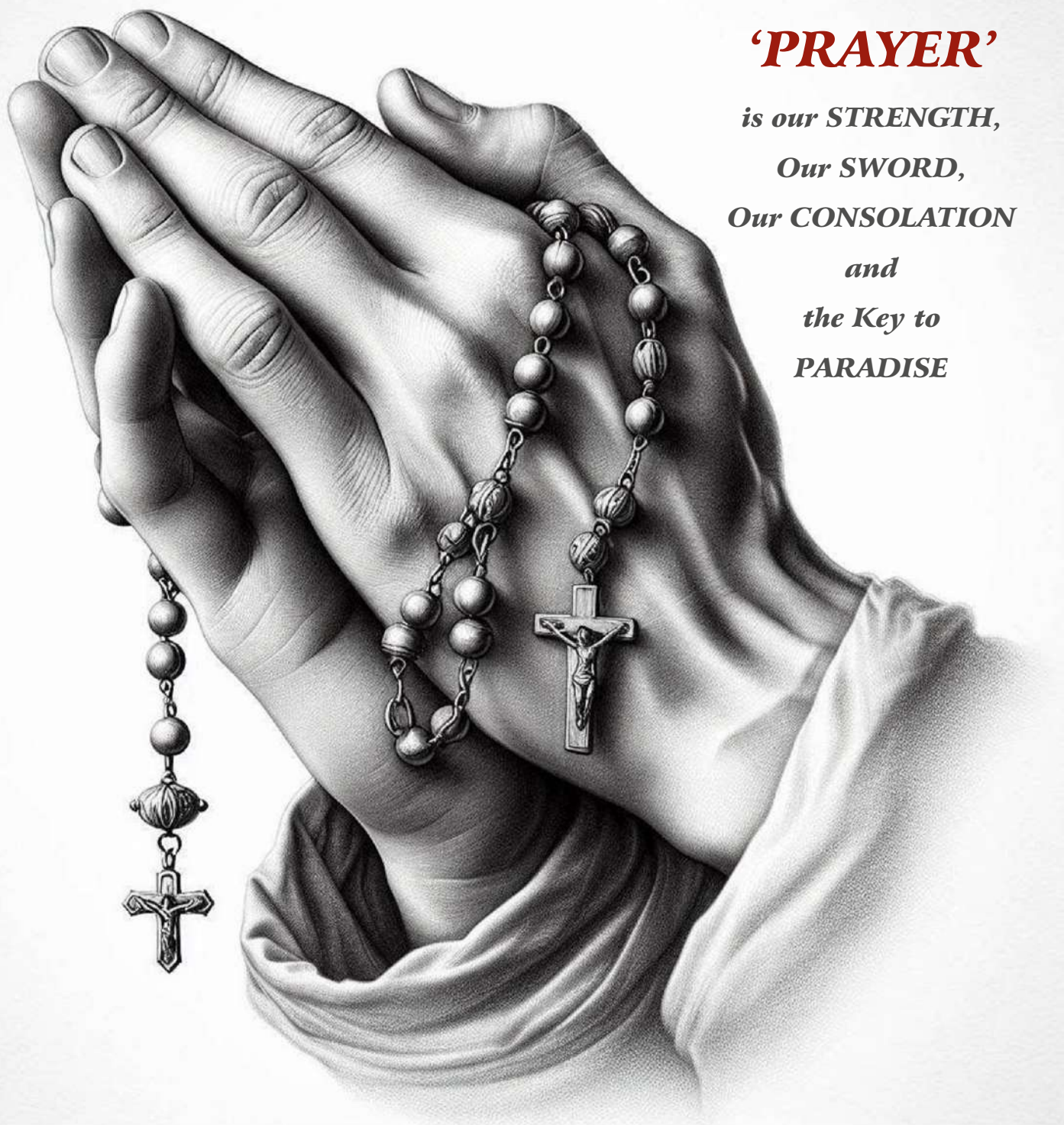


FR. AGNEL

ASHRAM NEWS

OCTOBER 2024



'PRAYER'

is our STRENGTH,

Our SWORD,

Our CONSOLATION

and

the Key to

PARADISE

PRAY THE ROSARY!

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[website : www.agnelashram.org](http://www.agnelashram.org)**VEN. FR. AGNELO'S 97TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY****Wednesday, 20th November 2024****PROGRAMME****SPECIAL NOVENA SERVICES | 11TH TO 19TH NOVEMBER 2024****Every day****Morning** : 7.00 a.m. & 9.30 a.m.: Holy Mass and Novena Prayer in English.**Evening** : 6.00 p.m. : Holy Mass and Novena Prayer in English.**N.B.**

On 17th November, all Masses and Novena Services will be held as on normal Sundays.

**20TH NOVEMBER (WEDNESDAY) : 97TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF VENERABLE FR. AGNELO****Morning** : Mass followed by Novena Prayers 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 Novena Prayers.**Most Rev. Thomas Macwan, Archbishop of Gandhinagar,
will be the main Celebrant on 20th November 2024.**

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

**Rev. Fr. Superior****FR. AGNEL ASHRAM**

P.B. No. 6656, Bandstand, Bandra (West), Mumbai – 400 050, Maharashtra, India.

Tel.: 022 - 67114000 | Mobile: 091 - 7738009137**Website : www.agnelashram.org****Bus No. 211 : Special Bus Service to Ply from Bandra Railway Station to Fr. Agnel Ashram Gate.**

MESSAGE FROM THE REGIONAL SUPERIOR



Happy Feast of Our Lady of Pilar, Patroness of the Society of the Missionaries of St. Francis Xavier, being celebrated on 12th October. Standing on the pillar so tall, Our Lady hears us in our troubles and guides us on our way.

Last month, on 26th September, we celebrated the Foundation Day of our Society. We marked the day with our Regional Assembly held at Fr. Agnel Ashram, Bandra, Mumbai. It was followed by the Annual General Meeting. It was a time for sharing, gaining valuable insights and learning from each other's experiences, in our way forward.

This month, we pay our humble tributes to the Father of the Nation. Gandhi Jayanti is also celebrated as the International Day of Non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi was inspired by the teachings of Lord Jesus Christ, especially the Sermon on the Mount. Numerous events and inter-faith meets mark the day in India.

On the International Day of Older Persons, let's commit to strengthen care and support systems that honour their dignity. Their wisdom and experience is a gift to all of us. May their days be filled with love, happiness and good health.

In this Month of the Rosary, let's take a leaf out of their book and recite our prayers and the Rosary in deep faith and in the knowledge that something good is going to happen. Praying the Rosary daily is indeed a good habit in life!

The theme of this year's International Day of the Girl is 'Girls' vision for the future.' Girls are not only courageous in the face of challenges but hopeful for the future. Every day, they take action to realise a vision of a world in which all girls are protected, respected and empowered.

In our educational institutions throughout the Agnel Region, in Bandra, Vashi, Ambernath, Pune, Delhi, Noida, Greater Noida, Vaishali, Assagao and Verna in Goa, girls are doing exceedingly well in academics, sports and cultural events. More power to them!

As we enter the festive season of Navratri, Dussehra and Durga Puja, may the joys and the spirit of sharing and caring continue the whole year through!

- Fr. Bento Rodrigues

PRAY THE ROSARY **BETTER!**

-Fr. Fio Mascarenhas, SJ

The Rosary needs no introduction. Every Catholic from childhood onwards (and presumably till today!) has been praying daily for a few minutes with a rosary in his/her hand. But for the sake of improving our prayer life, let us re-examine its purpose. Is the Rosary mainly a prayer focused on Mary, or a prayer focused on her Son Jesus? Is it not meant to be primarily a “**contemplative**” prayer on the whole life of Jesus? So, should we not try to make the common practice of rushing mechanically through 50 or more Hail Marys, without application of mind to one of the Mysteries of the Life of **Jesus**, become more fruitful?

The early Christians did not know the Rosary (Nor is it mentioned in St. Ignatius’ famous *Spiritual Exercises*). It was only in the 15th century that Pope Sixtus V officially approved the practice of reciting the Rosary *as an aid for illiterate people*.

Greeting Mary so many times was compared to offering her a **crown of roses**, hence the name, “Rosary.” Then in 1571, Pope Pius V instituted the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary (7 October). And more than 400 years later, in 2002, Pope St. John Paul II added five new mysteries (the Luminous Mysteries) to the Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries, so as to complete the whole Life of Jesus Christ.

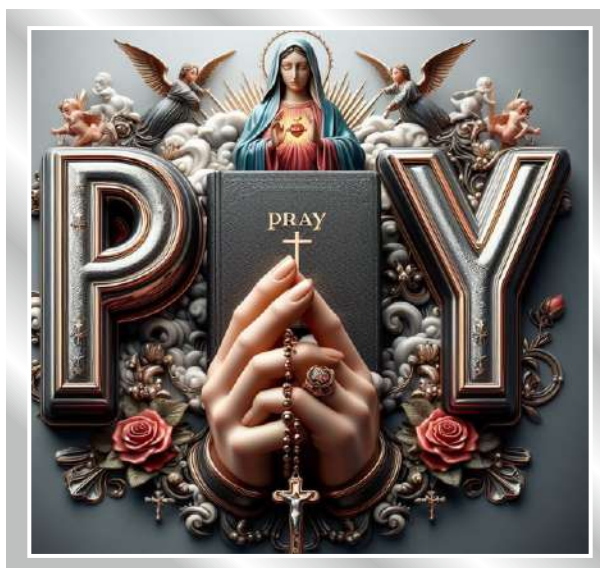
It is interesting that more recently, from the late 1960s, the Popes have been emphasizing that the Rosary must be **prayed as a “contemplative prayer.”** Pope St. Paul VI in *Marialis cultus* said

that he “**intended to encourage the restoration, in a dynamic and more informed manner, of the recitation of the Rosary, by emphasizing the importance of a further essential element, namely the element of contemplation. Without this, the Rosary is a BODY WITHOUT A SOUL, and its recitation is in danger of becoming a MECHANICAL REPETITION OF FORMULAS.**”

Pope St. John Paul II too described the Rosary as a prayer which concentrates “*all the depth of the Gospel message in its entirety.*” In proclaiming a Year of the Rosary (Oct 2002-03), he invited the faithful to “**CONTEMPLATE with Mary the face of Christ.**” And Pope Benedict XVI has declared: “The Holy Rosary is not a pious practice banished to

the past, like prayers of other times thought of with nostalgia. Instead, the Rosary **helps to put CHRIST AT THE CENTRE.**”

Our own Pope Francis in October 2018 declared: “I would like to emphasize the beauty of **this simple contemplative prayer**, accessible to all. In the Rosary we turn to the Virgin Mary so that she may guide us to an ever closer union with her Son Jesus, to bring us into conformity with him, to have his sentiments, and to behave like him. Indeed, in the Rosary, while we repeat the Hail Marys, **we meditate on the Mysteries of Christ’s life, so as to know and love Jesus ever better.**”



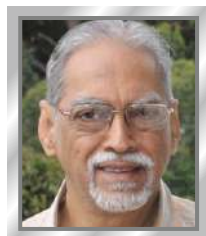
Pope Francis renewed the invitation “**to contemplate together the face of Christ, with the heart of Mary**” in 2020: “I invite everyone to rediscover, especially during this month of October, the beauty of the rosary and to carry it in your hands or in your pockets. The recitation of the rosary is the most beautiful prayer we can offer to the Virgin Mary; it is a **CONTEMPLATION, with Mother Mary, on the stages of the life of Jesus the Saviour**, and is a weapon that protects us from evils and temptations.”

