

# THE SECULAR CITIZEN

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A NATIONAL FAMILY WEEKLY



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# Leadershift

## A Paradigm Shift In Pandemic Times

We know very well that the only constant thing in life is change. But while we realize the need for change, what is still more important is to *continue* changing. How does a leader do more than just hang on and survive in today's hostile and threatening environment. The key is to learn how to continually make

We are indeed living in highly turbulent times, VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Challenging and Ambiguous) is passé as the pandemic has given a whole new meaning to crisis and escalated it ten-fold to a new high. With a major economic recession looming large on the horizon, businesses have had to redraw strategic blueprints to avoid the operational cul-de-sac & develop the agility to take the right detour towards excellence and brace oneself against the impending fall-out of the situation.



Thomas Lobo

In these distressful and alarming times, all our homegrown and validated axioms on leadership may not be good enough to steer us through this unprecedented crisis. It is here that John Maxwell, Best selling author & Leadership expert in his new book, LEADERSHIFT © 2019 outlines for us a pathway to growth through the exercise of nimbleness and adaptability that will help businesses to stay ahead of the curve by not only relying on speed but thriving on timing, innovating and making changes before they are necessary. Instead of staying the course, you can change your trajectory and position yourself to leverage on new and challenging opportunities.

We know very well that the only constant thing in life is change. But while we realize the need for change, what is still more important is to *continue* changing. How does a leader do

more than just hang on and survive in today's hostile and threatening environment. The key is to learn how to continually make **Leadershifts** and a Leadershift, according to Maxwell is an ability and willingness to make a leadership change that will positively enhance organizational and personal growth. Maxwell illustrates this beautifully by quoting a NYT article

on **Cheetahs** which teaches us a lot about the importance of agility when it comes to success: Anyone who has watched a cheetah run down an antelope knows that these cats are impressively fast. But it turns out that speed is not the secret to their prodigious hunting skills: a novel study showed that a cheetah chases his prey by using a subtle combination of speed and agility...with a top speed of 58 mph it can suddenly decelerate to 9 mph within a single stride and with great agility can leap sideways, change directions abruptly and slow down suddenly thus out manoeuvring its fast and nimble prey.

A recent study conducted identified the three top leadership qualities that are needed in today's "BEYOND VUCA" world:

- \* Ability to motivate staff (35%)
- \* Ability to work well across cultures (34%)
- \* Ability to facilitate change (32%)

All these three qualities require Adaptability. Most recruiting firms today insist that almost 91 per cent of future

recruiting in the workplace will be based on people's ability to deal with change and uncertainty and the capability to change to fit new circumstances and situations.

According to Maxwell, "Good leaders adapt. They shift and Adaptability is the ability to sense the change in wind direction and alter course to take advantage of the shift. Leaders who Leadershift must be like water. They have to be fluid. Water finds a way, it makes a way. First, it changes with its circumstances. The environment dictates the change. But moving water is also forceful. It first moves around an object, but at the same time it begins moving the object. It can wear down solid rock over time. If you want to be an effective leader, you must Leadershift. You cannot be the same, think the same, and act the same if you hope to be successful in a world that does not remain the same."

This is so true of today's pandemic struck world. If we hope to get out of this quagmire soon, we will have to program into our minds the words of Albert Einstein: "We can not solve our problems with the same level of thinking that created them"

*The words of the nineteenth century preacher, Phillip Brooks, the author of the famous hymn, "O little town of Bethlehem", should inspire us in our quest to break free and chart a new course for the future: "Sad will be the day for every man when he becomes absolutely contented with the life he is living, with the thoughts he is thinking, with the deeds that he is doing, when there is not forever beating at the doors of his soul some great desire to do something larger, which he knows that he was meant and made to do."*

John Maxwell enumerates for us 7 im-



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(Contd.. from p. 2)

portant principles of LEADERSHIFT

\* CONTINUALLY LEARN, UNLEARN AND RELEARN – redundancy is the name of the game. We need to embrace change everyday. We must be willing to let go of what worked yesterday and learn new ways of seeing, doing and leading.

\* VALUE YESTERDAY, BUT LIVE IN TODAY - People may honour you for what you did yesterday, but they respect you for what you are doing now.

\* RELY ON SPEED BUT THRIVE ON TIMING – For leaders, timing is critical. Good timing enables leaders to seize the moment and gain victory for the team When the leader sees the bandwagon, it's too late to lead

\* SEE THE BIG PICTURE AS THE PICTURE KEEPS GETTING BIGGER –A leader must imbibe the process of layered learning as the picture becomes bigger and bigger. Leadership is all about growth and a leader learns to keep growing seeing the big picture getting bigger

\* LIVE IN TODAY BUT THINK OF TOMORROW –Leaders must have a natural bias for action & they must

be proactive today for the sake of tomorrow

\* MOVE FORWARD COURAGEOUSLY IN THE FACE OF UNCERTAINTY – If there was no uncertainty we would not need leaders. It requires courage to demonstrate leadership amidst uncertainty

\* REALIZE THAT TODAY'S BEST WILL NOT MEET TOMORROW'S CHALLENGES – Good is the enemy of the best, but best is the enemy of the better

It is the quality of our leadership and our ability to LEADERSHIFT that will decide how well we navigate through the fallout in the aftermath of covid-19. We may come out bruised and battered but with our spirits intact and strengthened by an inner resolve that we can be down but never out.

*Thomas Lobo is Founder Director, Life Anchors and Founder & CEO, Roots2Wings Training Solutions, a Corporate to Pastoral Training Initiative. He retired as Director, Pfizer Ltd*

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## Spreading disinformation is a deadly virus, like covid

Social media is replete with religious posts, holy pictures, images, quotes and prayers---lots of prayers. Prayers are always good, more so during this pandemic. What is not good is resorting to subterfuge to trick people into praying. A recent post of a bishop and 2 priests of Bombay Archdiocese being covid positive is a case in point. The post requested 'urgent prayers' for the bishop who was 'fighting for his life' in Holy Family Hospital. While prayers for the Bishop and two priests were most welcome, the facts were deliberately misrepresented so as to get the maximum number of people to flood the heavens with prayers. Even God would not approve of such chikenerly to coerce people into praying. While people who forwarded the post did so in good faith the author of the post deserves condemnation for it was a conscious effort to fool the people.

As a general rule people should be wary of forwarding posts blindly. Remember, you are not participating in a game of fastest-finger-first. One day you may burn your fingers. So next time you receive a fwd, give it a few hours. No one will remember you for a forward; but everyone will remember you, if you goof up on a fwd!

—Prof Robert Castellino  
Malad Mumbai

## Realities differ

just don't understand what's wrong with the Tanishq ad? What's wrong with celebrating traditions across re-

ligion? The Tanishq advertisement of a Muslim mother-in-law and a Hindu daughter-in-law is beautiful, just the way all their advertisements are. Taking it back means we believe that it is fiction, that these kinds of relationships do not exist in reality. But they do, don't they? Only, too many don't inhabit that reality.

— Jubel D'Cruz,  
Dombivili, Mumbai

## Rise in mental health problems due to Covid-19

As per recent medical reports, there has been an alarming rise in mental health cases ever since the outbreak of Covid -19. It is not surprising though, given the number of myths and disinformation that have been circulating on social media about the dangers of the viral spread, number of deaths and means to safeguard oneself from the attack of the virus. While there are some who refuse to venture out of their homes and even receive visitors for fear of being infected, there are others who are paranoid about even touching their daily newspapers before warming them in the oven. Social distancing has made us all untouchables. Even large offices refuse to let customers in without thermal screening and hand sanitizing. Cheques for payment have to be dropped in the box, only to be cleared on the following day, for fear of virus contamination. Three-layered face masks are found to be ineffective in air conditioned rooms and theatres, if the virus is suspended as aerosols. And for many, the day does not end without a warm water gargle, steam inhalation and a glass of hot milk with turmeric powder. This is the sorry

state of affairs we live in, and there is little we can do about it since doctors themselves are not sure what works and what doesn't. Dead bodies are disposed of as garbage with no value for human lives. For how long will this situation last is therefore the million dollar question.

—A. F. Nazareth,  
Alto Porvorim, Goa

## Will Migration and reverse migration be a major factor in Bihar elections?

In spite of coronavirus lockdown days the election campaign is in full swing in Bihar. Looking at the past, years ago Lalu Yadav came to power and migration from Bihar rose further. Nitish came to power on the promise of development, but under his regime, Bihar's per capita GDP has only slipped to the lowest in the country. Unemployment has risen. Migration hasn't stopped. Industrialisation is slow.

In coronavirus-induced lockdown days there was a reverse migration. The Bihar government responded most irresponsibly. Nitish didn't want people coming back. People were forced to walk home for days taking auto, or cycles. So many died during the reverse migration. There is also anger over mishandling of the recent floods.

So the question for the honest citizen is: will this pain upsurge in the form of votes and bring responsible parties in power? Or as usual money-muscle-EVM power will play the upper hand and chaos continues in Bihar?

—Fr Michael G.  
Vasai

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# He Is Risen! Alleluiah!!

**S**orry to take you back into the Easter season! That's because the Lenten season of Corona does not seem to end even after eight long months! Corona, like a ghost, is haunting us. Invisible yet real. Frightening for life! 'She' lost her husband the other day. He died not of Corona but people suspected the same ghost. The relatives got him cremated by the hospital, hurriedly brought the ashes (of the wood?) and in the night buried in the Church cemetery! That night 'she' was alone with her two daughters in the house because even her own sister thought the ghost was there in her house! Has anyone seen the ghost? No one! Yet there are people who did not come out of their houses for the last all eight months! In a parish there was no one ready to bury a dead; the parish priest himself had to shoulder the coffin! Migrant workers have Mumbai and it has lost its glory! There is no rush, no life, no josh, no fun, no dance, no theatres. All is lifeless! Even humaneness is dead!

