

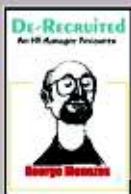
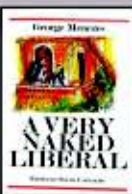
Vishal Jagriti

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GEORGE MENEZES



Memory of a Legend



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Editorial...

Farewell to a Stalwart



Lives of great men all remind us

We can make our lives sublime,

And, departing, leave behind us

Footprints on the sands of time.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882), American poet and educator in A Psalm of Life.

The Catholic community, and India at large, lost a multifaceted intellectual and Karmayogi in the passing away of George Menezes on September 9, 2016. It is a great loss to All India Catholic Union which he helmed with distinction and otherwise guided through his wise counsel. This issue of Vishal Jagriti leads with articles on him and by him.

While wishing eternal rest in peace to the departed soul of George Menezes, we offer heart-felt condolences to his bereaved family and large circle of his friends.

While on the subject of helming, many stalwarts have done it over nearly a century of AICU's existence. We recall one such, Professor M. Ruthnaswamy, who not only headed this organisation but strode on the national political stage. We would like to have more such coverage in VJ and request our veterans to send articles and photos on/of such persons.

We had devoted the last cover article of VJ to the canonisation of Saint (Mother) Teresa of Kolkota. The event has spawned many articles on her in the media and we do a follow-up on her by featuring a couple of articles on her.

We have many heritage churches spread all over India. VJ has so far covered Rosario Cathedral in Mangaluru, St. Andrews Church in Mumbai and St. Lawrence Church in Karkala, in Udupi diocese – when it was raised to the status of Minor Basilica earlier this year. In this issue we focus on St. Patrick Church in Bangalore which marked 175 years. We would like to receive articles on such heritage churches elsewhere in India.

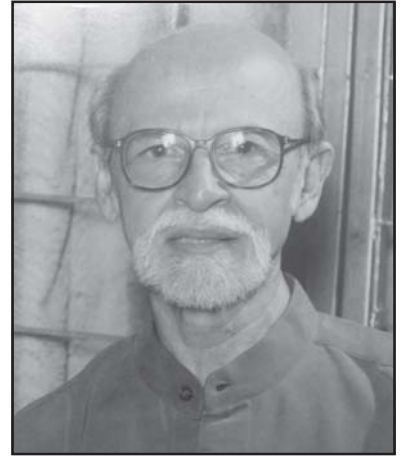
AICU Annual General Meeting was held in the last week of September in Kolkota wherein yours truly was elected President along with a new set of office-bearers. We have a token coverage on this AGM and will feature full coverage in the next issue.

Meanwhile, we conclude with renewed request for reports and articles from AICU constituents from all over India. Please make this a habit! Until next issue then.

- Lancy D'Cunha, Editor

George Menezes - A Multi-faceted Man

- By Alex YZ



George Menezes

Sunday, September 11, the over 400-year-old Portuguese church of St Andrew's Bandra, Mumbai, was overflowing with people from all walks of life, from all over Mumbai and even from Goa.

They had come to pay homage to 87-year-old George Menezes who had passed away on Friday after a brief illness at his home not too far away from the church.

The multi-faceted George Menezes was a renowned author, columnist, diplomat and an eminent Catholic leader. The Mass was concelebrated by Bishop Percival Fernandes and six other priests. His son Christophe paid glowing tributes to his father that brought tears to the congregation. His friend Rev Cardinal Oswald Gracias, who is in Rome, made his presence felt by his letter which was read by Percival extolling his great contribution to the Catholic church. Also seen in the congregation was his cousin the super cop and ex ambassador of Romania Julio Ribeiro, Dr Luzito D'Souza, Gerson da Cunha, Dr Armida Fernandes, Dr Rui Fernandes, Darryl D'Monte, Lenny Menezes, Joseph St Anne, Cezar and Mimi Menezes who came all the way from Goa. It was touching to hear renowned violinist

Ernest Menezes of Aldona finally playing the haunting tune 'Adeus Korchea Velar'.

Menezes came from the village of Divar but was born on April 10, 1929, at Eugenes Maternity Home in Byculla, Bombay. His father was renowned professor Armando Menezes who at that time was teaching in St Xaviers College, and his mother was Matilda Rebello e Menezes.

He spent much of his childhood in Dharwar where his father was the principal of the Karnataka College. A little-known fact about Menezes was that at the age of 13 he was imprisoned for a day with a group protesting against the British regime because of his role in burning a railway station. George later graduated to become a naval officer. On December 30, 1956, 27-year-old George married Thecla Mascarenhas at St Michael's church in Mahim, Mumbai. They had two children Christophe and Anjali. He also had a stint as the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's Liaison Officer.

In 1984, Menezes shocked the political scene in India by joining the Bharatiya Janata Party as he was nominated to its national executive committee. He left the party being disillusioned by its functioning.

He played a major role as a Catholic lay leader, as the president of the All India Catholic Union. He championed the cause of Dalit Christians. He was also chairman of the Society for the Protection of Fundamental Rights. One of his most cherished moments was in 1981 when he organized a rally for Mother Teresa of Calcutta at St Andrew's school grounds, Bandra. He was also honoured in 1984 to meet Holy Fr Pope John II at the Vatican as member of India's Laity Council.

George was a man of many parts, as squadron leader in the Indian armed forces, an Indian diplomat in Paris, a human resource Management expert.

He used his humour to make political and social statements.

Menezes' life was truly blessed and his death is a big loss to India and the Catholic community.

(Source: The Times of India)

OBITUARY

No Longer Naked, But Liberated

(George Menezes 10/4/1928 - 9/9/2016)

- By Chhotebhai



George Menezes

Two years ago I did a review of the book "The Naked Liberal", on anthology on George Menezes, written by Selma Carvalho. I enjoyed reading the book, and also writing the review; because it was a labour of love for someone I loved, cherished and respected.

Now he has crossed to the other shore and will probably be surprised to find himself no longer, "naked", for he will be covered with "the robe of righteousness" (cf Rev 7:9), with a halo teasingly resting on his bald pate! St Peter would not have been surprised to find George Menezes at the Pearly Gates, but by George, I am sure that he would have been pleasantly surprised to find himself up there, and now beaming down on us with a wily wink.

Now that he has been liberated from his suffering body (he was in the ICU of Holy Family Hospital, Mumbai for quite a few days) he will be even more liberal, experiencing the glorious

liberty of the children of God (cf Rom8:21).

Towards the end of the anthology there is a chapter "Watching my own Passing Away". It is a naked liberal's flight of fancy about his own funeral. In typically self-deprecating humour (indicative of a wise and humble person) he portrays only three persons at his funeral - a frustrated money lender, a jilted lover and a cop looking for the dead body! Now that the chapter has closed I daresay that there are many of us who are indebted to him, his passing on has broken our hearts, and we sure know where to find him, for he has gone ahead of us into Galilee (cf Mk 16:7). And lest I forget, there were more than the imaginary three mourners at his funeral celebrated by Bp Perceval Fernandes at St Andrew's Church, Bandra, on 11th September.

Though I am familiar with George's writings, his humour, his persona and his family, I will

here restrict myself to his role as a lay leader of the Catholics. It was way back in 1986, when I was attending the Annual General Meeting of the All India Catholic Union (AICU) for the first time, in what was then Calcutta. The organization was going through a rough patch and leadership crisis. It was through the intervention of late Bp Patrick D'souza of Varanasi, that George's name was proposed for the National President (NP). Ironically, George himself was not there, but Antony Vellara the indefatigable Secretary General of the AICU lobbied hard for George, and he got elected in absentia. At that time the presidentship of the AICU was looked upon as a crown of thorns. George willingly donned, and subsequently adorned it.

At the time he was an Executive Member of the BJP, which he

termed a political experiment. He now felt that this was incompatible with his new role as the NP of the AICU. He immediately relinquished his position in the BJP. That was the naked liberal in him.

The first time that I actually met George was a year later, when he came to Kanpur to conduct the first ever North Indian Laity Training Programme. He was brutally naked about what he believed to be true, and liberal in understanding ground realities in both Church and society. The programme was called Effective Christian Leadership (a term that I have continued to use in my own training programmes over the last 30 years). How effective the training was is evidenced by the fact, that even though north India hardly counts for anything in the real politick of the Catholic Church, it produced 3 NPs for the AICU - myself from 1990 - 94, Norbert D'souza of Jhansi/Lucknow (1996 - 2000), and Dr Remy Denis of Gorakhpur (2008 - 2012). As one of the recommendations of that programme Remy was also appointed a member of Uttar Pradesh Minorities Commission. The fruit was there for all to see.