Therefore, to pray the Rosary “fruitfully” (rather than only mechanically), we must re-learn to pray it, perhaps using the Ignatian prayer-method called **Application of the Senses**. “*To contemplate with Mary the face of Christ*” (Pope John Paul II), “*To contemplate with Mother Mary the stages of the life of Christ the Saviour*” (Pope Francis) while praying the Rosary must mean that we can no longer just rush through a Rosary and “have it done” in maybe 10 minutes! One suggestion is to take just *one or two* of the Mysteries and practise a determined application of mind on those one or two mysteries, instead of five... or twenty!

On the other hand, many people do use the Rosary (prayed quickly) as a **prayer of intercession** for some urgent need (and not as a **prayer of contemplation** on some aspect of the Life of Christ). Here too, perhaps we could shorten the 50 Hail Marys to just three, and pray them slowly, with deliberation, remembering Jesus' advice, “*And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then like this: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name...*” (Matt 6:7-9). This “Lord's Prayer” taught by Jesus himself is so succinct! Surely, the Hail Mary could also be prayed more meaningfully as a real gift of “roses” for our Mother?

Finally, have we realized that the first half of the Hail Mary is **fully biblical** (and only this first half existed and was originally prayed in the early centuries of Christianity)? It was meant **as an act of praise for what God had done for Mary**, with every phrase taken from the Annunciation and Visitation stories in the Gospels. On the other hand, the second half was composed as a petition for help, and it was added to the first half much later (in the Middle Ages), during the Black Plague when more than half the population of Europe was struck down by the disease.

To conclude, pray the Rosary, and pray it often! Most importantly, pray it well (with application of mind to the particular Mystery in the Life of Christ you want to focus on). Please don't just rattle off multiple Hail Marys with your mind wandering everywhere else except on Jesus and on what He has done for us, as Saviour, Brother, Friend, and Lord, and on the important role his Mother played in Jesus' life! Remember again the words of Pope St. Paul VI: “**Without this, the Rosary is a BODY WITHOUT A SOUL, and its recitation is in danger of becoming a mechanical repetition of formulas.**”



Dr. Fiorello Mascarenhas SJ DMin recently celebrated his Diamond Jubilee in the Society of Jesus, and writes and teaches biblical spirituality. His contact: frfiomas@gmail.com

REMEMBERING THE MAHATMA

- Jubel D'Cruz

On October 2, we celebrate the birth anniversary of two of our great leaders — Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri. We all know what Mahatma Gandhi has done for us, but many of us are not aware who Lal Bahadur Shastri was.

Also known as the 'Father of the nation', it was Mahatma Gandhi's charisma that united the nation against the British. His passion and vision kept the independence movement going until freedom was won. The most unique thing about his struggle was that it was completely non-violent. He took up the leadership of India's freedom struggle and launched many movements such as the Non-cooperation Movement, the Civil Disobedience Movement and the Quit India Movement. He promoted the philosophy of 'Satyagraha' and 'Ahimsa.' His consistent and untiring efforts finally achieved India's Independence on 15th August, 1947.

He was such a kind of person who loved non-violence and harmony. He wanted everyone to live happily in the nation in unity without any form of non-violence. He always wanted our nation to be democratic, free, and a secular nation. But it is sad to see that nowadays many cases of violence and crimes are happening everyday. We see people fighting in the name of religion.

Lal Bahadur Shastri was the second Prime Minister of India and the one who initiated the project to make India one of the largest producers of milk. He first dreamt of a new India. Gandhi had gifted us freedom, but Lal Bahadur Shastri gave the Mahatma's efforts a direction. He was a man of short stature, but of great courage and will power. He led his life with great simplicity, was very laborious and honest and was a great source of inspiration for all of us.

Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, popularly known as Gandhi Jayanti, is observed on October 2 every year to mark his birth anniversary. The day is also observed as the "International day of non-violence", encouraging non-violence and harmony among the citizens of India and the world. He was the architect of our freedom struggle and his teachings have more significance in today's world. "Work is worship" was his motto in life.

One more thing to mention is that Mahatma Gandhi always maintained his originality. As a barrister, he travelled to the United Kingdom and South Africa as often as he could. He would always wear his traditional Indian dress - the dhoti and would respect the culture of his country and its customs. He would do that even though foreign nationals did not understand, like or respect it.

'Mahatma', the title given to him means 'Great Soul'. This Gandhi Jayanti, let us remember the Mahatma, the man who found the soul of India and put it together with values of love and service.

Gandhi Jayanti is one of the three national holidays of India - the other two are Independence Day and Republic Day.

Lal Bahadur Shastri served the country as the second Prime Minister between June 1964 and January 1966 soon after Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's death. Due to his old age, he

could not continue for long. He died on January 11, 1966.

While Mahatma Gandhi was a practicing Hindu, Christianity intrigued him. In his reading of the four Gospels, he was impressed by Jesus Christ whom Christians worshipped and followed.

During his student days in London, he read the entire New Testament. The impact of the 'Sermon on the Mount' on his mind was to remain with him all his life. In volume 1 of his ten volume "The Story of Civilization", eminent historian Will Durant lauds Gandhi thus: "He did not mouth the name of Christ, but acted as if he accepted every word on the Sermon on the Mount."

Mahatma Gandhi is perhaps the best example of someone who was discerning enough to reject Christianity, not Christ. He was deeply hurt by his experiences with apartheid and Christians during his time in South Africa, and it obviously stymied his relationship with Christ.



Jubel D'Cruz is a freelance writer and the author of several books for children. He lives in Mumbai.

THE FEAST OF THE LITTLE FLOWER - THERESE OF CHILD JESUS

-Fr. Allam Sagar Manoj Kumar

Few Saints have aroused so much admiration and enthusiasm immediately after their death; few have acquired a more astonishing popularity everywhere on earth; few have been so rapidly raised to the altars as was this holy young Carmelite. Marie Françoise Therese Martin, known as the Little Flower of Jesus, was born January 2, 1873 at Alençon in Normandy, France, of very Christian parents. The Martins, who lost four of their little ones in early infancy or childhood, regarded their children as gifts from heaven and offered them to God before their birth.

Therese was the last flower of this blessed stem, which gave four Sisters to the Carmel of Lisieux, still another to the Visitation of Caen. The five sisters were left without their mother, a victim of cancer, when Therese was only four years old; but her two oldest sisters were of an age to take excellent care of the household and continue the Christian character formation of the younger ones, which their mother had initiated. Their saintly father was soon to see his little flock separated, however, when one after the other they left to enter religious life. He blessed each one and gave them all back to God, with humble gratitude to God for having chosen his daughters.

From childhood, Therese had manifested a tender piety which her naturally lively temperament could not alter. Her mother's death affected her profoundly, however, and at the age of nine she was visited with a severe trial in the form of an illness the doctors could not diagnose, and which seemed incurable. She was instantly restored to her ordinary good health by the Blessed Virgin Mary, in answer to her desolate sisters' prayers; Therese saw her statue become animated, to smile at her with an ineffable tenderness as she lays on her bed of suffering.

Before the age of fifteen Therese already desired to enter the Carmel of Lisieux, where her two eldest

sisters were already nuns; a trip to Rome and a petition at the knees of the Holy Father Leo XIII gave her the inalterable answer that her Superiors would regulate the matter. Many prayers finally obtained an affirmative reply to her ardent request, and four months after her fifteenth birthday she entered Carmel with an ineffable joy. She could say then, "I no longer have any desire but to love Jesus alone." She adopted flowers as the symbol of her love for her Divine Spouse and offered all her little daily sacrifices and works as rose petals at the feet of Jesus.

Divine Providence gave to the world the autobiography of this true Saint, whose little way of spiritual childhood was described in her own words in her Story of a Soul. She could not offer God the macerations of the great soldiers of God,

only her desires to love Him as they had loved Him, and to serve Him in every way possible, not only as a cloistered nun, but as a missionary, a hero of the faith, a martyr. Later she would be named patroness of missions. Her spirituality does not imply only sweetness and light. However this

loving child of God passed by a tunnel of desolate spiritual darkness, yet never ceased to smile at Him, wanting to serve Him, if it were possible, without His even knowing it.

When nine years had passed in the Carmel, the little flower was ready to be plucked for heaven; and in a slow agony of consumption, Therese made her final offering to God. She suffered so severely that she said she would never have believed it possible, and could only explain it by her desire to save souls for God. She died in 1897, was beatified in 1923 and canonized in 1925. And now, as she foretold, she is spending her heaven in doing good upon earth. Countless miracles have been attributed to her intercession.

On the other hand, Therese has much to teach our age of the image, the appearance, the "Self." We



have become a dangerously self-conscious people, painfully aware of the need to be fulfilled, yet knowing we are not. Therese, like so many saints, sought to serve others, to do something outside herself, to forget herself in quiet acts of love. She is one of the great examples of the gospel paradox that we gain our life by losing it, and that the seed that falls to the ground must die in order to live (John 12). Preoccupation with self separates modern men and women from God, from their fellow human beings and ultimately from themselves. We must relearn to forget ourselves, to contemplate a God who draws us out of ourselves and to serve others as the ultimate expression of selfhood. These are the insights of St. Therese of Lisieux, and they are more valid today than ever.