## HE IS RISEN! ALLELUJAH!!

After the cruel murdering of Jesus on the cross the apostles were terrified and hidden in their houses. They felt all the big talks and magical miracles are over and now we have got to go back to our routine business. But! On the third day Mary Magdalene came shouting, "He is alive! I have seen Him!" John and Peter ran to the grave. They did not see the body dead or alive. But they did feel, 'he is alive!' So did all the apostles were revived as they heard the news. There was life again! They rushed to the highways and byways to announce bravely, "You killed him but God raised him up! Now repent and believe!"

Such events of Easter and Pentecost are required today. Some prophets

need to announce, "Arise! Jesus is alive! Corona is defeated!"

## WEDDINGS CHUPCHUPKE?

November-December is our wedding season. But ... it seems there will be no wedding Mass! The matrimonial Sacrament will be celebrated either in the sacristy or in the church office chupchupke! "Oh shucks! What a disappointment! Wedding season goes like Holy week? Let us hope not! And if the ghost of Covid-19 continues to haunt us for another two and a half months as our Health Minister predicts? Jesus save us! Let us rise up. We need to learn to live with Corona. The wedding is a great event in one's life. It must be celebrated with minimum dignity and decorum. We usually celebrate weddings in the sacristy or such other secret place of those couples of rather bad repute. Why project all our young couples, innocent and budding in bad image? They deserve to be married with all honour and dignity.



Fr. Michael G. Vasai

Let us make some adjustments like mature Christians. With 50 faithful we can certainly celebrate the wedding Mass keeping all the rules of safety. Our churches are spacious enough for the purpose. If without mass then why not celebrate the sacrament of Marriage in the wedding hall or an open mandapam? There will be a stage, people and decoration! That will enhance the Sacrament! There could be a band for all to enjoy. Of course the fifty lucky guests should scare the ghost and dare to come to make the couple feel great on the day!

No reading of banns! Why? "You are exempted from them!" "Who asked for it? Why? We want to announce to the world that we are getting married 'in the Lord'! Perhaps the online Masses will spread the good news to all cor-

ners of the universe! In fact dispensing from the reading of the banns is a punishment given to some couples that need to hide their 'disrepute'! Why to impute that impression on the couples just because they are born in Corona days?

Frightened of Coronavirus, we have become inhuman towards one another. Where is our faith in the Resurrection of the Lord? Frightened of death we become 'Quarantine Religious of St. Corona' and let our 'brothers' die in miserable loneliness! Have we exaggerated the government restrictions? Showing over zealousness perhaps the Church has done great harm to the tender feelings of the faithful and human relationships? In the long run this will affect their relationship with the Church. Someone said, "You taught us that cremation is O. K.; that burying without blessing the graves is *chalta hai*; Matrimony in a corner is still a Sacrament... Oh! We have understood how to go to heaven without you!" The mask, social distancing, quarantining have generated suspicion among people and killed humaneness in individuals.

Welcoming the new encyclical of Pope Francis, Cardinal Charles Maung Bo, the President, FABC in his address to the Churches of Asia (12 – October 2020) describes the dark period thus: "This year of 2020 is and has been for many of you, and for your people, a time of chaos, fear and loss. It is heavy for you, it is claustrophobic to be forced to stay at home and to keep your churches closed. Calendars are empty. Donations are drying up. There is increased hunger among our poor. Naturally we fear for the future. Yet Francis urges us not to make superficial responses to this time of crisis. We never stop being on mission. Now is a time to build respect for one

(Contd.. on p. 8)

# Looking for an Intercessor?

**T**here are numerous instances in real life when people are in trouble, they feel helpless, unable to handle the situation by themselves. Like it's out of their capability, out of their control. They feel the need for an intercessor to help plead their cause, to help them get over the situation.

Haven't we ourselves at some time or the other, found ourselves in such situations? So, what do we do? Like when the children in the family want something and the father refuses to give in, they turn to their mother to intercede for them. Take for instance this family of the mother father & son. The mother is a housewife, the father does odd jobs and struggling to provide for the family. They have managed to send their little fellow to a decent school. When the school decides to go for a picnic, the son naturally wants to go. The father is hesitant to give in; short of funds, etc. The little fellow cries and pleads with the mother. The mother then goes and intercedes with the father on his behalf. After much discussion, the father agrees to their wish. A familiar scene? Have we seen this sort of a situation in our own family, neighborhood, in our community? **What is it about the mother that she can successfully plead the cause of those who place all their hope and trust in her? There's definitely something about a Mother!**

Let's look at the larger picture. A large number of devotees flock to Marian shrines around the world. One of the most popular devotions to Mary in Mumbai, is the Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, at St. Michael's Church, Mahim. Thousands of devotees flock, to ask Mother Mary, wednesday after wednesday for help. To plead their cause before the Father, to intercede with the Father on

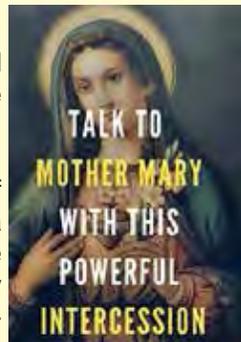
their behalf. Do we need proof that their prayers are being heard?

Those who receive a copy of the Don Bosco's Madonna would find a Column on the back cover, entitled '**Mary was there**'. It carries testimonies of devotees who have found solace in Mother Mary. A mother never fails. There are also times when Mary herself senses the needs of people and without even waiting for them to approach her, she goes out of her way to help. We have seen this when she rushed to help her cousin Elizabeth at the time of her pregnancy. At the wedding feast at Cana, when the hosts had run out of wine.



Mary is always there to intercede for us, she is our heavenly Mother, indeed the Mother of the universe. Look at the Titles given to Mary in the Litany recited with the Rosary, in many a home. The Rosary is one of the most popular family prayer. Here's what Archbishop Fulton Sheen had to say about the Rosary. ***"The rosary is the book of the blind, where souls see and there enact the greatest drama of love the world has ever known; it is the book of the simple, which initiates them into mysteries and knowledge more satisfying than the education of other men; it is the book of the aged, whose eyes close upon the shadow of this world, and open on the substance of the next. The power of the rosary is beyond description."***

Many of us do recite the Rosary, but think of it, are we reciting the Rosary just as a matter of routine, a formality? Then, it has no meaning. During



the months of May & October which are devoted to Mother Mary, the Rosary is recited as a community. Are we participating in the Rosary with devotion or are we physically present only for the grams or snacks served after the Rosary?

Let our devotion to Mother Mary be true and she will definitely be with us in our difficult situations and intercede for us before Jesus. ***However, do we have a feeling that by praying to Mary, we are diminishing our honour for Jesus and giving more honour to Mary?*** This is what Saint Louis Marie de Montfort had to say, ***"We never give more honour to Jesus than when we honour his Mother, and we honour her simply and solely to honour him all the more perfectly. We go to her only as a way leading to the goal we seek - Jesus, her Son."***

**Mary will always remain a powerful intercessor, greater than any other intercessor here on earth.**

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# Paradox of the Mask & distancing today

**D**ay in and day out at every turn from every open source we hear about COVID 19, use Face mask and physical distancing to prevent..... Look closely and you will be shocked to see how casual it has become at all levels without exception and how really worthless it boils down to be - you would have given thought perhaps. It is definitely not so simple or elementary, "use face masks and keep physical (not social) distance" In fact certain basic improper practices with regard to both these do more damage than benefit, give rise to greater hazard in spreading the virus than otherwise.

**MASKS ARE "CONTAMINATED" BY EACH USE :** The study, published this month by the British Medical Journal, found that masks were effective protecting against viral infections from common respiratory pathogens such as the flu, rhinoviruses (common cold viruses), and seasonal coronaviruses only if used and washed daily. It was concluded that the temperature at which the mask is laundered is also crucial, citing that they should be washed at a high temperature to ensure they are decontaminated.

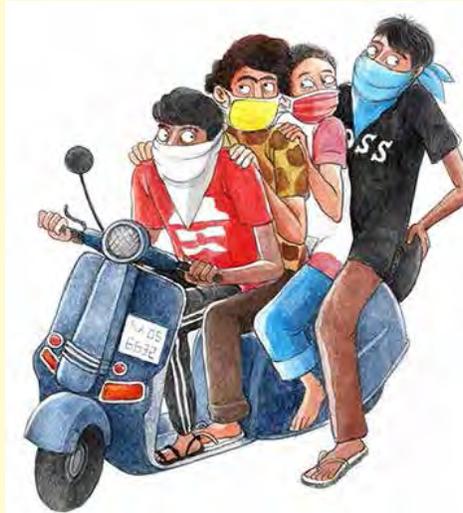
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*another, to live as we wish the world to be in the future. "If the Church is alive, it must always surprise."*

## **FRATELLI TUTTI!**

Pope Francis comes out to help us to brighten the dark period of Corona. In his recent encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* he presents to some extent his vision for a post-pandemic world. Together with the great ideals it also suggests the tangible ways to build a more just and fraternal world in our ordinary relationships, in social life, politics and institutions, *where every person is welcomed & loved, the foundation of being human.*

**THIS IS THE DAY  
THE LORD HAS MADE!  
WE REJOICE AND ARE GLAD!!**



Not wearing masks as needed – many seemingly educated people going out without this protection or sporting them below their noses, on the chin or just around the neck, to quickly strap them on when checking is near. Akin to those helmets placed on petrol tanks of two – wheelers, with even 4 riders. That we need an Ordinance and fines for compliance is shameful and uncivilized.