I have never forgotten his gems of wisdom. Talking about

leadership he said a rider was galloping through a village when a villager asked him "Where are you going?" The reply came fast and furious, "Don't ask me, ask the horse where it is taking me"! It would have sounded silly, had it not been true of so many of our leaders in various fields. He then asked us if a bald man like himself could be a model for a Brylcreem ad? His not so obvious answer was "Yes, this is what will happen to your pate if you don't use Brylcreem". The man was brilliant, converting adversity into an opportunity. Another endearing gem was that a public person was public property to be used and abused. How true of Effective Christian leadership.

He told us the story of the hen and the pig. They passed a shop selling farm fresh eggs and bacon. The hen boasted of how it gave its eggs for others to consume. The pig retorted that its own commitment was total, for without dying we could not get its bacon. Thanks George, you gave us the bacon and the eggs.

Let me now tell an anecdote that probably nobody knows. The next AGM of the AICU was being held in 1988. Nobody expected George to not stand for re-election. As a result nobody filed any nomination, George, the naked liberal,

included. At the time he was away in France. Trust him. I then "conspired" to have his nomination papers "sent" to France, and get them submitted in time! Else we would have had a constitutional crisis on our hands. After two terms he felt that it was time for change. Back then nobody wanted to don the crown of thorns as the NP of the AICU.

He chose me in 1990, as his handpicked successor. After a long line of eminent and venerable personalities - Members of Parliament, Chevaliers and Professors, from the Catholic bastions of the south and the west; here was a 39 year old northerner, a college dropout, on whom he bestowed the mantle of leadership. I believe that I lived up to the trust that he reposed in me.

George gave us our bacon and eggs, taught us how to hold the reins of the horse, and a lot more that would make this obit too long. It was he who gave me the KISS for my writings. He had said, "Keep It Short Stupid"! As he now enjoys the heavenly repast I wish the Naked Liberal Au Revoir, till we meet again, up there hopefully.

- The writer succeeded George Menezes as AICU National President from 1990 to 1994

A Sense of Satisfaction

- By Don Aguiar.

He had a rational and robust intellect and a good sense of humor which helped reduce stress, cope with pain, created empathy in social situations and even improved his odds in networking.

His good sense of humor was an essential social toolset. A perfectly placed and executed joke got him out of a tight corner. It helped him get away with things that most people would not be able to get away with. It made making friends easier. It made networking easier. And, it also helped him become successful.

He knew how to make you laugh and make you immediately begin to feel as if that he understands you. You begin to feel that you share a similar sense of humor and therefore most likely to have other things in common as well.

His good sense of humor demonstrated “maturity and the ability to see the forest through the trees”. He did not have to be a stand-up comedian although at times he did play that part, but he chose well placed humor that is clever and a apropos to a business situation that enhanced his career

He had the tendency of particular cognitive experiences

to provoke laughter and provide amusement. He encouraged people to laugh together which in turn made him popular and successful as humor helps one to experience the lighter side of life, bringing happiness to everyone he met.

His cracking a quick joke or two when in a business meeting or conducting sessions on leadership, allowed his audience to feel more comfortable. His good sense of humor was a great tool for breaking the ice and getting people to drop their guard – so that one can attack and take them for all they are worth! I kid or maybe not.

His good sense of humor in the business world was a great networking tool. If you have a good sense of humor and are able to break the ice with others, then you are more likely to meet the people you want to meet. Would you not prefer to introduce your friends to a colleague who has a good sense of humor rather than a colleague who is boring?

His outside – the-box thinking required good sense of humor which he was not only good at but encouraged when he conducted his numerous sessions on leadership and HR. It got him and the participants to look

at things differently, from different angles and under different light. Humor put his and the participants mind into a calmer mood, allowing him and the participants to better focus and be creative as having a sense of humor requires much creativity in itself.

Whenever he was around at the workplace or conducting sessions or at meetings he created a jovial atmosphere which made it easier to work or participate in. If small mistakes are lightly poked at instead of scolded for, then people will be less afraid of making them and will be more likely to think outside the box and increase productivity and that is what he always patiently prompted.

He understood and used the significant role that laughter and fun play in organizational life which has been seen as a sociological phenomenon and has increasingly been recognized as also creating a sense of involvement among workers. Sharing humor at work or during sessions not only offer relief from boredom, but can also build relationships, improve camaraderie between colleagues and create positive effect. Humor in the workplace or during sessions may also relieve

tension and can be used as a coping strategy to aid in dealing with daily stress, adversity or other difficult situations. Fun and enjoyment are critical in people's lives and the ability of colleagues to be able to laugh during work through banter or other, promotes harmony and a sense of cohesiveness which he achieved at the work place or when conducting his leadership and HR sessions.

One is much more likely to trust a person who knows how to make you laugh than someone who you feel has an awkward sense of humor. This revealed in a way the authentic person he was. His sense of humor said a lot about who he was and if he shared your sense of humor as one found that they were getting a good look at who he truly was as a person as making people feel comfortable thru his good sense of humor got many to trust him which is very valuable.

His good sense of humor gave him more confidence. It allowed him to feel more certain about himself and more certain about his social skills as he knew he had the ability to make people comfortable and avoid awkwardness leading to him interacting with many people all over the globe.

One of his most important characteristics of him being a successful person is his ability

to feel comfortable enough to approach people that he did not know which made him an outgoing personality.

His good sense of humor was a ubiquitous, highly ingrained and a largely meaningful aspect of his experience and was therefore decidedly relevant in his organizing contexts, such as the workplace, meetings, conducting leadership or HR sessions, etc.

Dear Readers I am talking about none other than the Late Mr George Menezes – a strong and vibrant leader of many organizations. A powerful personality who had the courage to take on the system and fight for the laity and the minorities, was a HRD specialists and conducted training sessions for leadership development in many places for Catholics. He was the president of the AICU from 1986 – 1990 and played a pivotal role in developing and giving direction to the organization. He rendered services as a member of the Pontifical Council for Laity, a member of the “think tank” of Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences.

He was a noted journalist, award winning writer, inspirational speaker and a divergent thinker. He served India as an Indian Air Force officer and as a diplomat with the Indian Embassy in Paris. He was best known for his writings and his humor

He was my dad's friend and used to visit regularly till the time my dad was alive after that as per the unwritten rule - the younger visits the older so I visited him. As both my dad and he were social activist in different spheres they used to debate and exchange ideas which often led to difference of opinion but they never lost their cool on each other but often used humor to make light of difficult situations and to brighten up the atmosphere in general as they regarded it an enjoyable and positive experience, so it would be reasonable to assume that it might have some positive physiological effects on them.

I remember him in my younger days telling me funny and strange stories, unpredictable jokes, saying odd things, etc. with a serious calm expression in order to make me understand and make me see that my reasoning had to change for lack of experience. He was the life of the party and without him events tended to be mediocre.

This is how he put it in one of his leadership sessions when he noticed that a participant got it all wrong trying to copy - An inspirational speaker said: “The best days of my life were the days I spent with another man's wife” Audience were in shock and silence. He added, “and she is my mother”. A big round of applause and laughter followed.

One man who listened to the speech decided to crack this at home. After dinner, he said to his wife:” the best days of my life were the days spent with another man’s wife.....” After a moment he tried to recall the second line.... By the time he regained his senses, he was on hospital bed, recovering from burns and hot water poured by his wife..... MORAL: Don’t

copy if you do not know how to paste.

His sense of humor has been effective for him in increasing his resilience in dealing with distress and also effective in undoing negative thoughts and also shown to improve and help the ageing process in three areas. The areas are – improving physical health, improving social

communication and helping to achieve a sense of satisfaction in life. **Yah!!!! A sense of Satisfaction...**

With the passing away of Mr George Menezes we have lost a person who made humor a part of the art of leadership, of getting along with people, of getting things done. RIP dear Uncle George

Bad Things Happen for Good?

