery of the Incarnation – “And, the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us” (Jn.1:14; Heb.9-14), is the core of Christian faith and the foundation of the Church's edifice; it is also God's last and definitive Word! The divine and the human natures are hypostatically united in the one person of the eternal Logos. Mary can, therefore, be called Theotokos (Mother of God). The famous and illuminative phrase, “One Incarnate nature of God the Word”, of the great Father of the Church, Cyril of Alexandria, will always remain the standard of the Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic faith for the whole Church. Our salvation began at the Annunciation. Indeed, the whole Christ-event is salvific: From His conception in the womb of His holy Mother to His Ascension, to be seated at His heavenly Father's right hand. We are saved by the flesh, the Body of Christ: “A body you have prepared for me.”

**Conclusion:** Now—at Christmas, as always, Christ is present. But at Christmas, celebrating His birth, amid all the family joy and gift-giving, troubled also by the sorrows of our day, as Mary and Joseph undoubtedly were, we have a date for what ultimately transcends all dates, God's Word among us to draws us through his Spirit to Himself. The antiphon for the Magnificat in the Evening Prayer on Christmas Day reads, “Today Christ is born!” Today—forever!

Clearly, the life and humanity of Jesus cannot be complete at birth. There were years of unseen labour, presumably learning carpentry from Joseph. After the baptism by John, the opening of His public life and ministry, there was His testing in the wilderness, both crucial experiences for the course of His life. He had yet to experience the effect of His preaching, His healing of the sick, his companionship with outcasts, his

mastery of the natural world, not to mention the growing antagonism of leaders, both, religious and civil. And, obviously, His Passion, Death and Resurrection!

Deservedly, the Feast of the Annunciation is a Feast of profound revelation, about God's choice to become human out of love for us. But, it is also a Feast to recall the rightful response to that self-giving, with a self-giving of each of us, after the example of Mary. Luke would like us to think about the gift of self which is at the heart of this Feast.

Now, this gold nugget! The Feast of the Annunciation is truly a day of celebration. By taking on our human nature, Christ has redeemed humanity, transforming it back to what it was meant to be, namely, the image of God. The mediocrity of our lives has also been transformed allowing us to love and find God in everyday living.

And, this final flourish! St. Bernard speaks with urgency: “Arise, hasten, open! Arise in faith and hasten in devotion, open in praise and thanksgiving.” That same encouragement is given to each of us as well – to be true sons and daughters of the woman who enabled God to become man. She said, “Let it be done to me according to thy word!” If we take this quintessential doctrine of our holy Faith – as we must – and live its implications to the full, we can do no less than echo our Mother's response of loving cooperation. And, the mystery of the Incarnation is repeated all over again in our lives and our world.

The clincher! The deepest blessing of Christmas is not that, Jesus was born as an Infant Child of Mary, but, rather, that He was born to become fully human, and with the promise that, we too might be so.

This masterstroke! When we celebrate the birth of Jesus again this Christmas, the appearance of God and humanity united in one small Infant, we commemorate, as well, our birth for heaven—and call the whole universe to the “Original Blessing”, “Pristine Glory”, and, the children of God in it, for ages to come.

# Christmas

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Christmas is a season not only of rejoicing but of reflection- Winston Churchill. For it is in giving that we receive- St. Francis of Assisi.

- Christine D'Sylva

The word Christmas is perhaps one of the most popular words in the English language. Christmas is like a good fairy who with a wave of her wand over the world transforms it into a softer, happier and more inviting place.

Christmas evokes images of joy, celebrations and carol singing.

Christmas, as we all know, is the celebration of the birth of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. It is celebrated on the 25th of December and the Christmas season ends on January 6th, which is the Twelfth day of Christmas.

Many years before the birth of Jesus Christ, the prophets had told a promise to the Jewish people that God would send them a Messiah. The Mother of Jesus was a young woman named Mary, who was chosen by God to be the Mother of Jesus. An angel appeared to her and told her that the Holy Spirit would come over her and she would give birth to a son. She was unmarried, yet bravely accepted it as God's will. Her faith and humility is astonishing in a conservative era where there would be stigma attached to a pregnant unmarried woman.

Her betrothed Joseph is naturally upset, but in a dream an angel comforts him and tells him not to worry for the child is a gift from God.

Joseph a good, just, and holy man married Mary without questioning her. His whole-hearted acceptance of her is commendable and speaks of his kindness and faith in God and shows us he was a true gentleman, not ready to forsake his betrothed wife despite her pregnancy. Together they travelled to Bethlehem which was their hometown because of a Decree by the Romans that they had to go to their hometown and put their names on the taxation lists.