We can truly say that she was a valiant woman who did not whimper about her illnesses and anxieties. Here was a person who saw the power of love, that divine alchemy which can change

everything, including weakness and illness, into service and redemptive power for others. She always says, do ordinary things in an extraordinary way out of love of God with 100% dedication and child like trust, ever ready to undertake any type of sacrifice. Then, we can convert suffering into redemptive suffering and use it for our Apostolate and let us make a strong resolution and follow Therese of Child Jesus by becoming child like in our relationship with God and especially by doing His will with 100% sincerity and love.



Fr. Allam Sagar Manoj Kumar is from the Diocese of Guntur. He has authored two books on Important Feast Days in the Liturgical year and contributed Articles to various National and Local magazines. He is also available for talks and retreats: allamgnt2020@gmail.com



There is no Joy Greater than the Joy of GIVING

Jeeja Rose, Kerala

I have sent a small gift of Rs. 5000 for the Balbhavan boys on the occasion of my family member, Dr. Teresa's birthday. We pray that all of us be greatly blessed and our desires in life be fulfilled.

Kayomarz Homi Mistry, Mumbai

I have made an online donation via NEFT of Rs. 20,000 for the welfare of Balbhavan boys. They are not only doing well academically but shine in music, singing, painting, sports and other extra-curricular activities.

Severine Saldanha, Mangalore

I am donating an amount of Rs.10,000 as my contribution for the well-being of Balbhavan boys. They are being well cared for and receive the best education.

Luca Alban D'Silva, Udupi

I am sending a cheque of Rs.1000 as my contribution for a poor child under Fr. Agnel Ashram's care. Ven. Fr. Agnel was known for helping the marginalised and a bringing a ray of hope into their lives.

Rabia J. Khan, Mumbai

I have sent Rs.1250 through UPI, as my monthly contribution, towards the sponsorship of one child in Fr. Agnel Ashram.

Aruna R. Ghatge, Sangli

An amount of Rs. 5000 has been sent through UPI towards sponsoring snacks for the Balbhavan boys.

Lynes Rebello, Bhayandar

I have donated an amount of Rs.2000 as thanksgiving to Fr. Agnel for all favours received.

Hazel Perpetual D'Souza, Mumbai

I have sent Rs.5000 each through NEFT for the mini sponsorship of two Balbhavan boys.

Nishka Hiten Bajaj, Mumbai

I am happy to make a sponsorship of Rs.40,000 for one full day meal and full sponsorship for a child as a thanksgiving to Ven. Fr. Agnel and Fr. Agnel Ashram. The Ashram Fathers are continuing the rich legacy of service to the community.

AGING WITH DIGNITY

-Leon Bent

“On this International Day of Older Persons, 1st October, let's commit to strengthen care and support systems that, honour the dignity of older persons and caregivers,” says UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

2024 Theme: Aging with Dignity: The Importance of Strengthening Care and Support Systems for Older Persons Worldwide.

Population aging is a major global trend re-shaping society, worldwide. Life expectancy at birth now exceeds 75 years in half of the world's countries, 25 years longer than in 1950. By 2030, older persons are projected to outnumber youth globally, with this increase most rapid in developing countries. This demographic shift has significantly transformed the caregiving landscape, encompassing a wide range of needs for both paid and unpaid support in formal and informal settings. As populations age, the demand for comprehensive healthcare, care, and social support services has grown substantially, particularly for older persons with conditions such as dementia. In recognition of these challenges and opportunities, the 34th commemoration of the United Nations International Day of Older Persons will focus on this theme.

This year's event will bring together experts to discuss policies, legislation, and practices that strengthen care and support systems for older persons. It will highlight the urgent need to expand training and educational opportunities in geriatrics and gerontology, address the global shortage of care workers, and recognize the diverse contributions of caregivers. The commemoration will also emphasize the importance of protecting the human rights of both caregivers and care recipients, and for the right to make decisions about their care and quality of their lives.

On 14th December 1990, the United Nations General Assembly designated 1st October as the International Day of Older Persons (resolution 45/106). This was preceded by initiatives such as the Vienna International Plan of Action on Aging, which was adopted by the 1982 World Assembly on Aging and endorsed later that year by the UN General Assembly.

In 1991, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Principles for Older Persons (resolution

46/91). In 2002, the Second World Assembly on Aging adopted the Madrid International Plan of Action on Aging, to respond to the opportunities and challenges of population aging in the 21st century and to promote the development of a society for all ages.

The number of older people (defined as those aged 65 years or older) tripled from around 260 million in 1980 to 761 million in 2021. Between 2021 and 2050, the global share of the older population is projected to increase from less than 10% to around 17%.

Rapid growth in the number of people reaching older ages underscores the significance of promoting health, preventing, and treating illnesses throughout the entire course of life.

In societies with aging populations, it becomes imperative to adjust to the increasing number of elderly individuals who possess a diverse range of functional capacities. The capability to carry out essential functions and partake in everyday activities is influenced not solely by an individual's inherent capacity but also by the social and physical environments in which they reside. Supportive environments play a pivotal role in assisting older individuals to maintain their activity levels and independence as they progress in age.

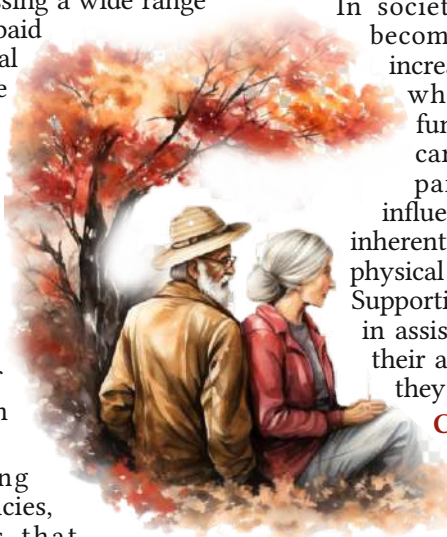
Change the Way You Think About Age!

People worldwide are living longer. Today most people can expect to live into their sixties

and beyond. Every country in the world is experiencing growth in both the size and the proportion of older persons in the population.

By 2030, 1 in 6 people in the world will be aged 60 years or over. At this time the share of the population aged 60 years and over will increase from 1 billion in 2020 to 1.4 billion. By 2050, the world's population of people aged 60 years and older will double (2.1 billion). The number of persons aged 80 years or older is expected to triple between 2020 and 2050 to reach 426 million.

While this shift in distribution of a country's population towards older ages – known as population aging – started in high-income countries (for example in Japan 30% of the population is already over 60 years old), it is now low and middle-income countries that are experiencing the greatest change. By 2050, two-thirds of the world's population over 60 years will live in low and middle-income countries.



Aging Explained

At the biological level, aging results from the impact of the accumulation of a wide variety of molecular and cellular damage over time. This leads to a gradual decrease in physical and mental capacity, a growing risk of disease and ultimately death. These changes are neither linear nor consistent, and they are only loosely associated with a person's age in years. The diversity seen in older age is not random. Beyond biological changes, aging is often associated with other life transitions such as retirement, relocation to more appropriate housing and the death of friends and partners.

Common Health Conditions Associated with Aging

Common conditions in older age include hearing loss, cataracts and refractive errors, back and neck pain and osteoarthritis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, depression and dementia. As people age, they are more likely to experience several conditions at the same time.

Older age is also characterized by the emergence of several complex health states commonly called geriatric syndromes. They are often the consequence of multiple underlying factors and include frailty, urinary incontinence, falls, delirium and pressure ulcers.

Challenges in Responding to Population Aging

There is no typical older person. Some 80-year-olds have physical and mental capacities similar to many 30-year-olds. Other people experience significant declines in capacities at much younger ages. A comprehensive public health response must address this wide range of older people's experiences and needs.

The diversity seen in older age is not random. A large part arises from people's physical and social environments and the impact of these environments on their opportunities and health behaviour. The relationship we have with our environments is skewed by personal characteristics such as the family we were born into, our sex and our ethnicity, leading to inequalities in health.

Older people are often assumed to be frail or dependent and a burden to society. Public health professionals, and society as a whole, need to address these and other ageist attitudes, which can lead to discrimination, affect the way policies are developed and the opportunities older people have to experience healthy aging.

Globalization, technological developments (e.g., in transport and communication), urbanization, migration and changing gender norms are influencing the lives of older people in direct and indirect ways. A public health response must take stock of these current and projected trends and

frame policies accordingly.

WHO Response

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly declared 2021–2030 the UN Decade of Healthy Aging and asked WHO to lead the implementation. The UN Decade of Healthy Aging is a global collaboration bringing together governments, civil society, international agencies, professionals, academia, the media and the private sector for 10 years of concerted, catalytic and collaborative action to foster longer and healthier lives.

The Decade builds on the WHO Global Strategy and Action Plan and the United Nations Madrid International Plan of Action on Aging and supports the realization of the United Nations Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The UN Decade of Healthy Aging (2021–2030) seeks to reduce health inequities and improve the lives of older people, their families and communities through collective action in four areas: changing how we think, feel and act towards age and ageism; developing communities in ways that foster the abilities of older people; delivering person-centred integrated care and primary health services responsive to older people; and providing older people who need it with access to quality long-term care.

How to Get Involved

Here are some ways to participate in the International Day of Older Persons:

- **Host Events:** Organize community events, such as health fairs, workshops, or social gatherings, to celebrate and support older persons.
- **Advocate for Rights:** Engage in advocacy efforts to promote policies that protect the rights and well-being of older individuals.
- **Volunteer:** Offer your time to assist older persons in your community through local organizations or programs.
- **Raise Awareness:** Use social media to share information about the importance of this day and the contributions of older people.
- **Educate Yourself:** Learn about the issues facing older populations and how you can help make a difference in their lives.



Leon Bent writes because, with the rise of the web and its quick dispatches, people are hungry for profound thought, for depth, for insight, for sustained description and the touch of the Divine.

WORLD ANIMAL WELFARE DAY

-Tony Menezes

"It is contrary to human dignity to be responsible for causing any animals to suffer or die needlessly in any way." – Pope Francis

The World Animal Welfare Day is rightly celebrated worldwide on 4th October, feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals. The theme of World Animal Welfare Day 2024 is 'The World is Their Home Too!' Every year the themes are modified keeping in mind the climatic developments the world over. For example, the theme for 2023 was 'Great or Small, Love Them All'.