- By Adolf Washington

Why should a ‘good God’ allow suffering?” is an eternal question rattling the human mind. Yet there are so many incidents in our own lives appearing bad but turn out what we ourselves call “a blessing in disguise”. In some ways it does answer that eternal question.

A king enjoyed the company and the wisdom of Jewish Rabbis as much as he did his forest jaunts. As a treat, he took a Rabbi with him into the forest and encouraged him to try his shooting skills.

The Rabbi said “Sire I am only a Rabbi. I haven’t held a rifle all my life”. After much prodding, the Rabbi took the rifle a few furlongs into the forest. The Rabbi pulled the trigger. He heard a scream. He had accidentally shot the king’s

arm. The king’s respect turned to rage. He had the Rabbi thrown in the darkest dungeon.

With a wounded arm the adventurous king ventured again into the forest. Danger struck. Cannibals captured him. His soldiers escaped. He was sure to be eaten. But the Cannibal chief screamed “Look. We have a bad omen. This creature’s body is wounded. Let go, lest evil befall us”.

The king headed straight to the Rabbi in the dungeon saying “Holy Rabbi. If you didn’t shoot at me, I wouldn’t be alive.” He elevated the Rabbi to the highest ranks of advisors. But the Rabbi said “Thank you Sire. I would have been eaten by those cannibals if you didn’t throw me in this dungeon”.

When you truly love God, good things happen somewhere to someone even when you can’t comprehend Divine Providence. Sample these. You pray for the rains to cease; a poor farmer prays for rains. You pray for relief from the scorching sun; the farmer prays for sun to dry his grain. You pray for a salary-raise; a youngster is praying for employment. You pray for a better house; a refugee prays for a land to call his own.

Though mysterious, God’s ways serve a loving purpose. “For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Mathew 5:45) and “all things work together for good, for those who love God” (Romans 8:28) With real Faith you can count your ‘blessings in disguise’.

Is the Catholic Church in Crisis?

- By George Menezes

For some time now the world has been living in the shadow of the leadership of people like George Bush and Tony Blair.

One, the leader of the most powerful nation in the world and the other the leader of a much admired nation. Admired for its democratic parliamentary system, its outstanding judiciary and it is multiculturalism.

Nearer home we have a Prime Minister of the highest integrity, a competent economist whose dithering on important issues and whose weak, mumbling personality behind the microphone have driven B schools to get the best scholars to research the new meaning of leadership.

There is a world crisis of leadership. Wonderful nations are being led by the most incompetent leaders.

Is the Catholic Church too, which has followers outnumbering the populations of the most powerful and much admired countries, now facing a leadership crisis as well?

In the year 1984 Pope John Paul II appointed me to the Pontifical Council for the laity for a period of five years despite my known

differences with the church in India, mostly about the marginalised role of the laity in the functioning of the church.

Ultra-conservative members of the Indian hierarchy were convinced that the appointment was due to a computer error. Be that as it may, I came face to face with the then Cardinal Ratzinger. We were participating in a conference in a wonderful location outside Rome called "Rocca del Pappa"

During one of the discussions I intervened to say that there was not enough sharing of power between the hierarchy and the laity in the Church in India.

Red in the face, Cardinal Ratzinger got up and said, "I want you to know that there is no such thing as power in the Church, Mr Menezes".

It cost me, I'm told, my participation in the Synod of the Laity. I also learnt that the Cardinal was ultraconservative, and allergic to negative feedback but by far the most brilliant and the most powerful member of the Pope's inner circle.

I'm quite sure the Pope Benedict's advisers would have suggested to him the dangers of

quoting from a conversation between the 14th century Byzantine Emperor, Manuel II Paleologus and a learned Persian.

There must be reasons why Pope Benedict went right ahead quoting Emperor Manuel who said: "show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached"

I find no justification in his statement. There are many sources from which the Pope could have quoted to make his point. He made the wrong choice.

He also chose the wrong time. A time when the whole world is debating the "clash of civilizations" and making pathetic attempts to deal with what has become now to be known as Islamic terrorism. It was poor leadership at its worst. No doubt these are stressful times for the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church.

The churches in Europe are empty. There is a shortage of priests. More and more Catholics are joining religious cults that

appear to give them more freedom in their beliefs and warmer and more meaningful relationships within the community. The more the teachings of Jesus and the witness of his followers become relevant in a violent, quick fix, hedonistic world, the less Catholics are able to tolerate the inflexible, irrelevant practices of the structured church in which they see themselves as subservient to the hierarchy.

In the dwindling numbers of true believers it becomes ridiculously necessary for a Bishop from Kerala to bring to the notice of his flock that something urgent must be done. Unconcerned about the struggles and the pains of parenthood he urges them to go forth and procreate.

Is there a sense of panic in the Catholic Church? Is it not a fact that that Islam has more adherents than any other religion in the world? Is it not that most of those who were converted to Islam in recent times were persons belonging to the Christian faith?

It is a great pity that for most religions specially the great religions of Hinduism, Islam and Christianity numbers are becoming more important than the intensity and sincerity of one's faith as well as a

disciplined, undistorted practice of its teachings.

All these issues must have weighed heavily on mind of Pope Benedict XVI. And I believe it took him a lot of courage to say what he did knowing that a great part of the world would chastise him and that he would become a new target of terrorism.

I may be greatly uncomfortable in the structured and institutionalised Church but I have great faith in the teachings of Jesus. I do believe in the Holy Spirit and that the Holy Father was truly guided by the presence of Holy Spirit which has made possible for the Catholic Church to have the right Pope for the right time.

Pope John XXIII who walked around the streets of Rome and was called Johnnie Walker was inspired, despite much opposition, to convene the Second Vatican Council that changed the face of the Church forever.

Pope John Paul II whose holiness, transparency and unconditional love for people was greatly admired beyond the borders of Christianity and who brought the message of peace in a world decimated by violence.

Pope Benedict the XVI must have been reminded that the

Catholic Church had a great price to pay for its silence during the extermination of millions of Jews by the Nazis. Was the Holy Spirit inspiring him to speak up. To make his, and the Church's, stand clear that when faith is divested of reason, violence becomes justifiable and the consequences devastating?

When the Pope twice emphasized that he was quoting he should have distanced himself from the contents of the quote. His explanation, that when he said that "violence is incompatible with the nature of God and the nature of the soul" he was issuing an open invitation to dialogue among cultures, will not be bought by the fundamentalists among the Muslims. Even the apology can be faulted. It is not for the statements that he made but that he was deeply sorry for the reaction his speech had caused.

Very few World leaders ever apologise. I pray that the public apology of the Holy Father will take the wind out of the sails of Muslim outrage. The time for dialogue has never been more urgent.

This is a dated article from the collection of this writings.

St Patrick's Church Turns 175 Years Old

The church on Brigade Road was set up to cater to 700-odd Catholic soldiers

BENGALURU: At noon every Sunday, the toll of the bell in St Patrick's Church on Brigade Road reverberates through the neighbourhood, marking the beginning of the service at the first church set up in Cantonment area 175 years ago to cater to 700-odd Catholic soldiers.

One of the oldest churches belonging to the Archdiocese of Bangalore, St Patrick's observed its 175th anniversary on October 10. "From the church records, we know that in the 1840s, Protestants constituted the majority of the Christian population of the city. The Catholic community comprised approximately 5,000 Indians and 1,000 Europeans. As the Cantonment expanded and the Catholic population grew, a need was felt to establish a new church

in the 'white' part of town," said Reverend Monsignor C Francis, parish priest of St Patrick's.

The foundation of the church was laid on July 22, 1841. "A little-known fact about St Patrick's is that it was originally dedicated to the Blessed Trinity and named after the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Michael the Archangel. After the building was completed, Irish soldiers named it St Patrick after the patron saint of Ireland," said Rev Francis.

The first parish priest was Father Jacques-Henry Gailhot, a Frenchman who had to overcome considerable prejudice of Protestant officers in the Cantonment. For the small Catholic mission, funding the new building was a major issue. Money had to be raised from



other sources as only about 200 of the 700 Catholic soldiers were willing to contribute, probably because they were afraid of displeasing their Protestant officers, he said.

"The church came up on a ground initially used as a parking ground for elephants and camels, presumably of the army. Oral history of the nuns in the neighbouring Good Shepherd Convent reveals that the area was thickly wooded and full of cactus plants, a far cry from the concrete jungle the area now is," Rev Francis said.