There was nowhere to stay but a stable where animals lived. It was in this humble abode that

Mary gave birth to baby Jesus. How brave she was for there were no mid- wives or doctors to assist her and yet, her courage and faith in God remained firm. Any mother who has given birth knows how frightening it can be if there is no medical aid at childbirth. Yet, God helped her and the birth in all profanity was not a difficult one.

The baby Jesus was visited by shepherds guided by an angel, and the three Kings from the Orient guided by a star in the sky. This great King had only a manger as His abode and a straw bed to lay His little head.

The Shepherds paid homage to Jesus and the three Kings gave Him gifts of gold, incense, and myrrh.

Thus, on that cold, lonely night Jesus Christ was born and this poignant Nativity scene is celebrated by Christians all over the world by putting up cribs in their homes. Churches too display cribs with the Nativity scene and contests are often held for the best crib made.

The traditions of gifts, Christmas trees, decorations, cribs and sweets still linger on and it is true that Christmas has become a very commercialised Feast.

Yet, the true meaning of Christmas is not lost.

The true significance of Christmas is to think of others and bring happiness to others. This means forsaking selfishness and loving our neighbour as ourselves which is Christ's second greatest commandment. The first is to love God with all your heart and soul. But we can only love God and show our love for Him when we love our neighbour and perform acts of kindness. Thus, the two greatest commandments of Jesus are interrelated. One depends on the other.

Here is a touching true story that took place many years ago on Christmas Eve. A young

# A New Beginning in the New Year

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-P. A. D'Mello

We will be soon approaching the Holy Season of Christmas. Shortly after Christmas follows the dawn of another New Year. This is a moment of transition. We will be observing the passing of the old Year and ushering in the New Year. As human beings we had a past, we will have a future and we are living in the present. The years indeed have rolled by. We welcome a New Year and very soon the New Year becomes old. The moment of transition should be a moment of salvation, moment of God experience.

The word of God tells us in the Book of Revelation: "Then I saw a new heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, and I heard a great voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And He who sat upon the throne said: "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21, 1-5). Indeed this is a moment when God makes all things new. We need to wait for the intervention of God in our lives.

Unfortunately, there is tendency in most of us to cling on to the past. Even when God is making the past go away, we do not want to let it go. We want to live in the past and therefore, we miss the new reality that God is bringing into our lives.

Thus there are many people who look to the past with regret and grief. In this moment of change over, we should know how God looks at our past. "For I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sins no

more." (Jer.31-34)

Then there is another feeling of anger. There are people who are very bitter when they look to the past. This is more due to their being hurt, insulted and humiliated. We blame a lot of people for many things that we regret today. The more we blame the, more angry we become.

We need to look to the past and deliberately forget because that is what God wants us to do. As Isaiah says: "Remember not the former things nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth I tell you of them" (Isa.42:9). This is the salvific activity of God.

Our God is not a God of the past. He is a God of the future, a God who is always doing new things in our lives. Therefore, we need to let go of the past and look forward to the future.

On Jan 1, 2020 Pope Francis will mark the Annual World Day of Peace with a message titled "Good Politics is at the service of Peace." Pope Francis compels everyone to be engaged in the work of advocating for and with those whose voices are marginalized, to ensure the protection and fulfillment of the youngest and smallest."

Peace is like the hope which the poet Charles Peguy celebrated. It is like a delicate flower struggling to blossom on the stony ground of violence. We know that the thirst for power at any price leads to abuse and injustice. Politics is an essential means of building human community and institutions, but when political life is not seen as a form of service to society as a whole, it can become a means of oppression, marginalization and even destruction.

The challenge given to us by the Lord Himself: overcome evil with good. Let us

think of every person who has hurt us, humiliated us, and insulted us, betrayed us, and run away from us. In this regard we can remember what Jesus did. He got up from his seat of authority and removed his mantle, the mantle of a teacher. He put on the dress of a humble servant and knelt at the feet of Judas, who betrayed Him. He knelt at the feet of every disciple, who ran away from Him and washed their feet.

That is the law of Jesus: "I have given you an

example, that you also do as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him." (Jn. 13:15-16)

Let us therefore, come down from the throne of pride and arrogance, love is stronger than hatred, light is stronger than darkness. That is the style of living the New Year should bring before us. Thus there will be peace in our hearts, in our families and all over the world.

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### ***Christams -Contd. from 6***

couple was driving in Arizona and their car suddenly stopped. The man got up and tried to fix the car.

The lady was bored and she began to walk around to kill time. She wandered into the desert and there she came upon a big hatbox. It looked incongruous lying there in the desert.

Curiosity filled her and she opened it. To her surprise she discovered a baby lying there, obviously deserted.

