

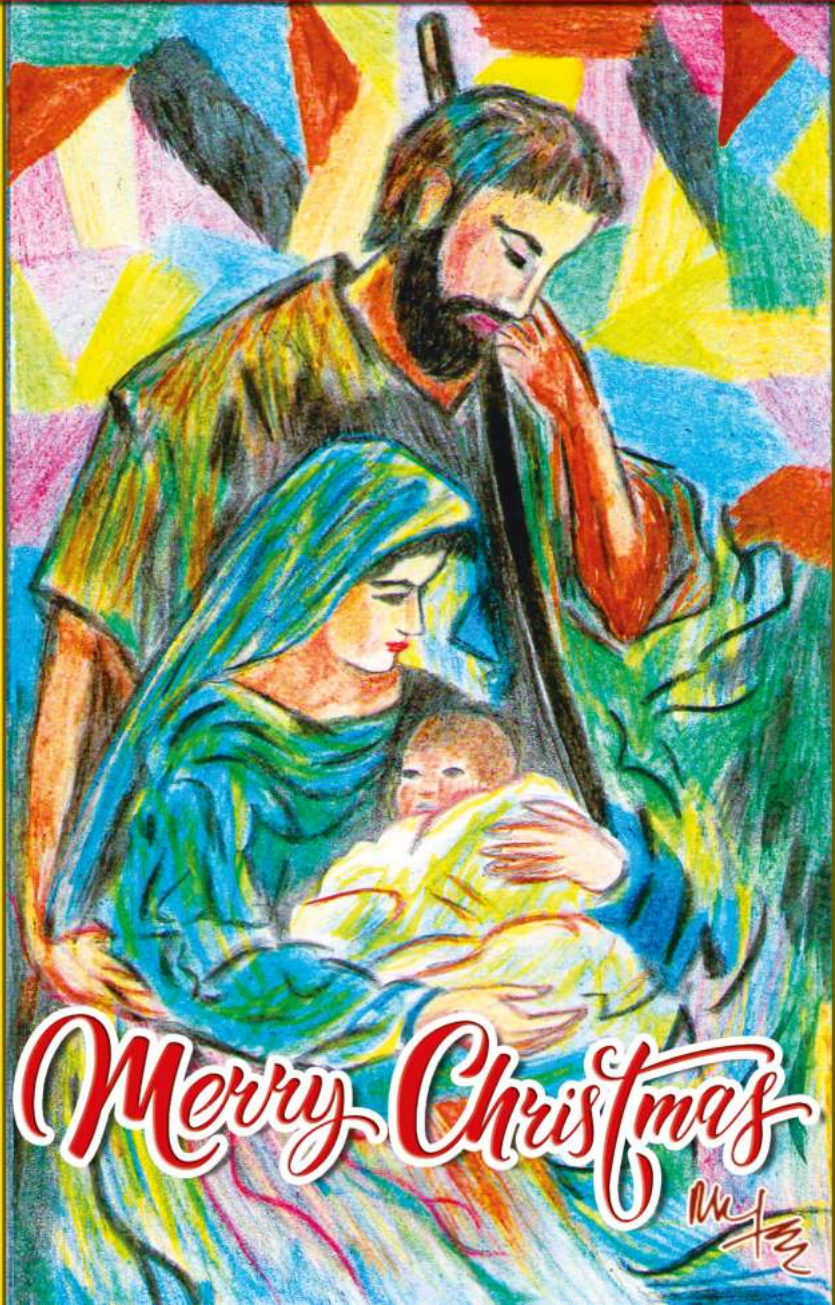
Mangalore

CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH KANARA

Vol. LXXXVIII No.12

December 2024

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CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH KANARA

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Office Address: Pio Mall, 3rd Floor, Jail Road, Bejai, Mangaluru 575 004

Phone: 0824 - 4271733 Mobile: 9480071733

Office Time: 10 am to 5 pm (2nd and 4th Saturdays holiday)

Email: caskmangaluru@gmail.com Website: www.caskmangalore.org

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Editorial Commentary

Are you feeling the Christmas spirit yet? At ‘Mangalore’, we’re here to spread a little festive magic, bringing you joy, inspiration, and a sense of togetherness. This year, we’ve resolved to embrace the essence of Christmas by slowing down, cherishing the moment, and making the season truly meaningful. In this issue, you’ll find a variety of ideas and features to make your celebrations brighter and more fulfilling.