The Day is also known as 'Animal Lovers Day' as it promotes affection, care and protection of animals with the active assistance of organisations and individuals who love animals. The objective is to raise awareness, enlighten people on the issues faced by animals, mainly, neglect, abuse and exploitation, celebrate animal life, and promote better standards of animal care.

Notably, Henry Bergh is called the father of animal welfare. He founded the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) in April 1866, three days after the New York State Legislature passed into law, the first efficacious legislation against animal cruelty. World Animal Welfare Day was first observed on March 24, 1925, by animal protection activist Heinrich Zimmermann. Well-known humanitarian Rukmini Devi Arundale, pioneered animal welfare in India, and under her stewardship the Animal Welfare Board of India was established.

World Animal Welfare Day is a global initiative for the well-being of animals, a reminder of the important role animals play in nature, and the significance of maintaining ecological balance. This day also reminds us of the essential work that must be done to address the plight of animals, both in the domestic and wild world. We should not forget that animals have the ability to suffer in the same way and to the same degree as humans do. **They feel pain, fear, pleasure, hunger, frustration, loneliness and parental love.**

Whenever we consider doing something that would interfere with their needs, we are morally obligated to take these facts into account. To those who whine that the money spent on feeding stray animals could instead be put to better use by

feeding the poor, should remember that whilst humans have the ability to speak out when hungry and ask for food, this privilege of oral communication is absent in animals.

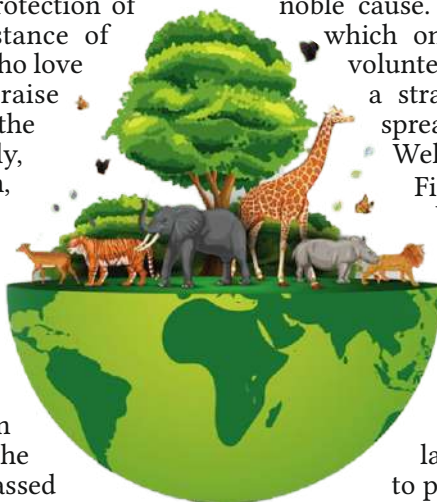
The American Veterinary Medical Association has well defined the five essentials of animal welfare, namely – 'animals must be provided with water, food, proper handling, health care, and an environment appropriate to their care and use, with thoughtful consideration to their biology and behaviour specific to their species.'

Many animal lovers wonder how they could celebrate Animal Welfare Day and be a part of this noble cause. Here are some of the ways in which one can be involved – donate / volunteer at a local animal charity, adopt a stray animal, use social media to spread awareness of World Animal Welfare Day.

Finally, it would be apt to conclude by giving a brief insight on the composition and working of the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI). AWBI is a statutory advisory body for the Government of India. The purpose of this statutory body is to advise the government on laws related to animal welfare and to promote the welfare of animals in the country. The Board was established

in 1962 under Section 4 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960. It has its headquarters in Faridabad, Haryana. The Board has 28 members who serve a 3-year term. Besides providing grants to Animal Welfare Organisations, it also works to ensure that animal welfare laws are adhered to in the country.

World Animal Welfare Day is not just an annual ritual but a reminder of our responsibility to care for and protect animals in true spirit of mutual coexistence. By raising awareness, we can create a world wherein all creatures are treated with the respect and compassion they deserve.



Tony Menezes is a writer, aspiring poet, hospitality management professional and animal lover.

I AM CALLED

-Fr. M. K. George, SJ

As I began to write these reflections, I was in a bit of shock having heard of the suicide of one of the famous writer-social workers in Kerala who had inspired thousands of people like me. Why did he decide to end his life at the age of 70, after contributing so much to the most marginalized tribals and to Malayalam literature? A comment from one of his friends said, 'I feel we are in for more such incidents caused by the despair of how the Society is evolving.'

The VUCA world makes you lose the sense of meaning in life. You end up not knowing what you are here for. This is where Christian faith has a definite answer to the VUCA world and its confusions.

You are called and hence whatever be the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity you have a mission.

The Scriptural Affirmations

One of the most powerful affirmations of the unique call each Christian receives is in Mark 1:11 when Jesus comes out of the rivers of Jordan after his baptism in the hands of John the Baptist. 'And a voice came from heaven, "you are my beloved son; with you I am well pleased." The crucial theological insight is that this privilege of being related to the Father as a son/daughter is available to each one of us, from the moment of baptism, bestowing on us the rights and duties of a child of God. This is huge indeed. At times hard to believe. But, believe and we are transformed!

Similarly, Jeremiah 1:5 says, 'before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born, I set you apart.' Again, an affirmation due to each of the believers. When you believe these affirmations, your behaviour changes and life too. A true Christian is someone who deeply believes he/she is called specially by God.

Psychological Explanations

Positive psychology tells us that a sense of uniqueness is one of the most important dimensions of personal identity and that it refers

to individuals' private sense of experiencing the self that can only be acknowledged by the individuals themselves. Fred Rogers said, "As human beings, our job in life is to help people realize how rare and valuable each one of us really is, that each of us has something that no one else has - or ever will have - something inside that is unique to all time. It's our job to encourage each other to discover that uniqueness and to provide ways of developing its expression."

Some Lived Experiences

Of the millions of lived experiences, I would like to recall Viktor E. Frankl's survival in the concentration camps. When thousands perished in the brutal Nazi camps under unbelievable cruelty, he survived. He said, "those who have a 'why' to live, can bear with almost any 'how.'" And the why of living is that I am called uniquely by the Lord and I have a role that no one else can fulfil in this world.

Let me conclude with a story.

In a catechism exam, one question was, 'What was the voice that Jesus heard when he got out of the waters of Jordan after being baptised by John the Baptist?' A young boy knew the first part of the answer, 'You are my beloved son'. The second part he just could not remember. The teacher came round once or twice to collect his paper. Finally, when the teacher was about to snatch the paper away, the boy wrote, 'You are my beloved son. Better behave like one!'

Yes, we are called. Called uniquely. But do we behave like the ones who are called.

In the forthcoming pieces, I reflect on further dimensions of living as a Christian in a VUCA world. Meanwhile, let us reflect and Pray!



Fr. M.K. George, formerly Principal of Loyola College of Social Sciences, Trivandrum, is currently General Counsellor to the Superior General of the Society of Jesus in Rome. He can be contacted at gmutholil@gmail.com

Goa's first 'AI Skills' Centre of Excellence at PCCE, Verna

Padre Conceicao College of Engineering, Verna, recently inaugurated Goa's first Centre of Excellence in 'AI Skills', set up in collaboration with Intel Corporation and Dell Technologies. The occasion also marked the launch of the Master of Engineering (M.E.) programme in Artificial Intelligence and Data Science.



Fr. Agnelo Gomes, Director, Padre Conceicao College of Engineering, Verna (third from right) welcoming Chief Guest Aleixo Pereira (fourth from right).



Chief Guest Aleixo Pereira (third from right) at the inauguration, along with dignitaries.

Mr. Aleixo Pereira, Hon. Minister for Law, Judiciary and Captain of Ports, graced the occasion as Chief Guest and inaugurated two new state-of-the-art labs and three WiFi Access Points on the campus. He appreciated the management for their commitment to excellence.

The Guests of Honour were Mr. Radhesh Shankaranarayanan (Director, Dell Technologies), Ms. Saloni Singhal (APAC Manager, Intel Corporation) and Mr. Sankarlingam P. (Product Manager, Dell Technologies).

The 'AI Skills' and 'Research' labs aim to empower our students and faculty with cutting-edge technologies for innovation and advanced research in Artificial Intelligence. PCCE, Dell Technologies and Intel Corporation will partner together in the 'AI for Youth' initiative for workshops and internships that will enhance AI competency and promote social impact ideas.

RUTH: A LEGACY OF FAITHFULNESS AND REDEMPTION

- Fr. Trevor D'Souza, OFM (Franciscan)

The story of Ruth, is one of the most remarkable narratives. Despite its brevity, the Book holds profound implications for understanding loyalty, faith, and divine providence. Ruth, a Moabite woman whose name in Hebrew means "companion" or "friend," exemplifies virtues that resonate across centuries and is relevant today.

Ruth's Background and Commitment: Ruth's story unfolds during a turbulent period in Israel's history, the era of the Judges (Ruth 1:1), when social and religious chaos prevailed. She married one of the sons of Elimelech and Naomi, an Israelite family that had moved to Moab due to a famine in Bethlehem. Tragically, Ruth, her sister-in-law Orpah, and Naomi all became widows, leaving them in a precarious situation in a male-dominated society where women had few rights and could quickly become destitute without a male protector.

When the famine in Bethlehem ended, Naomi decided to return to her homeland and urged her daughters-in-law to remain in Moab and remarry. While Orpah reluctantly returned to her people, Ruth clung to Naomi, making a profound statement of loyalty and faith. Ruth declared, "For where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried" (Ruth 1:16-17). This declaration not only stated Ruth's deep commitment to Naomi but also her embrace of the God of Israel, marking a significant step in her spiritual journey.

Ruth's Role in the Narrative of Redemption: Ruth and Naomi arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest. To provide for themselves, Ruth went to glean in the fields, a practice allowed under Mosaic Law for the poor to collect leftover grain after the harvesters (Leviticus 19:9-10). Ruth's diligence and humility led her to the field of Boaz, a wealthy landowner and a relative of Naomi. Boaz noticed Ruth and, impressed by her loyalty to Naomi, extended his protection and generosity toward her.

Naomi, recognizing Boaz as a potential "kinsman-redeemer" (a close relative who could marry a widow to preserve the family line), encouraged Ruth to seek Boaz's protection through marriage (Ruth 3:3-4). Boaz, honouring this custom, married Ruth, and together they had a son named Obed. Obed would become the father of Jesse and the grandfather of King David (Ruth 4:17). It is through this lineage that Jesus would ultimately be born (Matthew 1:5).

Ruth thus got included in the lineage of David, displaying the inclusive nature of God's plan, demonstrating that faith and character, not ethnicity, determine one's place in God's covenant. The story highlights God's ability to bring forth salvation and blessing through unlikely means and people. Ruth, a foreigner, becomes an integral part of God's redemptive plan, showing that God's grace extends beyond ethnic and cultural boundaries.