Early records reveal that the early building did not have the high roof, steeples and Gothic architecture we see today. These were added about half a century later, and a belfry was added to the rear of the high altar in 1845. In the early years, the two wings of the church doubled as classrooms for European and Eurasian children.



Why Mother Teresa's Canonization is Important for India

- By Gopalkrishna Gandhi

Saint Teresa... That makes you somewhat distant, Mother Teresa. It places you, warm, vital, restless, in a cold glass case with wax candles all around you. Sainthood turns you, the owner of a thousand wrinkles, into a doll of the smoothest plaster. It turns you, a woman with the brow of care on your forehead, into a caramel éclair. Popular reckoning says the Catholic world has had, roughly, 10,000 saints, each of them with a set smile, a fixed halo, hands raised in everlasting blessing. These come from 'back then', from the early days of Christianity. Of the 'properly' canonized ones, that is, those who have been so titled by the Pope, a more exact number is given - 810. And so, Ma Teresa, you are now moving the Vatican 810 to the fine count of 811 and the 10,000 to a rough 10,000 and more.

You never heard Earl Grant's Number Fifty Four, did you? No matter. Let me rejig it for you to say that as a saint you now make

A full 10K 'n more / in a waxen case / with a waxen roof a waxen base - Don't turn a waxen bore!

Now that you are a saint you will wear a halo of wax sticks and you will shed, in public view,

viscous tears. "Whoa!" they will exclaim, "A miracle!" And the multitudes will throng. From Skopje, where you were born, to Calcutta where you died, from Brasília to Manila, the 2.4 billion Christians the world over (33 per cent of its population, no less), of which around 1.27 billion are Roman Catholics (17.8 per cent) and non-Christians no less, will crowd centres of your Missionaries of Charity and seeing the cracks on your waxen images will shout: "See her veins, her throbbing veins! She is alive, the Saint! Saint Teresa lives!" Grown-ups mimic their grandchildren.

But seeing it 'all in all', let me say, Ma Teresa, that your canonization is a wonderful thing to be happening, particularly now. The scholar-priest, Reverend Father Adrian Mascarenhas, has put it thus: "The significance of the canonisation is that St. Teresa stands for a Church that is spontaneous in its response to human suffering - a message that is also close to the heart of Pope Francis - a Church that acts, that intervenes, that gets involved, without asking questions or making distinctions, a Church that is basically on a rescue mission to those whose lives have been shattered."

I value your canonization for that, Ma, and for these three supplementary reasons: first, it has brought to our forgetful society a new awareness of your incredible life. Second, it has brought a new attention to Christian India. Third, it has given a pause, brief though it may be, to the tsunami of majoritarianism overtaking our country.

To focus on the first reason first, you remember the day you were driven up the capacious forecourt of the Rashtrapati Bhavan where India's First Citizen resides? You emerged from the car, almost weightless, smiling through those creases on your face, looked with a practical gaze at the presidential palace, and said: "This building will do nicely for our work." Mother Teresa, going to be beatified, to become a saint, you were also a woman who had a certain job as well, albeit honorary - that of a space manager - so many sick to so many square feet, so many cribs to not so many square feet. You were a working woman with children to look after, old children and small children, with little money and less time. You were the very personification of millions of overworked and under-acknowledged mothers.

Now, for the second reason for celebration. Your canonization gives India the chance to deepen its knowledge of Christian India. Your becoming a saint should bring back to our collective mind the fact that but for that emancipator of India's womanhood, Raja Rammohan Roy (1772-1833), powerfully influenced by Christianity, India would have been burning widows, including little 'widowed' girls for another two centuries. The Raja was from our East. From our West, Pandita Ramabai (1858-1922), the Sanskritist and Christian, showed that India's girl-child was brighter than the lout who claimed superiority over her, and so she must go to school, college, become a harbinger of change. From our Tamil south, the Kumarappa brothers, J.C. (1892-1960) and Bharatan (1896-1957), provided the much-needed intellectual leavening to the movement for swaraj, even as in Kerala, George Joseph (1887-1938) led the freedom struggle there with inspirational grit, while Mangalore-born Reverend Jerome D'Souza (1897-1977), Jesuit priest, impacted the thought processes of our Constituent Assembly transformationally.

"Don't leave out the North," you will point out, Ma, and you will be right. I almost did, but that is because the North tends, despite itself, to dominate and I dislike domination. Amrit Kaur, brave rajkumari of Kapurthala

(1889-1964), as a woman, a Christian and a Sikh-Christian at that, personified resistance as a freedom-fighter, modernization as an educationist and was India's first health minister. She it was who inaugurated mass immunization and family planning in our society controlled by superstition and quackery.

You never dabbled in statistics Ma. "Numbers?" you may well say. "The only numbers I know are of the dying." But we need to know that there are 27.8 million Christians in India (1.16 per cent of the world's Christians, and around 2.3 per cent of the population of India). Of these, 17.3 million are Catholics (around 1.4 per cent of the world's Catholics, or 1.55 per cent of the population of India).

Christianity has spurred education with Anglo-Indians in the lead, bolstered medical care with missions driving it, as few others have. In 1869, Wellesley Bailey, a young Irish teacher in Punjab, saw a row of huts inhabited by persons with serious deformities. Shocked to learn that they were suffering from leprosy, Bailey was to recall: "I almost shuddered, yet I was at the same time fascinated, and I felt that if there was ever a Christlike work in the world it was to go amongst these poor sufferers and bring them the consolation of the gospel." That was the beginning of The Leprosy Mission in India. Ida Scudder, Graham and Gladys Staines have carried the work

further afield, with other pioneers, many of them non-Christian, doing the same.

What about conversions? Were they not awful things to have happened? Done through intimidation and exploitation, of course they were. You have not escaped the charge yourself, Ma, have you? Did you, while ministering to the leprosy-hit, put a wafer and wine to her or his lips and say, "Ayesha, you are now Alice", or "Biman, you are now Basil"? If you did, a thousand pities. But if you did not, shame, a thousand shames, on the accuser for he was doing precious little for Ayesha or for Biman.

Missionaries may have made our Northeast a strong home to Christianity; they have thereby also made India's Northeast that much more at home with India, its 'India-ness', which is so different from Brahminic Bharatiyata or Delhi-centric Hindustaniyat. Conversions are a sorry fact but they belong, in most part, to history. Tendentious non-Christian reviling of Christian conversions is a sorrier fact for it belongs wholly to political opportunism.

'Rainbow nation' is a phrase that belongs to Mandela's South Africa, but if India has tones of many hues in many ways, one has come from non-Indians domiciled here. Despondent India met a counsellor in C.F. Andrews, tribal India a friend in Verrier Elwin, and, above all others, in you, Ma Teresa,

destitute India found a redeemer. If all these could come to serve India, we have Jesus Christ to thank.

What of 'the idea of India'? you may ask, saying those words, now so over-used, with some scepticism, which brings me to the third reason for celebrating your canonization. Jerome D'Souza, that handsome Mangalorean, as a member of the Constituent Assembly, strove for the rights of the minorities to be protected by the Constitution. He was instrumental, along with Harendra C. Mookerjee (1887-1956), who chaired the minorities sub-committee of the Constituent Assembly, in having the right to practise and propagate one's religion included in the Constitution as a fundamental right. Nehru made D'Souza join India's delegations to the general

assembly of the United Nations four times.

That was then. We are in the 'now'. Only the other day, the president of the Bharatiya Janata Party said in Jerome D'Souza's Mangalore: "It has become a fashion for persons and organisations to question nationalism by invoking their right to freedom of expression." And he then told his listeners to "isolate them" (alag-thalag kar dijiye). That phrase is about more than 'isolating'. It is about marking out, singling out, differentiating the holy from the... who? Dalits, Christians, Muslims?

Islam is exposed to a thousand questions, all zeroing onto beef, the triple talaq, jihad, the Taliban, al Qaida, Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham. Christianity, likewise, is unceasingly made to account for the inquisitions,

crusades, colonialism, conversions, and even the Holocaust.