"Both cloth masks and surgical masks should be considered 'contaminated' after one use," Professor MacIntyre, who conducted the study, explained in a press release. "Unlike surgical masks, which are disposed of after use, cloth masks are re-used. It can be tempting to use the same mask for multiple days in a row, or to give it a quick hand-wash, research suggests that this increases the risk of contamination." Observe how masks are generally handled everyday, even cultured educated people are negligent, touch the mask, then touch things and places, remove casually, place on tables and counters, leave them all over at home this only creates infection to spread all over. Note that these days one can see a lot of masks and sometimes gloves nonchalantly discarded on roads, open spaces, anywhere and everywhere.....this is the worst scenario, sad for us humans not worth the name. Then imagine the poor Indian on the street who can not afford a

meal or to wash his clothes regularly, is it possible he has a good mask and washes it properly - the system simply goes for a toss.

## **STAY IN & PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

: In spite of awareness and exhortations by all and sundry, the bottom line is that 'spreaders' are invariably educated and well placed professionals. But education or affluence are different from common sense. There is no device to test it. Its effects are borne by innocent folks, who, despite the inconvenience and claustrophobia, have chosen to remain indoors, quite simply because they know they are vulnerable. No one relishes being under house arrest. We all like to stir out. Who doesn't? But not everyone can afford that risk. Tragically in homes where there are elderly people with comorbidities, or kids with low immunity, consequences are often life threatening.

Lockdowns are frustrating and damaging in many ways; It takes no superior intelligence to realise that the government's decision to unlock stems not from a decreased threat perception but for sheer economic survival. Revival is still far fetched. It's not as if Covid has left or taken a break, in fact the second round too with serious after effects are surfacing. If anything, the numbers are rising alarmingly. But the negligence and cavalier attitude of many citizens is completely out of sync with the danger that stares us in the face.

It will be interesting to see if affected individuals or families start suing those who have infected them, for exemplary compensation. Or at the very least, for reimbursement of medical expenses. If common sense, civic mindedness and basic sensitivity are locked inside, a legal antidote may not be out of place. The big question is whether we will ever return to our former way of life, probably never!

*-Compiled : Ivan Saldanha-Shet.*

# False Rumours Often Start at the **Top**

by Don Aguiar.

**W**e know that false information spreads online like the world's worst game of telephone. As words are twisted into online weapons, those from powerful people matter even more.

We don't talk enough about the role of people in charge who say too little or the wrong things at important moments, creating conditions for misinformation to flourish.

Think about the recent rumours and outrage that flew around the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, Bollywood actresses questioned about drugs and an ugly brawl among TV news channels. Or precisely, between Arnab Goswami and his Republic channel on the one hand, and many of the rest on the other. Ill-considered communication from those at the top - made cycles of bogus information and misplaced anger even worse.

Every word that powerful people say matters. It may not be fair, but they must now anticipate how their words might be twisted — intentionally or not — into weapons in the online information war.

For example, look at the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, where a tweet and other poorly communicated information from the Mumbai police / television channels contributed to bogus rumours that it was a suicide / homicide.

"It is a suicide" the police in Mumbai then posted. There was no evidence at that time whether it was a suicide or homicide, but people seized on this and other odd or ambiguous official information as evidence that people jealous of his rise in Bollywood were responsible for his death.

Local officials, including the television news channels, also spread rumours over his death that people responsible for his death are being shielded.

Truth doesn't matter in internet information soup. Wrong or ill-considered official statements can confirm what people already suspected.

The same thing happened when the NCB suspected Bollywood actresses of dealing in drugs and summoned them for questioning as their mobile conversations, gave the false impression that they consumed and dealt with drugs.

In short, their mobile conversation projected the idea that their mobile conversations were the opposite of what it really was. Some politicians, ministers and the police force called the use of drugs in Bollywood a very bad example for the younger generation and pushed the government to set an example. Outcry about the Bollywood drug habits has been amplified by supporters of the conspiracy theory, the false idea that top Bollywood producers and actors are behind a global drug racket.

Social media accounts affiliated with the Hindu right and TV networks, which essentially work as extensions of Mr Modi's party, started frothing about the wild, wild ways of the film industry and its copious consumption of drugs. Beyond distraction, the assault on Bollywood, the most powerful cultural force in India, had a clear purpose: to force the film industry into complete silence and submission, and line up behind the B.J.P.'s Hindu majoritarian project.

The Hindu nationalists are hoping this sudden and unexpected assault on Bollywood will force the film industry into complete submission to a govern-

ment keen on wiping out dissent and liberal ideas. They want Bollywood at their command, an accessory to furthering their exclusivist, majoritarian politics.

But in our greatest moments of joy and sorrow, Indians turn to songs and dialogue and stories from our films. Our films are what bring us together as a nation across our religious and cultural diversity. Many filmmakers have bent to the pressure from the government and many more will, but the Hindi film industry has outlived many autocratic regimes.

India's love for films is a force multiplier that brings people together irrespective of religion, caste or regional loyalties. The Hindi film has its own language, its own cultural ethic, and its own ideas about where India's destiny lies. The current crisis is unlikely to be able to destroy that.

This hysterical campaign of vilification and the persecution of numerous actors is an attempt to distract people from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's failure to handle the coronavirus pandemic and a sinking economy.

All this, as the pandemic is raging, the economy is tanking and about 2.5 million migrant workers from Bihar who had lost their jobs in Indian cities had returned to their villages.

There are always people who twist information to their own ends. People might have misplaced blame for the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput or dumbed down the complexities of inquiry into the drug cartels in Bollywood even if official communications had been perfectly clear from the jump. But by not choosing their words and images carefully, the people in charge provided fuel for misinformation.

(Contd.. on p. 10)

(Contd.. from p. 9)

We see over and over again that unclear, wrong or not enough information from the beginning can be hard to overcome.

Conspiracy theories about exaggerated claims of TRP ratings in the last week were fuelled by people close to the monitoring agency, the Mumbai police commissioner and television channels misspeaking or obfuscating what was happening. And taking the history from Donald Trump to Narendra Modi, from Arnab Goswami to Ravish Kumar in our limited connect, that phenomenon rules. And there's another reason: As school children would say, what goes of my pop (mere baap ka kya jaata hai)? Let these self-styled masters of the universe fight it out. Unfortunately, we can't be so indifferent. As in these polarised times when, once you believe in a person or a leader, you believe everything he says. And anything the other side says must be false.

It is not just the television channels. This virus is as contagious as Covid-19 and the problem is nobody is wearing masks or sanitising either. TV just happens to be the more visible player. It was a matter of time before hostility of the studios, newsrooms, fake and exaggerated claims of ratings, exclusives, super exclusives and the latest, "explosive exclusives", would spill over to the ground.

A producer assembled the largest ever cast of extras for his war scenes, so he'd be hailed as the showman who brought the most realistic war sequences ever to the screen.

This is spectacular, his financier told him, but I am not about to pay for all these. How will you pay? Not a problem, said the producer. In the last scene, I will give them real weapons, so they all kill each other. It will be so realistic, and there will be none left alive to pay.

Do you see similarities between this and the situation in our news media

today? They're all — the most powerful, popular, the best and worst of them — now caught in this mad battle scene with real weapons. Abusing, cursing and name-calling each other.

This has gone on for some time, since tricks were learnt like the best way to counter a rival who scooped a story before you is to start dissing that story right away as fake, motivated, exaggerated etc. Or, you simply steal it and use the 'exclusive' tag. The idea of following up on somebody's break is now so 20th century, for the losers.

If you see the state of all media institutions, from the various rival broadcasters' associations to other societies, 'clubs' and even housing cooperatives run by journalists, you'll find them at each other's throats. This war is a mass-scale fratricide. They are all the same expendable extras.

In any case, the story of the producer giving real weapons to the thousands fighting this most realistic war, letting them all kill each other. You can, meanwhile, watch the show from a peepul tree, and suck on sugarcane (as they say in the heartland), or munch popcorn.

The owners, whether motivated by financial gain or power, are the ones who gave out the real arms to those enacting this scene — including owner-editors — the government is what all governments are, the tax collector. And, therefore, the guaranteed beneficiary.

The more the news media weakens,

especially at this juncture of economic ruin with layoffs and wage cuts, the more the owners and journalists weigh their value in terms who they are close to, the more they depend on the state to bail them out of trouble, slow-fry their rival, the faster it pushes them towards institutional destruction.

It's an ideal situation for an establishment to step in. Why should India's most powerful government in almost four decades miss such an opportunity? It will move in professing the best of intentions, for 'riot control', to restore order. What can we do, it would say, when all regulation is shot, your own professional institutions are divided or compromised, and you are all caught in this bloodletting? It is also reading the playbook of the Maharashtra government and Mumbai Police.

Nature abhors a vacuum, and the internet turns a vacuum into conspiracies. All of us have a role to play in not contributing to misinformation, but experts and people in positions of power shoulder even more responsibility for not creating the conditions for bogus information to go wild.

Before we go . . . We are all conspiracists now: Conspiracy theories are a symptom of the broader erosion of authority in the internet age. How easily the conspiracist's creed — that the official narrative is always a lie, and that the truth is out there for those willing to dig for it themselves — has penetrated our national psyche.

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## Rape here, rape there – rapes everywhere

This is one pandemic that refuses to slow down. If at all, things are getting from bad to worse. While there is a rape every 16 minutes, selected cases like 2012 Nirbhaya case, 2013 Shakti Mills case or Badaun gang rape of 2014 get highlighted by politicians and news channels and the reason behind this is not necessarily any genuine concern for the survivor/s but to gain political mileage or robust TRPs. The interest of the victim is incidental. Channels then scream to say that they have the maximum viewership and claim they have public support. Viewers enjoy the 'entertainment' on such 'drama' channels which have more of hype than substance. Don't sexually explicit movies have huge viewership? It does not mean that the movie has anything of substance to offer. Viewership alone cannot define popularity.

Focusing on the recent Hathras case, the same has now taken a different course. Some say it was stage managed, some say the accused and the victim had an affair or politicians had stage-managed the crowds to increase inter-caste friction and riots etc – all financed by an external source. Surprisingly, the ED says no. In the process the victim is maligned. A nervous Chief Minister hastily announced substantial compensation – Rs 25 lacs, a house and a government job. If, as he claims his government had intelligence inputs of a well planned 'conspiracy' then what was the tearing hurry in announcing the package? Now if there was foul play, will he withdraw his offer? DM says the midnight cremation was done to pre-empt any law and order situation. The UP High court has questioned the administration on this but Yogiji is undeterred. Undoubtedly, the government is hiding a lot more than what it reveals.