The Significance of Ruth in Contemporary

Times: Ruth's story offers valuable lessons for modern readers. In a world often characterized by division and exclusion,

Ruth's integration into the lineage of David serves as a powerful reminder of the inclusivity of God's love.

Ruth's unwavering loyalty to Naomi and her faith in God are exemplary. In today's society, where personal ambition often overshadows commitment to others, her willingness to leave her homeland, embrace a new faith, and care for her mother-in-law at great personal cost challenges us to consider the depth of our own commitments to family, faith, and community.

Ruth's story of redemption through Boaz is a precursor to the ultimate redemption offered through Christ. Just as Boaz redeemed Ruth, Jesus redeems all who come to Him, offering eternal life and inclusion in God's family.

Conclusion: Ruth's story carries profound messages of faith, loyalty, and redemption. It portrays the inclusivity of God's love, and the significance of redemption. Her legacy displays



the enduring relevance of biblical principles in our contemporary world, the importance of commitment to God, family, and the belief in divine providence.

Resources: *Dictionary of the Bible; Reader's Digest, Who's Who in the Bible; Internet sources and AI Tools.*

BIBLE QUIZ ON THE LIFE OF RUTH

1. **Where was Ruth originally from?**
 - a) Bethlehem
 - b) Moab
 - c) Jericho
2. **Who was Ruth's first husband?**
 - a) Boaz
 - b) Chilion
 - c) Mahlon
3. **What prompted Naomi to leave Moab and return to Bethlehem?**
 - a) Forest fires in Moab
 - b) War in Moab
 - c) Famine in Bethlehem
4. **What did Ruth say to Naomi when asked to return to her people?**
 - a) "I will return to my people."
 - b) "Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God."
 - c) "I will stay in Moab."
5. **How did Ruth provide food for herself and Naomi in Bethlehem?**
 - a) Selling goods
 - b) Gleaning in the fields
 - c) Working as a servant
6. **In whose field did Ruth glean?**
 - a) Elimelech's
 - b) Boaz's
 - c) Jesse's
7. **How did Boaz treat Ruth?**
 - a) He ignored her
 - b) He showed kindness and protection towards her
 - c) He asked her to leave the field
8. **What advice did Naomi give Ruth to attract Boaz's attention?**
 - a) Ask him for food
 - b) Uncover his feet and lie down
 - c) Demand marriage
9. **Boaz as Ruth's protector and husband was called?**
 - a) Guardian
 - b) Kinsman-redeemer
 - c) Priest
10. **What was the name of the child Ruth had through Boaz?**
 - a) Obed
 - b) Jesse
 - c) David
11. **Who is Ruth's great-grandson?**
 - a) Solomon
 - b) Saul
 - c) David
12. **Which book of the Bible is the story of Ruth found in?**
 - a) Judges
 - b) Ruth
 - c) Esther
13. **The story of Ruth is read during which feast in the Jewish Calendar?**
 - a) Feast of Passover
 - b) Feast of Weeks (Shavuot)
 - c) Feast of Tabernacles
14. **The women of Bethlehem reacted to Naomi and Ruth's return?**
 - a) They welcomed them with open arms
 - b) They questioned, "Is this Naomi?"
 - c) They ignored them
15. **Why is Ruth included in the genealogy of Jesus Christ?**
 - a) Because she was a faithful Moabite
 - b) Because she was the mother of Obed, the grandfather of David
 - c) Because she was married to Boaz

Answers to Bible Quiz on life of Ruth

- 1 (b) - (Ruth 1:4)
- 2 (c) - (Ruth 4:10)
- 3 (c) - (Ruth 1:6)
- 4 (b) - (Ruth 1:16)
- 5 (b) - (Ruth 2:2)
- 6 (b) - (Ruth 2:3)
- 7 (b) - (Ruth 2:8-9)
- 8 (b) - (Ruth 3:3-4)
- 9 (b) - (Ruth 3:9)
- 10 (a) - (Ruth 4:17)
- 11 (c) - (Ruth 4:22)
- 12 (b) - Book of Ruth
- 13 (b) - A traditional Jewish practice
- 14 (b) - (Ruth 1:19)
- 15 (b) - (Matthew 1:5-6)



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GOD - OUR SOURCE OF TRUE HAPPINESS

-Ibonio D'Souza

Human beings are always in pursuit of happiness. Academics have continued trying to identify factors that bring lasting satisfaction and joy. Hundreds of books have been written, and countless number of conferences have been held on the topic. Despite all these efforts, we can see that the experts have not succeeded. However, what remains elusive to them - the source of true happiness - is explained plainly in the Word of God.

According to John 13:17, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." It means that we will be happy if we know the will of God and do it. Let's take a closer look at this Biblical formula to help us better understand the source of true happiness.

HAPPINESS - What is the right understanding of happiness? The word happy in John 13:17 means "supremely blessed." This word does not imply an absence of earthly sorrows; if that were part of the definition, then no one could be happy, since it is impossible to escape from sorrows in this world. Actually, the state that is referred to in this verse is a favour which only comes from God. It begins when we are reconciled to Him at salvation, and His blessing remains upon us as long as we stay faithful to Him. God is the source of true happiness, and it cannot be found apart from Him.

We read in Ecclesiastes 5:10, "He that love the silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity." Happiness does not come from possessions, wealth, or power. Nor can sin satisfy, and it leaves a bitter after-taste. It is certain that those who seek happiness in temporal things will never be satisfied. They may experience a measure of joy from certain events or amusements, but it cannot last long because it is dependent on circumstances, which are always changing. On the other hand, the happiness we experience when God's blessing rests upon our lives is unchanging. It triumphs over earthly sorrows and disappointments.

Consider the example of the Children of Israel in Exodus 15. After God set them free from bondage in Egypt, He used Moses to lead them through the wilderness. However, after going three days without finding water, they began to murmur

against Moses. They failed to have faith in God. They had been miraculously freed from slavery, yet they were unhappy because of a lack of water! Often times, no matter how much people have, they want more. One man who has healthy feet will complain that he has no shoes to wear, while another man who has disabled feet praises God for his life! The difference between people like the Israelites who complained and our disabled brethren who expressed the goodness of God, was their own choice to be grateful for their greatest blessing - knowing God and experiencing His favour. That is why our brethren have "joy unspeakable and full of glory." That is the true happiness available to us all from the word of God.

KNOWLEDGE - The first requirement in the Biblical formula for happiness is "If ye know these things...." If we do not know what God would have us to do, then we certainly will not be able to do it. Knowing is a requirement for doing the will of God, so we are enjoined to learn the Word of God.

Paul advised Timothy, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that's needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (Timothy 2:15). Christ himself said, "Take my yoke upon

you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mathew 11:29). God told Joshua, "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shall have good success" (Joshua 1:8). The truth leads to eternal life, while falsehood leads to sin and Hell. If we want true happiness, it is imperative that we know the truth.

Our desire should be to know more and more about God and His Word. We can never know enough about God. Even Moses, after he had been walking with God for many years, prayed, "Show me thy way, that I may know thee" (Exodus 33:13). Later we read how God answered Moses' prayer and allowed him to see part of Himself. The man who was closest to God desired to draw closer still, and God granted his request. We all have so much yet to learn about God; may He give us the desire to know Him more.

OBEDIENCE - Christianity is a practical religion. It is not just something to study and talk about; the Word of God is meant to be lived. We understand that knowledge is important, yet even more



important is what we do with the knowledge we gain from Scripture. It is wasted if we do not apply it to our lives and put it into practice, and we will never experience the true happiness that comes from God without obedience.

Our Lord epitomised practical Christianity. He taught not only with words but also through His life and actions. A true disciple of Christ is not only acquainted with what He taught but actually follows His example. Jesus said in John 15:14, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." May God help us to be doers of His Word!

If we were merely professing, preaching, and teaching the Word, but not practising it, then we would be hypocrites. A religion like this is worthless; it will not bring happiness and will not satisfy the soul. God has happiness for us, but we have a part to play: we must obey God's Word. We must do what we have learned. We must practice what we know!

GOD NEVER FAILS US - Some may question how God can give happiness in the midst of great trials. We may go through experiences that cause us to doubt if it can be true, but we have a promise that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psalm 30:5). Where there is obedience to the will of God, the joy will be there. This is God's promise to us.

Abraham, who waited so many years for his promised son, and then God told him to sacrifice that son. Genesis 22:2 records that God said to him, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest...." Abraham did love Isaac, but not more than he loved God. If he had loved Isaac more, that would have been the end of his close relationship with God. While God ultimately provided a substitute for Isaac, Abraham put his

faith into practice by his willingness to obey. When our faith is tested, God will also give us the grace to pass the test. Abraham proved he knew God's will, he obeyed, and he received God's blessing on his life. We too can learn from his example.

We have yet another example of Job. God Himself testified of Job that he was perfect, upright, feared God, and eschewed evil. Yet, he was tried. He lost everything he had, including his ten children. If he had loved his family more than God, that would have severed his relationship with God. But what did he do? He said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21). What a life of surrender! Job's faith was not merely words, but it was practical.

All of us go through trials in this life, but our constant guarantee is that God is always there for His people. He will never leave us nor forsake us, and He will never forget His own. When we know the will of God and do it, we will have God's divine favour on our lives and happiness will follow, which will not just end here on earth only but will go with us into Heaven. May God help us fix our love on Him alone, our source of true happiness.



Ibonio D'Souza is the author of the widely read motivational tome 'Rise And Shinethe lotus way', columnist, and a social activist.

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BE NICE

- Severina Peres

“Be Nice,” are parting shots from family and friends - often received.

Is one expected to be nice like the popular biscuit - crisp, sweet and sprinkled with sugar for added sweetness? Would you say you are a nice person? One's reply would well be: “Most often, yes but not always.”

The word Nice is defined as 'being pleasing, agreeable or courteous.' It is not always easy to be nice or agreeable with everyone. A popular advertisement shows a youngster approaching her father for approval to pursue her studies in another city. “I want to move ahead in life, there is so much to do,” she quips. Her Dad suggests she pursue her dreams in the same town where similar opportunities exist. She is infuriated and withdraws with a sulk. Can she be nice to her Dad now? It is her father who now chooses to show understanding. He goes a step ahead by being kind to her and agreeing to her expectations.