The couple, whose car by now was fixed, took the baby to the adoption centre. A few months later, a couple adopted the baby girl. She was brought up by caring new parents and grew up to be leading a good and successful life.

The story is heartwarming because it serves to remind us that even if our loved ones or the world forsakes us, God never does. He remembers us and if we keep our faith in Him, He will always help us in all our problems and difficulties. It is said that there is no problem too big for God to solve but our faith is important.

One of the most popular practices of celebrating Christmas is placing an evergreen tree in one's home and decorating it with various

Christmas symbols like hollies, gifts, stars, angels etc. An angel is generally placed on top of the tree. Evergreen trees are used to convey that everlasting life is with God and it is a reminder of eternal life. Spruce, pine to fir trees is generally used but in homes artificial evergreen trees are displayed generally.

Holly and Ivy are decorated in homes and their significance is that Holly is associated with males and is supposed to bring good luck to men while Ivy is its female counterpart.

Christmas is a time of socialisation and gifts and sweets are exchanged. Parties, dances too are popular. The Church does not condemn commercialisation of this beautiful Feast but stresses that while we should enjoy Christmas in a commercial manner if we desire but we must never forget to keep the true spirit of love and joy in our hearts.

Charles Dickens said, "I will honour Christmas in my heart and keep it all the year." This should be our motto this Christmas for Christmas is everlasting and love and peace should be the true spirit that we carry in our hearts for the New Year.

Merry Christmas everyone!



## AGNELITES IN HYDERABAD .....THE CITY OF PEARLS

Our much awaited trip commenced on 4th November 2019 with our journey on board the Konark Express. The destination was Hyderabad, a place waiting to be explored, discovered and enjoyed.

We reached Secunderabad on 5th November at 8:00 am. and checked into Hotel Ashoka Best Western in Hyderabad. After a scrumptious breakfast and some rest followed by lunch, we headed to the Birla Temple and, thereafter to Lumbini Park where we went on a boat cruise on the nearby Hussein Sagar lake to enjoy the marvel of the Buddha Statue built in the middle of the lake.

Day 2 began with a visit to the Nehru Zoological Park, where we witnessed biodiversity at its best with a wide range of birds, reptiles and mammals. In the evening, we visited the Golconda Fort where we watched a mesmerising light and sound show, that told us the story of the Qutub Shahi dynasty during which, the Fort was built. The Fort is known for its magical acoustics and marvellous architecture.

Our most awaited day was the third day, when we went to Snow World. Students had a gala time playing in the artificial snow, while

temperatures soared outside. Later we visited Sudha Car Museum which humbly showcased a unique collection of customised and vintage cars. We also visited the grand Salarjung Museum and caught a glimpse of the magnificent collection of artifacts housed there.

That night students grooved to the latest catchy tunes in the jam session.

The last day was marked by a full day tour of Ramoji Film city. It has been certified as the largest studio complex in the world by the Guinness Book of World Records. It has theme parks and amusement rides along with 47 sound stages and a variety of permanent sets ranging from railway stations to temples.

We also witnessed the cultural show where dancers performed, the colourful carnival and also a comic stunt show- The students and teachers watched and participated in a movie making show. Enriched with the visual treat at Ramoji Film Studio, we started our return journey by Durgam Cheruvu Express at 11:00pm.

Every trip has to end, ours ended too, with all of us reaching safely back home.

### **Fr. Agnel Ashram - Bandra** **MASSES and NOVENAS ON SUNDAYS**

MORNING			
TIME	MASS	TIME	NOVENA
07:00 a.m.	English	07:45 a.m.	English
08:00 a.m.	Konkani	08:45 a.m.	Konkani
09:30 a.m.	English	10:15 a.m.	English
TIME	NOVENA	TIME	MASS
10.30 a.m.	Tamil	11.00 a.m.	Tamil
EVENING			
TIME	NOVENA	TIME	MASS
03.00 p.m.	Gujarati & Marathi	03.30 p.m.	Marathi
06:15 p.m.	English	06:30 p.m.	English
07:15 p.m.	English	07:30 p.m.	English

#### **Weekdays Mass in English at 6.00 p.m.**

Novena Prayers and Kissing of Relic are held on every Saturday after 6.00 p.m.

Mass Favours obtained, petitions and offerings may kindly be sent to :

Rev. Fr. Superior

Fr. Agnel Ashram

P.O. Box – 6656, Bandstand,  
Bandra (W), Mumbai – 400 050.

Tel : 67114000.

Fax : 67114100.