So, Ma Teresa, you who made waters thirst for the thirsty, food hunger for the hungry, the rich go a-begging for beggars, now as Saint Teresa, you have yet to do something beautiful for your India. Show it how being Catholic is about seeing Mary as the mother not of the Eastern-most Christian but the Western-most Asian. And show us, please, how pride at being a great democracy must be accompanied by shame at being so vulnerable a republic. Make us whole, not holy, sainted mother. Ami tomake pronam kari.

Gopalkrishna Gandhi is a former Governor of West Bangal. Source/Courtesy: The Hindu

Goat No. 3

This happened in a small town near Toronto??? Could it be Oakville? An eye opener of a fable. Many thanks, Marconia

It all started one lazy Sunday afternoon in a small town near Toronto in Canada.

Two school-going friends had a crazy idea. They rounded up three goats from the neighborhood and painted the numbers 1, 2 and 4 on their sides.

That night they let the goats loose inside their school building. The next morning, when the authorities entered the school,

they could smell something was wrong. They soon saw goat droppings on the stairs and near the entrance and realized that some goats had entered the building.

A search was immediately launched and very soon, the three goats were found. But the authorities were worried, where was goat No. 3 ? They spent the rest of the day looking for goat No.3. The school declared classes off for the students for the rest of the day. The teachers, helpers, guards, canteen staffs, boys were

all busy looking for the goat No. 3, which, of course, was never found. Simply because... it did not exist.

Those among us who, in spite of having a good life are always feeling a "lack of fulfillment" are actually looking for the elusive, missing, non-existent goat No.3. Whatever the area of complaint or dissatisfaction, relationship, job-satisfaction, finance, achievements, An absence of something is always larger than the presence of many other things.

Of Limitless Love & Compassion: My Days with 'Gutter to Altar' Saint

- By Fr Anthony J Kunnel

Amplifying the power of compassion, Pope Francis declared Mother Teresa a Saint, on September 4, 2016, to be more Ablaze in the Glory of God.

I thank God almighty and share with everyone all over the world the cherished memories and lasting impression of my interaction with Mother Teresa of Kolkata. I am a witness to the 'angel of compassion'. When you walk with her, you walk differently because you know that MOTHER walked with the very deposit of God inside her soul, the very source of compassion. By words and in deeds Mother was a treasure of Compassion who has left behind us a milestone legacy. My long-standing yearning to see Mother finally arrived in the year 1994. I

was blessed to work with Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata for in the same year. Looking back, I vividly recall those ineffaceable moments on July 4, 1994 when, together with my companions we climbed up the stairs to greet Mother at her residence.

Face-to-face with Mother, I was dumb struck by her radiant, glowing smile and gentle greeting. I leaned forward and kissed her palm. I never imagined how deeply and completely that event would shape the rest of my life afterwards. The saint I kissed is my lifelong inspiration. Very gently, mother picked up some prayer cards from the window of her room and sat on the wooden bench on the veranda. She signed one of it and gifted that prayer card saying, "thank you for coming."

The prayer card reads: 'Mary, Mother of Jesus, give me your heart, so beautiful, so pure, so Immaculate, so full of love and humility that I may be able to receive Jesus in the Bread of Life, love Him as you

loved Him and serve Him in the distressing disguise of the poorest of the poor'. Amen. I hold on to this "treasure beyond measure." The very words: 'Mother Teresa,' even today evokes an image of an amiable person, wrinkled and wearing a white and blue sari walking through the gutters of Kolkata meeting the needs of the poor. Mother became the champion of compassion to 'the powerless band of homeless.' Mother was one with them, washing and feeding the dying, embracing the lepers, and caring the starving children.

In the days spent in different houses of Missionaries of Charity for six months caring for the sick and dying, I could see Mother's extraordinary nature of expressing compassion had gripped the hearts of all. She rendered lifelong service to the poorest of the poor. Mother Teresa became an icon of compassion to people of all religions. One fine morning I accompanied a Missionaries of Charity brother to give out some medicine to a family under a bridge. As we walked along, brother noticed a very sick man almost taking his last breaths. Truly, I had no courage to stay long there. However, to my surprise he told me to stay with that man until he



returns with a vehicle to take the man to the home for the dying destitute at Kalhighat. I stood there helpless trying to avoid looking at the man. Shortly, thereafter, he returned in a car, we took the man in and placed him on our lap.

This was my first ever such experience, just as the car stopped in front of the home for dying destitute he took his last breath on my lap. Thousands are the destitute women, men and children who have experienced a final fulfilment in the love of the extraordinary services by Mother and her associates. Mother was prepared to care for the sick, the dying, and thousands of others nobody would care for.

Star in the galaxy of saints

With these and many more cherished memories in mind and heart, Mother to me is a "Gutter - to-Altar" saint, a shining star in the vast galaxy of holy women and men of God. Couple of times I saw her moving with sisters and children with the humility of a true servant of God. With generosity, and still greater humility she let the compassion fly over all around her. Mother was determined to head on and wrestle with God and people to bring the greatest happiness possible. No wonder that Mother has been recognized and acclaimed throughout the world. Her life is nobler for the sacrifices, and saintly to be a Saint. Today I am imbued with greater joy to see Mother being raised to the honours of the altar. Remarkable is the

journey from the gutters of Kolkata to the Altar of God.

I feel blessed among several to have seen face-to-face, my "Gutter-to-Altar" Saint. Radiant face, feet committed to poor sick, and palms sanctified by the fresh touch of God have irrevocably overwhelmed me and changed the purpose of my life. The fragrance of Mother's heart full of love for the sick, I have no hesitation to say, is a sweet extension of God's compassion. If anyone asked me who has been the greatest influence in the growth of your vocation, easily my answer would be my Mother Teresa.

Deeply divine in her :

I was nineteen years old when I first met Mother, since then I used to tell my companions and members of the family that there is something deeply divine in her. In my formation years as well as in the religious life whenever I found it difficult to nurture my vocation due to the challenges and uncertainties, Mother has always stood by my side to strengthen and move me forward. Thank God for the gracious woman and specially remember to thank late Fr Ernesto Nidin MI, then superior who let me go to Kolkata. Life happened because of Mother. In the weeks that I spent recently in Ebola stricken Sierra Leone, providing psychosocial services, I firmly felt Mother's benign presence by my side to raise the prayers of many for safety and protection of the survivors and the bereaved kin of Ebola victims.

Many are the threads of hopes and despair that has knit the basket of compassion in Mother's heart. Mother Teresa was the youngest child of a humble Albanian family in Skopje, Macedonia. Her father passed away when she was 8 years, and by the time she turned 12, she knew her calling was to be a missionary. She left home at 18 to join the Sisters of Loreto, in Ireland. She chose the name Sister Mary Teresa after St Therese of Lisieux, and a few months later, left for Kolkata, India, to join the sisters of her community. Sister Teresa took her first vows as a nun and began teaching at St Mary's School for girls. In 1946, while riding on a train from Kolkata to Darjeeling, heard a calling from God, She says, "I heard the call to give up all and follow Christ into the slums to serve Him among the poorest of the poor. It was an order. I was to leave the convent and help the poor while living among them."

Thereafter she set out to establish a community dedicated to serving the poorest of the poor. After two years of planning and prayer, devoted herself full time to her calling. She dressed in a white sari with a blue border—what would become her religious outfit for the rest of her life. Mother started the congregation of the Missionaries of Charity, in 1950 and now includes more than 4,500 members, in 125 countries and a vast number of volunteers across the globe. Her work with orphans, prisoners, the sick, the dying, the disabled—the

unwanted—earned her international recognition, including the Pope John XXIII Peace Prize in 1971, the Nehru prize in 1972, and the Nobel prize in 1979.

Image of Abundant Life:

Open to the spirit's call, Mother knew that it is offered in love and hope, with the same love and hope that led Jesus to ask, more of people than they thought they could give. Our Lord emphatically stated his purpose in the Gospel of John 10:10, "I have come that they may have life, and have it life abundantly." For us Christians, to recognize the abundance of life which Jesus spoke is essential to our wholeness. For us the mode of abundant life is modelled after the person of Jesus by his message and the way he lived. Abundant life is characterized by the extension of compassion to all.