To tantalize your taste buds, check out Kuzn, where we share delightful recipes and culinary tips perfect for the holiday season. For those seeking a deeper connection to the spirit of Christmas, explore our articles on spiritual enrichment and discover timeless wisdom from the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh — not just as symbols of the Nativity but also as elements that offer health benefits, educational value, and a sprinkle of humor.

One of the highlights of this edition is our Christmas Quiz, packed with intriguing questions and attractive prizes. It’s a fun way to engage with the season and test your knowledge. With something for everyone — from lighthearted entertainment to thought-provoking reads — we’ve crafted this issue to ensure every reader finds a personal connection. Your engagement makes our efforts truly rewarding.

This month, we also take you on a journey through our rich cultural heritage. These pages delve into the traditions, stories, and artistic expressions that define our collective identity. We’ve included insights from medical experts, erudite scholars, and accomplished specialists to offer perspectives that help you make informed choices. Additionally, we reflect on the artistic and cultural sensibilities that adorn our heritage, exploring their relevance in contemporary times and this festive season.

As always, we celebrate the legacy of CASK, reaffirming our commitment to preserving and cherishing our traditions for the future. Let’s embrace this season of joy and gratitude together, celebrating both the past and the present while looking forward to a bright future. Wishing you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year 2025!

Prof. Dr. Paul G. Aquinas, Ph.D., D.Litt.



President's Communiqué

Dear friends,

As we come to the close of another year, it is with a heartfelt of gratitude and hope that I reach out to each one of you. The year gone by has been a time of both challenges and triumphs, of moments of joy and sorrow. Yet, through it all, the strength of our faith and the spirit of unity have been a constant guiding light, as we continue to walk together on the path of love and service.

December hosts several international observances that highlight global causes we can all support. International Day of Persons with Disabilities (*December 3*) serves as a reminder of the importance of inclusivity, accessibility, and equal opportunities for all people. On International Human Rights Day (*December 10*), we are reminded of the universal rights and freedoms that every person deserve - freedoms that we must continue to protect and advocate for, in every corner of the world.

Around December 21, marks the *shortest day and longest night of the year!*

As we reflect on the past year, we are reminded of the profound love of God that sustains us. The challenges we faced, whether personal or communal, have deepened our understanding of God's presence in our lives. The call to serve, to love, and to be merciful is never more pressing than in times of difficulty. And yet, it is in those moments that we experience the true meaning of Christmas - God's gift of His Son, Jesus Christ, who came to bring us peace, hope, and everlasting love.

This Christmas season, let us take a moment to pause and reflect on the grace we have received. Let us be grateful for the moments of joy, for the blessings of family, and for the strength to carry on in faith. Above all, let us remember that the true spirit of Christmas is not just found in the decorations or the presents we give, but in the love and care we extend to one another.

In this holy season, I encourage each of you to renew your commitment to our shared mission of building a stronger, more compassionate community. Let us continue to support one another,

uphold our Catholic values, and be beacons of hope in a world that so deeply needs it.

On behalf of the Governing Council members of the Catholic Association of South Kanara, I extend my heartfelt wishes to you and your family for a blessed and joyous Christmas. *May the peace of Christ reign in your hearts today and always, and may the New Year 2025 bring with it new opportunities for growth, service, and deepening of our faith.*

With gratitude and prayers,

Ronald I Gomes
President

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-Editor

Christmas and its Meaningful Celebration

- Rev. Dr. Francis Assisi Almeida

Christmas, rooted in the Christian tradition, celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ and has transformed over the centuries into a global event. It features family gatherings, acts of kindness, festive decorations, gift exchanges, etc. While its religious significance remains important for many, Christmas is also embraced as a cultural celebration by people of all backgrounds. The nativity story, depicting the humble birth of the Savior in a manger, is central to many traditions and often illustrated in nativity scenes and church services.



Christmas traditions vary across cultures but commonly emphasize family, love, and celebration. The external celebration includes decorating Christmas trees, preparing cribs, the presence of Santa Claus, etc. Further, one of the most cherished traditions of Christmas is the gift exchange that symbolizes love, generosity, and the true spirit of giving, rooted in the biblical story of the three Wise Men who brought gifts to Jesus. Singing Christmas carols is another beloved tradition, with groups of singers spreading joy through songs that tell the Christmas story, fostering community and celebration.