Email : [agnelashramnews@gmail.com](mailto:agnelashramnews@gmail.com)

Web : <http://ash.fragnel.edu.in>

# Fr. Agnelo's 92nd



*The Entrance Procession - Bishop Salvatore Lobo along with the Clergy*



*Bishop Salvatore Lobo along with Fr. Peter D'Souza, Fr. Almeida and other members of the Clergy.*



*A Prayer Dance performed by Fr. Agnelo School, Ambernath.*



*Koli Dance by Fr. Agnel School, Ambernath*



*Bishop Salvador Lobo celebrating the Eucharist*



# Death Anniversary



*Fr. Peter DSouza (Superior) and Fr. Trevor Pereira welcomes Bishop Salvadore Lobo with a bouquet of Flowers.*



*Bishop Salvadore Lobo being presented a Shawl by Fr. S. Almeida*



*Punjabi Dance performed by Fr. Agnelo School, Ambernath.*



*The Faithful pray at the Relic of Ven. Fr. Agnelo*



*Devotees of Fr. Agnelo.*

# AGNEL “GOONJ” MAKES WAVES

Here's the right place, where innovation meets talent. The beginning of November was a buzzing week for Agnel's youth. An exciting festival, “GOONJ”, was organized for the students of Std. XI and XII. The purpose behind such a festival was to bring out the unnoticed talents that the students possess. The Event was planned and executed over 3 days.

The students were divided into four groups, each with 2-3 teachers as Team Leaders. With an enthusiastic start, the teams were given



tasks of “Slogan and Flag making”. Also, the general knowledge and presence of mind of all teams were assessed through various extempore activities.

Agnel “GOONJ” opened with the “Mini Marathon” on the next day followed by an athletic meet and football matches. It was indeed a day of challenges. A spirit of sportsmanship could be seen coupled with optimism. It was a healthy and fair competition. On the same day, “Tele Games” were conducted in the evening. The air resounded with enthusiastic cheering and clapping. Each team worked with unity as each member in the team was engaged in planning

strategies to win.

Day 2 was celebrated as Traditional Day. The teams were dressed in the traditional attire of the state allotted to them. Teams of West Bengal, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Kerala welcomed the Judges with their speeches in various languages. The rest of the day was full of Art activities. The skills of rangoli making, mehendi, tattoo making, lamp decoration, fort building etc. were showcased. A traditional lunch comprising of the cuisine of the four states was prepared and served to the Judges and the Teachers by the students.

Day 3 began with a Zumba warm up followed by a precision walk display by each team on the field. The “Rang Manch” show brought out glimpses of the circus, the jungle, the railway station and airport.

The evening was a treat with solo singing, group singing, fashion shows, group dances and street plays. DJ's of various teams rocked the evening as everyone took to the dance floor. The students and their team leaders waited with bated breath as the scores were added up. With thunderous applause, Team “Green Knights” was declared fourth, Team “Yellow Galaxy” took the third position, Team “Red Titans” came in a close second while the first position was bagged by team “Cool Blue Sapphire”.

The youth festival, “GOONJ”, helped to break the monotonous routine and gave the students and Teachers of the Junior College a chance to showcase their hidden talents. The Event was thus, a great success.





# Stepping into eternity is a possibility

---

*-Shriniv Narayan, Speaking Tree*

Why would stepping into eternity be any more difficult than stepping on to the moon? From earth, man has sent a satellite into the orbit of Mars, several million miles away. Humanity is making tremendous advances in science and technology, especially in new age areas like artificial intelligence, robotics, reality augmentation and cutting-edge healthcare.

Despite these external achievements, as humans, we are still relatively primitive, inwardly. There isn't substantial progress that can compare with advancements in other fields. Evolution from primates to human beings seems to have happened more in biological terms and not so much in the inner sphere.

Human beings may have raced ahead of plants and other animals in physical survival. Earth and environment are being exploited by human beings for their selfish ends. But within himself, a human being is waging a war – against desire, avarice, violence, greed and envy, to name a few. This inner battle also manifests as an outward battle for power, one-upmanship, supremacy over his fellow humans and other beings, which then becomes the cause for intense violence and competition. Naturally, that takes a toll on peace, calm and happiness, both for the individual and humankind as a whole.

What do we want in our lives – happiness, contentment and inner peace? It is indeed possible to have them, not just for one person or one country, but for the whole world. But how can we get it when we are always torn apart between desire and control, selfishness and sacrifice, joy and sorrow, war and peace?

To go very far, one must begin very near, although it should not be mistaken that psychological

evolution is a function of time. By very near, one refers to the relationship that one has with one's own parents, siblings, grandparents, cousins, neighbours and friends, and with that stranger on the street passing by. How does a person observe the street dog, the green tree with its beautiful branches and its dancing leaves, the vegetable seller pushing his cart and calling out to prospective buyers, the housemaid lost in her daily chore of housekeeping, the beggar, the rich man in his limousine, the blue sky, the sunset, and the twinkling stars?