On 9th October a newspaper carried out details of other heinous rapes – 6 year old from Haathras was repeatedly raped by 15 year old relative and police refused to entertain the complaint till senior officials intervened. Next was the story of a deaf and dumb girl in Gorakhpur [UP] being raped in her hut while she was sleeping. In UP's Pratapgarh a 17 year old dalit girl was sexually assaulted by a person who got into her room from the terrace. In a bizarre incident, a 14 year old was raped by her own father – again in UP. While the now

## VIEWS on NEWS

famous Hathras case has been referred to the CBI possibly with Court supervision at the behest of the UP CM, how about these other cases forming part of that investigation? He wants CBI probe because he can nail some politicians and other groups in the process which will possibly erase some of the scathing attacks on the administration. He can give this [conspiracy] as an example in future rape cases and wriggle out. In UP caste plays a very big role and there is a big divide between the upper and the lower caste citizens there. Yogiji will not refer other cases to the CBI since he knows these are pure and simple cases of rape – indicating failure on the part of the government.

*It is hard to prevent such crimes but it is important that the authorities act swiftly and decisively against the suspects, file FIRs immediately, give urgent medical help and punish the culprits. Police cannot be seen as complicit in such crimes – that will make the State look like a banana republic. Coming to the Hathras case once again, a seasoned journalist has said that the real reason behind the midnight cremation of the dalit girl was because the CM had panicked. If the body was handed over to the family, it could have been paraded in the town the next day to arouse passions which could tarnish the CM's carefully built image. Remember when the Sabarmati train bogie was burnt the charred bodies of victims were purposely given to the claimants to arouse communal passions so the other community could be taught a lesson. They succeeded to a large extent. By the way, Uma Bharati and Union Minister Jyoti both berated the Yogi government for its handling of the case. Were they also part of the larger conspiracy Yogiji? Will you specifically ask the CBI to question the two BJP leaders too? Accordingly to you, all who question you are complicit in the conspiracy.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## Bihar Elections – a test case

Bihar goes to polls towards the end of this month and it will also be a real test for the young but confident Chirag Paswan to lead his party in the elections for the first time. Unfortunately the doyen of backward classes in Bihar [and to some extent pan India as well] Ram Vilas Pas-



by Marshall Sequeira

wan [Union Minister] of LJP passed away within days of the announcement of the elections. He had opted out of the Bihar NDA alliance. The father-son duo could have been a formidable force in Bihar with the distinct possibility of the backward class votes being split between JD[U] and Paswan's party. BJP knows well that this split in votes could cost the JD[U] some seats and then BJP could emerge as a single largest party. It could eat the cake and have it too hence did not react when LJP walked out of the alliance. If the numbers do not add up maybe they could align with LJP to form the government. The other group of RJD and the Congress will also vie for the backward class votes and with anti-incumbency factor playing some role, challenge for Nitish Kumar is real. Even in the 21st century there is so much of caste politics. Illiterate poor are prone to being manipulated by shrewd and selfish politicians. It suits them.

*This election in the midst of the pandemic will be a stupendous challenge for the Election Commission which has drawn up elaborate S.O.Ps to ensure social distancing, sanitization, masks, gloves etc. The LJP will be worth watching. Ram Vilas Paswan's recent death could garner sympathy since the leader has been in public life for almost half a century. He enjoyed huge popularity winning the elections repeatedly with big margins. Chirag Paswan is likely to benefit from this and could play a crucial role in the formation of the next Bihar government. Being cornered by Nitish Kumar, BJP was forced to declare that they have no truck with LJP. But will they openly declare that they will not align with that party after the elections? They will not! By the way, Sushant Singh's death has been exploited for political gains with the help of a couple of TV channels. The 'murder' theory which is kept alive despite murder being ruled out by AIIMS team will possibly be pursued till the Bihar elections only and then the poor chap will be forgotten. Just you watch.*

# A Proclivity For Exaggeration

Besides the huge fan-following they command, many of the current Indian matinee idols are acclaimed as youth icons of the modern generation.

Hence when Bollywood is tainted by a drug scandal which involves big names in the industry, there is every reason to feel let-down by these stars who have carved out a larger-than-life image for themselves in real-life.

However, it is shocking to read that the Hindi film world is more bothered about drug abuse allegations devastating the celebrity landscape and the impact it will have on the brand endorsement kitty of those named in it.

The frivolous approach to the whole mess by Bollywood makes it more than obvious that doping is quite a casual matter in the film industry and does not deserve the awful hullabaloo that it has attracted in recent times.

Investigations into the suicide of a popular Hindi cine-star have seemingly opened up a can of worms with many of the A-listers in the industry allegedly implicated in the drug scandal feeling the heat.

The probe by the Narcotics Control Bureau into these 'indecent' affairs in the film-land is perfectly justified! But questions do arise as to how the NCB has so far refrained from investigating the major drug mafias who are operating at will within the film industry and have instead chosen to do a 'hit job on Bollywood'!

It is however the media approach towards this seemingly 'sordid' drug-affair that should be inviting criticism. If the media-trials which have already pronounced those named in the drug-case guilty of a crime yet to be proved are not enough, incessant and prime-

time coverage of an issue that has set the channels flame are becoming increasingly monotonous.

Needless to say that the impact has made the masses oblivious to the 'COVID-induced' hardships and it is as if the nation has nothing but the stained-images of their celebrity stars to discuss about.

It is however a matter of deep concern that as the filmy-story gets sensational with each passing day, the public apparently has nothing much to say about the three contentious bills that will change the way India's farmers do business which have prompted a political slugfest in the Parliament and have sparked protests that have spilled onto the streets.



by Pachu Menon

The new emerging story is about how the northern state of Uttar Pradesh seems to have descended into a state of chaos!

Apparently, UP is the new rape capital of India!

Perceived to be the outcome of systemic and deep-rooted casteism and misogyny, frequent reports of brutal sexual assaults against Dalit women has earned the state this unique distinction.

Although it brings back chilling memories of the Nirbhaya case of 2012 in New Delhi, the gangrape and death of the 19-year-old Dalit girl from Hathras in Uttar Pradesh only serves to add to the burgeoning statistics of crimes against women in the country which, besides the nationwide uproar they attract, only end up as political issues to discredit the government with.

Tending to remain in the news for some time, such cases usually fade away from public domain after the hullabaloo over the matter gradually sub-

sides.

Coming close on the heels of the Hathras shame, the report of the death of another Dalit woman in a case of alleged gangrape in Balrampur district has rocked the state.

Is UP really insensitive to the plight of these women who have the misfortune to find themselves at the lower rung of society and are hence vulnerable to the evil designs of the upper caste men!

Even otherwise, how safe are women in our society today! It is the repressive mindset of men in general towards women which is responsible for it. Hence the overall feeling of unease among women across the country about their safety should dispel any notion of the crimes against them being restricted to any one class.

The incident where a female COVID patient was raped by an ambulance driver while being taken to hospital in Kerala is indicative of the rot that has set in.

It is only rarely where a sustained campaign by the press and the social media to gain justice for the victim galvanizes the administration into action and the culprits are brought to book.

The Nirbhaya case which shook the very foundation of a nation wedded to the belief that women hold an exalted status of eminence, dominance as well as loving concern in society was one of those rarest of cases which rightly fetched the death penalty for perpetrators of the vile crime.

Even then, the delay in executing the four convicted for the heinous crime has exposed the frailties of a system which allows loopholes in the existing legislations to be exploited by sharp



(Contd.. from p. 12)

legal minds to earn reprieve for their clients.

The situation definitely needs to change!

Realizing fully well that politics in our country has always been issue-based, reactions by the Opposition parties to these 'gross' anomalies observed in government functioning can only be seen as natural political responses to the 'opportunities' presented.

As an 'antidote' to the prevailing pandemic situation, news that skips the enormity of the COVID-effect in the country will always be welcome diversions.

However, the sensationalism in today's news coverage that the media houses are often blamed for hardly serves any purpose other than helping them gain precious TRP ratings.

Yet, public fascination over sensationalized news continues to override all other considerations, even at the cost of ignoring far-pressing matters which will one day have far-reaching consequences for the nation.

The press and the media love to make a story sound bigger than it is. But shouldn't the public be the better judges of what is to be believed!

-THE END-

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## U.P. Govt Clarification On Opening Of Religious Places



Lucknow/Allahabad/Kanpur (14th October 2020): Sri R.K. Tiwari IAS, Chief Secretary of the Govt of U.P. set at rest certain doubts in the minds of religious heads regarding the re-opening of places of religious worship w.e.f. 15/10/20. The confusion arose because of the divergent instructions issued earlier by the Health Ministry on 4/6/20 and subsequent orders issued by the Home Ministry and U.P. Govt on 1/10/20.

A delegation of Catholic leaders met the Chief Secretary in his office in Lucknow on 13/10/20. The delegation was led by Bishop Raphy Manjaly of Allahabad Diocese, who was also recently appointed by Pope Francis to the Pontifical Council for Inter Religious Dialogue. The others were Rev Naresh Lobo, Vicar General of Lucknow Diocese and chhotebhai, National Convenor of the Indian Catholic Forum.

The Chief Secretary was emphatic that the latest guidelines from the Home Ministry and U.P. Govt would prevail over the earlier orders of the Health Ministry. However, all SOPs as stipulated in the Govt orders. would have to be strictly followed.