Can you see a difference in being Nice and being Kind? Being Kind is much more, it means showing understanding or empathy. Parents learn quickly this distinction between being Nice and being Kind, as they look with wonder as their infant rises for the first time but soon his wobbly legs will tire and the child will probably fall down on his bottom or cry. At this, parents have to resist interfering and being nice to the child, the child will then reassert himself and struggle to stand up again. It may be essential in some circumstances to appear 'Not Nice' if one is to achieve a greater good. One can be kind always but not always nice.

At times, people may seem nice outwardly but it may be a sugar coated pill to hide fear or cowardice, even to avoid rejection or confrontation. We come across individualistic

approach in our dealings with one another. Someone asks for directions on the road but does not stop to say thank you. While boarding a bus or train, if someone tramples you, no word or look of apology is given. Requests come across in the form of demands rather than in gentleness. Family members may be taken for granted. We must remember to thrive, we must live not as individuals but, as a family, a community, a society.

In this scenario, it's important to deliberately cultivate goodness and kindness in our speech and actions. More important is to instil these habits in



our young ones particularly the frequent genuine use of the three Golden Words “Please, Sorry and Thank you.” Incumbents in the Hospitality industry are trained to be nice and go even further to be kind 24x7, even if one does

not feel like it. Showing kindness often requires an extra effort, it is a choice to overcome lethargy, forego rudeness or indifference. We are plunged into moments when we can be deliberately different in the situation, to be a winner and to create ripples of kindness. Offering to walk the extra mile, lend a helping hand or flashing your sweetest smile will be effortless once we develop a habit of doing so.

And of course, be sure, the Kindness you show is going to come back to you. Be Nice, go a step further, be Kind!



Severina Peres has considerable experience in the banking sector and enjoys writing short articles based on Encyclicals and Church Documents. She is also interested in assisting senior citizens.

15 PROMISES OF PRAYING THE ROSARY

Tradition tells us that the Blessed Virgin Mary made 15 promises to St. Dominic which she extends to anyone who prays the Rosary. Here are her promises:

1. Whoever shall faithfully serve me by the recitation of the Rosary, shall receive signal graces.
2. I promise my special protection and the greatest graces to all those who shall recite the Rosary.
3. The Rosary shall be a powerful armour against hell, it will destroy vice, decrease sin, and defeat heresies.
4. It will cause virtue and good works to flourish; it will obtain for souls the abundant mercy of God; it will withdraw the hearts of men from the love of the world and its vanities, and will lift them to the desire of eternal things. Oh, that souls would sanctify themselves by this means.
5. The soul which recommends itself to me by the recitation of the Rosary shall not perish.
6. Whoever shall recite the Rosary devoutly, applying himself to the consideration of its sacred mysteries, shall never be conquered and never overwhelmed by misfortune. God will not chastise him in His justice, he shall not perish by an unprovided death; if he be just he shall grow in grace and become worthy of eternal life.
7. Whoever shall have a true devotion for the

Rosary shall not die without the sacraments of the Church.

8. Those who are faithful to recite the Rosary shall have, during their life and at their death, the light of God and the plenitude of His graces; at the moment of death they shall participate in the merits of the saints in paradise.

9. I shall deliver from purgatory those who have been devoted to the Rosary.

10. The faithful children of the Rosary shall merit a high degree of glory in heaven.

11. You shall obtain all you ask of me by the recitation of the Rosary.

12. All those who propagate the holy Rosary shall be aided by me in their necessities.

13. I have obtained from my Divine Son that all the advocates of the Rosary shall have for intercessors the entire celestial court during

their life and at the hour of death.

14. All who recite the Rosary are my sons and daughters, brothers and sisters of my only son Jesus Christ.

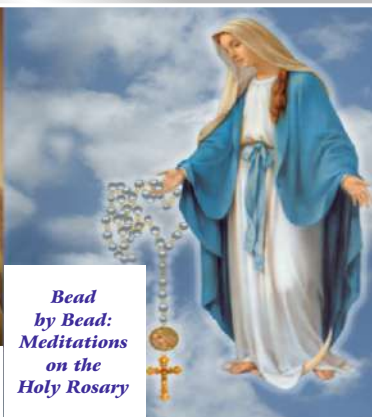
15. Devotion of my Rosary is a great sign of predestination.



Source : Internet



15 Promises of Mary for the praying of the Rosary



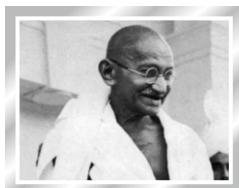
Bead by Bead: Meditations on the Holy Rosary

We are in the month of October, a month that signifies hot summer days and vacations.

It is a day we remember the birthday of our freedom fighter, Mahatma Gandhi, whose struggles with other freedom fighters, resulted in us becoming a democratic nation free from the autocracy of any foreign rule.

So let's begin...

Anecdote of Mahatma Gandhi



When Mahatma Gandhi was studying law at the University College, London, a white professor named Peters disliked him intensely.

One day both were having lunch. Gandhi came along with his tray and sat beside the professor.

Peters said, "Mr. Gandhi, you do not understand. A pig and a bird do not sit together to eat."

Gandhi replied calmly, "You do not worry, professor, I will fly away." He went and sat on another table.

Peters was enraged and decided to teach him a lesson. He posed a question in class to Gandhi, singling him out.

"Suppose you were walking down a street and found a package and within this was a bag of money and a bag of wisdom. Which one would you take?"

Gandhi replied, "The bag with the money of course."

Peters said sarcastically smiling, "I, in your place would have taken the bag of wisdom."

Gandhi said calmly, "Each one takes what he does not have."

Peters was furious. He decided to take revenge. On Gandhi's exam sheet he wrote the word- IDIOT.

Gandhi saw his exam paper and was quiet for a while.

Finally, he got up and went to the professor and told him in a dignified tone, "Mr. Peters you signed the exam sheet but you did not give me the grade."

Now there are some sources that say this story is untrue and others point out its validity. But whether true or untrue, this story highlights the

awful racism that existed and how Gandhi managed to keep calm and use his intelligence, not get overly ruffled and spoil his chances of continuing his education in London.

We too can learn that when dealing with difficult people to keep our cool and not get overly upset. Racism is a world-wide problem and while racism might sometimes be swept under the carpet by people who refuse to acknowledge it exists, it remains a serious covert or overt problem that seems hard to completely erase despite education and the technological leaps we have made today.

Quiz



The beauty of waterfalls. A waterfall is any point in a river or stream where water flows over a vertical drop or a series of step drops.

1. Which is the world's biggest waterfall?
2. Which is the smallest waterfall in the world?
3. Which is the city in India known as the City of Waterfalls?
4. Which Canadian city is called the City of Waterfalls?
5. Where is the Niagara Falls located?

Legend about the Nohkalikai Falls – Curious Facts



Nohkalikai Falls is the tallest plunge waterfall in India, its height is 1115 feet. This waterfall is located near Cherrapunji, one of the wettest places on Earth.

The name of the falls in Khasi language means 'Jump of Ka Likai' which is linked to a legend about a local woman Likai who jumped off the cliff next to the falls.

According to the legend, in a village upstream from the Nohkalikai Falls, a woman named Likai resided but had to remarry after her husband died. Ka Likai was left with her infant daughter with no means of income after the death of her husband. She had to become a porter to support herself and her daughter. But her job resulted in leaving her

daughter unattended for long intervals at a time but when she was at home she took good care of her infant daughter.

Now after she wed the second time, the husband felt neglected by her because of her care of her infant daughter. He killed the infant and discarded her head and bones, cooking her meat for a meal.

She usually had a betel leaf after her meals and to her shock found a severed finger near the betel nuts and leaves.

She realised what happened, went mad with anger and grief. Swinging a hatchet she jumped from the waterfall and this was named Nohkalikai Falls after her.

The local people call the waterfall dangerous as it is believed to be haunted and it is said that if people go in an odd number they return in an even number. This waterfall has been the subject of various suicides and numerous deaths.

Smile Please



1. An Irishman walked into a bar and ordered two shots every day.

He did this regularly. The bartender was curious. He asked him, "Sir how come you drink only two shots

every day?"

The Irishman replied, "You see my brother lives across the country, so I order two shots, one for me and one for my brother."

Then one day the Irishman ordered only one shot. The bartender was concerned. He asked him, "Sir, has something happened to your brother?"

The Irishman shook his head, "Of course not, he is just fine. You see I just quit drinking."

2. President Lincoln was approached by a woman after a political speech.

"If you were my husband, I would poison your tea."

Lincoln replied, "Madam, if you were my wife, I would gladly drink it."

3. Why did the scarecrow win an award?

Because he was outstanding in his field.

4. Why should you always knock on a refrigerator door before opening it?

In case there is a salad dressing.

5. Have you noticed that a woman's, "I will be ready in five minutes." And a man's, "I will reach home in five minutes" is exactly the same?

6. A panda walks into a bar. It pulls out a pistol,

fires into the air and heads for the door.

The bartender shouts, "Hey!"

The panda turns back and says, "Google me."

The bartender does so and he reads - A panda is a tree climbing mammal with distinct black and white colouring, eats shoots and leaves.

What's in a name?



Let's talk about some Biblical male names, their origin and meaning.

Asher – Hebrew origin and it means happy or blessed.

Amos – Hebrew origin and it means by God.

Cyrus – Persian origin and it means sun, hero or one who bestows care.

Alexander – Greek name and it means defender of men.

Cain – Hebrew origin, the first son of Adam and Eve and it means to get.

Evan – Welsh origin and it means God is gracious.

Riddles



1. What kind of coat is always wet when you put it on?

2. What is the difference between a jeweller and a jailer?

3. What has a neck but no head?

4. What gets smaller every time it takes a bath?

St. Francis of Assisi - Feast Day October 4



Often saints are more concerned with people rather than with animals. But St. Francis of Assisi was renowned for his remarkable love and affection for animals of the

sky and the animals of the earth, and because of his loving and welcoming presence, animals flocked towards him.

He is a patron saint of the ecological movement.

One day, he came to a town called Alviano to preach the Word of God. He asked the people for silence before he could begin.

The people became quiet and waited for his preaching. However, a flock of swallows building

nests in that place continued to chatter away, making it impossible for the people to hear St. Francis.

St. Francis spoke to them, "My sisters, the swallows, it is my turn to speak now because you have already said what you need to say. Listen to the Word of God. Stay still and be quiet until it is over."