The very observation of all these without the yearning to change or control them is itself the seed of man's inner transformation. Eternity and paradise are not billions of miles away, at the edge of the universe. They are right here, at kissing distance, or even closer, within us.

You may visit places of worship, go on pilgrimages and do charity, but you can't hide your frailties and fallibilities in these acts and call yourself a 'good, kind-hearted soul'.

Before even asking how to step into eternity or knowing how to get there, is it not important that we keep emptying all the unwanted content of consciousness? This then translates into right behaviour, right action and right relationships both with other human beings and the earth. You may call this the preliminary state of preparedness.

Once we get to this point, then, the door to eternity may not be too far away and you may even know how to walk to it. Otherwise, we can let our imagination run wild about our notions of Eternity and the Ultimate, and they will only be phantasmagoric, not real and substantial.

*Courtesy - TOI*

# Your Full Expression Should be in Reaching Out to Others

Eternity is called whole, not because it has parts, but because it is lacking in nothing.

- Thomas Aquinas

We all learn in geometry that the circle is a perfect form, but there is no such thing as a perfect circle. Straight lines are not perfectly straight; a flat floor can never be perfectly flat. Perfection is an idea that can never be realized.

The idea of eternity is beautiful, like the idea of perfection. It expresses the striving of the human spirit for perfect unity; the fulfillment, the perfect satisfaction, of all desire, perfect wholeness, "lacking in nothing".

Of course, eternity is an impossible standard

to attain. Civilizations are not eternal, nor are laws, nor works of art. We make ourselves miserable if we try to measure our achievements against such a standard. We invent techniques and gadgets to help us overcome our human weakness and awkwardness. And we cooperate with others, both weaker and stronger than ourselves, to multiply our efforts many fold. How much kinder it would be to love the idea, as an expression of longing, and to love ourselves because we do the best we can. It's because we lack many things that human beings are so creative and ingenious.

*If you're not reaching back to help anyone then you're not building a legacy.*

- Germany Kent

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## The First Christmas

*by Michael R. Burch*

'Twas in a land so long ago . . .  
the lambs lay blanketed in snow  
and little children everywhere  
sat and watched warm embers glow  
and dreamed (of what, we do not know).

And THEN—a star appeared on high,  
The brightest man had ever seen!  
It made the children whisper low  
in puzzled awe (what did it mean?).  
It made the woolly lambkins cry.

For far away a new-born lay,  
warm-blanketed in straw and hay,  
a lowly manger for his crib.  
The cattle moored, distraught and low,  
to see the child. They did not know  
it now was Christmas day!



# Freezing The Moment is Not The Answer

- Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev

Nowadays, people who come to me do not merely ask for blessings. They ask for a selfie! They want to ‘freeze’ the moment, ‘capture’ the guru, as it were.

Whether it is a person, object or knowledge, the rudimentary human mind always wants to ‘possess’ it. The problem with this approach is that you end up with titbits of life, but believe you’ve mastered all of it. You cannot capture a damn thing in this universe. If you are willing, however, you can experience this universe in an unimaginably profound and powerful way.

At a recent event, I was asked why so many mystics down the ages turned to poetry. I said, “To confuse you.” And it is true! There is nothing logical about human existence. For the mystic, poetry is not a teaching in verse; it is simply an outpouring of an illogical but incredibly beautiful inner condition.

Regrettably, the human impulse to capture or freeze life masquerades as knowledge. In religion, mystical outpouring is ‘frozen’ into scripture. In education, poetry is ‘frozen’ into textbooks. In politics, a perspective is ‘frozen’ into ideology. People are always seeking conclusions. A conclusion is a useful peg to hang a coat on.

But you don’t spend your life hanging on to a peg, unless you want to be nailed!

When I was eight years old, I already had a billion questions. I could never find anyone who answered a single question without quoting somebody else. I knew that the authority they invoked invariably quoted some other authority. When that authority was from another time zone, it was sanctified as ancient scriptural authority! This made no sense to me. So, I brooded endlessly, and wrote poems that always ended with questions. I could never accept authority as

truth. Truth was for me the only authority.

My irreverence should have made me the unlikeliest candidate for spirituality. This is why I tell people: outsourcing your responsibility to an external authority will not make you more spiritual; it will only make you submissive. The spiritual process is about dropping all assumptions. It is an unbridled seeking – a seeking unchained by tradition, caste, creed, religion, parentage, genetics. If you are a true seeker, you are not seeking heaven, or even God. If the Devil rules the world, you want to find out and meet him! The spiritual journey is about seeking truth, nothing else.

