



LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF

FR. AGNEL

ASHRAM NEWS

AUGUST 2025

Happy
79th
Independence
Day



MAY THE SPIRIT OF FREEDOM AND UNITY ALWAYS PREVAIL IN OUR NATION

AUGUST 2025

CONTENTS

Message from the Regional Superior	3
Editorial	4
Do Miracles Necessarily Convert	6
Christian Hospitality	8
Catholic Church Teachings on Social Justice	10
Joy of Giving	11
Agnel Happenings	12
Bandra's International Hockey Stars Contribute Back to the Game	14
Miracles of St. Anthony - Part III	16
Elijah: Prophet of Fire and Faith	18
Sacrament of Reconciliation	20
Just for Fun	21
Fr. Agnel's Blessings	24
Out of Their Bounty	25
Bob's Banter	26

Printed & Published by
Fr. Valerian D'Souza, sfx on behalf of Agnel Publications

Editor

Fr. Jose Alarico Carvalho, sfx

Printed at :

S.B.M. Printers
C-130, Ansa Industrial Estate,
Andheri (East),
Mumbai - 400 072.

Place of Publication :

Fr. Agnel Ashram, Bandstand,
Bandra, Mumbai - 400 050.
Single Copy Price : Rs. 15
Annual Subscription : Rs. 150
agnelashramnews@gmail.com
[website : www.agnelashram.org](http://www.agnelashram.org)



FR. AGNEL ASHRAM

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

Email : fragnelashrambandra@gmail.com | Website : www.agnelashram.org

Tel.: 022 - 67114000 | Mobile : 091 - 7738009137

THE NATIVITY OF BLESSED VIRGIN MARY - BANDRA FEAST - 2025



Dear Friends and Well-Wishers,

It is with great joy that we celebrate the birth of Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, on 8th September, of whom was born our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Our Mother intercedes for us and fills our lives with hope.



It is a time of rejoicing, more so for our little Agnelite angels, the Balbhavan children who organise a Fun Fair at Fr. Agnel Ashram, Bandra. Your financial contribution in assisting us in caring for our children will be very special, on this occasion.

We wish you a Happy Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary and assure you of our daily prayers for your special intentions by our children.



With a grateful heart and best regards,

Yours Sincerely in the Lord,

Fr. Valerian D'Souza, sfx
(Superior)



1. Donations to **Society of St. Francis Xavier, Pilar**, are exempted from Income Tax.

2. Please issue Cheque/Draft/M.O. in favour of '**Society of St. Francis Xavier, Pilar**' or send to the A/c. No. below through NEFT and email us details of donations to fragnelashrambandra@gmail.com



3. It is mandatory to quote your Name, Address and PAN No.

4. Visit our Website for further details:
www.agnelashram.org

Account Name

Bank Details

A/c. No.

**Society of
St. Francis
Xavier, Pilar**

Union Bank of India
Mumbai - Bandra,
Branch: Baitul Sharaf,
105, Hill Road, Bandra (W),
Mumbai - 400 050

520141000955503

IFSC: UBIN0901202

Please detach the Form below and return it with your generous offering.

MY SPONSORSHIP 2024

To,

Fr. Superior,

Fr. Agnel Ashram, P.B. No. 6656,
Bandstand, Bandra (W), Mumbai - 400 050.

Dear Fr. Superior,

I am sending my Cheque/Draft/M.O. for _____ as my contribution for the children under your care.

Name & Address: _____

Pin _____ Phone _____ PAN No. _____

Email I.D. _____ Our Ref. No. _____



MESSAGE FROM THE REGIONAL SUPERIOR



“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others,” said Mahatma Gandhi. On the 79th Independence Day, we are reminded of the *Satyagraha* movement of the Father of the Nation and other leaders, who fought for the freedom of India.

Celebrating the Feast of St. John Vianney, the patron saint of parish priests on 4th August, let us be inspired by his holiness and dedication to the priesthood. Often, he would spend over 16 hours a day in the confessional, in order to save sinners. He fasted and made sacrifices for the sake of others. May we strive to follow in his footsteps and become holy instruments of God's mercy and grace.

Ganesh Chaturthi, one of the most-loved festivals in India, is a social and community event that brings people together and promotes harmony. This 10-day festival of hope and prosperity, which begins on 27th August, is traditionally celebrated in most states of India. However, the fervour with which it is celebrated especially in the state of Maharashtra is unparalleled.

This Raksha Bandhan, celebrated on 9th August, is the time to celebrate the bond between siblings. On this day, a sister ties a rakhi around the wrist of her brother in order to pray for his prosperity, health and well-being. In return, brothers pledge to protect their sisters and offer gifts, strengthening the bond between them.

Krishna Janmashtami is celebrated on 16th August with traditional rituals like *Dahi Handi*. Teams form human pyramids to break pots filled with curd, symbolizing teamwork, unity, strategy and triumph over challenges.

We celebrate International Youth Day on 12th August. The theme is “*Local Youth Actions for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Beyond.*” It highlights the need to empower our youth to become active agents of change in their communities and beyond. The youth, full of enthusiasm, energy and innovative ideas, contribute to all aspects of global development.

-Fr. Bento Rodrigues



INDEPENDENCE - A LIVING, EVOLVING STRUGGLE

- Tancia Pires

As we unfurl the tricolour and celebrate the triumph of 1947, it's worth asking - what does **independence** truly mean in 2025? Is it merely political freedom, or something far deeper and more personal to the people across India's diverse states?

Every morning in schools, every public celebration, every Independence Day ceremony begins with the same solemn reverence: "**Jana Gana Mana adhināyaka jaya he...**" Our National Anthem, a tribute to the soul of India - a nation unified in spirit, diverse in being, upholding the virtue of '*anekta mein ekta*' (Unity in diversity).

Jana-gana-mana-adhinayaka jaya he

Bharata-bhagya-vidhata.

Panjaba-Sindh-Gujarata-Maratha

Dravida-Utkala-Banga

Today, while India stands sovereign, each of her states continues its own quiet struggle - for social justice, economic equity, environmental stability, and cultural preservation. In **Punjab**, the land of warriors and wheat, the fight is against the silent epidemic of drug abuse and the ongoing agrarian crisis that shadows the glory of the Green Revolution. **Gujarat**, having the highest industrial output when compared to other states in India, is today grappling with drought-like conditions, unemployment and the like. **Bihar**, rich in intellect and history, battles the paradox of brain drain and poor infrastructure. **Kashmir**, wrapped in natural beauty and complex geopolitics, longs for peace that goes beyond ceasefires.

Northeastern states like Manipur and

Nagaland seek visibility, integration, and healing from decades of insurgency and underrepresentation. In **Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand**, tribal communities struggle to protect their land and way of life from the grip of industrial expansion. **Dravida** - the southern peninsula including states like **Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu** - fiercely guards its linguistic and cultural identity, even as it embraces progress. **Utkala**, a.k.a. Odisha (formerly Orissa), known for its rich heritage, culture, and beauty, falls prey to poverty and low standards of living today. **Maharashtra**, the economic powerhouse, juggles urban ambition and rural distress. And **Goa**, the jewel of the Orient, where today, the sun and sand mask the deeper concerns of ecological degradation and identity erosion amidst rapid commercialisation.

However, these are not signs of weakness, but of a nation in motion. Each state's battle today is a testament to democracy, where people's voices rise, resist, and reform.

Vindhya-Himachala-Yamuna-Ganga

Uchchhala-jaladhi-taranga

We've sung of the **Vindhyas** and the **Himalayas** that are ever so eternal and majestic. Yet today, the Himalayas are weighed down under the burden of unchecked construction, melting glaciers, altered precipitation, and increased risks of natural disasters like flash floods and landslides due to deforestation and drastic climate change. Our forests in the Vindhyas are falling to the axe of development.

We've sung of the **Yamuna** and **Ganga**, the





sacred rivers that cradle our civilisation. Yet they now flow choked with waste, caught between worship and neglect. The blue veins that carry the ashes of our dead are now becoming the breeding sources of several diseases due to the increasing pollution and unsustainable practices. We've sung of the roaring ocean waves - symbols of abundance and strength - while rising sea levels and eroding coasts now threaten the very shores we once glorified.

But to sing these lines in 2025 is not hypocrisy - it's a call to action. A reminder of the treasure we've inherited, and the duty we carry.

*Tava subha name jage, tava subhasisa mage
gahe tava jaya-gatha.*

*Jana-gana-mangala-dayaka jaya he Bharata-
bhagya-vidhata.*

These lines from our national anthem aren't just poetic - they're prophetic. They speak of our people awakened by the name of their nation, seeking her blessings, and singing of her glory.

As a music lover, this reminds me of my current obsession, Ed Sheeran's 2025 single "Sapphire," where he paints India not just as a place, but as a feeling, a vibrant, soul-deep sparkle amid the noise of the world. He sings of India's colours, its warmth, its contradictions, its brilliance. In his words, India becomes a gem - not perfect, but priceless. It becomes a Sapphire!! A gem that breathes vibrancy through its people, culture, traditions, food and beauty.

The anthem also speaks of **bhaagya vidhāta** - the dispenser of our destiny. But who holds that pen today? The people, or the powerful? We are not only addressing a higher force - we are also holding up a mirror to ourselves. We, the people, are now the dispensers of India's fate. Let this Independence Day be a reminder to us that patriotism is not performance, but keen participation.

*Jāya hē, jāya hē, jāya hē,
jāya jāya jāya jāya hē.*

And yet, even as we confront these

contradictions - between what we sing and what we see - there is another story unfolding. A quieter, often unnoticed story. The one that's not always headlined, but constantly happening. The story of Victory, Success, and Prosperity.