Christmas is a time of Sharing:

Christmas is often referred to as the “*season of sharing*”. Beyond material gifts, Christmas encourages acts of kindness, charity, and compassion. Many people take the opportunity to donate to those in need, volunteer at shelters, or contribute to charitable organizations that provide food, clothing, and gifts to underprivileged families. The message of goodwill towards all is at the heart of the celebration, reminding us of the importance of compassion and empathy.

For many, Christmas is a time to reconnect with loved ones. The chaos of everyday



life often leaves little room for quality time with family and friends, making Christmas an opportunity to slow down and appreciate those closest to us. Whether it is gathering around the dinner table, sharing memories, or simply enjoying each other's company, the celebration fosters connection and closeness. In addition to the festive atmosphere, Christmas also encourages moments of reflection and gratitude. For Christians, it is a time to meditate on the birth of Christ and the message of peace and love he brought to the world and for others, it may serve as a time to reflect on the year gone by and express gratitude for the blessings in their lives.

A Meaningful Celebration of Christmas:

No doubt, Christmas is a time for coming together, marked by festive decorations, gift-giving, and special meals but the true spirit of Christmas transcends material aspects; it embodies love, kindness, compassion, and togetherness. For Christians, Christmas is a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, whose messages of love and forgiveness inspire millions. To celebrate meaningfully, we should reflect on the deeper values of the season. Activities such as attending church services or reading the Nativity story can remind us of the core



message of Christmas, i.e., peace on Earth and goodwill towards all. Christmas is a time for families and loved ones to gather. Instead of getting caught up in shopping and preparations, take a moment to appreciate being present with those you care about. Share stories, laugh together, and create

lasting memories that reflect the true meaning of love and unity.

Giving gifts is a cherished Christmas tradition, but its true meaning is found in the thought and care behind the gifts, not merely their material value. Generosity through presents, time, or acts of kindness can have a lasting impact. Small acts of kindness spread joy and remind us that Christmas is about giving to others, not just receiving. Further, the Christmas season is a great time to reflect on our blessings and

practising gratitude can enhance our happiness. Christmas is an opportunity to appreciate our health, homes, relationships, and life's simple joys, therefore, we must take a moment to express our gratitude to those around us through smiles, kind words, or thoughtful actions.

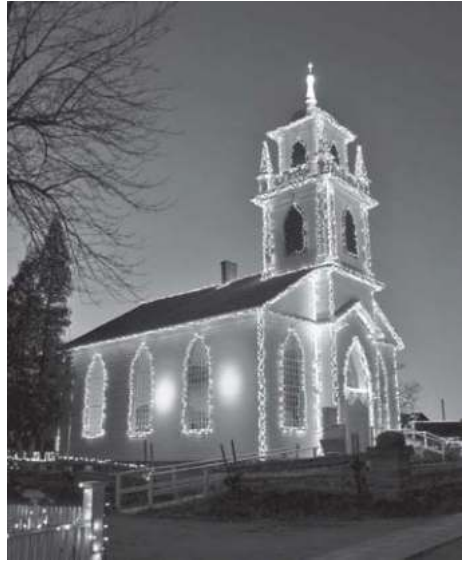
While old traditions can be comforting, meaningful Christmas celebrations often come from new ways to connect. Consider starting a family tradition of volunteering,

preparing meals for those in need, or setting aside time for reflection and prayer. Choose activities that reflect love, community, and giving, fostering meaningful connections. In our materialistic world, we often forget that the best gift is our time and attention. Instead of chasing the perfect gift, focus on enjoying valuable moments with loved ones by spending time with family and those in need through sharing stories, playing games, cooking together, or simply having healthy conversations. These experiences create lasting memories that outlive the wrapping paper.

Conclusion

Christmas is a time for goodwill, focused on spreading love and kindness to everyone, including friends, neighbours, and strangers. Acts of kindness, like sending a card to someone who feels lonely or helping with shopping, can brighten the darkest winter days. Showing others that they are valued is one of the most meaningful gifts we can give. So, let our Christmas this year be a celebration of love, hope, and joy that unites people across borders and cultures. Let it offer a chance to pause and reflect on what truly matters i.e., our relationships and the kindness we show.

(Author is the Secretary of Karnataka Regional Commission for Education, Bangalore)



Coming Home for Christmas

- Evane Jean DSouza

As the months with ‘ember’ start to roll in, the countdown begins, and the excitement grows to come back home. ‘I am going home for Christmas’ always sparks a yearning to be around family, friends and loved ones, and a much-needed break from work and mundane daily routines. I look forward to heading to a place where I belong, welcomed with warm hugs and shielded from stresses of everyday life.