It may be recalled that the Health Ministry had earlier laid down 26 conditions for the re-opening of religious places. They included a ban on touching Holy Books, sprinkling of Holy

Water, distribution of Prasad (Holy Communion), choir singing and also asked for washing of hands and feet before entrance. On this basis the then District Magistrate of Kanpur had prepared a proforma with 24 similar questions on 7/6/20 and had asked all religious leaders to sign on the dotted line, and submit the declarations to the nearest police station. These conditions were such that the religious heads declined to open their places like mosques, gurudwaras and churches. These stringent conditions had affected them the most because of their tradition of congregational worship at a fixed date, time and place.

The delegation breathed a sign of relief when the Chief Secretary stated that now only the latest guidelines would prevail with a maximum of 100 persons attending, and following all the SOPs like masks, sanitisation, and physical distancing. He also cautioned that Holy Books should not be touched by multiple persons. Bp Raphy stated that we used water only for one time use as in Baptism. He thanked the Chief Secretary for sparing his valuable time to meet the delegation.

chhotebhai  
CONVENOR,  
INDIAN CATHOLIC FORUM

# Garland of Roses for Mary!



In Catholic homes, the day comes to a close with prayers and fellowship. The Angelus chiming from the church belfry marks the end of a day and calls all Mary's children to prayer. Before the discovery of mobile phones the Angelus bell also served as the deadline for all young members kicking balls around on the nearby grounds to enter the shelter of their home. In May and October, the prayers culminated in a cacophony of voices singing, 'Let us mingle together voices joyful and gay.....singing hymns to our Mother.....!'

Walking down memory lane I realize that the family 'mingling together', the Rosary, served as the bond that knit us firmly into a union of love and service. Spending time in close proximity with one another, raising our voices in unison and repeatedly chanting the same words in chorus brought us close to one another. A family that prayed together stayed together in good times and bad. But sadly our lives now are in the grip of a competitive digital world that is driving us in pursuit of self gratification and away from all that led us to the heavenly goal.



by Vera Alvares

The church dedicates, the month of October to the Holy Rosary, which is one of the best known of all Catholics devotions. The Rosary is more than a display of our love and dedication to Mary our mother; it is also a powerful weapon to seek her intercession not only in times of danger but every moment of our life. The lives of Saints have illustrated how devotion to Mary can pave the way to holiness. St. Padre Pio had said "Some people are so foolish that they think they can go through life without the help of the Blessed Mother... Love the Madonna and pray the Rosary, for her Rosary is the weapon against the evils of the world today. All graces given by God pass through the Blessed Mother." He

also said that the Rosary is the weapon of our times!

Though there are different views on the origin of the Rosary, it is generally believed that the knotted strings served the desert fathers as counting devices for renditions of repeated prayers, in monasteries of olden times. During medieval times the holy monks who could not read the Divine Office, substituted these Rosary prayers, reciting them repeatedly. The first clear historical reference to the Rosary dates back to the thirteenth century, from the life of St. Dominic, the founder of the order of Dominicans. According to tradition, St. Dominic devised the Rosary after our Lady appeared to him and told him to pray in this manner as an antidote for Heresy and sin! The Dominican Pope, St. Pius V, did much for the spread of this devotion and thereafter the Rosary became a popular prayer among Catholics.

In her love and concern for her erring children the Mother of God has appeared in many parts of the world, appealing for the conversion of sinners. Every apparition of the Blessed Virgin is with a Rosary in her hands, urging mankind to recite the daily Rosary in order to placate her Son and save us from his harsh judgment!

In the Rosary we ponder the life of Jesus through the eyes of his mother. Nobody sees the life of a child the way that child's mother does. Mary's unique perspective of Jesus' life provides us an incredible experience and helps us to build a rich and vibrant spiritual life.

Burdened with our responsibilities, we sometimes feel like stepping back from the world to take a break from our daily commitments. So pick up the holy beads! Every time we pray the Rosary, Jesus welcomes us into his life and we welcome him into our life. "Bring him your deepest pains and struggles, and let him heal the hurt.

Only great things can happen when you invite Jesus into your life." Says a man of God.

On October 7, the Church celebrates the Feast of 'Our lady of the Holy Rosary' bringing into focus once again the importance of praying the Rosary. The origin of this feast is an occurrence that demonstrates the power of the Mother of God that can save and protect us. History tells us that during the 16th Century the advancing forces of the Ottoman Empire had to be stopped in their tracks to save the Christian countries from further annihilation. A combined Christian fleet faced the mighty enemies at the battle of Lepanto on 7 October in the year 1571. The shocking Christian victory at this battle was attributed to the praying of the Rosary by masses of Europeans in response to the request of Pope Pius V.

According to legend, the Bishop of Mexico had dispatched to the Admiral an image of our Lady of Guadalupe, which was placed in the cabin of the flagship of the armada and every vessel carried the blue pennant of mother Mary, at the mast head. The presence of the Mother of God armed her children and led them to crush the enemy. The Pope attributed the victory more to the "arms" of the Rosary than the power of cannons and the valor of the soldiers who fought there. He commemorated this victory with the feast of Our Lady of The Rosary on the same day.

So this October spread the devotion. Pray the Rosary daily as a family, distribute the holy beads to others and take time to have a closer look at the life of Jesus through the eyes of his Mother!

# Standing with Fr Stan Swamy SJ

Late night on 8 October, the 83-year-old Jesuit Fr Stan Swamy was taken into custody by the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) from his residence in Ranchi and to an undisclosed destination. According to his colleagues, the NIA did not serve a warrant on Fr. Stan and that their behaviour was absolutely arrogant and rude. The next morning, he was forcibly flown to Mumbai, where he was immediately produced before a special court and then sent to the Taloja Jail just outside the city. Fr Stan is sickly and feeble; according to reliable inside sources, for more than a week after his incarceration he was not given a cot to sleep on, a chair to sit or even a walking aid; besides he was kept in common barracks together with several other prisoners. This is inhuman and totally deplorable. The first court hearing on the case is scheduled for 23 October.

Fr Stan is charged under the UAPA (Unlawful Activities Prevention Act) for his apparent involvement in the Bhima-Koregaon violence of January 2018 and participating in the Elgar Parishad earlier. Fr Stan vehemently and unequivocally denies this. In October 2020, the NIA released a 10,000-page charge sheet regarding the incident with fresh names, including that of Fr. Stan who it is alleged conspired to take on the Government of India by means of armed militia, along with him being connected to the banned left-wing terrorist organisation, CPI (Maoist). It makes him the oldest person to be charged with terrorism in India.

The others charged under this draconian law without any justification and are languishing in COVID-ridden jails include Sudha Bharadwaj, (human rights lawyer and activist from Chhattisgarh), Varavara Rao (78-year-old Activist, writer and poet from Andhra Pradesh; he is currently very sick), Anand Teltumbde (70-year-old Dalit scholar and activist), Arun Ferreira (advocate and human rights' activist from Mumbai), Vernon Gonsalves (civil rights activist and former professor at Mumbai

University), Sudhir Dhawale (writer and Mumbai-based Dalit rights activist), Shoma Sen (professor at Nagpur University), Surendra Gadling (a UAPA expert and lawyer from Nagpur), Mahesh Raut (a young activist on displacement issues from Gadchiroli), Rona Wilson (Delhi-based prisoners' rights activist), Gautam Navlakha (Delhi-based journalist and civil rights activist) and at least five other members of the Kabir Kala Manch troupe.

In a powerful statement a video which has gone viral, Fr Stan says, "I was interrogated by NIA for 15 hours during a span of 5 days (July 27, 28, 29, 30 Aug. 6). Apart from my bio-data and some factual information, several extracts allegedly taken from computer implicating my connection to Maoist forces were placed before me. I told them all these are fabrications stealthily put into my computer and I disowned them. The nature of the present NIA investigation of me has nothing to do about Bhima Koregaon case in which I have been booked as a 'Suspected-accused' and consequently raided twice (28 August 2018 and 12 June 2019). But it had everything to do to somehow

establish (i) that I am personally linked to extremist leftist forces, (ii) that through me Bagaicha is also relating to some Maoists. I denied both these allegations in strongest terms. After six weeks of silence, I am being summoned to appear in NIA-office in Mumbai. I have informed them (i) that I fail to understand the need for interrogating me further given the fact I have been subjected to that for 15 hours already, (ii) that I am not in a position to undertake the long journey given my age (83) and the nature of the epidemic ravaging the country. Besides Jharkhand State Govt. has given a directive that during the lockdown period elderly persons above the age of 60 may not appear in public, (iii) that if the investigating agency wants to interrogate me further it can be done through video-conference. If NIA will refuse to consider my request and insist



Fr Stan Swamy SJ

that I go to Mumbai, I'll tell them that it will not be possible for me to go for the above reasons. Hoping human sense will prevail. If not, I/we must be ready to face the consequences. I would just add that what is happening to me is not unique. Many activists, lawyers, writers, journalists, student leaders, poets, intellectuals and others who stand for the rights of Adivasis, Dalits and the marginalised and express their dissent to the ruling powers of the country are being targeted. Grateful to all who have stood in solidarity with me all these years.

Fr Stan is a highly committed Jesuit priest who draws his inspiration from the person and message of Jesus Christ and who has been diligently putting into practise the faith-justice mandate of the Society of Jesus. He has over the years accompanied the Adivasis in their quest for a more humane, just, dignified and equitable life; he has empowered them and stood for their rights. In doing so, he has naturally made many enemies: with the mining mafia, with those wanting to displace the Adivasis and deny them their identity, with powerful politicians and other vested interests in the tribal heartland. The best way for them is to ensure that Fr Stan is no longer in the area and to arrest him on totally false and fabricated charges.