While states wrestle with their own battles, they are also rising in unique ways. Kerala, with its literacy and health models, has become a template for grassroots governance. Odisha's disaster preparedness has evolved from tragedy into textbook efficiency. Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh are leading the way in green energy transitions. Sikkim showed the country that organic farming isn't a dream, but a direction. Tamil Nadu's healthcare system, Maharashtra's start-up boom, Goa's focus on preserving heritage - each reflects a piece of India refusing to give up. There are stories of youth rewriting narratives - coding in Kashmir, creating art in Assam, running climate movements in Delhi, reviving indigenous crafts in Jharkhand. Women leading panchayats. Tribes reclaiming languages. Farmers innovating with technology. Migrants becoming entrepreneurs.

These are not exceptions; this is evidence of a living, breathing democracy. The India we are becoming may not always mirror the anthem's ideal, but it is also not standing still. It is inching forward, although through contradictions, but also through grit and conviction.

So, this Independence Day, as we sing the anthem and salute the flag, let us also remember that Freedom is not just what we received. It is what we must continue to fight for, state by state, soul by soul. Let us not just sing with empty pride, but with honesty and an earnest resolve to live up to the anthem we've known by heart all our lives.



Tancia Pires, who hails from the scenic state of Goa, is currently pursuing her Ph.D. degree at the Manipal Academy of Higher Education. She is passionate about literature, performing arts, music and singing.



DO MIRACLES NECESSARILY CONVERT?

-Fr. Fio Mascarenhas, SJ

Let us start by looking at a very interesting revelation of Jesus about a dead rich man who (hypothetically) goes to “hell.” This man tries to “intercede” on behalf of his five (very selfish) brothers on earth, asking that they be converted through a miracle! But he is told by Abraham: *‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ He replied, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead’* (Lk 16:19-31)!

From this, we must conclude that miracles do not necessarily lead to conversion and new faith! Remember also that Jesus said: *“This generation... seeks a sign, but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of Jonah”* (Lk 11:29). And very importantly, Jesus said to Thomas, *“Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe”* (Jn 20:29). Of course, a few miracles of healing (through the intercession of Mary and the saints) are still occasionally worked by the Holy Spirit, which at times have led some people to new faith.

There is the famous case of **Dr. Alexis Carrel** of the Lyons Medical University (he later won the Nobel Prize for medicine in 1912). He went in 1903 to the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes as an unbeliever and ex-Catholic, in order to study *“psychological improvements in health that are easily explained by the mass hysteria accompanying emotional demonstrations of faith.”* He declared: *“If a truly organic cure took place, it would be different. If this woman was cured, I would believe.”*

‘This woman’ was Marie Ferrand, who was in the same compartment of the Lourdes Pilgrims’ Train that Carrel had travelled in from Paris. She was in the last stages of tubercular peritonitis, the hard mass of fluid in her stomach bulging ominously. Several times on the train journey she passed out

and Dr. Carrel gave her morphine injections. He angrily jotted in his notebook that religion became fanaticism when it dragged dying patients like Ferrand halfway across France in the heat of summer – only for them to die in greater misery! But, he added, *“she will not be cured!”*

In Lourdes, he tried unsuccessfully to prevent the unconscious woman being taken to the outdoor blessing of the sick. But though by now half dead, she was carried to the procession, where the Bishop blessed her with the Eucharist, and lo and behold, her death pallor left her face! When the swollen stomach flattened out, Carrel later wrote, he thought he was going mad. He accompanied her back to the hospital, where several other doctors examined her carefully, and declared that “the pathetic patient of several hours before was **fully cured.**” Carrel had witnessed a physical miracle, the very one he said could not happen, but *“still he could not believe.”*

He argued with himself for hours that maybe there was something in the air at Lourdes that could be responsible for the cure, as yet unknown to science. But no, he realized, that’s rubbish! No hitherto unknown substance could selectively cure just one of the crowd, turning scientific laws of medicine topsy-turvy in the process. Was some other explanation possible? His mind and emotions thrashed about without rest.

It was late that same night, and Carrel was as confused as when he first saw the woman physically healed. Then, a group of pilgrims passed him singing to the Virgin and entered the Lourdes Rosary Basilica. He too entered the church and sat on a chair at the back. For the first time since school days, he prayed. *“Gentle Virgin ... take unto thyself this uneasy sinner with a troubled heart and intellectual pride ... who has a dream of believing in thee and of loving God with the shining spirit of the*





men of God.” He then walked out into the night “absorbed in prayer,” and found that **his prayer was answered!**

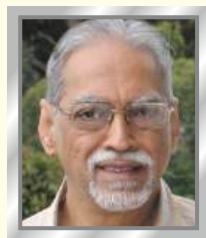
Returning to his hotel room, Carrel took out his notebook and concluded his observations: “*All preoccupations with theories, and intellectual doubts, have vanished. Beneath the Holy Virgin's hand has come ... certitude.*” It was now 3 a.m. and enfolded in a peace that banished doubt, he slept like a child. (This experience at Lourdes is told in his slim volume, *Journey to Lourdes*, a book that soon went into many languages).

Dr. Carrel made no progress in the ancient human dilemma – is the supernatural real? – until he prayed with a real desire to know, and with humility. God, through Mary, solved his dilemma. As with St. Peter, the first disciple to proclaim that Jesus was the Son of God (Mt.16:13-17), so too Jesus could say to Carrel, “***It was not flesh and blood (i.e. human thinking and cleverness) that revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.***” God reveals himself, we don't figure him all out by ourselves. Hence, Vatican II declared significantly: “***Human beings must have the grace of God, the interior helps of the Holy Spirit, to move and assist them, before they can exercise faith***” (*Dei Verbum*, n.5).

Yes, faith is a gift! But it can only be received with a childlike spirit! A miracle alone cannot automatically result in faith. One must personally

reflect on the miraculous happening in prayer, and allow the Holy Spirit to breathe faith into one's inner self, for faith is not just belief in some theoretical proposition, but a Spirit-led “***assurance of things hoped for, and conviction of things not seen***” (Heb.11:1). Frequent *Lectio Divina* is the most favourite means of the Spirit to bring us true faith daily, in an ongoing way throughout life! “***Faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ***” (Rom 10:17). We can also claim that faith is, in practice, the most important spiritual gift of God to us human beings. That is why the New Testament assures us, “***This is the victory that conquers the world, our faith***” (1Jn 5:4).

As we celebrate in August 2025 the feast of Mary's Assumption into heavenly glory, and also the feasts of Sts. John Vianney, Sts. Monica and Augustine, the Martyrdom of John the Baptist, and of other heroic saints who received and put into practice “the gift of Faith,” let us pray daily for ourselves and for our Church struggling in today's Modern World, that many (or all of us) will also become “holy heroes” of Faith.



Dr. Fr. Fiorello Mascarenhas, SJ recently celebrated his Sacerdotal Golden Jubilee and has his 29th book **WOMAN, BEHOLD YOUR SON!** published. His contact: frfiomas@gmail.com

AGNEL CO-OPERATORS

You can join the Ashram Family by becoming a member of Agnel Co-operators and enjoy the fruits of a Special Sunday Mass offered at Fr. Agnel Ashram, Bandra, for all the members. You will also enjoy the fruits of all the prayers and good works of the Agnel Ashram Fathers and entire Agnel Ashram Family.

MEMBERSHIP

Ordinary Member

Individual	: Rs. 100/-
Family	: Rs. 500/-

Special Member

Individual	: Rs. 500/-
Family	: Rs. 1000/-
Benefactors	: Rs. 3000/-
Patrons	: Rs. 5000/-

Please contact:

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



CHRISTIAN HOSPITALITY

- Ninette D'Souza

As we celebrate the Assumption of Our Lady on 15th August, Blessed Virgin Mary teaches us to find a balance in life and more importantly to let our hearts beat for Jesus with single minded love for God.

"When we walk without the Cross, when we build without the Cross, and when we confess Christ without the Cross, we are not disciples of the Lord: we are worldly, we are bishops, priests, cardinals, popes.

The first thing that God said to Abraham was: Walk in my presence and be without reproach. We need to be living stones, anointed by the Holy Spirit in order to build up the Church, the bride of Christ, on that cornerstone which is the Lord himself. We can walk as much as we wish, we can build many things, but if we do not confess Jesus Christ, it is no good. We will become a humanitarian NGO, but not the Church." - adapted from late Pope Francis' first homily, March 14, 2013.



What does this message have to do with Christian hospitality? Let's ask ourselves another question - Who is my neighbour? The answer to this may vary depending on the location one lives in and the culture one comes from. Your neighbour could be someone with whom you share a property border, many of whom you make brief eye contact with throughout the day, anybody in the 60 apartments of the complex you live in. In response to this question found exclusively in the gospel of Luke 10:29, Jesus told the teacher of the law, the parable of the Good Samaritan, from which we gather that, 'a neighbour is anyone with whom we come into contact; whose needs we can meet'. In the parable Jesus not only gives us a picture of who qualifies as a neighbour but also how to connect with them, because our neighbours too have needs, just as we do.

Often, we can be blind to something profoundly

important. We can love and serve those far away yet fail to acknowledge with a simple hello, a nod of the head or a handwave, our actual neighbours - the ones who live on either side of us, above and below us. I would go so far as to say that we often don't even know our next-door neighbours or the first thing about them. We might be guilty of not recognizing them as our neighbours if we chanced upon them at the grocery store or worse still in church!

In Mt 22:37-40, Jesus clearly calls us to love God and our neighbour. Christianity is not about being a solo artist as Fr. Warner D'Souza deftly puts it. We are a Church, a Community. Christ didn't work like superman taking care of everyone all by himself. He chose humans to be his hands and feet, mouths and hearts. Loving God and our neighbours is Christianity at its core. It's the essentials, the basics. Christian hospitality is a posture of the heart which involves being emotionally, physically,

spiritually open to strangers.