A reel of memories unwinds with cherished childhood moments, enveloped with Christmas cheer and holiday traditions. An essence of distance and time melts away and I feel present among all the chaos of Christmas in Mangalore. This makes my days go faster and as December soon approaches, I cannot wait to be back home.

This year, my travels take a little bit of detour. A short stopover in Mumbai to see my brother takes precedent, where the D’souza siblings plan to take over the city with a little pre-holiday cheer and loads of delicious food. And dare I say, all away from parent supervision.

But we both will hop on a plane to Mangalore because that’s where Christmas always is! The town gets dressed in all things festive with continuous flow of family events – be it lunches, dinners, birthdays, weddings and ‘roces’. The best part is I get to see all my family under one roof, dancing to the latest tunes all night long; but my worst nightmare is to ransack my wardrobe finding the best outfit for each occasion. Alas, I am ready for it all.

I cannot wait to have the best Mangalorean food, whether it is mom’s home cooked meals or the delicious dishes from *The Village* (this is a must whenever I am here). And let’s not forget the abundance of traditional sweets prepared during this season. This is a complete sensory overload before I even get on a plane.

The sweet melody of carols and other Christmas songs brings a warm comfort to my soul. These melodies stay timeless, and I never tire of listening to them. The Christmas Mass with the choir singing the Silent Night and other hymns brings an essence of tranquility. As I

walk down the streets, it is a sight of joy to see the beautiful decorations, festive lights and tall Christmas trees across the town.



What I look forward to the most is our annual family tradition of getting together on

Christmas eve at my grandparents' home. The night is filled with good food, a lot of firework action, a singing session of old songs and random banter between uncles, aunts, cousins, nephews and nieces. This kicks off the festive season and continues till next day when we attend the Christmas dance at Mangalore Club – another tradition I dare not miss.

I would not want my holidays to ever end, and let's not think about it for now. A wonderful time spent with family and friends rejuvenates my spirit, fills my heart with renewed hope and enthusiasm for a new year. Another page added to my book of memories. ●

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE MEMBERS OF CASK

<i>No.</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Place</i>
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14.	Mr. Max Sequeira	Mangalore
15.	Ms. Felicitas Sequeira	Mangalore
16.	Mr. Kevin J .Fernandes	Bangalore

In the Beginning...

- Gabriel Vas

In the beginning - a reflection, unraveled the threads of yesterday reflection on the memories of one's childhood the foundation upon which our lives and personalities are built. **Gabriel Vas** takes a journey and delves into the treasure trove of childhood with its tribulations, understanding and transformations that make us what we are - a unique personality.

Who isn't enamoured of short stories, especially children? I was.

I myself was hooked to stories since my childhood. We have heard and read stories in our schools, and this fascination with short stories continued even as I grew up.



From primary level to high school and college, we used to be hooked on to short stories. I am sure all of us are and were addicted to stories.

Those of us, who studied in Padua High School at Nanthoor in the port city of Mangaluru, are familiar with the graphic narration of stories with action and voice modulation by our beloved 'John Master,' as we used to call John D'Souza Sir. This was in the sixties.



Old students of Padua High School would certainly recall how our beloved John D'Souza Sir used to take his classes and devote the last 15 minutes or so of his class for the session of stories! He had a vast repertoire of enchanting stories. I know he is no more now, and can only say RIP to our John Master!

Well, I am going ahead of myself.

All of us have certainly gone through this phase of listening or reading short stories, particularly as children and those of us who started learning in schools in the Kannada medium, are familiar with stories invariably beginning with the words, 'ondaanondu kaaladalli' or 'once upon a time'. These stories, often derided pejoratively as fairy tales, or simply as 'cock and bull stories' or 'ajji kathe' (grandma's stories)!



But our folklore is abundant with a wide range of fairy tales that has

captured the imagination of people. This, I am sure, is most certainly true of all languages.

I had often wondered why the stories that we heard in our childhood phase began with 'ondaanondu kaaladalli' or 'once upon a time'.

Why can't the stories have a different kind of beginning? Again, almost all the stories had happy ending, a grand reunion after emotional turmoil, as it does in our Bollywood films.