To the people's amazement, the little birds immediately stopped and St. Francis was able to complete his preaching.

This reveals how living creatures could recognize his affection for them and sensed his love.

What can we learn from this great saint?

We learn that true religion is not just being concerned with people. It encompasses all living creatures. Let us learn to reach out in love to animals and birds with love in our hearts. All forms of animal abuse should be avoided and they should be treated with love and affection.

There are many people who abuse animals, treating them badly. But we learn from St. Francis that all living creatures require our love and respect and do not deserve abuse. We must emulate St. Francis respect for all living creatures.

What's the Good Word?

All about musical instruments



1. The first piano was created by this man.
2. The place where the first guitar was created.
3. The most expensive violin in the world.
4. The number one

piano company.

5. Inventor of the flute.

Curious Facts



One of the most fascinating musical instruments of the world is the piano. The piano used to be called a pianoforte. This referred to the ability for the piano to play both loud,

(forte) and soft (piano.)

Pianos used to have ivory keys but they would turn a nasty yellow colour and needed professional cleaning or bleaching. Nowadays pianos are made with plastic or synthetic ivory and although they have a different touch, hold up

much better. The most expensive piano ever sold so far was for 3.22 million dollars. The piano is called the 'King of Musical Instruments.' A piano has the largest note range of any instrument.

Did you know that learning to play the piano can actually improve brain function? The discipline required to learn to play the piano along with the creativity and the focus needed can have a lasting impact on other areas of life. So kids should be encouraged to learn if not the piano then a musical instrument of their choice.

Brain Teasers



1. There are 12 months in a year. And seven months have 31 days. How many months have 28 days?

2. Mr. and Mrs. Smith have six sons who each have one sister. How many people are there in

the Smith family?

3. How do you make the number seven even without using addition, subtraction, multiplication or division?

4. If three bears can catch three fish in three minutes, then how long will it take for 100 bears to catch 100 fish?

5. a is an even number of two digits and is greater than number 70, when divided by b = 8, and b multiplied by z = 720, then find the value of b, a and z?

Inspirational Quotes of art and creativity



1. "Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." - Pablo Picasso

2. "Everybody born comes from the Creator trailing wisps of glory. We come from the Creator with creativity. I think that each one of us is born with creativity." - Maya Angelou

3. "Passion is one great force that unleashes creativity, because if you are passionate about something, then you're more willing to take risks." - Yo-Yo Ma

4. "I would rather die of passion rather than of boredom." - Vincent Van Gogh

5. "The one thing that you have that nobody else has is you. Your voice, your mind, your story, your vision. So write and draw and build and play and dance and live only as you can." - Neil Gaiman

Did you know? All about October



1. October was in ancient Rome the eighth month of the year. The word octo is Latin for eight.

2. Christopher Columbus arrived in America on October 12, 1492.

3. The month of October is associated with two birthstones - opal and tourmaline.

4. The calendula flower is associated with the month of October. Its bright yellow-orange petals evoke the beauty of autumn sunsets and the colourful foliage of changing leaves.

5. Halloween an annual celebration is observed in many countries on October 31st.

Wisdom Message for the Month



An anecdote is told about John Lennon. He was always told by his mother that happiness was the key to life.

One day the class was asked by his teacher to write what they

wanted to become when he grew up.

He wrote, "I want to be happy."

His teacher was upset and called him to her desk, "You did not understand the assignment."

The boy answered, "You don't understand life."

Now this anecdote makes us ponder. Success is good, achievements are good but are we really happy? Or is life just a rat race?

In a Miss Universe contest, a contestant was asked by the judge, "Define success."

She said, "Success to me is to be happy. It is more than our achievements."

So in truth while the world might admire our success, only we deep down know the truth - whether living on earth is our heaven or hell. So strive for happiness always. Jesus himself said, "Unless you become a little child, you cannot enter

the kingdom of Heaven."

The biggest determination of success is how truly happy we are.

Unless we see the world with childlike wonder, never lose our enthusiasm for life in a childlike manner, we can never be truly happy. A child feels happy with the simplest things not pondering all the time on earthly success. Only when we view the world like a child we can find happiness.

This does not mean being naïve or stupid but it does mean we can still find joy in the simplest things like watching a butterfly perch on a flower, being awed by the rainbow in the sky or looking at the evening star and making a wish.

That's all for this month. Take care and God bless.

Answers

Quiz

1. Angel Falls. 2. Devi's Fall in Pokhara, Nepal. 3. Ranchi. 4. Hamilton. 5. It is located on the border of New York State and Ontario, Canada

Riddles

1. A coat of paint. 2. A jeweller sells watches and a jailer watches cells. 3. Guitar. 4. Soap.

What's the Good Word?

1. Bartolomeo Cristofori. 2. Ancient Greece. 3. Giuseppe Guarneri in 1741 and valued at 18 million dollars. 4. Yamaha. 5. Theobald Boehm.

Brain Teasers

1. All of them. 2. Nine because each brother shares the same sister. 3. Drop the s and it becomes even. 4. Three minutes. 5. $A = 72$, $b = 9$ and $z = 90$



Christine is an author of over 30 books available on Amazon worldwide in paperback and Kindle. She also enjoys playing the piano and has a YouTube cooking channel Christine D'Sylva's fusion kitchen.

READER'S FEEDBACK

We have increased the number of pages of Fr. Agnel Ashram News, from 20 to 28, to bring you more interesting articles. We would love to hear from you. Share your views at **agnelashramnews@gmail.com**

This magazine is available online.

Visit us at **www.agnelashram.org**



FR. AGNEL'S BLESSINGS

THANKSGIVING FOR BEING BLESSED

BORIVALI: Through the kind intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnel, I have been blessed in many ways. I have been visiting the shrine at Fr. Agnel Ashram, Bandra, for many years and my prayers have been answered.

-Janet Fernandes

THANKSGIVING FOR THE GIFT OF A HOUSE

MALAD: We offered a wax house at the relic of Ven. Fr. Agnel at Fr. Agnel Ashram, Bandra, and prayed for our intention to be fulfilled. We have been blessed with our heart's desire, our very own house.

-Savio & Jennifer Crasto

THANKSGIVING FOR FAVOURS RECEIVED

BHAYANDAR: Ven. Fr. Agnel has blessed us immensely. We are indeed grateful for all the favours received and have faith in the Venerable.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE GIFT OF A CHILD

MUMBAI: I prayed to Ven. Fr. Agnel for the gift of a child and my prayers have been answered. Given the miracles performed, we trust in Lord Jesus that one day the Venerable will be canonised a Saint.

-Simon Pereira

THANKSGIVING FOR GOOD HEALTH

CANADA: I thank Ven. Fr. Agnel for answering my prayers and blessing me with good health.

-Messi Lopes

THANKSGIVING FOR FAVOURS RECEIVED

ANDHERI: I always pray to Ven. Fr. Agnel and seek his intercession. I visit the shrine at Fr. Agnel Ashram, Bandra, to offer thanks for answering my prayers.

-Peter Carmelio

THANKSGIVING FOR BEING BLESSED

VASAI: Ven. Fr. Agnel has answered my prayers and blessed me in many ways. I have immense faith in the Venerable and thank the Fr. Agnel Ashram Fathers too for keeping us in their prayers.

-Regina Rodrigues

THANKSGIVING FOR PEACE IN LIFE

VASAI: As a devotee, I prayed to Ven. Fr. Agnel and through his kind intercession, many of my problems have been solved. The Venerable listens and intercedes for us with the Heavenly Father and Lord Jesus Christ.

-Frankie Benka

THANKSGIVING FOR FAVOURS RECEIVED

GOREGAON: Through the intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnel, we have received many favours and blessings.

-David Gonsalves

THANKSGIVING FOR ALL BLESSINGS RECEIVED

GOREGAON: I am thankful to Ven. Fr. Agnel for answering my prayers. I have immense faith in the Venerable and Lord Jesus Christ.

-Diago D'Silva

THANKSGIVING FOR BLESSINGS RECEIVED

VASAI: I always look up to Ven. Fr. Agnel for his intercession. We are indeed grateful for all the blessings received.

-Nancy D'Mello

THANKSGIVING FOR INTERCESSIONS

THANE: I always seek the intercession and blessings of Ven. Fr. Agnel. He supports me in every way.

-Gilbert Menezes

IN GRATITUDE TO VEN. FR. AGNEL

BANDRA: We are indeed grateful to Lord Jesus and Ven. Fr. Agnel for blessing us always.

-John D'Souza

THANKSGIVING FOR BEING BLESSED WITH PETS

MUMBAI: Ven. Fr. Agnel has blessed us with new members of our family, our pet puppies. We welcome the new additions.