Transformation in life happens when one sees for oneself that there is a new way of life: Abundant Life. The genuine sacrifice on the part of Mother demonstrated the way in which compassion has proved to draw God to the sick. Compassionate Giving is an important component of, and pathway to, that Abundant Life. It implies a compassionate approach to the life of the other. It means a conscious attention to the condition of the rest of the world. Here is where I see Mother's spirituality of compassion related to people. In contrast to the general understanding of "good life," it is difficult to create an image of abundant life, for we do not find it

easily prevalent around us. Yet, all of us, on the grounds and tracks we walk and run on, experience hints of abundance – breathtaking moments that ring in our hearts and call us to be more fully alive.

The illuminated journey of Mother from the gutters of Kolkata to the Altar of God is a tapestry woven with the voice of God on a moving train amidst the roar and gust of daily grind. Visiting families living in slums, nursing those weak with hunger and dying of tuberculosis and leprosy, touched the hearts of "the unwanted, the unloved and the uncared for." Mother Teresa believed no act of kindness too small to have impact. She encouraged people to look for the needy in their neighbourhoods, even in their own homes. She cried out, "There is a terrible hunger for love. Find them. Love them." Hence, abundant life is the life of love, where the heart is full and relationships are rich. Abundant living is a life of greater simplicity and compassionate giving.

Greatness in Smallness

I was born in a small village of Shivamogga district, Karnataka, and grew up in very ordinary circumstances. I witnessed a genuine example of love, watching my own mother always cook food either for a regular beggar who approached her for food or set aside rice worth for an adult for a meal later to be given to a beggar/stranger who would walk up to our home. That characterized her relationship to God in the Poor. All those who knew her had this to

tell on the day of her funeral three years back. The two names of holy men and women often I heard of at home were, Mother Teresa and St Pope John Paul II, whose picture was placed in our family prayer room. One day I happen to read the following saying of Mother Teresa. Mother poured out her deepest longing in the following words: "If I ever become a saint, I will surely be one of "darkness." I will continually be absent from Heaven – to light the light of those in darkness on earth." Further reflecting I began to see for myself, this righteous attitude determined the character of Mother's engagement with the poor sick.

Today, as I see the saint I kissed, raised to the honours of Altar by Pope Francis on September 4, I am reminded that abundant life includes valuing the worth of every individual irrespective of colour, creed, abilities, languages, and only way to honour this gift of life is to be seized-in compassionate giving. I was so captivated by the manner by which Missionaries of Charity sisters, brothers and volunteers cared for the needs of the poor sick. We began our day at 5am with Morning Prayer, and ended it with adoration. At the end of the day, it was really a very humbling experience. This shared experience mattered to me, and lead me to realize in the last ten years of living and working with people infected with HIV, that touching each other's brokenness is where we find Consolation and Joy for the gutters

of our life are the altar of God-experience.

Visit to Mother's tomb

In February 2016, after twenty years, Fr Joy and I went to pay our respect to Mother. Brother Mark, one of the general councilors of Missionaries of Charity Brothers accompanied us to Mother's tomb to offer Holy Mass. Mother's Tomb is a very special place to offer prayers and find moments of solitude. Mother is indeed exalting the God of Compassion. I Pray:

O Mother Teresa,

To live in love and for love

To shower compassion in abundance

To bring the greatest happiness possible

To open up the pathway to God's Reign

Live .. Live.. Live..!

O Mother Teresa,

Strong-willed: walking on the gutters

Firm-faith: kneeling on the ground

Passionate-heart: feeling the pain

Holy-palms: healing the wounds

Live.. Live.. Live..!

O Mother Teresa,

Gospel of the Land

Cry out for us your children

Unto God raise our care

Mother in me no end

Live.. Live.. Live..!

We went up to visit Mother's room and walked up and down the very same stairs and porch Mother has walked all her life. We said to each other, 'There is no end for a good person.' Looking back there is no other personal greater experience than the days I spent with Missionaries of Charity.

Come and Visit us from Heaven

Living a life in love and for love Mother set a mark on millions to extend compassion. Despite difficulties of personal journey, Mother Teresa found the courage and dedication to continue her work with the poor. Even on days when she experienced deep despair and a crisis of faith, she got out of bed, prayed and went out into the streets to help those who needed her. Over the years, she came to believe that this inner struggle allowed her to more fully

experience her convictions and empathize with those she wished to help.

This canonization of Mother Teresa in the Roman Catholic Church to be a saint, will set a mark on us to recognize the significance, sacredness, and purpose of our call. As Mother said, "you will find Kolkata all over the world if you have the eyes to see" and this is the biggest challenge for all of us. May Mother bless our pursuit of the abundant life through compassionate giving. May the abundant life of Mother inspire and be a road map to you as you make your journey. To hear those longings that call us all to the abundant life, I pray, O' Mother, Come and Visit us from Heaven. Come, begin the Sacred Journey and seek the Abundant Life. We humbly beg Mother to empower us for compassionate caring. The saint I kissed is the champion saint, a shining star in the galaxy of saints. Life happens because of You!

Mother Teresa Bless us!

(Source : Daijiworld)

What is Some People's Problem with Mother Teresa?

I truly don't get it. If the Pope wants to sanctify her why are people like Justice Katju and British-based activist Aroup Chatterjee spewing so much venom and the media running with it without any evidence except

conjecture that was a lot of no good.

Is it to get attention for themselves? There are worse people in the world and I don't see what advantage there is in assaulting the reputation of a

woman who has been dead for 20 years. Where were all these people when she was alive and the Mission of Charity was functioning under her aegis and she was holding lepers in her arms?

So she liked chocolates, ice cream and fun. Which is what? A series of sins? Oh, she was using second hand syringes. Since I did not give her any money I have no idea how she harnessed her resources but would so many poor people keep coming to her for a little solace and comfort if she was such an evil person.

As for her lifestyle and her trips to Europe - perhaps she went abroad to get money from the rich to use it for the poor. Robin Hood herself. To the best of my knowledge, she didn't buy a yacht, a house in Calais or go romping on the Costa del Sol. She didn't eat caviar and foie gras, guzzle champagne or have any late night parties or gambol about in a private jet. Nor did she have a secret cache in the Caymans or lived a life of grand self indulgence and stay at the Ritz and go to gamble at Vegas.

So why this pettiness which was timed with her being given a sainthood? Frankly, it hasn't affected your life or mine or anyone's in any way. Most of us thought she had already been beatified and it is the Vatican's decision. So let it go. Why are we pulling scabs off spots where there are no wounds.

Are any of us really not impressed that 150,000 people came for the ceremony. Ain't no one near that number coming to your goodbye, mate!

People who have tried to expose the work she and her missionaries

have done connect it to their own experiences. Well, we don't know what you did there for the schism to develop, so let's not pass judgement and by that token your hostility cannot be taken without question.

Oh yes, this old conversion drivel and how hordes of us are being subtly brainwashed into turning Catholic. You know what...thousands of us have studied in patrician schools, with Jesuits, I have lived in Goa for several years and shared meals with the Bishop and discussed many an issue but not one of them in school, college or work has ever tried to convert me or even brought the subject up. Yes, we were slightly anglicised and spoke better English and it was perhaps a bit awkward for little Hindu boys in ties singing hymns in the choir or saying 'grace' before grabbing the bread but it didn't make us any worse for wear.

In fact, those brothers and fathers and mother superiors were pretty dedicated people and gave our generation quite the global education. Our generation is in the armed forces, the corporate world, media, bureaucracy, law, you name it and I don't know one of us who was converted so these priests must have been doing one crappy job.

Let's stop being mean-spirited. Like Julie Andrews said in Sound of Music, "I must have done something good. Nothing comes from nothing, nothing ever could."

If Mother Teresa was this wicked witch lady, why was she not held accountable over all those years and what exactly do you expect twenty years after her death by throwing mud at her. We should have hauled her away then with hardcore proof of perfidy.

In a way it sickens you because people who have done nothing to help anyone ever in their fatcat lives now wriggle out of the woodwork and pontificate righteously about the fraud she was. As if they know the inside story.

Fine. Go hold a dying leper with festering limbs in your arms and comfort him till his last breath, then come and spit your rage. Else shut up.

1. The version found written on the wall in Mother Teresa's home for children in Calcutta.
2. People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.
3. If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.
4. If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies. Succeed anyway.
5. If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you. Be honest and sincere anyway.
6. What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight. Create anyway.