Just before his arrest Fr Stan also highlighted some of the works he was involved in; these include taking up issues related to the violation of laws in acquiring land for mega projects for mining and infrastructure development by flouting the rights of the poor, down-trodden and tribal people. He was raising voice in a democratic, legitimate ways against the state-sponsored violations of laws and assault on democratic rights of people aimed at paving way for unrestricted exploitation of land and natural resources. He has filed a case to give justice to around 3000 people who were either taken into custody or went missing for raising their voice against violations of law, in Jharkhand. He has questioned the non-implementation of the 5th Schedule of the Constitution and asked why the Panchayats (Extension

(Contd.. on p. 17)

Wikipedia : I know everything  
Google : I have everything  
Facebook : I know everybody  
Internet : Without me you are no body

Electricity: AWAAZ NICHE

\*\*\*\*\*

Boss : Why is your eye swollen?  
Employee : It was my wife's birthday  
yesterday sir and I.....  
Boss : So you forgot?  
Employee : No sir, bought her a cake.  
Boss : Then how is your eye swollen?

Employee : Her name is "Tapasya...",  
but that idiot in the cake shop wrote  
"Samasya".

Quality control is so so important.

\*\*\*\*\*

Q: What was the first thing your  
husband said to you when he woke  
that morning?

A: He said, "Where am I, Cathy?"

Q: And why did that upset you?

A: My name is Susan.

\*\*\*\*\*

India have contributed immensely in  
every field  
But in maths? They have contributed  
zero

\*\*\*\*\*

A politician visited a village in India..  
A politician visited an Indian village  
and asked what their needs were.  
"We have 2 basic needs sir," replied  
the villager.  
"Firstly, we have a hospital, but  
there's no doctor."

On hearing this, the politician  
whipped out his cellphone, and after  
speaking for a while he reassured the  
village leader that the doctor would  
be there the next day. He then asked  
about the second problem.

"Secondly sir, there is no cellphone  
coverage anywhere in the village."

\*\*\*\*\*



A Classic joke from India  
Ajay comes crying to his father after  
school. His father noticed he is  
covered in bruises, just completely  
beaten black and blue. So he asked  
him sone what happened. Ajay tells  
him the teacher pointed pointed a  
ruler at me and said "At the end of  
this ruler is an idiot. "

"So" His dad said  
"So I said which side"

\*\*\*\*\*

Johnny walks in the room and looks  
at his wife and says  
"baby. if you were in India they would  
worship you"

His wife responds while blushing  
"does that mean I'm a goddess"

He smiles and says "no you're a cow"

\*\*\*\*\*

Till when has the lockdown been  
extended to, in India?  
"May the 3rd"

What else would you like to say  
about the situation?

"May the 4th be with us."

\*\*\*\*\*

Try at your own risk.  
Foreign tourist: What is the greatest  
adventure sport in India?

Indian man: \\*Looks sadly at ring on  
his hand\\* Arranged marriage.

\*\*\*\*\*

What is the difference between India  
and USA?

An Indian would introduce himself  
as,"I grew up with 5 brothers and 3  
sisters".

An American would say, "I grew up  
with 5 mothers and 3 fathers".

\*\*\*\*\*

Teacher: What is India Gate?

Student: Basmati Rice.

Teacher: What is Charminar?

Student: Cigarettes.

Teacher: What is Taj Mahal?

Student: Tea, Sir!

Teacher: You stupid boy! You have  
made a joke of all our national mon-  
uments. You have failed the test. Get  
your father's signature tomorrow.

Next day the student comes to class  
and puts a gift wrapped parcel on  
the teacher's table.

Teacher: What is this?

Student: Signature, Sir.

You had asked for my father's signa-  
ture. I have brought you his whole  
bottle. This is what he drinks.

— Sent by: Jubel D'Cruz

\*\*\*\*\*

Teacher: How many letters are there  
in the English alphabets?

Student: 26 with GST, 23 without  
GST.

— Sent by: Jubel D'Cruz

## THE SECULAR CITIZEN

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(Contd.. from p. 15)

to Scheduled Areas) Act [PESA], 1996 [No:40 of 1996] has been ignored. He expressed disappointment at the silence of the govt on Samatha Judgment, 1997 of the Supreme Court; he has raised his voice at the half-hearted action of govt on Forest Rights Act, 2006; queried why the govt is unwilling to carry out the SC order 'Owner of the land is also the owner of sub-soil minerals'. He has expressed his apprehension at the recently enacted Amendment to 'Land Acquisition Act 2013' by the Jharkhand government which sounds a death-knell for Adivasi Community; appealed that the provisions for social and environmental consultation/assessment as well as fair compensation, in its true spirit, prior to acquisition of land as envisaged in the legislation related to land acquisition is honoured; he has strongly disagreed with the setting up of 'Land Bank' which he sees as the most recent plot to annihilate the Adivasis. He has challenged the indiscriminate arrest of thousands of young Adivasis under the label of 'naxals' just because they question and resist unjust land-alienation and displacement.

That the harassment, intimidation and the arrest of Fr Stan Swamy and others in the Bhima-Koregaon case is illegal and unwarranted is without doubt. In the country today, there is every move to quash human rights defenders and to throttle all those who take up the cause of those who stand up for the rights of the poor and the marginalised. Fortunately, at this moment there is a groundswell of protest: citizens from all walks of life have come out to protest at the arrest of Fr Stan. The CBCI, several other Bishops, Church and secular organisations have all issued statements condemning the arrest of Fr Stan and others. There is an overwhelming wave of protests everywhere. Editorials, op-eds are being written; some from the international media have also taken up Fr Stan's case. The message is clear: until he is released unconditionally the protests will continue because #WeStandWithStan!

*\*(Fr Cedric Prakash SJ is a human rights and peace activist/writer. Contact cedricprakash@gmail.com)*

### Ingredients:

For the dosa batter:

- 2 cups rice
- 1/4 cup white urad dal
- 2 tbsp chana dal
- 1/2 tsp methi (fenugreek) seeds
- 1/4 tsp pepper powder
- 1 cup instant oats (oatmeal)
- Salt to taste
- Water (required for grinding)
- 6 eggs
- 1 onion (finely chopped)
- 1/2 cup coriander leaves (finely chopped)
- 4 green chillies (finely chopped)
- 1 tomato (very finely chopped)
- Cooking oil (for drizzling)

### Method-1:

1. To begin making this recipe, wash and soak the rice for 5 to 6 hours.
2. Mix urad dal, chana dal and methi seeds in a bowl. Clean and wash them properly.
3. Soak them in water for about 5 to 6 hours. After 5 to 6 hours, drain the water.
4. Grind the dal mixture by gradually adding little oats at a time to form a smooth paste. Transfer into a large bowl and keep aside.
5. Next, grind the rice into a smooth batter with little water. Add the ground rice into the dal batter. Add salt to taste. Stir well to combine.
6. The batter should be smooth and have thick pouring consistency.
7. Cover the dosa batter and keep it in a warm place for 10 to 12 hours to ferment.
8. After the fermentation, the batter will be foamy and it will rise to double of its original level.

### Method-2:

1. In a large bowl, beat the eggs along with the onion, coriander leaves, green chillies, tomato, salt and pepper powder. Keep it aside.
2. Now heat a non-stick dosa pan. Take a ladle full of batter and pour it in the centre of the pan. Quickly start spreading the batter from the centre in continuous circular motion to form a thin dosa.
3. Drizzle a few drops of oil on the dosa and around the edges.
4. Spread a small ladle full of beaten egg mixture evenly on the dosa. Allow it to cook for a few minutes.
5. Once the bottom of the dosa gets cooked and turns golden brown in colour, flip it over and cook on the other side for a few seconds till the egg is cooked through. Flip it back again, roll out and take it off the pan and place the egg dosa on a serving plate.
6. Serve with dhaniya-pudina chutney, red chilli coconut chutney or any other chutney of your choice.



Sweta D'Cruz

# The Voice Crying in the Wilderness

**W**e are living at a time when the world is shaken by a tiny virus termed as Covid-19. Many counties including ours are in the process of retrieving back to their old situation. But it isn't an easy task. This deadly virus has jeopardized the lives of numerous people irrespective of their religions, languages, cast, geographical territory etc... Quite many people lost their dear ones, multitudinousness remained at home without work and salary due to lock down. Poor people underwent extreme poverty than ever. All educational institutions are still remaining shut. Transportation facilities are not fully retrieved. Amidst all these havoc and uncertainty, there was a barbaric and inhuman outrage that shook the entire nation. Miss. Manisha Valmiki, a 19 years old young girl, belonging to Dalit community from Hathras district in Uttar Pradesh, was brutally gang raped while working in the field on 14th September.

The reportages unveiled that her tongue was cut off and spin broken leaving her quadriparetic. In an interrogation, Manisha herself narrated the horrific incident from her deathbed in the hospital. Having fought for life about two weeks she departed from us. This is an unfortunate incident. Our country could not save another girl from the clutches of barbarians. May her soul rest in peace. The awful cruelty was that police themselves cremated her in the dead of the night Wednesday 2.30 am without any consent of her family. What wrong did Manisha do? That she was raped by so-called barbarians? What heinous crime did her parents commit? That they could not even perform the final rites for their daughter. None of them did any crime. It is the collective

responsibility of every citizen of this diversified nation who could not protect its girl's children from being raped and who could not amend any law for the rapping culprits. Only after her death, this outrage was brought to the limelight. By that time when the news began to spread like wild fire police took over the village and implemented 144 and never allowed any media interference fearing that their role in hiding the facts and manipulating the case brought to the public. What would be the reasons for the neglectfulness and dictatorship of police and authoritative people? Whom are they trying to protect? Why are they so lethargic in this case? There are two major reasons that can answer these questions. The first is gender discrimination and the second is caste oppression both of which are two sides of the same coin and conjugated and interlinked. Manisha who was "Girl" belonging to the "Dalit Community" was gang raped. This is what Dr. B.R. Ambedkar says, "The caste system thrives on the oppression of women." It is pictorial that this gang rape involved more proportional of caste oppression than gender discrimination on one or the other way.