-Alex Kenny

OUT OF THEIR BOUNTY

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------|-------|-------------------|------------|------|--------------------|------------|------|
| Revon D'Silva | Mumbai | 50000 | Minikumari | Kerala | 3000 | Jefferson Saldanha | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Praveen Srivastava | Mumbai | 47000 | Peter Abreo | Mumbai | 2500 | Allan Joe | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Ameya Deorukhkar | Dubai | 30000 | Arun M. | Mumbai | 2500 | Abey E. Thomas | kerala | 1000 |
| Elsy Francis | Mumbai | 25000 | Vijo John | Mumbai | 2000 | J.B. Pinto | Karnataka | 1000 |
| P. Aruldas Babin | Mumbai | 20000 | Joe Jacob & Fly | Mumbai | 2000 | Yash Mehta | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Kayomarz Mistry | Mumbai | 20000 | Leena Joe | Mumbai | 2000 | Lizann Lobo | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Blessy Parmar | Mumbai | 15000 | Rosily Joseph | Kerala | 2000 | Paresh Thakker | Thane | 1000 |
| K. P. Jose | Kerala | 12000 | Jaison Chackochen | Mumbai | 2000 | Melvin D' Souza | Thane | 1000 |
| Sagar Dhonde | Mumbai | 10000 | Renu Chopra | Mumbai | 2000 | N.G. Asher | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Mrudulaben Shah | Gujarat | 10000 | Lorna Lobo | Mumbai | 2000 | Dr. Agnello | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Melroy Fernandes | Mumbai | 10000 | Adit George | Mumbai | 2000 | Nayana Rathod | Mumbai | 1100 |
| Walter F. Crasta | Mumbai | 10000 | Paulraj Chettiar | UK | 2000 | Lawrence Noronha | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Montina D'Souza | Mumbai | 10000 | Alphonse Chettiar | Mumbai | 2000 | Gavin Fonseca | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Veronica Tauro | Mumbai | 8000 | A. P. Varghese | Kerala | 2000 | Hyacinth Kenny | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Wilfred D'Silva | Mumbai | 8000 | Madhu Bardhan | Pune | 2000 | Diana Chettiar | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Subramaniam R. | Mumbai | 5100 | Shalini Desa | Vasai | 2000 | Ancy A. | Kerala | 1000 |
| Magdalena Kamuel | Pune | 5000 | Rija Francis | Kerala | 2000 | Mary Antony | Kerala | 1000 |
| Collin Steve | Mumbai | 5000 | S. Arulgnana S. | Tamil Nadu | 2000 | M. D. Mathai | Kerala | 1000 |
| Jomon Jose | Kerala | 5000 | Nathan Pinto | Mumbai | 2000 | A. Santhappan | Tamil Nadu | 1000 |
| Jeeja Rose A.J. | Kerala | 5000 | Alok Rakshit | Mumbai | 2000 | Mariamamma John | Thane | 1000 |
| Vijay Luzar | Vasai | 5000 | Cindrella Miranda | Vasai | 2000 | Shirley Rebello | Thane | 1000 |
| Ashley Fernandes | Mumbai | 5000 | Golbert Lewis | Mumbai | 2000 | Luca D'Silva | Karnataka | 1000 |
| Kersi Kapadia | Karnataka | 5000 | Vincent Lobo | Pune | 2000 | Jenis Rumaw | Vasai | 1000 |
| Philomena G. | Virar | 5000 | Cheryl Swami | Mumbai | 2000 | Pulin Dabhi | Gujarat | 1000 |
| V Georgekutty | Kerala | 5000 | Adit George | Mumbai | 2000 | Felix Pinto | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Rama Rao | Mumbai | 5000 | Lynes Rebello | Mumbai | 2000 | Ronald Fernandes | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Sajita Thomas | Mumbai | 5000 | Clive Lemos | Mumbai | 2000 | N. A. Joseph | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Peter Fernandes | Thane | 5000 | Yashoda Chindalia | Mumbai | 1800 | Francis Rebello | Gujarat | 1000 |
| Franklyn Pinto | Mumbai | 5000 | Donald Fernandes | Mumbai | 1500 | Linto Joy | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Agnel Xavier | Mumbai | 5000 | Arun Jadhav | Kerala | 1500 | Teddy M. Quinny | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Aruna Rajesh | Sangli | 5000 | Janina Gomes | Mumbai | 1500 | Z. M. Rabady | Mumbai | 1000 |
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| Anthony Saldhana | Mumbai | 5000 | Anil Felix Athait | Vasai | 1500 | Christopher R. | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Russel Rodrigues | Mumbai | 5000 | Sharon D'Souza | Mumbai | 1250 | Geet Pujara | Thane | 1000 |
| A. Josephine | Mumbai | 5000 | Suzanne D'Souza | Mumbai | 1250 | Purshottam M. | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Dorothy R. D'Souza | Mumbai | 4000 | Alice D'Souza | Mumbai | 1250 | Jordan Dabre | Vasai | 1000 |
| Christina Noeline | Hyderabad | 3000 | Johnmary M. | Vasai | 1000 | Rachel Ravikumar | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Vally Gonsalves | Vasai | 3000 | Paul Joseph | Karnataka | 1000 | Margret D'Cunha | Vasai | 1000 |
| Techno Products | Chennai | 3000 | S. Natarajan | Mumbai | 1000 | Sabu Philip | Kerala | 1000 |
| Roger D Sambrya | Thane | 3000 | Sherlyn R. | Thane | 1000 | Marykutty | Kerala | 1000 |
| Abelina Pereira | Kolhapur | 3000 | Sherwyn Shane | Thane | 1000 | Smita Talcherkar | Mumbai | 1000 |
| Triansh Solanki | Gujarat | 3000 | Solanki Hiralal | Gujarat | 1000 | | | |
| Oscar Noronha | Thane | 3000 | | | | | | |

BOB'S BANTER

by Robert Clements

Fear and The Mumbai Coastal Road..!

Many decades ago, while in my teens I loved taking the double-decker bus from the city, run up the stairs to the upper deck, rush to the front seat, and enjoy a glorious ride to the Mumbai suburbs. As night set in, I would put the front glass pane up, and believe me, no air-conditioner in the world could beat the refreshing gusts of cool air, driven in by the thrust of the bus.

What was a little scary, was looking down at traffic in front of you from up there, and finding yourself rushing at breakneck speed straight onto a vehicle in front, with you not having steering wheel, clutch or brake, but trusting only the driver who sat just below. It was a roller-coaster feeling, with you not being in charge.

But more fearful than that, was when the bus

Today driving on the beautiful Sea-Link and the coastal road, with the rocks lit, I stare at the calm, pleasant sea and wonder how those restful, rippling, rush of waters ever had me terrified.

Today, the waters reflect the awesomeness of the sea-link, the grandeur of the spans and the splendour of the cables. Suddenly the same spot which terrified me years ago now looks like the most peaceful place on earth, because the darkness that once frightened me has now been removed and lights which dazzle, look up and say, "Hey it's a fun place to be in, right here in the waters!"

I am amazed at how progress drives away petty dreads and fears, how light dispels the blackness of ignorance, how knowledge and technology



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started its journey across the old Mahim Causeway over a small part of the sea; which was one part I wasn't too fond of; those days the sides of the causeway weren't lit, had hardly any people, and from the top of the double-decker you looked directly onto the dark sea.

It wasn't a very pleasant sight, the black waves crashing against ominous, forbidding rocks, and being driven back. You could hear the sounds of the breakers and with not much light down there the effect was sinister and fearful.

That was one time I kept my eyes strictly in front, not looking to the side even as I heard the waves roaring, "Bob you coward! Look down at us!" Today I look at them.

have made harsh waves into friendly ripples, and I know this is what is needed more than ever: To bring light into the lives of people in our country through education and knowledge and we will immediately get rid of the controls misguided religious chiefs and uneducated or mischief mongering political leaders have over us!

In my mind, I am back in the same double-decker bus and laugh as I cross the same causeway, but there is no fear anymore..!

Robert Clements is a newspaper columnist, whose column has graced over 80 newspapers and on certain days has a readership of over 6 million. He can be contacted at bobsbanter@gmail.com

Bandra Fair

**8th -15th
September 2024**

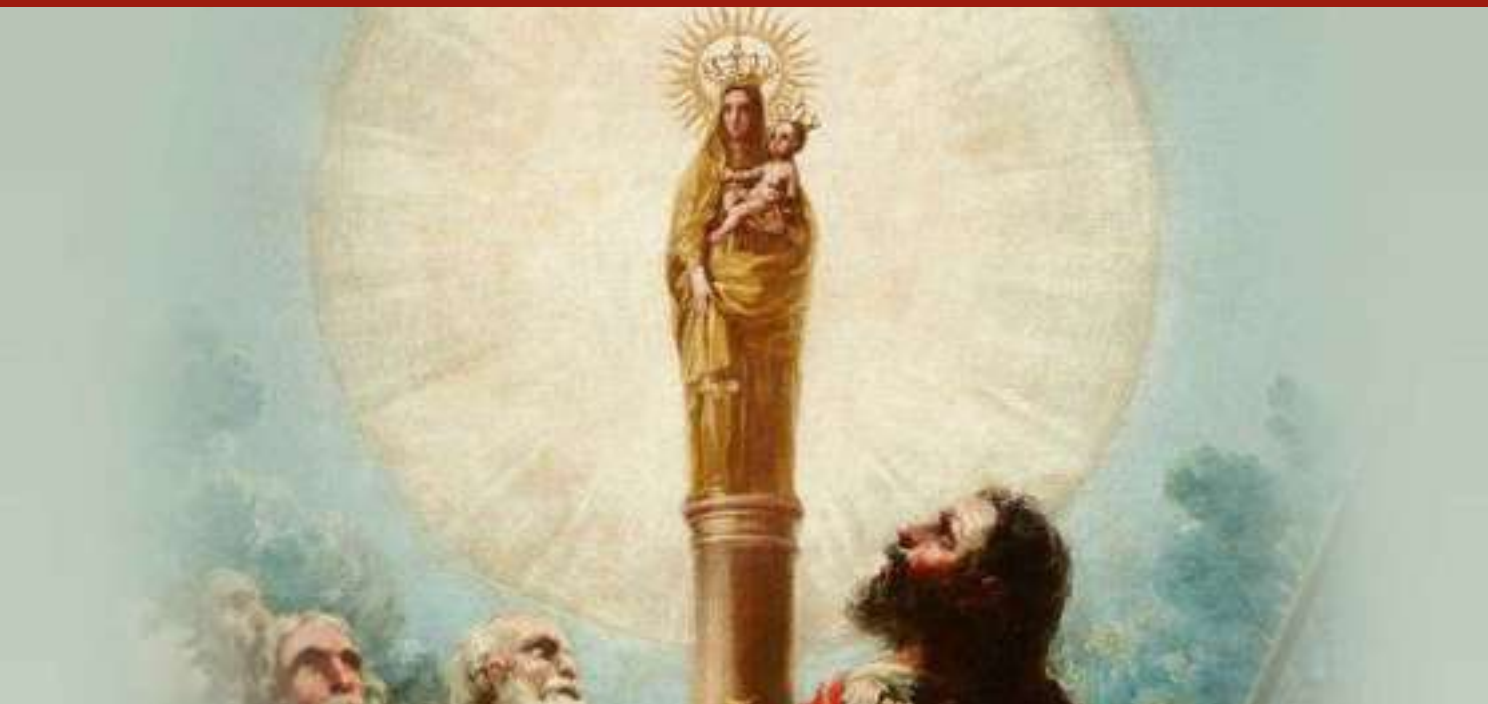
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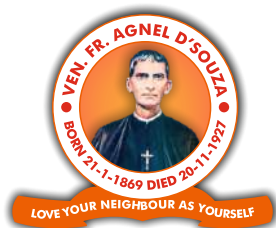
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12th October
Happy Feast of Our Lady of Pilar!
Patroness of The Society of The Missionaries of St. Francis Xavier



Our Lady, our joy and strength. Be with us always!



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