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| <p>7. If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous. Be happy anyway.</p> <p>8. The good you do today, will often be forgotten. Do good anyway.</p> <p>9. Give the best you have, and it will never be enough. Give your best anyway.</p> <p>10. In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.</p> | <p>This version is credited to Mother Teresa. However the original version "The Paradoxical Commandments are attributed to Dr Kent M. Keith.</p> <p>1. People are often unreasonable and selfcentered. forgive them anyway.</p> <p>2. If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.</p> <p>3. If you are honest, people may cheat you. Be honest anyway.</p> | <p>4. If you find happiness, people may be jealous. Be happy anyway.</p> <p>5. The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.</p> <p>6. Give the world the best you have and it may never be enough. Give your best anyway.</p> <p>7. For you see, in the end, it is between you and God. It was never you and them anyway.</p> |
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Lucknow Witnesses All Religion Eid Milan

Can Catholics do this for their Festivals?

Shoulder to Shoulder (S2S), a citizen driven initiative, saw Shias and Sunni in the city offering joint Eid namaz on Eid Day for a consecutive second year. The prayers were followed by an all religion Eid Milan that saw Hindus, Christians and Sikhs joining Muslims, sending out a message of communal harmony to the world.

Last year the prayers were held at Imambara Sibtainabad (a Shia religious shrine); namaz was led by a Sunni Imam. This year Sunni Maulana Qamar Alam led the congregation at Imambara Shah Najaf (replica of the mausoleum of Imam Ali in Najaf).

A special discourse by Maulana Kalbe Sadiq, Shia cleric and senior vice president of the All India Muslim Personal Law

Board, preceded the prayers.

"When we came together last year, it was just Shias and Sunnis. This year it is all of us together under one roof and one cause. This has also been the ingrained secular nature of the country- to bring people together not tear them apart," he said.

Though prayers were offered by men, a huge turnout of women and children from all religions was seen at the Eid Milan on the same venue post namaz with around a 1000 persons greeting each other with Eid wishes as the Sikh sevadars served all with sewaiyan.

"We all come from one God one soul. Fighting amongst us then in the name of God is our biggest mistake," said Dr Gurmeet Singh, Prabandak, Yahiyaganj Gurudwara standing on the

sidelines with folded hands, as his Muslim brethren offered namaz.

"The message is loud and clear and us reaching even our children and generations ahead," said Anil Bajaj, president of the Bhartiye Punjabi Association.

Father Ronald D'Souza, Vicar General of the Catholic Diocese of Lucknow, was present at the event from the beginning. He said, "This is the ultimate service to God, to bring the hearts of people together and save humanity."

S2S began as a citizens movement last year during Eid-ul-Zuha and since then worked together with people on several inter-religious causes for keeping the syncretic nature of India alive.

All India Catholic Union AGM



Mr Lancy
D'Cunha

Mr Lancy D'Cunha, farmer-engineer and noted Laity leader, has been elected the National President of the All India

Catholic Union for the term 2016-18 at the annual general body meeting held September 24 and 25, 2016 in Kolkata. Mr D'Cunha, 50, was earlier the Vice President.

Mr. Elias Vaz, a senior Goa corporate executive, was elected the new National Vice President, The new Secretary General is former Delhi Catholic Federation president Mr A Chinnappan and the new Treasurer is Mr Alexander Anthony who simultaneously also serves as president of the Catholic Association of Bengal. Dr John Dayal, National President in 2004-08, is the official spokesperson. Mr Eugene Gonsalves, a Kolkata-based

entrepreneur, President from 2012-2016, had initiated the centenary celebrations due in 2019.

The All India Catholic Union has started preparing for the celebrations of its Centenary. Past years have seen it repeatedly intervene when issues of freedom of religion and expression were challenged.

Mr Lancy D'Cunha, born on 24 October 1966 in Bondel, Mangalore in South Canara, has been active at the grassroots in the Catholic community, and in nurturing a dialogue with other faiths and working with them on the basic issues of the people. He was among those who led the movement for justice for the victims of the targeted violence in August 2008. Though Kandhamal and Orissa was the epicenter, Mangalore was also viciously hit. He is married to Lidwin, 42, a teacher. They have two sons and a daughter. The AICU president said the Union will file an intervention

petition in the Supreme court on the Dalit Christian demand for scheduled caste rights as are given to Dalits of other faiths such as Hindus, Buddhists and Sikhs. The public interest litigation has been in court for more than 10 years without the government responding to court notices.

The AICU is also involved in the drawing up of a response to the National Education Policy proposed by the Union Government as it moves ahead on a multi-point program of strengthening the constitutional rights of religious minorities and other marginalized groups such as Dalits, Tribals and nomadic other targeted groups. Within the church, the AICU works with Catholic Bishops as well as other denominations to build a stronger laity aware of their rights and duties as members of the church and as citizens.



Mr Elias Vaz

Cardinal Toppo to be Pope's Special Envoy

- A C Michael

Former Member of Delhi Minorities Commission

First tribal cardinal of India, Cardinal Telesphore Placidus Toppo, Archbishop of Ranchi, is named as Pope Francis's Special Envoy to the XI Plenary Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, taking place from 28 November – 4 December 2016 in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Professor M. Ruthnaswamy

A Doyen of The Christian Community

- By D. V. D'monte

Few if any, have had such a varied and distinguished career in the Public Services in public life, and as a scholar, author, journalist, educationist, public speaker and an outstanding Christian, as this eminent citizen of India and the greatest Tamil Catholic of this state.

Born at Royapuram in 1885, Mariados Ruthnaswamy was educated in St. Anne's Convent, Secunderabad, St. Joseph's College, Trichy and at Nizam's College, Hyderabad.

He proceeded to Cambridge where he took his degree in History Tripos in 1910 and became an M.A. (Cantab) in 1912. While at Cambridge he was the contemporary of the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. He studied Law and was called to the Bar from Gray's Inn London in 1920.

Returning to India he served as Asst. Professor of English and later as Professor of History at the Pachaiyappa College, eventually becoming its Principal.

In 1928 he entered Government Service as the first Indian Principal of the Madras Law College. From 1930 to 1942 he was a member of the Madras public service commission and

also acted as its Chairman. He was Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai University from 1942 to 1948.

He edited "Democracy". an English weekly from 1950 to 1951 and "Tamilnadu". a daily from 1950 to 1953 at Madurai. His works include "Making of a State", "Principles and Practice of Public Administration", "India from the Dawn", "Political Philosophy of Mr. Gandhi", "Violence-Cause and Cure", "Principles and Practice of Foreign Policy" and in 1971 "Agenda for India".

In his declining years he edited a Tamil fortnightly "Thondan" owned by Mr. D.V. D. Monte ex-M.L.C. The paper earned quite a name for itself, and is still in existence-carried on by the Congress stalwart Sabri.

Professor Ruthnaswamy's real pulpit was his desk. His contribution to the press on Administration, Constitutional Law to Folk Songs, was a treat.

His political career began in 1919 when he joined the Justice Party. He was elected to the Madras Legislative Council as a representative of Indian Christians in 1921.

When the Swatantra Party was formed by Rajaji, Ruthnaswamy joined it and was elected its Vice President. It was a strange combination. Rajaji the Arch-Congress elder and Ruthnaswamy the former Justice Party leader and prominent administrator, to work as comrades to fight the Congress under Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru. Ruthnaswamy stood for "Self-Respect" and the upliftment of the Backward Classes and non-caste social hegemony in Indian democracy. He was wedded to democracy, Fundamental Rights and Civil Liberties and opposed the growing tendencies of State-engineered controls.

Whilst serving two terms in the Rajya Sabha, he continued to champion Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of the Constitution. An eloquent and persuasive speaker, he was listened to with respect. In fact, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, our late Prime Minister, held Ruthnaswamy in the highest esteem. In a message released on the occasion of his 92nd birth anniversary, Mrs. Gandhi said that there was always rapt attention in the House, whenever Ruthnaswamy spoke, even though he was in the opposition. She paid a tribute to

Ruthnaswamy being one of the ablest Parliamentarians who carried his eloquence and suggestions with courtesy and respect.

Papal honour: The services rendered by Ruthnaswamy to the Church and to Catholic causes were unique and perhaps unparalleled in the history of any layman in India. In recognition of his services, the then Pope conferred on him in 1930 the honour of "Knight Commander of St. Gregory the Great" the first Indian to be so honoured. In 1948 the late Pope Pius XII received him in Private Audience during a visit to Rome.