When at the age of twenty-five, I exploded into a state of boundless ignorance on Chamundi Hill, it is not that all my questions vanished. I simply realised the folly of trying to capture truth in installments. I saw that even if you read all the libraries on this planet, your knowledge would be minuscule compared to this utterly incredible cosmos. Enlightenment does not mean you ‘know’ everything in the universe. It means that your faculty of perception is now so uncluttered that you see everything just as it is. Enlightenment is absolute clarity.

There is a saying in Tamil that the beauty of poetry lies in its deceptions. What it means is that human existence is absolutely unreasonable, and still beautiful. That is essentially the perception of the mystic. I can see a sunset, dissect it and enjoy it at the same time. Creation is beautiful not because the imagination makes it so; not because you possess, freeze, whitewash or decorate it. Creation is beautiful because you have the eyes to see it just as it is. And that is why the mystic turns to verse: not to capture existence, but to embrace it.

*Courtesy - Times of India*



## There is no Joy Greater than the Joy of **GIVING**

**Augustine Abraham, Bangalore**

Please accept my humble donation of Rs.2000 for the orphan children. Please pray for me and my family's good health. Thank you.

**Hugh & Colleen Gantzer, Mussoorie**

Enclosed is a cheque of Rs.5000 towards your charitable activities. Please remember us in your daily prayers.

**Sunitaben M. Macwan, Gujarat**

Kindly accept our contribution of Rs.2000 for the benefit of the destitute children in

your Balbhuvan. Please pray for us. Thank you.

**Sosamma Saji, Al-Ain**

I am enclosing a Draft of Rs.80,000 as my humble gift for the orphan children under your care. Kindly pray for my intentions and for the good health of our family.

**Joseph M. Arakkathazh, U.S.A.**

I enclose a cheque of \$100 for the maintenance and education of the poor children in your Balbhuvan. Kindly request the children to pray for us. Thanking you.

## Mini Sponsorship Scheme

*Our Orphan Children  
need your Helping Hand*

The scheme offers the Benefactors of Fr. Agnel Ashram an opportunity to share in our noble work of bringing up 800 underprivileged children in our Balbhavans at: Bandra in Mumbai, Vashi in Navi Mumbai, Pune, Goa and Greater Noida.

- You can become a Co-Sponsor of an underprivileged child by paying ₹.1,200 or more per year. You can pay the amount in monthly installments of ₹.100 or more.
- We also have a Full Sponsorship Scheme for members paying ₹.9,000 or more per year. The amount also can be paid in monthly installments of ₹.750.

Please contact :

Rev. Fr. Superior,  
Fr. Agnel Ashram, Bandstand,  
Bandra (W),  
Mumbai – 400 050.  
Tel.: 022-67114000.





# FR. AGNEL'S BLESSINGS

## SECURED VISA TO USA

**KOTTAYAM-KERALA:** My son who is M.Sc. graduate in Nursing, was trying to migrate to the US. He passed all the relevant tests and interviews conducted by the US Govt. including R.N. Exam with high marks. But bad luck, he failed in the Medical Test as there was a trace of Hepatitis B in his blood report. We were very upset and disappointed. I sought the intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnel and tearfully prayed to him. We are now extremely happy to inform you that through the blessing of Ven. Fr. Agnel, my son passed the tough medical test in the second round and is blessed with a suitable job in a reputed Govt. Hospital in USA. As a token of our profound gratitude, an offering of Rs.5000/- to the Ashram.

*-Solly George*

## HEALING FROM BLOOD CANCER

**AQUEM ALTO-GOA:** I was suffering from blood cancer for about six months. Although I was under medication by a specialist, it did not bring much relief to me and my health was getting deteriorated day by day. In distress, my husband and I visited the Ashram and fervently prayed to Ven. Fr. Agnel for his healing touch over me. I have now great pleasure to testify that within a short period, I was completely cured of blood cancer. Today, we have come again to give our thanks offering of Rs.2000/- to the Ashram.

*-Aquem Alto*

## BLESSED WITH GOOD JOB

**DUBAI :** I am an Ex-student of Ven. Fr. Agnel ITI, Bandra, in Automobile Trade. During the recess, I would often visit the Samadhi and pray for my better prospects. I am now very happy to inform you that through the blessing of Ven. Fr. Agnel I secured a lucrative job in a world renowned automobile company (TOYOTA) with handsome salary and perks. As a token of my profound gratitude an offering

of 100 US dollars (\$.100/-) to the Ashram.