"Seeing" in the kingdom of God is of utmost importance. Jesus is very specific in Mt 6:22-23 "Your eye is like a lamp..." Seeing our neighbour is the first step in loving them. If we find ourselves failing to do so and most of us would be guilty of this, no need to berate ourselves because, I do believe that we don't avoid our neighbours or avert our eyes intentionally.

I think we simply fail to notice them or stop to consider how God might already be at work in their lives as He is in ours. These human beings made in the image and likeness of God recede into the background of our lives, like unnoticed scenery that is taken for granted. Most of us are gladly offering our time, energy, resources, prayer support to our regional; global neighbours and maybe to our parish community. And some others including



myself, while loving all sorts of people (including people online) fail to show love to our closest neighbours, conceivably even family members.

How do we make loving others a priority in a fast-paced world? It's easy to rush past people on our way to something, somewhere or someone else and is the most likely reason for us failing to love our neighbours. Saying 'I don't want to get involved' sounds trite coming from a Christian. Christian hospitality is not about fancy dinners and great impressions. It's about humbling our hearts and being open to meeting people where they are. It's what Christ did for us and we are privileged to follow His example. It will be uncomfortable at first but once we get accustomed to opening the doors of our homes and hearts to others, we open the door to unexpected blessings.

Spending time with our neighbours breaks down barriers and helps usher in Christ's Kingdom. Getting to know one another allows us to humanize each other. We are reminded that each one of us has a rich emotional life, that leads us into much struggle, something we share in common. Loving our neighbour keeps us from negative knee-jerk reactions or automatically attributing wrong motives to them. For example, we may find out if we try, that the woman next door is always yelling (according to us) at her ageing father because he is hard of hearing and not because she is rude and insensitive. There are so many of our neighbours who have chronic illnesses, who are battling the effects of ageing, have more bad days than good.

Several seniors believe their lives are meaningless because they can no longer contribute in the same ways they used to when younger and healthier. Praying for them and with them for the needs of the Church makes them feel worthwhile. Encouraging them with phone calls and brief visits with fruits or a home cooked dish says 'We love you' in a way the three words could never express, especially when they feel they have become a burden to family/society. When we get into such interactions, we're tempted to take pride that we're the ones providing the benefit, the help, the care our neighbours need; while in fact, it is we who receive the blessings. Expect God to show up in the faces of your neighbours.

Why does being kind matter so much? Because everyday we pass people who are silently falling

apart. You can't see the heart break, the exhaustion, the battle they're fighting behind closed doors. But they're out there. Everywhere. And sometimes the smallest act of kindness might be the only warmth they feel all day.

Each morning, we wake up to choices. How will we shine our little light? What will we share with those around us? What energy / positivity will we bring into the world? Let our choices be good, let them be true. They have eternal consequences. Just as Jesus called his disciples and after giving them His authority, sent them out as apostles, by our baptism we too are disciples.

All disciples are called to be apostles. We have the power to heal hearts, bring a smile to someone's face, make someone laugh, especially those who have lost a loved one, who are going through the pain of broken relationships. There are no self-made Christians, just needy, weary, tired ones who are looking for hearts like the one of Jesus. The Lord calls each one of us by name to mission as labourers just as he called the twelve. Our answer has to be **YES**. In Jesus' chosen 12, we don't find perfect candidates, so we're in good company. \

Jesus Christ doesn't ask for much, just that we willingly offer something that we can do. Read Mt 9:38. He didn't ask us to pray for **vocations** to the harvest. He asked us to pray for **labourers**. So, we're all called to labour.

The gospel cannot be preached sitting on a chair, the kingdom of God cannot be spread from a pulpit. It will bear fruit from the hands-on experience of living the good news. Sadly, we have lost the culture of community values. Jesus gave us freely his peace, love and support in our storms. We are called now to freely give the same to others.



Ninette D'Souza is a prolific writer and retired teacher of Math and Science at Canossa High School, Mahim. She is also the author of Lamplighter and Lamplighter 2.0.



CATHOLIC CHURCH'S TEACHINGS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

-Tony Menezes

"Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and destitute" (Psalm 82:3).

In today's world the phrase 'social justice' is somehow associated with protests, debates and is one of the main topics of conversation on social media. But what does it really mean? And most importantly, what does the Catholic Church actually teach about social justice? For many, the term may sound like a political catchword. But for us Catholics, social justice is not optional but rooted in or faith.

Justice, love and mercy form the tenets of Christianity. The broadest statement Jesus made on this topic was to tell us to love our neighbours as ourselves (Matthew 22:39). In Luke 14:12-14, Jesus encourages his disciples to invite those who are needy to their feasts.

At the heart of Catholic teaching is a simple truth: every person is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). This means that every individual, regardless of gender, race, ability, belief, or social status has inherent dignity and the right to be treated with respect and love. This is the reason why the Church is against anything that exploits or degrades human life, be it abortion, racism, human trafficking or poverty.

In the words of Pope John Paul II: "The church does not propose economic and political systems and programmes, nor does the church show preference to one or the other, provided that human dignity is properly respected and promoted, and the church is allowed the room to exercise its role in the world."

The church's view on social justice is grounded in the belief that God's righteousness and love should be manifest in all aspects of society. This involves taking care of the vulnerable, championing for the

oppressed and striving for a just and inclusive world while keeping in mind the fundamental dignity of every human being.

Some actions of the church in promoting social justice include *advocacy* - speaking up against injustice, lobbying for policies that promote equality, and working to dismantle structural barriers, *direct action* - providing food, shelter, healthcare and other essential services to those in need, *education* - spreading literacy and creating awareness about social justice issues among the poor and *community organising* - empowering

ostracised communities to fight for their rights and participate in decision-making processes.

The Church aims to avoid aligning itself with any particular political ideology, instead focusing on principles derived from faith and scripture. The Church's view on social justice is varied and is rooted in faith, that calls for an effort to build a more just and caring world. Each individual is created in God's image and

therefore deserve respect and just treatment. It is important to bear in mind that besides promoting social justice, the church also warns its flock of divine justice.

At the very heart of the teachings of Christ is justice to all. From the Old Testament to Jesus' life in the New Testament, God's heart for the weak and defenseless is unique. Jesus demonstrated a consistent and profound compassion for the poor and the weak, actively looking out for them, associating with them, and offering them hope and salvation. His teachings and actions emphasised love, service and preferential option for the marginalised, challenging the social norms of His time.

Seeking social justice may involve delving into





topics like human trafficking, rights of workers and other social issues, but when we meditate on what the Bible says, justice goes beyond a single cause. A Biblical view of justice teaches us to look to God's standard of right or wrong. It is about striving to adopt a lifestyle of Christlikeness in the way we see and serve others.

Social justice is an extension of God's love and work in protecting and defending those that cannot defend themselves. We should remember that God promises all those that pursue justice and extend their hands and hearts to the needy will be blessed and will lack nothing. It is blessed to give than to receive - "Blessed are they who maintain justice, who constantly do what is right" – Psalm 106.3.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED? To begin with, we can start by educating ourselves on Catholic Social Teaching then actively participate in initiatives that align with those teachings. Most importantly, we should remember that justice begins with a change of heart. It is all about changing lives starting with our own. It is not just limited to change of policies

and perspectives. We can contribute by praying for peace and justice and by reading and learning the teachings of the church, understanding church's Social Doctrine.

We can also volunteer our services at shelters, speak up for those who do not have a voice and are socially marginalized, and treat every person with dignity. Justice is love in action. The church's teaching on social justice is not marginal but a Gospel essential - it is not something abstract. As Catholics, we are called not just to believe, but to build the Kingdom of God here on earth.



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



There is no Joy Greater than the Joy of GIVING

Vanessa Theresa D'Souza, Dadar

I am pleased to donate an amount of Rs. 10,000 through a cheque for the well-being of the Balbhavan boys. Founded in 1957, Fr. Agnel Ashram has been serving the marginalised sections of society, for nearly seven decades.

Geeta Naik, Mumbai

As a thanksgiving to Ven. Fr. Agnel, I have contributed an amount of Rs. 5,000 via cheque for the daily requirements of the Balbhavan boys. They are growing into being responsible citizens of tomorrow.

Rija Anna Francis, Kayamkulam, Kerala

It gives me great joy to make my monthly contribution of Rs. 2000 via NEFT for Balbhavan. Besides studies, the boys are developing their skills in elocution, music, painting, sports and more.

Dr. Niket Shastri, Anand, Gujarat

I am donating an amount of Rs. 5000 via NEFT towards the education of a Balbhavan boy. Whenever I am in Mumbai, I make it a point to visit Fr. Agnel Ashram in Bandra Bandstand.

Harold Charles Mascarenhas, Mumbai

My contribution of Rs. 7000 is towards the medical, education, food and other expenses, for the Balbhavan boys. It is good to see the enthusiasm and team spirit of the boys.

Prescilla Sequeira, Mumbai

We are pleased to sponsor an amount of Rs. 2000 towards the welfare of Balbhavan boys. The Fr. Agnel Ashram Fathers are contributing towards the betterment of the community.

Fransquinha Fernandes, Andheri, Mumbai

I am pleased to contribute an amount of Rs. 1250 through UPI, as a monthly sponsorship for a Balbhavan boy. I am looking forward to the Fun Fair, organised by the little Agnelite angels, the Balbhavan children in September, at Fr. Agnel Ashram, Bandra.

Francis Dinesh Fernando, Mahim, Mumbai

I am donating an amount of Rs. 2000 through UPI, in support for the works of charity at Fr. Agnel Balbhavan.



AGNEL HAPPENINGS

Ambernath

Fr. Agnel Multipurpose School and Jr. College, Ambernath, celebrates International Yoga Day

Fr. Agnel Multipurpose School and Jr. College, Ambernath, came together to celebrate a day that connects our body, mind, and soul – **International Yoga Day**, on 21st June, 2025.

Students of the Primary and Secondary Sections took part in this event with great energy and joy. The day was marked with 30-minute Yoga Sessions for all age groups.