A champion of the Minorities, he was the President of the Catholic India Association and in 1945 founded the Catholic Union of India serving as its President for 12 years. (Today the All India Catholic Union serves the interests, rights and privileges of over 16 million Catholics in the Country.) He represented India at the International Catholic Conference in Melbourne in 1955 and in Rome in 1957.

During the framing of the Constitution of India, Ruthnaswamy along with Fr. Jerome D'Souza S.J. put up proposals to include provisions

for the rights to profess and also to preach and propagate their religion. In Parliament, he stood for the Catholic principles of Marriage in opposition to divorce.

A man of great refinement and culture, soft spoken and gifted with social graces, it was a pleasure to know and move with Ruthnaswamy. Through his diligence and systematic habits, by his infinite capacity for hard work he left a rich heritage for the country and the Christian Community. He died at the age of 92 on 1st June, 1977-Active till the last with his passion for study and contemplation.

Coffee with Jesus

A Republican, in a wheelchair, entered a restaurant one afternoon and asked the waitress for a cup of coffee.

The Republican looked across the restaurant and asked "Is that Jesus sitting over there?" The waitress nodded "yes! so, the Republican requested that she give Jesus a cup of coffee, on him.

The next patron to come in was a Libertarian, with a hunched back. He shuffled over to a booth, painfully sat down, and asked the waitress for a cup of hot tea. He also glanced across the restaurant and asked, "Is that Jesus over there?"

The waitress nodded, so the Lib-

ertarian asked her to give Jesus a cup of hot tea, "My treat."

The third patron to come into the restaurant, was a Democrat on crutches. He hobbled over to a booth, sat down and hollered, "Hey there honey! How about getting me a cold mug of Miller Light!"

He, too, looked across the restaurant and asked, "Isn't that God's boy over there?" The waitress nodded, so the Democrat directed her to give Jesus a cold beer. "On my bill," he said loudly so everyone in the restaurant could hear.

As Jesus got up to leave, he passed by the Republican, touched him and said, "For your kindness,

you are healed." The Republican felt the strength come back into his legs, got up and began to praise the Lord.

Jesus passed by the Libertarian, touched him and said, "For your kindness, you are healed." The Libertarian felt his back straightening up, he raised his hands and he, too, began to praise the Lord.

Then, Jesus walked with a huge smile on his face towards the Democrat. The Democrat jumped up and yelled, "Don't touch me... I'm on disability."

For those who understand, no explanation is necessary. For those who do not understand, no explanation is possible.

Pope Tightens Rules on Miracles and Money in Sainthood

New rules presented by the Vatican are designed to tighten the process for approving miracles as part of sainthood causes, and to also make sure there's a clear paper trail behind who's picking up the tab and how much they're spending.

The text was approved by Italian Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Vatican's Secretary of State, in the name of Pope Francis in August and released later

Italian Archbishop Marcello Bartolucci, the number two official at the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints, presented the highlights of the new measures in a note released by the Vatican's Press Office.

The new rules include:

- To approve a miracle, at least 5 out of the 7 members of the body of medical experts within the congregation must approve, or 4 out of 6, depending on the size of the group, as opposed to a simple majority.
- In case a miracle report is rejected on the first go-around, it may only be reexamined a total of three times.
- In order to reexamine a miracle claim, new members must be named to the consulting body.
- The president of the consulting body may only be confirmed to one additional five-year term after the original mandate expires.

- While in the past payments to experts could be made in person by cash or check, now the experts must be paid exclusively through a bank transfer.

In general, the going rate in sainthood causes is roughly \$560 for each of the two medical personnel asked to perform a preliminary review, and about \$4200 in total for the seven members of the medical consulting committee.

The new rules are not retroactive, and hence they do not invalidate any beatifications or canonizations performed under earlier procedures.

Bartolucci said work on the new rules began one year ago, around the same time that leaks of confidential Vatican financial documents raised questions about financial practices in the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

In his book "Merchants in the Temple," Italian journalist Gianluigi Nuzzi charged the congregation was among the most reluctant Vatican offices to cooperate with new transparency measures imposed as part of Francis's project of Vatican reform, and asserted that the average cost of a sainthood cause was about \$550,000.

U.S. Catholic officials traditionally have used \$250,000 as a

benchmark for the cost of a cause from the initial investigation on a diocesan level, to a canonization Mass in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican, though that cost can increase depending in part on how many people take part in the canonization ceremony and the logistics of organizing the event.

In March, Pope Francis had already approved a new set of financial procedures for the congregation, outlining procedures for handling contributions and specifying which authorities are charged with overseeing the flow of money.

Under those measures, while the postulator, or promoter, of a sainthood cause can continue to administer the funds for each cause, the bishop of the diocese or the superior general of the religious order that initiates the cause or another church authority must review financial statements and approve the budgets for each cause.

The rules approved in March also confirm a "Solidarity Fund" created by St. Pope John Paul II in 1983 to help cover the costs of causes where resources are lacking, giving the congregation discretion to transfer unused money from one case into the fund to cover the expenses of another.

Catholic News Service contributed to this report.

Golden Jubilee Celebrations: Darjeeling Diocesan Catholic Association

Kalimpong, October 9, 2016: A Church group in Gurkhaland marked its 50 years of service in the hills with a pledge to greater commitment in political leadership and social action.

Speaking at the concluding ceremony of its golden jubilee celebrations held at St Augustine's School, Kalimpong, on September 8, president of Darjeeling Diocesan Catholic Association (DDCA) Patrick Sada recalled St Pope John Paul II's call to the laity saying, "Every Christian should be involved in politics."

DDCA is affiliated to All India Catholic Union (AICU) established in 1919 and registered under Societies Registration Act 1860. The AICU with affiliate units across the diocese/districts in India is a non political body, and it seeks to represent and strengthen the Catholic Community and country, in the socio-religious, political, and economic fields.

Sada also informed more than 400 participants including some 40 priests and DDCA members present at the event the three decisions of the AICU national meet held last month in Kolkata.

First decision was a demand of the national Catholic leaders from

across India to press for equal rights for Dalit Christians as enjoyed by Dalit converts to other religions.

Secondly DDCA praised Government of India for sending a delegation to the canonization of St Teresa of Calcutta under the leadership of Minister for External Affairs Sushma Swaraj.

Thirdly the Catholic body condemned the malicious allegations leveled against the noble and selfless service St Teresa of Calcutta rendered to the poorest of the poor for over 50 years.

In his presidential address Sada also gave a three-word slogan to the members to "Renounce, Pronounce and Denounce."

Sada explained the slogan saying: "Renounce means self sacrifice in serving the society; Pronounce signified the primary duty of every Christian to proclaim God's kingdom of justice and brotherhood;" and Denounce meant "to respond to anti-Christian attacks."

The diocese of Darjeeling, established in 1962, comprises of the entire state of Sikkim and parts of North Bengal with its four hill stations of Kurseong, Kalimpong, Mirik and Darjeeling

as well as its numerous tea plantations.

According to 2014 diocesan statistics, it has 54 parishes, 3 missions, 132 priests (82 diocesan, 50 religious), 455 lay religious (121 brothers, 334 sisters), 40 seminarians. Spread over 9,521 square kilometers, it has a population: 37,109 Catholics (2.6 percent of 1,433,000 total).

The lay leaders and Bishop Stephen Lepcha of Darjeeling recalled the wisdom of Bishop Eric Benjamin, the first bishop of Darjeeling, who participated at Vatican II and was inspired by its concept of the Church as 'people of God' and started DDCA on July 23, 1966.

The jubilee celebrations started with hoisting of jubilee flag with the DDCA motto: For God, Country and Community." DDCA member from Kurseong, Peter Kerr, designed it.

The celebrations concluded with the release of a souvenir publication compiled by Thomas Mukhia chronicling the history of DDCA followed by thanksgiving Eucharist presided over by Bishop Stephen Lepcha and fellowship meal for all.

62nd AGM of All India Catholic Union held in Kolkata





Hearty Congratulations to
Newly Elected
Principal Office Bearers of AICU, 2016 -18



Lancy D'Cunha
National President



Elias Vas
National Vice President



A. Chinnappan
Secretary General



Alexander Anthony
Honorary Treasurer

Best wishes from

Vishal Jagriti Trust.



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