*-Rajendrakumar*

## GIFT OF TWINS

**DHARAVI-MUMBAI:** My daughter was issueless even after 6 years of her marriage. Treatment by specialist doctors did not bring any hope. Finally, as a last resort, we came to the Ashram and fervently prayed to Ven. Fr. Agnel. We are now extremely happy to inform you that through the blessing of Ven. Fr. Agnel my daughter has been blessed with twins : a daughter and a son. Both mother and her kids are keeping fine. With a grateful heart an offering of Rs.5000/- to the Ashram.

*-Kiran Sreedhar*

## SECURED GREEN CARD FOR USA

**MUMBAI:** We were facing some legal hassles to get the Green Card. Although we had tried our level best, all our efforts were in vain. In this plight, we sought the powerful intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnel and fervently prayed to him. We are now very happy to inform you that by the blessing of Ven. Fr. Agnel, soon we received the Green Card. With a grateful heart, an offering of Rs.2000/- to the Ashram.

*-Joyce Anne James*

## SUCCESSFUL HEART SURGERY

**AIROLI-NAVI MUMBAI:** I am 85 years old and had to undergo a major heart surgery for removal of 6 blocks. Since I am in an advanced age, the doctors expressed doubt over the success of the operation and advised me to manage with medicines. But my health was getting worse, being an ardent devotee of Ven. Fr. Agnel, I entrusted myself to his protection and courageously gave my consent for the surgery. I have now great pleasure to testify that through the blessing of Ven. Fr. Agnel, the operation was successful and I am keeping fine. Today, I have come to give my thanks offering of Rs.1,500 to the Ashram.