The programme began with meditation and *Surya Mudra*, which helped the students relax and get ready for the Yoga activities, followed by breathing exercises like *Anulom Vilom Kriya* with *Vishnu Mudra*.

Asanas are physical postures practiced in Yoga which help in reducing stress, increasing focus and improving overall health. Students performed seven different asanas such as *Vakrasana*, *Setu Bandhasana* known as Bridge Pose, *Vrikshasana*, followed by *Suryanamaskar* which is a full body exercise that benefits both the body and the mind. A few students performed artistic Yoga poses.



Students practising yoga on International Yoga Day.

The guest for this special event was **Ms. Janhvi Paryani**, who is a dedicated yoga instructor. She taught students stretching exercises and gave information about Asanas and Mantras. The sessions were both relaxing and educational, helping students understand the benefits of Yoga.

Another special guest, **Ms. Sumanjeet Kaur Assi**, a dedicated yoga practitioner who embodies the essence of yoga in her daily life, inspired both students and teachers alike with her demonstrations. She emphasised the importance of yoga in achieving physical, mental and emotional well-being.

The celebration of International Yoga Day was a beautiful reminder of the importance of incorporating wellness practices into our daily routines and left everyone feeling rejuvenated.



AGNEL HAPPENINGS

Pune

Fr. Agnel's Vidyankur School, Pune, celebrates Society Day and inauguration of 'Fr. Agnel Music School'

Fr. Agnel's Vidyankur School, Pune, celebrated the 'Society Day' on the 2nd of July 2025. On the same day, Fr. Agnel Music School was also inaugurated by the Chief Guest, professional guitarist Ashley Quiney, who is a renowned teacher of classical, jazz, rock and pop music.



Inauguration of Fr. Agnel Music School.

The programme began with a special prayer for all Pilar Fathers. The President and Speaker of the Senior and Junior Parliament felicitated Rev. Fr. Aleixo Luis, Director of Fr. Agnel's Vidyankur School, Rev. Fr. Peter D'Mello and Rev. Fr. Saturnino Mascarenhas.

The music school teachers put up a scintillating performance, along with the theme song which was led by the Director of Fr. Agnel Music School, Rev. Fr. Saturnino Mascarenhas. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks and distribution of sweets to all the students.



Theme song performance by the music teachers.



BANDRA'S INTERNATIONAL HOCKEY STARS CONTRIBUTE BACK TO THE GAME

- Sunil D'Cruz

On the occasion of the National Sports Day on 29th August, 2025, we take a look at Bandra, the queen of suburban Mumbai, known for its hockey internationals, and the place where Fr. Agnel Ashram is located.

It's good to see some of India's former hockey stalwarts giving back to the game, post retirement. It's heart-warming to see India's former field hockey player, Marcellus Gomes, who represented India at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, coaching budding youngsters in hockey at the St. Stanislaus International School Astroturf, every weekday morning.



Olympian Marcellus Gomes

Going down memory lane, the passion for hockey in Bandra goes down to the time when schoolboy wonder Francis D'Mello was still a student at Bandra's St. Stanislaus High School when selected to represent India at the 1971 World Cup Hockey Tournament in Barcelona, Spain.

Hockey stars like Leo Pinto, Cedric Pereira, Joaquim Carvalho, Marcellus Gomes, Darryl D'Souza, John Fernandes, Iqbaljeet Singh Grewal, Kulwant Singh Arora, and Puran Singh, hailed from the happening suburb of Bandra.

Leo Pinto, was the goalkeeper hero of the team winning the hockey gold (independent India's first) at London's 1948 Summer Olympics. The other prominent goalkeepers of international repute were

Cedric Pereira who played for India in the 1971 and 1973 World Cups and Diago D'Souza of St. Theresa's High School, Bandra.

Former India hockey captain and coach, Joaquim Carvalho, who represented India at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, is now involved in organising hockey tournaments. The Arjuna Award winner was also one of the successful Indian coaches, having led India to gold at the Asia Cup 2007.



Hockey legends Mervyn Fernandis (left) and Joaquim Carvalho (right).

Hockey legend Mervyn Fernandis, a three-time Olympian, and an Olympic gold medallist at the 1980 Moscow Olympics, is also involved in organising an annual hockey tournament, in memory of his late father Joe Fernandis, in Bandra.

Both Joaquim Carvalho and Mervyn Fernandis are also supporting the hockey program in Goa, at Fr. Agnel Technical Education Complex at Verna, Goa. It aims to introduce young students to hockey, during their physical training (PT) periods.

Viren Rasquinha, the former captain and successful half-back in the Indian hockey team who participated in the 2004 Athens Olympics, was involved with commentary during the recently held Olympic Games in Paris.



Olympian Darryl D'Souza.

Shiv Chhatrapati award winner Darryl D'Souza competed at the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona, Spain. Darryl is also a silver medallist in the Asian Games, Beijing, 1990. A Bandra boy from Carter Road, he is now a mentor and helps in promoting hockey for the Savio Hockey Foundation, Andheri (East).



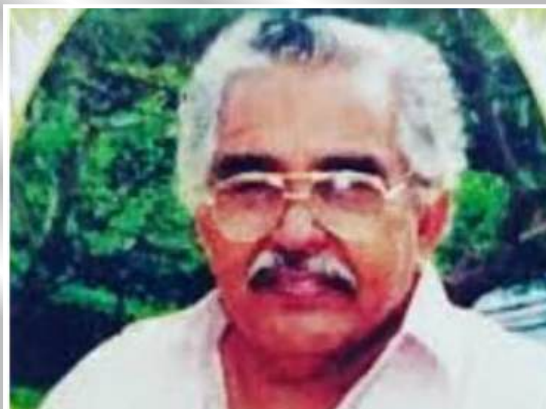
Shiv Chhatrapati Award winner John Fernandes who still plays in the Veteran's category.

Hillary Gomes, Cedric D'Souza, Reginald Pereira, Adolf Colaco and Prakash Noronha are other recognisable names for those interested in hockey.

Bandra girls too have made a mark in international hockey. Angela D'Sa, Sybill D'Mello, Fiona Fernandes and Donita D'Mello were among the star women hockey players. Dyan Chand award-winner Mary D'Souza Sequiera of St Joseph's Convent School, Bandra, was one of India's first female Olympians at the 1952 Helsinki Olympics and raised funds for her own flight ticket.

Bandra girl Jemimah Rodrigues started playing both hockey and cricket, before donning the India colours in international cricket. She is happy to encourage and share tips with budding talent.

Bandra witnessed the Sir Hyacinth Nazareth Memorial hockey tournament in August 2024, in memory of his relentless dedication to developing hockey in Mumbai, particularly at the St. Andrew's School Grounds, Bandra.



Illustrious hockey coach Oliver Andrade.

One can never forget coach Sir Oliver Andrade's immense contribution to the development of hockey internationals in Bandra. His commitment to people's fitness led him to develop Jogger's Park in Bandra, from a garbage dump!



Sunil D'Cruz is on the Editorial Team of *Fr. Agnel Ashram News*. He has contributed articles to several national and international publications.



MIRACLES OF SAINT ANTHONY - PART III

-Jacqueline Kelly

In this concluding part, we look at the miracles of Saint Anthony of Padua, the gentlest and kindest of all saints.

The Resurrection of Little Thomas

One day, a mother left her house, while her young son, Tommasino was playing alone. Upon her return, she found the child drowned in a water-filled tub. In despair, the mother immediately called for Saint Anthony, promising to offer as much bread as her child's weight if he was brought back to life. The saintly monk resurrected the boy and the mother kept her promise. The tradition of asking for a child's healing by promising to offer the child's weight in bread continues to this day.

The Consoler of Mothers

While in Brives, a poor woman attended Saint Anthony's sermon, leaving her child unattended. Upon her return, she discovered her child unharmed after falling into boiling water.

In another incident, a mother found her infant dead in the cradle after leaving him alone to hear the sermon. She informed Saint Anthony, who assured her, "Your son lives." Returning home, she found her baby alive and playing with other children.

The Sermon to the Fish

One day, as Saint Anthony was preaching in Rimini, the people paid no attention to the sermon and did not even seem to see the monk. Anthony walked to the mouth of the Marecchia River where it flows into the Adriatic and called out to the fish. "Since men do not want to hear the Word of God, it is to you that I will preach." Then, thousands of fish pushed their heads out of the surface of the water and wriggled to show their joy at listening to the Word of God. The people were deeply moved by Saint Anthony's words and returned to the Church.

The Eucharistic Miracle of the Mule

A heretic once challenged Saint Anthony, asking him to prove through a miracle the real presence of Jesus in the Host. A hungry mule was brought forward, with its fodder on one side and the Holy Eucharist on the other. Ignoring its meal, the animal knelt before the consecrated Host. The heretic converted immediately.

The Miraculous Spring

Religious brothers begged the Franciscan Priest to find water near their monastery. As soon as Anthony began to pray, clear and abundant water sprang forth at his feet. People came to draw water from this miraculous spring and many healings took place.

Aleardino's Glass

One day a knight called Aleardino da Salvaterra

arrived in Padua. Whilst dining, his tablemates started telling him with great enthusiasm of the many miracles performed by Saint Anthony. Aleardino emptied his glass and said, "If he whom you consider to be a Saint will prevent this glass from breaking when it hits the ground, I will believe everything you are telling me about him." He then threw the glass on the floor with all his strength and quite unbelievably, the glass did not break. The hard tiles broke instead of the glass. Aleardino believed and was converted.

Violent Husband

There was a Knight in Tuscany who was noted for his nobility and wealth but easily gave way to outbursts of anger. His wife, a virtuous lady, probably replied to him harshly and he was overcome with rage. He kicked her, punched her and stabbed her leaving her at the point of death.