**Br. Justin Arokia  
Raj SVD  
Bhopal**

There is a ray of hope even in this dark time. Ms. Pratima Mishra, an Indian journalist anchor and reporter of ABP News took a bold step by reaching out to the respective place with her camera man and exposing the reality to the public. She has hosted a number of issues and events across the nation including Nirbhya gang rape case. She has been anchoring popular morning show of ABP News named "Namaste Bharat". She is perfectly good at spot coverage too. She is considered an unbiased and impartial reporter standing for truth and justice. She was awarded with prestigious

Ramnat Goenka award for her excellence in the field of journalism. Apart from her reputations, what would have been her driving force that made her to enter into the spot in spite of all men made barriers? The driving force were probably that Pratima Mishra, as a woman, could no longer bear any more girl or woman being raped and left dead. Secondly as a responsible and daring journalist she must have felt that it was her sole onus to bring out the real truth that is being manipulated and kept hidden under the carpet. The video coverage vividly shows Mishra asking avalanche of questions to the police who could not give her proper reply to any of her enquiries. One of the questions that she posed before them was how could they prevent media from doing their job? In present society, people who have both power and money can control and prevent anybody from doing their duties. But it is not possible with committed journalists who are brave enough to question the authorities and challenge the rich by bringing the truth to the spotlight. Miss. Pratima Mishra has become the best epitome not only to the journalists but also to the women of our country.

The title of this article was taken from the Gospel of St. Luke where we read the proclamation of John the Baptist. He stood for the justice and pointed out the mistake of King Herod. As a consequence, he was beheaded. In Pratima Mishra, who is clamouring in the wilderness for the justice for the one who cried for help in the wilderness of Harthas resembles John the Baptist. Finally, All men of our nation must be ashamed of what happened to Manisha. At the same time, the women of our nation must be proud of what Mishra did to bring the truth out. May the soul of Manish get justice. May the soul of Manisha get justice.

# Dear Woman

Dear woman, buy yourself an attire in black  
No not to cover your flaws but show to the world you're  
bolder than any colour

Dear woman, take efforts to put together a little sugar  
and spice  
May your signature dish be the highlight of every meal

Dear woman, learn to cry without hiding your tears  
Tears need not be a sign of despair, but a cleanse of  
what's not needed within.

Dear woman, learn to say no without guilt  
Like you always say yes to others without thinking.

Dear woman, forget about the hourglass figure  
You never know when curves would be in fashion again.

Dear woman, select a person in whose arms you want  
to crash beforehand  
So that you don't have to knock on multiple doors when  
the need arises.

Dear woman, don't fuss about the inch of your heels  
Eventually your confident stride is what makes you look  
taller.

Dear woman, don't always suffocate yourself with an  
underwired push-up bra.  
Remember those sagging breasts fed the most precious  
gift of your life.

Dear woman, strip yourself naked and learn to look at  
yourself in the mirror without feeling shy  
Never forget that every part of you was beautifully knit  
together by the One above.

Dear woman, don't forget to carry with you some pepper  
spray  
It's not just for robbers and rapists, but also for those  
who judge you without reason.

Dear woman, let your hair loose, cut it short or paint it  
with colours bright  
You never know if it suits you unless you try.

Dear woman, break off from that relationship that fails to  
see your worth.  
Remember that your little sacrifices will be cherished  
elsewhere.

Dear woman, have something to do of your own

Not just to be independent but to have a source that you  
can depend upon when you feel clueless.

Dear woman, learn to bake a cake.  
So that on any birthday you may not be dismayed when  
no one arrives at the door with one.

Dear woman, don't shy away from wearing dark red  
lipstick  
Remember it gets better when you finally decide to get  
bolder.

Dear woman, throw away the obsession of perfect skin  
Those blemishes and tan make you the real you.

Dear woman, you don't need permission to laugh aloud  
At least once every day, laugh your heart out until tears  
pour out of your eyes.

Dear woman, stop worrying about grey hair or wrinkles  
Remember wine gets better and stronger as it gets  
older.

Dear woman, go on a diet if you want to  
But don't forget to indulge yourself once in a while.

Dear woman, make plenty of friends  
Some who can make you laugh and some who will  
smile because of you.

Dear woman, be kind towards the old, your dear ones  
and your foes  
Remember your children are watching you and they will  
follow you.

Dear woman, allow your man to spoil you with gifts and  
dinner occasionally  
After all he's got you!

Dear woman, pursue a hobby – sing, dance or write  
Remember you're never too old to follow your dreams.

Dear woman, learn to accept compliments from strang-  
ers without hesitations  
Sometimes it gives hope, that a known ally fails to bring.

Dear woman, start and end your day with the almighty  
It's towards Him that we all are  
headed.



by Sonal Lobo

# Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - GROOMS

**7172. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in August 1992) Ht. 6' 1", Wt. 90 kgs, Fair, Edn. Graduate, Diploma in Social Communications in Sophia and then done a Fellowship with Piramal House of Leadership. Working with an NGO - sports foundation. Contact email : florencemendonca@rediffmail.com

**7068. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in June 1983), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 58 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. HSC, working as a Customer Service. Contact email : cynthiad Almeida83@gmail.com

**7061. MUMBAI :** East Indian Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in July 1989), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 90 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. 12th, working for Central Railway Mec. Ftr II, Contact email : pkevindsouza@gmail.com

**7052. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in June 1977), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 72 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., Retail Management, working as a General Manager. Contact email : albert.pinto2006@gmail.com

**7050. LONAVLA :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in November 1985), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 75 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA., working. Contact email : dsouza\_adrian@yahoo.co.in

**7049. CANADA :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in June 1986), Ht. 5' 11", Wt. 85 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. BE (Computer), working in CANADA in a Non IT Field Seeks a working girl in Canada and holding a PR Visa. Contact email : anniedrz@gmail.com

**7047. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in November 1982), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., C.S. in Process, having family business.

Contact email : mail.soj@gmail.com  
**7045. CANADA :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Divorcee, (Born in September 1985), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 68 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., Hotel Management, having permanent Resident. Contact email : bmathias88@gmail.com

**7041. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in July 1985), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. 10th Std., working as a Plant Operator. Contact email : ronnydsouza075@gmail.com

**7040. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1991), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 65 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.C.A., MBA Pursuing, working as a GIS Analyst in MNC. Contact email : ronaldpereira1210@gmail.com

**7039. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, Handicap - slight Scoliosis - taking treatment, spine slightly curved. (Born in September 1976), Ht. 5' 4", Wt. 45 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A. Computer Prog. / Hair Designer, Having own business. Contact email : reginarodrigues634@gmail.com

**7032. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in November 1977), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 72 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. Degree in Electronics and Telecommunications, working as Telecom Engineer. Contact email : franky54@rediffmail.com

**7031. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1985), Ht. 5' 7", Wt. 60 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Undergraduate, IT Software, works at TCS. Contact email : josephavild@yahoo.co.in

**7028. ABUDHABI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1985), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Diploma

in Mechancial Engineer, working as a Stores Officer in Shipping Company. Contact email : pjmpraveen@gmail.com

**7025. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in May 1992), Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 56 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. B.E. (IT), working as a Software Developer. Contact email : kevin92ster@gmail.com

**7024. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in April 1980), Ht. 5' 9", Wt. 65 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. SSC / Diploma in Electricals, Having own Business. Contact email : jeny22\_m@yahoo.co.in

**7019. MUMBAI :** Tamilian Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in June 1981), Ht. 5' 6", Wt. 60 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as a Customer Services. Contact email : dasvinod1@gmail.com

**7018. MUMBAI :** Goan Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in October 1969), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 80 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. SSC, Self employed. Contact Email : fredrick.dsouza0110@gmail.com

**7017. MUMBAI :** Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in March 1981), Ht. 5' 8", Wt. 67 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA working as a Administrator. Contact email : matheanil@gmail.com

**7011. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Bachelor, (Born in September 1983), Ht. 6', Wt. 75 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA Electronics and Finance, working as Research Electronics. Contact email : canute.serrao@gmail.com

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# Royal Christian Family MATRIMONIALS - BRIDES

**7158 MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in August 1986), Ht. 5'1", Wt. 64 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., working as a Patient Care Manager. Contact email : ceciliacookie@gmail.com

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

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

**7148 MUMBAI :** Smart, good looking, Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in November 1993), Ht. 5'2", Wt. 40 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. H.S.C., having own business. Contact email : teresa.joseph.1993@gmail.com

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

**7149 GUJRAT :** Anglo Indian Catholic Spinster, (Born in July 1991), Ht. 5'2", Wt. 60 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. MBA, PGDM., working. Contact email : barnes.rufina@yahoo.com

**7153 MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Divorcee, (Born in May 1987), Ht. 5'2", Wt. 60 kgs, Wheatish

Complexion, Edn. B.Sc., IATA, Pursuing B.Ed., working as a Travel Consultant. Contact email :

greshma.saldanha@gmail.com

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

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

l2018anselm@yahoo.com

**7142. MUMBAI :** Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1981), Ht. 5'3", Wt. 62 kgs, Very Fair Complexion, Edn. MBA (HR) working as a HR Associate. Contact email :

sunrays1227@gmail.com

**6741. MANGALORE :** Mangalorean RC spinster, 26 years, 5' 3", Doctor, Qualification : MD. Very fair and beautiful. Belongings to an affluent business family. Email : sona68500@gmail.com

**7141. MUMBAI :** Affluent business family Protestant Spinster, (Born in November 1995), Ht. 5', Wt. 55 kgs., Fair complexion, good looking, Edn., M. Pharma, Student. Contact email : saloni.1995naik@gmail.com

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

**7139. MUMBAI :** Maharashtra Protestant Spinster, (Born in May 1993), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 47 kgs, Fair Complexion, good looking, Edn. B.Com., working

as a Sr. Advisor in MNC. Contact email : shirley.jadhav@gmail.com

**7140. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in November 1991), Ht. 5' 3", Wt. 63 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. Graduation (BBI), working for a Private Bank as a Deputy Manager. Contact email : glendamisquith9@gmail.com

**7138. MUMBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in December 1984), Ht. 4' 11", Wt. 56 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.A., working as an Executive Assistant (Secretary). Contact email : labinajena@gmail.com

**7137. MUMBAI :** Karnataka Protestant Spinster, (Born in January 1996), Ht. 5' 5", Wt. 54 kgs, Wheatish Complexion, Edn. B.Com., working as an Accountant. Contact email : sujatareddy209@gmail.com

**6970. MUMBAI :** Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in September 1987), Ht. 5' 2", Wt. 48 kgs, Fair Complexion, Edn. CS & LLB., working as a Company Secretary. Contact email : mendonsajacinta@gmail.com

**6528. DUBAI :** Mangalorean Roman Catholic Spinster, (Born in April 1985) Ht. 5' 7", Beautiful and Fair Complexion, Edn. Masters in Health, Care (MHA), Employed as a Manager in MNC Dubai, is looking for a suitable alliance between the ages of 32 to 36 with a height 5' 10" and above. Kindly respond directly to the party by email : aara8185@gmail.com with your photograph.