*-Jose Varghes*

## Out of Their Bounty

P. Srivastava	Mumbai	50000	Nikunj & Harnisha	Daman	1000	M.P. Pegado	Vasai	500
M.M. Nair	Mumbai	27000	Vimal Fernandes	Mumbai	1000	R.J. jeyaraj	Mumbai	500
Prasad Sudhakar	Vashi	9000	R.A. Gandhi	Mumbai	1000	Y.U. Vaz	Mumbai	500
Paul Sequeira	Mumbai	9000	K.M.Manek	Mumbai	1000	S.J. Martin	Gujarat	500
Jose K. C.	Kerala	9000	Clara Almeida	Mumbai	1000	A.P. Patwardhan	Pune	500
Mary J. Fernandes	Mumbai	6200	Sanjay Narvekar	Virar	1000	A. Honavar	Mumbai	500
Leena Bijoy	Mumbai	6000	Sahana Narvekar	Virar	1000	Jatin Desai	Valsad	500
P. Fernandes	Mumbai	6000	Tony Dias	Mumbai	1000	Ashok Patel	Mumbai	500
Subramaniam R.	Mumbai	5000	M.G. Fernandes	Mumbai	1000	M. Lewis	Mumbai	500
D.J. Fernandes	Mira Road	5000	G. Sartape	Mumbai	1000	Lily Crasto	Mumbai	500
S.D. Thengil	Mumbai	5000	Mehroo & Pawri	Mumbai	1000	John Fernandes	Mumbai	500
T.M. David	Mumbai	5000	A.. Tauro	Dahisar	1000	Tanvi Desai	Mumbai	500
Siju D. Thengil	Mumbai	5000	Francis D'Souza	Mumbai	1000	L. Joseph	Kalamboli	500
Manoj P. Porathur	Rajkot	3100	A.S. D'Cunha	Vasai	1000	Jose & Amy	Bhayandar	500
Samil Mehta	Mumbai	3000	B.B. Falcao	Vasai	1000	L. Sabbadu	S. Africa	500
S.G. Popat	Mumbai	2500	C.D. Joachim	Ahmedabad	1000	L. Alex	Thane	500
Dishaa S. Badaai	Oman	2000	A.G. Kelawalla	Mumbai	1000	A.T. Nadar	Mumbai	500
C. T. Varghese	Mumbai	2000	M.K.K.	Mumbai	1000	I.X. Coutinho	Vasai	500
Nita Nair	U.S.A.	2000	Kalpana Sonawane	Kalyan	1000	K.M. A. Vincent	Mumbai	500
Nita Abhilash Nair	U.S.A.	2000	Gavin P.Fonseca	Mumbai	750	D.F. Motafaram	Mumbai	500
Esha Mira Nair	U.S.A.	2000	H. Dubash	Mumbai	700	Josephine Jaswal	Ahmedabad	500
Maria D'Souza	Dubai	2000	Agee Kini	Mumbai	700	Sharon S. Balid	Ambivli	500
F.I. Jivan	Diu	2000	B. Dubash	Mumbai	650	F. Cardozo	Mumbai	500
B.R. Mandan	Daman	2000	A. Dubash	Mumbai	650	S. Parmar	Mumbai	500
V.R. Bariya	Daman	2000	Bharati S. Bidaai	Oman	521	Jijo J. Tholath	Mumbai	400
Parampita Boat	Uttan	2000	M.F. D'Souza	Mumbai	510	Ishwar A.	Mumbai	300
Justin Varghese	Bhayandar	2000	Subodh G.	Mumbai	501	Noreen Kanga	Mumbai	300
Nilesh J. Lopes	Vasai	2000	R.J. Wadekar	Mumbai	501	S.S. Gonsalves	Vasai	300
A.A.. Sequeira	Virar	2000	M.J. Lam	Nashik	501	V.L. Deore	Aurangabad	251
E. Fernandes	Mumbai	2000	Yaksh Popat	Mumbai	501	T. K. Chitalia	Mumbai	251
I. Fernando	Mumbai	2000	B. Vaja	Mumbai	501	K.V. Chitalia	Mumbai	251
A. Silvera	Mumbai	2000	Francis Londhe	Thane	500	Sonal & Samir	Ambarnath	250
A. Fernando	Mumbai	2000	S. Kurian	U.K.	500	Chris C. D'Souza	Nallasopara	200
Anna N. Fernando	Mumbai	2000	Wilson D'Souza	Mumbai	500	T.S. Kale	Uran	200
F. Gilder	Mumbai	2000	Marie D'Souza	Mumbai	500	J.V. Christian	Nadiad	200
Albert D'Souza	Mumbai	2000	J. Fernandes	Mumbai	500	Antonio Dias	Mumbai	200
M.S. Sequeira	Vasai	2000	Naina Desai	Mumbai	500	A.C. Makwana	Mumbai	200
Sanjay Narvekar	Virar	2000	Blossom Stephen	Nallasopara	500	M. Kuruvilla	Vasai	200
Saish S. Narvekar	Virar	2000	Rajesh D'Mello	Virar	500	S. Sanjay Narvekar	Mumbai	200
Millie Fernandes	Mumbai	2000	Umesh Angre	Navi Mumbai	500	M. Kadam	Kalyan	200
Albert Carvalho	Mumbai	2000	Laxmi	Virar	500	J. Bhujbal	Bhayander	150
H. Sontumyra	Mumbai	2000	A. R. Konge	Vasai	500	A.N. Kansara	Ahmedabad	125
George P. D'Mello	Virar	2000	S. P. Dhoke	Navi Mumbai	500	C.V. Raval	Ahmedabad	111
Vijay Singh	Mumbai	1500	J. P. Fulya	Vasai	500	R. Pandloskar	Mumbai	101
Savita D'Souza	Thane	1500	Isha Almeida	Vasai	500	P.N. Shridhankar	Mumbai	101
M.Patel	Mumbai	1200	Zinin & Vihan	Vasai	500	Agnes Kotta	Mumbai	101
C.C. Fernandes	Mumbai	1100	Shaina Gonsalves	Virar	500	R. Parikh	Mumbai	100
B. Modi	Bhayandar	1080	L.M. Pereira	Vasai	500	S.V. Shetty	Kalyan	100
Benaifer & Dominic	Mumbai	1001	M.C. Belosay	U.S.A.	500	P. C. Shah	Mumbai	100
A. Arora	Gujarat	1000	R.J. D'Sa	Vasai	500	T.S. Foss	Vasai	100
M. Tripathi	Mumbai	1000	Lavina S. Lobo	Virar	500	S.A. Sheth	Kalyan	100
Mira Esha Nair	U.S.A.	1000	C. Saldanha	Qatar	500	P.C. Collins	Mumbai	100
Sunita D'Silva	Mumbai	1000	N.F. Cerejo	Vasai	500	Neal Dias	Mumbai	100
Ayesha Pereira	Mumbai	1000	V.M. Solanki	Mumbai	500	J.K. Sagar	Nadiad	100
Walter Quadros	Mumbai	1000	Dhruva G.	Pune	500	Bharat M. Jai	Mumbai	99
M.A. Pereira	Mira Road	1000	P. Ravindra	Mumbai	500	R. Tyagi	Airoli	51
			J. Vincent	Mumbai	500			

## Hyderabad Trip, Fr. Agnels Ambernath

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Hyderabad Calling



Zooming in the Zoo



The Bahubalis at Filmcity



Seeking Blessings at Birla Temple

## Fr. Agnel College, Ambernath Youth Festival

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Precision on the Field



Going Caterpillar for the Cup.

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