The Knight began to regret his behaviour and ran to Saint Anthony, who was living in the city and begged him to come and help his wife. The Saint knelt down, asking God to give the dying woman life and health. When Anthony prayed, she rose up and was well again.

A Messenger from Hell Unmasked

While Saint Anthony was delivering his sermon at Puy, a sudden interruption occurred when a messenger appeared amidst the congregation. The messenger announced to a lady that her son had been brutally murdered by his enemies. Anthony silenced the crowd and comforted the distraught mother by assuring her that her son was in good health. Saint Anthony revealed that the messenger was none other than the devil in disguise who had only come to disrupt the sermon. The messenger vanished and Saint Anthony warned the crowd about the tactics employed by the devil.

An Extraordinary Prophecy

During his stay in Puy, he encountered a lawyer who led an immoral life. Each time, they crossed path, Saint Anthony would uncover his head and bow to the lawyer. This gesture annoyed the lawyer and he threatened to harm him.

Saint Anthony clarified that his intention was never to insult the lawyer. In fact, he was acknowledging him as a future glorious martyr.

A Bishop embarked on a journey to Palestine to convert the Saracens and driven by a divine impulse, the lawyer followed him. He was overwhelmed with a desire to convert the infidels. He began preaching on Christianity and exposing the wickedness of Mahometanism. The fanatics were enraged and captured the lawyer who was tortured for three days and martyred. As he faced



death, he revealed to those present how Saint Anthony had prophesized his fate.

A Broken Goblet and Running Barrel

During the autumn of A.D.1226 the Vicar General of the Franciscan Order, Brother Elias summoned all the Superiors from different Provinces to attend a meeting for the election of a new leader after the death of Saint Francis of Assisi. Saint Anthony accompanied by one of his brethren decided to stop on the way to Italy.

During their stay, they were hosted by a kind woman. She borrowed a beautiful cut glass goblet from her neighbour for them to drink their wine. Unfortunately, Saint Anthony's companion accidentally broke the goblet whilst examining it.

Secondly, the hostess forgot to close the tap of the wine barrel, causing all the wine to spill out. Distressed by these incidents, Saint Anthony bowed his head in prayer, and to the amazement of the woman, the broken pieces of the goblet were joined together without any trace of damage.

The hostess rushed to the cellar and discovered that the barrel, which was half-empty, was filled with the most delicious wine.

Consoler of Persecuted Women

A woman who held the Franciscan Friars in high esteem suffered greatly at the hands of her jealous husband. One evening, after completing her chores and purchasing items for the Friars, she realized it was too late to bring them to the monastery that night. So, she took the items home with her. This infuriated her husband who in a fit of rage pulled out her hair. The woman was in pain. She collected her hair and wrote a letter, pleading Saint Anthony to visit her the following day. Saint Anthony requested his fellow brethren to pray for this woman. Their prayers were answered. Her pain vanished and her head was once again adorned with hair as if nothing had happened. This miracle led to the conversion of her husband and turned him into a benefactor of the monastery.

The Carved Capon

Saint Anthony was invited to dinner by a group of heretics with the intention to mock him for his supposed foolishness. As they sat down to eat, a large bat, which is found in Sicily, was presented to him and he was asked to carve it. Saint Anthony without any hesitation began to carve the bat causing the heretics to laugh. Their laughter quickly turned to astonishment, as the pitiful bird transformed into a magnificent Capon [domestic cock flattened for eating] filling the room with a delightful aroma. This miraculous event led to the conversion of the heretics and they embraced the Church.

Zeal for the Word of God

During Lent, a rich lady, dressed in fancy clothes, was on her way to hear Saint Anthony's sermon. She wasn't paying attention and fell into a dirty pool. She thought she would be covered in mud, but

miraculously, her clothes were clean when she got out. This was a miracle.

Saint Anthony's humility and devotion to God led to miracles which clearly indicate that God's protection is always present for those who seek Him and the importance of faith and prayer.

Saint's Sermon is heard at a distance

A woman longed to hear Saint Anthony's sermon but was unable to do so as she was living an hour away from the Church. Unable to find solace, she stepped onto the balcony, leaning on the railings and gazed longingly in the direction of the Preacher's sermon.

To her surprise, she began to hear every word that Saint Anthony preached, as if she was inside the Church. She hurriedly ran to her husband and pleaded with him to listen. The sick husband too heard the sermon clearly. They asked their neighbour about the topic of the sermon in order to confirm the miracle and that it was not their imagination. They then shared their miraculous experience.

Cure of a Paralyzed Child

After Saint Anthony's sermon, a desperate man cradling his daughter with paralyzed feet approached Saint Anthony. She could not walk and also suffered from violent epileptic fits. He knelt before Saint Anthony and pleaded for his blessings.

Upon returning home, the father gently placed his child on the ground, supporting her with the rail of a bench. To his astonishment, she took a few steps and soon discarded the stick. She ran freely around the room, completely healed.

Martyr's Death Predicted

Saint Anthony foretold a woman in Assisi that her soon-to-be born son would face martyrdom, a prophecy that came true. The son, named Philip, became a Franciscan Friar and was sent to Asia, which had been taken back from the Christians by the Saracens. Despite being tortured, in order to renounce Christianity for Islam, Philip stood firm in his faith. Along with other Christians whom he inspired, he was beheaded for his beliefs.

God continues to work miracles through the intercession of Saint Anthony.

Pope Francis said, "Miracles still happen today. But to allow the Lord to carry them out we must pray with courage to overcome that 'feeling of disbelief' that dwells in the heart of every person, even in people of faith. Prayer works miracles, but we must believe it."

Jacqueline Kelly is a regular contributor of articles to different publications.



ELIJAH: PROPHET OF FIRE AND FAITH

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

Elijah, whose name means "My God is Yahweh," is one of the most significant prophets in the Old Testament. Renowned for his unwavering faith, dramatic miracles, and zealous defense of monotheism, Elijah's life, filled with divine encounters and challenges, offers profound lessons for believers. This article explores key moments in Elijah's life, his vision, mission, successes, failures, and his lasting impact in the Bible.

Key Moments in Elijah's Life

Elijah first appears in the Bible in 1 Kings 17:1, introducing himself to King Ahab with a bold proclamation of a coming drought, a punishment for Israel's idolatry. During the drought, Elijah went into hiding and was miraculously fed by ravens and water from a brook. When the brook dried up, he travelled north to Zarephath in Sidon, where he encountered a poor widow on the brink of death. Through God's miraculous intervention, the widow and her son had enough to eat and drink during the drought (1 Kings 17:8-16). Later, when the widow's son died, Elijah revived him through fervent prayer (1 Kings 17:17-24).

One of Elijah's famous confrontations occurred on Mount Carmel. He challenged the prophets of Baal to a test of divine power, asking them to call upon Baal to light a sacrificial fire. When their prayers went unanswered, Elijah prepared his sacrifice, poured water over it, and called upon Yahweh. Fire consumed the sacrifice, proving Yahweh's supremacy (1 Kings 18:20-39).

Elijah said, "How long will you go limping with two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him" (1 Kings 18:21). This powerful statement challenged the people to make a definitive choice in their worship and allegiance, emphasizing the importance of wholehearted devotion to the true God.

Vision and Mission

Elijah's vision was to restore the worship of Yahweh in Israel and turn the hearts of the people back to God. His mission involved confronting idolatry, the worship of Baal, promoted by King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. Elijah's ministry spanned from 865 to 850 BC. It was characterized by courage to stand against corrupt leadership and his dedication to truth.

Elijah's successes were numerous

Drought and Rain: His prediction of drought and subsequent prayer for rain demonstrated his close relationship with God and the power of his intercession (1 Kings 17:1, 18:41-45).

Defeating Baal Prophets: The victory on Mount Carmel was a monumental success, leading to the execution of the false prophets and a temporary revival of faith among the Israelites (1 Kings 18:40).

Elijah also faced failures and moments of weakness
Despair and Isolation: After Jezebel threatened his life, Elijah succumbed to fear and despondency, fleeing into the wilderness and expressing a desire to die (1 Kings 19:3-4). Despite his profound faith, he experienced human frailty, feeling isolated and overwhelmed.



His life teaches several lessons

Elijah was a defender of monotheism and demonstration of God's power.

Faith and Obedience: Elijah's unwavering faith and obedience, even in the face of danger, exemplify true devotion to God.

Prayer: His powerful prayer life, evidenced in the miracles he performed, underscores the importance of earnest and persistent prayer (James 5:17-18).

God's Presence: The encounter at Horeb, where God spoke to

Elijah in a gentle whisper, reminds believers that God's presence can be found in stillness and quietness, not just in dramatic events (1 Kings 19:11-12).

Relevance in the Biblical Narrative

Elijah is a pivotal figure in the Old Testament, representing the prophets' collective voice calling Israel to repentance. His life bridges the period of the divided kingdom, highlighting the tension between true worship and idolatry. Elijah's ministry culminated with his ascent to heaven in a whirlwind, signifying his unique status among the prophets (2 Kings 2:1-11).

In the New Testament he appears at the Transfiguration of Jesus alongside Moses, symbolizing the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 17:1-3). John the Baptist is often associated with Elijah, fulfilling the prophecy that Elijah would return to prepare the way for the Messiah (Malachi 4:5-6, Matthew 11:14).



Conclusion

Elijah's life, filled with fervour, miracles, and moments of despair, remains a profound source of inspiration. His strong commitment to God's mission, his powerful prayer life, and his role in biblical history highlight his enduring relevance. Elijah's story encourages believers to maintain faith, seek God's presence in all circumstances, and stand firm against challenges, knowing that God's power and presence are ever near.

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

BIBLE QUIZ ON PROPHET ELIJAH

1) Who was the king of Israel during the time of Elijah?

- a) David
- b) Solomon
- c) Ahab

2) What punishment did Elijah predict would happen to Israel?

- a) Flood
- b) Drought
- c) Earthquake

3) Who fed Elijah during the drought?