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## Book review:

# Awakening hidden potential of teenagers, channeling their energies

By Moin Qazi\*

“Let the Real You Stand Up”, “You Can Make a Difference”, “You Are Destined For The Skies!”, “Discover the Hero within You” – all of them self-help books, authored By Fr Alfonso Elengikal (published by Better Yourself Books and Media Pvt Ltd) – are aimed at awakening the hidden potential of our teenagers and also channeling their energies for more constructive purposes.

Self help books are a specialized genre and there are both motivational speakers and writers who have developed a niche in writing them. Teenagers' mind and body have enormous energies and also the capacity to dream big. Most tend to dissipate the energies and extinguish their dreams in the face of the heavy odds they encounter in life.

These books are an elixir of wisdom that serves to preserve the creative energies of our teenagers and use them more effectively for self-development. Readers learn how to turn their adversity into an opportunity and dispel gloom and hopelessness with courage and determination.

Fr Alfonso expounds on the universal principles of self help and takes special care to address them to the specific needs of the youth. He hits the nail on the head as he dissects the obstacles individuals may face in pursuing their dreams. These honest, conversational, stories light an instant fire in your soul and help you to be upfront with what you want from life. The hallmark of these books is the usage of real-life examples from men and women who have overcome insuperable odds in their own great lives. Each book is actually a follow-up book of the earlier one covering a vast range of themes including friendships, relationships, goal-setting, peer pressure, and so much more.



Fr Alfonso Elengikal

The stories and the issues handled are very hands-on and full of practical advices. You will learn the causes of mental clutter, how to change negative thoughts to positive ones, design strategies to cope with rocky relationships, how to identify what's important to you, the importance of meditation, how to goal set, and much more.

The stories are interspersed with anecdotes and quotes of great leaders and learning from scriptures. In sum, the books are the finest quintessence of traditional and modern wisdom gleaned from vast amounts of literature that Fr Alfonso has read. He is now in his third term as editor of India's most popular magazine for teenagers, “The Teenager Today”. Fr Alfonso has wielded the baton of editorship at different periods, taking time off between editorial responsibilities to test his ideas in the rugged realities of life.

He has harnessed his vast reading and training in spiritualism to delineate for the youth an essential blueprint for both worldly and otherworldly success. His spiritualism is not the spiritualism of the mountain caves but one that has to be practiced and lived in the hard realities of life. He talks of the problems afflicting the national polity –corruption, communalism and the many corrosions in the national character that have emaciated our public life and- and also weakened its vast creative potential.

Fr Alfonso has picked up the sto-

ries of so many ordinary individuals whose brave lives and crusading spirits serve as beacons of hope and also as models of responsible citizenship. He consistently exhorts the readers to raise their voice and pen against all forms of injustices. He draws on the lives of so many great men whose singular aim was to bring peace to warring societies. He culls out the principles and strategies that defined the lives and works of these reformers and demonstrates how every individual can make a difference to this world. In other words, he wants each one of us to be a change maker.

He talks about the ego and how to separate ourselves from it. His examples are not just hocus pocus; they really work and are something anyone can do. Whether your suffering is rooted in jealousy, anger, sadness, grief, anxiety, frustration or depression, Fr Alfonso will help you see life from varied perspectives, examine its nuances and the finer grains, and awaken yourself to your life's purpose. You will love to keep the book by your nightstands and flip the chapters when you're feeling some excess baggage creep in and could use these lessons of wisdom for clearing the cobwebs in your own mind.

Instead of casting the books aside and letting them gather dust, you will prefer to mark out various suggestions and advices you responded to. They drive home the points Fr Alfonso makes through his writing. When you feel a dip in your confidence, going back to your entries will put a positive spin on your day and remind you why you should show yourself more self-love.

When you're feeling overwhelmed with stress, worry, or anxiety, these powerful books will do their part in offering various techniques, tips, and tricks to cope with an a world which has too many slings arrows and quivers of outrageous fortunes that



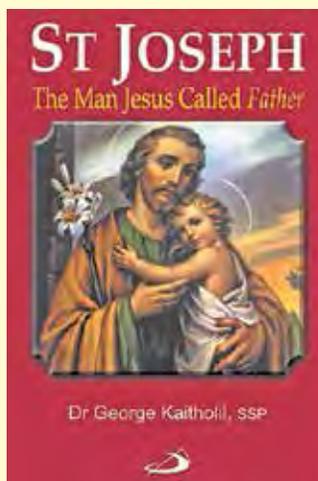
# SAINT JOSEPH, The Man Jesus Called Father

By Dr George Kaitholil, SSP  
ST PAULS – ISBN 979-93-5015-378-9 / Pp 141 – INR 150

REVIEW by Ladislaus Louis D'Souza

Of all the wondrous things said down the ages concerning Saint Joseph, the humble Carpenter of Nazareth and the faithful Foster Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the most significant perhaps is what Blessed James Alberione, the Founder of what has come to be known as the Pauline Family, wrote in the February 1953 issue of San Paolo in Italy: "The dignity of Saint Joseph is the highest after that of the mother of God... The intimacy Joseph shared with Jesus was for him an ongoing source of grace, virtue, spiritual wealth and consolation... Saint Joseph was always learning and sanctifying himself" (p 13). And yet, though uniquely associated with the very mystery of Salvation, with not much said about him in sacred scripture per se, he continues to remain probably the least understood saint of the Catholic Church. That is the lacuna Dr George Kaitholil tries to fill through SAINT JOSEPH, The Man

Jesus Called Father. And ably so! The title itself, having as it does a ring of familiarity that spells paternal bonding holds the key to understanding the greatness of Joseph, in the warmth of whose arms rested safe and secure the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Son of God no less, as is evident in the peace-exuding profile on the cover of the book!



when he says that through his betrothal to Mary, Saint Joseph shared in Mary's dignity and thus deserves great honour! Pope Saint Paul VI affirms that "if we look carefully into his life that was apparently so unremarkable, we shall find that it was greater and more adventurous, more full of exciting events, than we are accustomed to assume in our hasty perusal of the

Built entirely on the skeletal details available in the Gospel narrative, SAINT JOSEPH, The Man Jesus Called Father constitutes a theological, spiritual and pastoral treatise on the life and mission of Saint Joseph, the author bringing to bear on its contents in no small measure his priestly acumen as senior member of the century-old religious congregation of the Society of Saint Paul dedicated to the media apostolate in service of the Gospel. The sufferings, the internal struggles and the deeply spiritual dispositions of Joseph and Mary (pp 103-108) are portrayed here in a touching manner that hinges on the fact that Jesus called these two significant human figures in his life, 'Father' and 'Mother' respectively.

There is no gainsaying the fact that this book—the author's 93rd to be precise!—in which the meaning and value of the virginal marriage of Joseph to the Virgin Mother of God, is put into perspective, even as his silence, his doubts and anxiety, his sense of justice and sanctity are convincingly explained, is sure to enlighten, inspire and nourish the reader in relation to responding to God's plans as Christians. It will help resolve much of their skepticism and unasked queries besides clearing misconceptions, in the process enabling the reader appreciate better the power of Joseph's patronage and protection.

Pope Leo XIII puts it very succinctly

gospels" (p 11). SAINT JOSEPH, The Man Jesus Called Father takes us further in that it presents Joseph to us as the model of the active and contemplative life, its end objective being the facilitation of a closer relationship with Jesus through meditation and prayer. This objective is sought to be fulfilled by the sustenance offered for our souls in Part II (p 93) that comprises of various devotions honouring the saint, leading us to pray to him with rare fervour backed by a new understanding of this man whom Jesus lovingly called 'Father'!

Having been professor at the Regional Seminary in Allahabad named after none other than Saint Joseph, and involved as he has long been in the various stages of the formation of youngsters aspiring to the Pauline Priesthood and Brotherhood, his grasp of the spiritual needs of pope, priest and people alike is seen clearly in Chapter 11 which he devotes to 'The Sleeping Joseph, Active Helper' (pp 109-115). Indeed, George Kaitholil [email: gkaitholil@gmail.com], author of the well-known Target Series and of titles like Communion in Community, Mercy, Divine and Human, Understanding the Other: The Pope Francis Way among others, does the reader tremendous service by putting his Doctorate in Spiritual Theology to the edification of the reader as is evident in the pages of SAINT JOSEPH, The Man Jesus Called Father!

(Contd.. from p. 22)

keep you at bay . Fr Alfonso wants to show the silver lines even in the bleak skies. From creating new habits (and ridding yourself of old ones) to overcoming fear and surrounding yourself with like-minded individuals is one of the best take-away from these books.

We can gift these books to our teenage son, daughter, niece, nephew, or grandchild. They're the perfect keepsake to pass down to future generations of teens too. These books offer more than a sermon on the importance of living mindfully and in the moment. They help to keep your conscience as fresh and transparent as we can and provide the best recipe for our individual and collective salvation.

\*Development expert

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