- a) Angels
- b) Ravens
- c) Shepherds

4) Where did Elijah go after the brook dried up?

- a) Egypt
- b) Jericho
- c) Zarephath

5) Who did Elijah help in Zarephath?

- a) A rich merchant
- b) A poor widow
- c) A shepherd

6) Where did Elijah challenge the prophets of Baal?

- a) Mount Sinai
- b) Mount Carmel
- c) Mount Tabor

7) How many prophets of Baal did Elijah face on Mount Carmel?

- a) 450
- b) 300
- c) 200

8) What did Elijah pour over his sacrifice to prove God's power?

- a) Oil
- b) Wine
- c) Water

9) Where did Elijah encounter God in a gentle whisper?

- a) Mount Sinai
- b) Mount Horeb
- c) Mount Zion

10) Who was Elijah's successor?

- a) Eliezer
- b) Elisha
- c) Ezekiel

11) How was Elijah taken up to heaven?

- a) In a chariot of fire
- b) On a cloud
- c) By angels

12) What river did Elijah part with his cloak?

- a) Jordan
- b) Nile
- c) Euphrates

13) How long did Elijah fast while travelling to Horeb?

- a) 30 days
- b) 40 days
- c) 50 days

14) Which king did Elijah prophesy against for killing Naboth?

- a) Ahaziah
- b) Jehoram
- c) Ahab

15) Who appeared with Jesus during the Transfiguration?

- a) Moses and Abraham
- b) Moses and Elijah
- c) Elijah and David

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUIZ ON PROPHET ELIJAH

- 1-c) Ahab (1 Kings 17:1)
- 2-b) Drought (1 Kings 17:1)
- 3-b) Ravens (1 Kings 17:6)
- 4-c) Zarephath (1 Kings 17:9)
- 5-b) A poor widow (1 Kings 17:10)
- 6-b) Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:19-20)
- 7-a) 450 (1 Kings 18:22)
- 8-c) Water (1 Kings 18:33-35)
- 9-b) Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:11-12)
- 10-b) Elisha (1 Kings 19:19)
- 11-a) In a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2:11)
- 12-a) Jordan (2 Kings 2:8)
- 13-b) 40 days (1 Kings 19:8)
- 14-c) Ahab (1 Kings 21:17-19)
- 15-b) Moses and Elijah (Matthew 17:3)



Fr. Trevor D'Souza, OFM, is a Franciscan Priest, Retreat Preacher and a Writer. He can be contacted at jc4me2000@gmail.com



SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

- Jubel D'Cruz

The Sacrament of Reconciliation, also known as the sacrament of confession or penance, is one of the seven sacraments in the Catholic Church. It is a process where individuals confess their sins to a priest, who then grants absolution in the name of God, thus restoring the person's relationship with God and the Church. This sacrament is seen as a path to healing for the soul and a means of receiving God's grace and forgiveness.

The confessing of sins should be a part of a Catholic lifestyle in order to refresh one's relationship with God. It is one of the seven Sacraments taught to us by the Church and is encouraged to be practiced frequently.

There are various perspectives on the Sacrament of Reconciliation on whether or not confession before a priest is necessary considering the opportunity to confess one's sins to God through prayer.

However, those that believe that a priest should be present are not only driven by the words of the Holy Scriptures, but the overall emotional and spiritual impacts left on them.

The Bible includes many verses that explain why it is important to confess one's sins. The Catholic Church took the confessing of sins to the next level when the Sacrament of Reconciliation was created. The Catholic Church created this Sacrament to give Catholics the opportunity to go to a higher power within the church and confess their wrongdoings and receive penance.

Once the sins have been confessed, the sinner is believed to receive God's grace and mercy through the priest. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). "Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy" (Proverbs 28:13).

Branching off of the factual conception that supports the idea of confession with the participation of a priest comes the emotional and spiritual aspects that are accompanied with the process of confession. The environment of the church is very welcoming and joyous as well as understanding and open to all things, making confession much more at ease. It is understood that confession through prayer is, and can be acceptable, yet some of the perks of Catholicism is evident through the one on one conversation with God with the help of a priest. For the Catholic Church

proclaims that the Sacrament of confession is Christ's gift to us rather than the church's advertisement. With this gift, one who goes to confession with full honesty is guaranteed an overwhelming experience along with the cleansing of their sins.

Although confessing one's sins is crucial in maintaining a strong relationship with God, some may view a direct confession with the Lord as more powerful, rather than reconciling to a priest. This way, one's confessions are private, and it provides an intimate setting to receive forgiveness. Some may not feel comfortable sharing sins they have committed with a priest.

Traditionally, Catholic reconciliation is to be done in front of a priest; however, many Christian denominations believe that confession is meant to be kept between God and an individual. In addition, confession between God and a person can be done more frequently at any time or any place. Although a priest to guide you through reconciliation may be

helpful, for some it is best to create a sacred bond of confession between God and themselves.

Whatever one does, whether it is confessing before a priest or directly to God through prayer, God called on all sinners to confess their sins in one way or another. Although the Catholic Church provides evidence from the Bible that suggests that God wanted sinners to confess to a priest, there are many passages that simply say that confessing sins is necessary, yet it does not specify to whom the sins must be confessed to. The purpose of confession is to acknowledge that one has given into temptation, but also has the desire to repent. When one confesses their sin directly to God, or to a priest, the benefits are really no different. Once the sins have been recognised and have been told to God or to a priest, the sinner receives immediate grace from God and the relationship with Him will continue to flourish.



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



JUST FOR FUN

- Christine D'Sylva

The month of August makes us feel patriotic for we celebrate Independence Day and it reminds us how fortunate we are to have freedom and democracy, not something all countries can boast about.

August is also a time to celebrate the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady that falls on the same day, August 15th.

Let's begin...

The Freedom Fighters of our Century

There are many freedom fighters who are noteworthy but let's talk about a few of them.

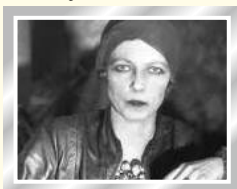
John Lennon.



A top member of the pop group Beatles, John Lennon went from being one of the greatest world's pop stars to having the courage to speak out against the Vietnam War.

He used every opportunity in interviews to spread the message of peace. One of the greatest songs 'Imagine' was written by him.

Nancy Cunard.



She was the heiress to the Cunard fortune but because she fought for the rights of the African- Americans in the 1920s and 1930s, she was disowned by her family. She

raised money to buy a printing press so that she could print newspapers and books to keep the African-American culture alive through poetry, music, literature and art. However, she did end up being destitute because she was disowned by her family and she fought for what she believed in. She went from being a socialite to a freedom fighter and this interesting journey reveals her courage and her determination to see justice.

Inspirational Story



Our greatest freedom fighter, Mahatma Gandhi used to travel from city to city and village to village, collecting funds for the Charkha Sangh.

He was addressing a meeting in Orissa (now Odisha), when after his speech a poor old woman stood up. She was bent with age, her hair was grey and her clothes were in tatters. The volunteers tried to stop her but she fought her way to reach where Gandhi was sitting.

From the folds of her sari, she took out a copper coin and placed it at his feet. Gandhi picked up the copper coin and put it away carefully.

The funds were under the charge of Jamnalal Bajaj. He asked Gandhi for the coin but Gandhi refused.

The man said laughing, "I keep cheques worth thousands of rupees but you won't trust me with a copper coin."

Gandhi replied, "This copper coin is worth much more than those thousands."

Gandhi went on seriously, "If a man has several lakhs and he gives away a thousand or two, it does not mean much. But this coin was all this poor woman possessed. She gave me all she has. What a great sacrifice."

What do we learn?

We learn charity from the heart is much better than charity done with no real feeling or sacrifice. It's easy to give away little when we have a lot but so hard to give away till it hurts.

Quiz

All about pop groups



1. Which band has the hit, Satisfaction? 2. Name the iconic song of the pop band Led Zeppelin? 3. Who was the lead singer of the Doors? 4. Who was the lead singer of the band U2? 5.

Which band had the lead singer Kurt Cobain? 6. Which band is famous for its song Hotel California?

Inspirational Quotes

John Lennon of the pop group - the Beatles



1. *Life is what happens when you are busy making other plans.....*

2. *Time you enjoy wasting was not wasted.*

3. *If everyone demanded peace*



instead of another television set, then there would be peace.

4. *Everything will be okay in the end, if it is not okay it is not the end.*

5. *When you do something beautiful and nobody noticed, do not be sad. For the sun every morning is a beautiful spectacle and yet most of the audience still sleeps.*

6. *Trying to please everybody is impossible. If you did that, you would end up in the middle with nobody liking you. You've just got to make the decision about what you think is your best and do it.*

Smile Please



1. My dating bio says that I have a corner office with views of the entire city, drive a 500,000 dollar vehicle and that I am paid to travel. My dates later never seem too happy when I tell them that I am a bus driver.

2. A 70-year-old millionaire got married to a 20-year-old model. His friend asked him how he did it. He said, "I lied about my age."

Friend: "Ah, so you said you were 40."

The millionaire replied, "No, I said I was almost ninety."

3. At a job interview, the company director asks the candidate, "Why are you asking for such a high salary when you have no experience in this field?"

The candidate replies, "Well, sir, the job is much harder when you do not know what you are doing."

4. Teacher: "How do you catch a squirrel?"

Student: "Climb a tree and act like a nut."

What's the Good Word?

Countries



1. The most populous country in the world.

2. The country that measures its success using Gross National Happiness (GNH).

3. The country where the necktie originates.

4. The country that abolished its military in 1949.

5. This country has the tallest male residents.

Fun Facts

1. The heart of the whale is so large that it could weigh as much as a small car and this demonstrates the immense size of these creatures.



2. Koalas have fingerprints similar to humans.

3. It is estimated that there are more than 18,000 islands that make up Indonesia but there are only five main islands.

4. Gummy Bears that kids enjoy eating are a German invention.

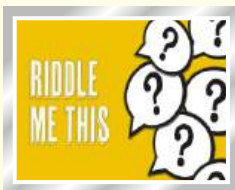
5. The average person blinks 14 to 17 times per minute.

6. Butterflies taste with their feet. They tap on surfaces with their feet to detect if a plant is edible.

7. The brain is the fattest organ in the human body.

8. The famous Painting Mona Lisa by Leonardo da Vinci, the lady depicted has no eyebrows.

Riddle Me



1. The only word in the dictionary spelt wrong.

2. What can you put between 8 and 9 to make the result greater than 8 but lesser than 9?

3. Where would you take a sick boat?

4. What is in seasons, seconds, centuries and minutes but not in decades, years or days?

The value of Ginger



Ginger is not just a spice, it has medicinal value.

Its roots are in Southeast Asia. A small addition of ginger in your diet is very helpful. You can add it to your food or even

to a glass of warm water to get its benefits. It can double the speed of digestion and improves digestive health. It boosts immunity for it is packed with antimicrobial and antifungal properties. It helps reduce mood swings and irritability associated with PMS. It can also relieve nausea and an upset stomach.

Add about half a teaspoon or even one teaspoon with a teaspoon of honey and lemon juice in warm water and sip it. This helps ward off coughs and colds very effectively especially when done regularly.

So go ahead and add a little ginger to your diet either in water, your meals or even your cup of tea.



Brain Teasers



1. The alphabet goes from A to Z but I go from Z to A. What am I?
2. A rooster is sitting on the roof of a barn facing west. If it laid an egg, would the egg roll to the north or to the south?
3. Why do bees have sticky hair?
4. I have many eyes but I cannot see. If you put me in hot water I get soft and tasty. What am I?
5. If a multiplied by b = 36 and b added to c equals to 9 wherein c is an odd number. What are the values of all three?
6. 6 divided by 2 multiplied by 4 subtracted by 3 and added by 2 = ?

World News



Mumbai's new bird park in Gori offers visitors a chance to see 70 different exotic bird species, providing a unique recreational and educational experience.

Iran could start enriching uranium for bombs within months, says UN nuclear chief. Rafael Grossi's claim contradicts President Trump who insists Iran's nuclear capabilities have been totally obliterated. Zohran Mandani, a Democratic mayoral candidate for New York city, on being asked whether he believes billionaires have a right to exist said, "I don't think we should have billionaires, frankly it is so much money in a moment of such inequality and ultimately we need more equality across our city, across our state and across our country."

Needless to say billionaires like Bill Ackman totally oppose him.

Wisdom Message of the Month



A matrimonial advertisement in a popular Christian publication got me stumped. The guy stated he was well qualified, citing his degrees and job placement, described himself glowingly as kind, compassionate, caring ... you get the drift. Then he said simply that the girl he was looking for as a bride should be totally focussed on her career. No other great attributes or qualifications really needed I guess. Seems simple, doesn't it?

So the questions that arose in my mind were - Do you want a bride or a business partner? Do you want a money-making machine?

Or do you want a lady at your side as a loving

partner who bears your kids, looks after your home and takes care of the family with love and care?

Basically such men want money and make no bones about it. The dowry system is illegal today but this subtle hint in this advertisement dropped seemingly innocently, only highlight that while the reference of dowry is not too obvious, yet it remains covert and subtle.

I pity the young women who respond to such advertisements. Somewhere along the line, the sacrament of marriage has been forgotten. It is a holy state, a state that is a vocation and so revered, it is now a sacrament. Defacing this with money only reveals how materialistic people have become. There is no shame in such men at all. Blatantly asking for a business partner in the disguise of a life partner. So basically such advertisements should read - Wanted bride who gives me a lifelong steady cash inflow and to hell with kids and the home.

Of course money is important, yet it is not to be the main criteria for choosing a wife, a lady who is to be your better half and a mother to your kids.

What do we learn?

We learn that perhaps more spiritual guidance is needed to educate the young men and women more clearly about the sacrament of marriage. More talks and more speeches should be given to make the young people aware of the sanctity of marriage as something blessed by Christ as divine and beautiful and not to view partners only as money-making machines.

Answers

Quiz.

1. Rolling Stones. 2. Led Zeppelin. 3. Jim Morrison. 4. Bono. 5. Nirvana. 6. The Eagles.

What's the Good Word?

1. China. 2. Bhutan. 3. Finland. 4. Costa Rica. 5. The Netherlands.

Riddle Me

1. The word wrong. 2. A decimal point. 3. To the dock. 4. The letter N.

Brain Teasers

1. A Zebra. 2. Neither because roosters do not lay eggs. 3. They use their honeycombs. 4. Potato. 5. $A = 9$ $b = 4$ and $c = 5$. 6. 11.



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.



FR. AGNEL'S BLESSINGS

THANKSGIVING TO VEN. FR. AGNEL FOR SONS REUNION

MAHIM: I want to thank Ven. Fr. Agnel for my wishes being fulfilled. Through his intercession, my three sons staying in America, met each other after one year.

- *Nergish Phiroze Dastoor*

THANKSGIVING FOR FAVOURS RECEIVED

VASAI: Ven. Fr. Agnel has answered my prayers. We have immense faith in the Venerable and am happy to see devotees from all over India flock to Fr. Agnel Ashram in Bandra, Mumbai, in deep faith.

- *Sayali Jason*

THANKSGIVING TO VEN. FR. AGNEL

NASHIK: I thank Ven. Fr. Agnel for his intercession and all the blessings bestowed on me and my family.

- *Mathew D'Souza*

THANKSGIVING FOR FAVOURS RECEIVED

GOREGAON: I thank Ven. Fr. Agnel for answering my prayers and blessing me and my family.

- *Alora Quadros*

THANKSGIVING FOR GOOD HEALTH

VASAI: Through the intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnel, my child Zeus is enjoying good health.

- *Joel D'Souza*

THANKSGIVING FOR BLESSINGS RECEIVED

UTTAN: Through the intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnel, our prayers have been answered. We have been blessed in many ways.

- *Victor Darja*

THANKSGIVING FOR SECURING A GOOD JOB

MUMBAI: Through the intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnel, I have been blessed with a good job. Thank you Venerable for answering my prayers..

- *Meher*

THANKSGIVING FOR FAVOURS RECEIVED

VASAI: I am a staunch devotee of Ven. Fr. Agnel and am thankful to him for all the blessings received.

- *Celsus John Rodrigues*

THANKSGIVING FOR SUCCESS IN EXAMS

VASAI: We often pray to Ven. Fr. Agnel for his kind intercession. Our family has been blessed with good health.

- *Rinal Colaco*

THANKSGIVING FOR BLESSINGS RECEIVED

BANDRA: We have been blessed immensely by Ven. Fr. Agnel. I am indeed grateful for all the blessings received.

- *Alphonsia Thakur*

THANKSGIVING TO VEN. FR. AGNEL

VASAI: Through the intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnel, my family has been blessed in many ways. I make it a point to visit Fr. Agnel Ashram in Bandra to receive blessings.

- *Zarina D'Silva*

THANKSGIVING FOR PRAYERS ANSWERED

ANDHERI: We are indeed grateful to Ven. Fr. Agnel for blessing us always. I like to visit Fr. Agnel Ashram, in Bandra Bandstand, whenever possible.

- *Patricia Martin Fernandes*

THANKSGIVING FOR FAVOURS RECEIVED

BANDRA: Through the intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnel, I have been blessed in several ways. I am indeed thankful to the Venerable.

- *Kafal Dalvi*

THANKSGIVING TO VEN. FR. AGNEL

MUMBAI: I find joy and peace whenever I visit Fr. Agnel Ashram in Bandra. I thank Ven. Fr. Agnel for his kind intercession in answering my prayers.

- *Rita Fonseca*

THANKSGIVING TO VEN. FR. AGNEL FOR MY NEW JOB

NALLASOPARA: Through the intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnel, I have secured a good job. I always pray to the Venerable to face the challenges of life.

- *Lincy S. D'Costa*



OUT OF THEIR BOUNTY

Praveen Srivastava	Mumbai	51000	Heather Hyrapiet	Kolkata	2000	Manuel Fernandes	Mumbai	1000
Hutoxi Zybin Bharucha	Vasai	15000	Adolf Pinheiro	Mumbai	2000	Sanskriti M. Randive	Mumbai	1000
Judie Regina	Jagdarpur	15000	Hyacinth Kenny	Mumbai	2000	John Gonsalves	Mumbai	1000
Allwyn Joseph	Mumbai	15000	Gavin P. Fonseca	Mumbai	1500	Mukkungal P. John	Kerala	1000
Gulnar Katak	Mumbai	15000	Arun Jadhav	Kerala	1500	Harsh R Shukla	Mumbai	1000
Gaurang Mehta	Mumbai	15000	Joseph Easo	Kerala	1500	Raj C. Pachickara	Kerala	800
Joanita N Sequeria	Mumbai	12000	Darayes Patel	Mumbai	1400	Canute D'Souza	Chennai	600
Cherie Saldanha	Mumbai	12000	Melvyn J. D'Mello	Thane	1250	Bhavnik B. Solanki	Diu	600
Joseph Kumar	Mumbai	12000	Fransquinha Fernandes	Mumbai	1250	Jayant Kelkar	Mumbai	501
Hugh & Colleen Gantzer	Uttarakhand	10000	Dorothy Ann	Mysuru	1200	Saurav D. Kathekar	Mumbai	501
Mathew Joseph D'Souza	Mumbai	10000	Rita Johnson	Thrissur	1200	Mathew Kurian	Bengaluru	501
Kersi Kapadia	Bengaluru	10000	Marykutty John	Idukki	1100	Mahrukh Mistry	Nashik	501
David M. Oliver	Mumbai	10000	Abhishek S. Serrao	Mangalore	1000	Dhruv Desai	Mumbai	501
Sonia A. Dmonte	Palghar	10000	Rockhenry A. Chettiar	Mumbai	1000	Niranjan M. Amolik	Ahmednagar	500
Warren Fernandes	Mumbai	6000	Mary Antony	Trichur	1000	R.S. Raju	Kodambakkam	500
Melita Peris	Panvel	6000	S. Arulnana Stephen	Tirunelveli	1000	Rani Sebastian	Pulincunoo	500
Subramaniam R.	Mumbai	5100	A.Santhappan	Kanyakumari	1000	Andrew Lobo	Mumbai	500
Rajendra K. Parikh	Mumbai	5001	N.C. Babu	Palakkad	2000	Ashish Bana	Mumbai	500
Hazel Newton	Mumbai	5000	Ancita Rodrigues	Mumbai	1000	Machado & Sons	Tuticorin	500
Payal Shetty	Mumbai	5000	Paciencia	Mumbai	1000	Manisha E. Murzello	Mumbai	500
Ronald M. Fernandes	Oman	5000	Paresh M. Thakkar	Mumbai	1000	Siyana E. Murzello	Mumbai	500
R.Sattayappan	Thiruchitrambalam	4000	Preet P. Thakkar	Mumbai	1000	Anto Paul	Kochi	500
Techno Products	Avadi	3000	Yaksh S. Thakkar	Mumbai	1000	Raji Sojwal	Thane	500
Sujata Vijay Dabre	Mumbai	3000	Durvesh Naik	Mumbai	1000	Aryam I. Attara	Mumbai	500
Vishal Amolik	Mumbai	3000	Fittech Industries	Mumbai	2000	Simon Dunga	Mumbai	500
Linto Joy	Panvel	2500	Ankit G. Patel	Mumbai	2000	Devyani Mehta	Mumbai	500
Chelsia G. D'Cruz	Palghar	2500	Ghanshyam K. Patel	Mumbai	2000	Harish D. Mehta	Mumbai	500
Vanita Antony	Navi Mumbai	2100	Sangita G. Patel	Mumbai	2000	Aarvii N. Agarwal	Mumbai	500
Isabel Hendricks	Villupuram	2000	Jinal Patel	Mumbai	2000	Kreyansh N. Agarwal	Mumbai	500
Adler Fernandes	Vasai	2000	Monica D'Souza	Pune	1000	Dr. G.J. Panchal	Mumbai	500
Anu Philip	Ernakulam	2000	Leena D'Souza	Mumbai	1000	Gajanan S. Makeshwar	Kholapur	500
Daniel D'Souza	Karnataka	2000	Geeta B. Pillai	Gujarat	1000	John Baptist	Chennai	500
Lynette L. D'Cruz	Mumbai	2000	Trushank J. Patel	Gujarat	1000	Melvin Joseph	Mysore	500
Attely A Kuttikadan	Dombivoli	2000	Darragh Smail & Co.	Kochi	1000	Minaxiben S. Solanki	Gujarat	500
A.R. Elavia	Mumbai	2000	Donal J. Rodrigues	Palghar	1000	Ajitkumar Makwan	Gujarat	500
Ethan H. D'Mello	Mumbai	2000	Freejo Vincent M.	Kerala	1000	Charles Braganza	Mumbai	500
Josephine D'Souza	Mumbai	2000	Joyce Sagar Jumble	Mumbai	1000	H.K. Manohar	Mumbai	500
Nethan Alan	Mumbai	2000	S. Jistine Sales	Tamil Nadu	1000	Benedict A. D'Cruz	Kerala	500
Sabrina H. John	Mumbai	2000	Maria S. Arputharaj	Tamil Nadu	1000	R. Victor	Tamil Nadu	500
Pasquinha Fernandes	Mumbai	2000	M.D. Mathai	Kerala	1000	Dipti Ben	Gujarat	500
Mary D'Souza	Mumbai	2000	Felix Deon Basil	Kerala	1000	Anita Shelar	Mumbai	500
Peter Fernandes	Palghar	2000	Parvati S. Desai	Mumbai	1000			



BOB'S BANTER

by Robert Clements

They are Not Weak..!

There's something about silence from a smaller person that emboldens the bully. Gives him a sense of victory. Makes him think his sticks, fists and false cases are powerful.

With growing disbelief, I've seen nuns - yes, those gentle, sari-clad sisters who'd sooner cradle a child than carry a protest sign - being bundled into police vans on the outrageous charge of human trafficking. What were they doing? Smuggling weapons? Hiding fugitives? No. They were escorting students to a learning centre. That's their crime.

I've seen pastors, their clothes torn, dragged out of prayer meetings, as if faith had suddenly become a felony. Congregations scattered, churches locked, and Bibles... burned. Yes, burned. As though pages of peace and love were weapons of mass destruction.

And through all this, one question seems to hover in the smoke: Why don't they fight back? Why don't these people retaliate? Organise a mob, shout some

Because they know. The silence is not forever.

There is a growing roar behind that hush.

The powers that be - the ones who slap trumped-up charges, who torch scripture as if it were straw - have mistaken patience for passivity. That's where they've made their biggest mistake.

They think the meek won't inherit the earth.

They think the Jesus who forgave from a cross will watch His followers perish.

And so, like schoolyard bullies who find no resistance, they grow bolder. And bolder.

But wait till that verse, Isaiah 42:14, is no longer just ink on a page but thunder in the sky.

I've seen horrible things unfold in the lives of those who've acted with cruelty - their children taken away in the prime of youth, fortunes that vanished like mist. I've watched those who schemed and lied walking with heads covered in shame and defeat -



Become a Powerful Writer and Speaker!

Taught by Robert Clements himself

Online course of 1 month
4 hours a week
and write like a Professional

- Write a Book
- Speak at functions
- Create change around you

Send a  to : **+91 98925-72883**

slogans, throw a few punches?

Because they are not weak.

But have you ever wondered why? Yes, you who do this.

Because, their strength lies elsewhere.

Somewhere in Isaiah 42:14, where God himself thunders:

"For a long time I have kept silent, I have been quiet and held myself back. But now, like a woman in childbirth, I cry out, I gasp and pant: I will destroy and devour at once."

You see, when a people believes in a God who holds back - not out of helplessness but restraint - they don't panic. When they're beaten or jailed or mocked, they don't rise with sticks and stones, but with whispered prayers.

and have even cried to God saying, 'Enough Lord, don't do this to them!'

But I know, and surely know from all this, that there is a higher Judge watching, and sometimes, He doesn't just balance the scales; He breaks them to rebuild justice.

I believe we are all children of one God, so the next time you march into a convent or a chapel with false charges and fiery hate, pick up that Bible you are going to burn, open it to Isaiah 42:14 and read it out aloud.

Because the God who was silent... Is waiting...!

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



MP Prof. Varsha Gaikwad addressing the huge gathering.

CHRISTIAN PROTEST RALLY AT AZAD MAIDAN, MUMBAI

Over 15,000 Christians from across Maharashtra gathered at Azad Maidan in Mumbai on 11th July, 2025, to protest against MLA Gopichand Padalkar from Sangli, who made inflammatory remarks encouraging violence against Christian priests and pastors. The protest, organised by the Sakal Christi Samaj and supported by over 20 Christian organisations, ran from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. and was attended by Christians from various denominations as well as several political leaders and civil society activists from Maharashtra.

The community has demanded that Padalkar should be expelled from the assembly and an offence should be registered against him. "Through this action, many types of atrocities on the Christian community like the vandalism of churches and attacks on religious leaders will be curbed in the coming future. The community needs protection from the government and action against the culprits," read a statement by Sakal Christi Samaj, the organisers of the protest rally.

While addressing the gathering, MP Prof. Varsha Gaikwad and former Minister of School Education, Govt of Maharashtra, said, "People vote for you and with this power, you make such kinds of malicious comments."

Meanwhile, the Archdiocese of Bombay has expressed concerns about Maharashtra's proposed anti-conversion law, highlighting religious freedom as a fundamental right under the Indian Constitution. While condemning forced conversions, the Archdiocese argues that criminalizing voluntary changes in faith would violate constitutional protections and potentially target vulnerable communities. They emphasize the Church's mission of compassion and service, not coercion, and urge the government to reconsider the law.

Specifically, the Archdiocese points to Article 25 of the Indian Constitution which protects the freedom of conscience, profession, practice, and propagation of faith. The Church also clarifies its commitment to serving communities through education, healthcare, and social welfare, particularly in marginalized areas.



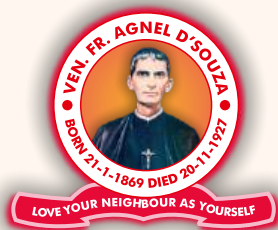
Regn. No. of Publication RNI-9473/64
Date of Publication 10th of every month
Date of posting 14th & 15th of every month
Single copy Price Rs. 15/-
Annual Subscription Rs. 150/-
Total pages including cover : 28

PRN - MCN/175/2021-2023
to post at concession rate on 14th & 15th
Licence to post without prepayment
No. MR/TECH/WPP-87/NORTH/2021-2023
at Bandra Post Office, West, Mumbai - 400 050.

**HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS AND FELICITATIONS TO
OUR REGIONAL SUPERIOR REV. FR. BENTO RODRIGUES ON HIS 80TH BIRTHDAY**



**May Almighty God continue to bless you with good health
and empower you even more in your Ministry of Service.**



If not delivered please return to

FR. AGNEL ASHRAM

P.B. No. 6656, Bandstand, Bandra (West), Mumbai – 400 050, Maharashtra, India.
Tel.: 022 - 67114000 | Mobile: 091 - 7738009137



Email us at : fragnelashrambandra@gmail.com | Website : www.agnelashram.org