Born into a Christian family, I had my own doubts about our Bible, which we were taught by nuns and priests rather quite well. As a child, I for one was often dreaming of going to heaven so as to enjoy the kind of luxurious life like the winged angels. Talking about heaven, I dreaded the idea of being consigned to hell.

Anyway, what are my childhood doubts about the Bible, which we know is the Word of God?

Honestly, I still have my own doubts about the Old Testament and many of the incidents so vividly narrated, including the Garden of Eden, Eve tempting Adam with the 'forbidden' apple and blaming the serpent, which had to incur God's wrath and suffer the curse of crawling

on its belly for all time to come, and again the Great Deluge and Noah's Arc and so on.

However, the story of Cain and Abel or the parable of the Prodigal Son and many other narrations in Bible has really touched my heart. Surely, we have seen a few such persons and families among us! Also, we must have certainly seen dramas and movies dwelling on such tales.

Be that as it may. What has surprised me is the beginning of the gospel according to John: 'In the beginning was the Word.'

As a child I felt the beginning of John gospel sounded like the proverbial 'ondaanodu kaaladalli' or 'once upon a time!'

The entire opening verse of John's gospel reads like this: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'.

I later understood that the term of 'the Word' in Christian theology signified the original Greek 'Logos' and represents Jesus Christ implying His divine nature and eternal existence. With the simple term of 'The Word' Jesus is portrayed as the divine expression of God.

Evangelist John continues by saying later, 'the Word became flesh and dwelt among us'.

I don't claim to be well versed in Christian theology and much less a biblical scholar.

But if we look at Hinduism, the predominant religion in India, or even those practicing Yoga, the word 'Om' is the constant refrain. The word, 'Om,' is uttered to invoke God.

'Om' like 'The Word or Logos' is described as the primordial sound and essence of the universe; it is eternal and source of all existence.

For the computer geeks, Microsoft Word is equally significant as it has become the cornerstone of the digital word processing for individuals and organizations worldwide. Word has a pioneering role as well since it is one of the first widely adopted word processing programmes that have become standard for creating, editing and formatting documents.

John, the apostle most loved by Jesus Christ, obviously had profound understanding of the nuances and wanted to convey some entirely different perspective in his gospel, when he starts it with the verse, 'In the beginning was the Word...'

A Saviour is Born

- Renee Lobo

*In the cold dark night when all asleep,
to the manger of
..... insecurity
..... helplessness
..... and eerie silence
He came, bringing glad tidings of love
..... to the last
..... to the least
..... to the lost.*



It's a saga of unending love, a new born child behind the greatest success story ever, the Babe of Bethlehem... Jesus Christ. Shorn of the trappings of wealth and splendour as befitting the Lord of the Universe, He came.. He saw.. He conquered. Wrapped in swaddling clothes, His birth in a manger gave us a glimpse of the Man He was destined to be and heralded a radiance of optimism, spreading a rich treasure of love, peace and joy.

As angelic choirs heralded His coming, the shepherds with their flocks of sheep worshipped in wonder and awe, such wonder as the Nativity scene invokes in us even today, centuries later. A 2000 year old tryst with destiny as Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless us with the most enduring expression of devotion in its purest form, and the Infant Jesus makes a divine entry into human life. For God so loved the world that He gave us His only Son.

So then, we must celebrate this spirit of sharing and caring for Jesus is born. Presents of kindness and compassion can better fill a stocking than the



best chocolates in the world, just as a personal call to a lonely relative will uplift and spread goodwill. Give a gift from the heart and happiness multiplies manifold. The majesty of the Magi was complete only before the crib of Jesus. As we reach out to those in need love will find a dwelling place in everyone, and we will be an inn with the Masters room for Him.



So deck the halls with good cheer and camaraderie as the Yuletide spirit has many hues to joy. Bask in the warmth of family reunions when loved ones make a beeline home and Midnight Mass gives this wonderful feast a prayerful start. Savour the gifting, the tree, the twinkling lights, kuswar and the hustle and bustle of a Christmas lunch... chickens roasting, sannas and pork a calling, the fragrance of a sweet pullao bursting with nuts and raisins and the grand finale.. that oh so special X'mas pudding set alight with a flaming brandy sauce.



It's a feeling like no other and while we often get caught up in the glitz and glamour, the clang and clamour of our present day effervescent celebrations, we just need to bring Christ back into Christmas and make Him the Reason for the Season.

It's a challenge, a leap of faith. All we have to do is follow a tiny Baby with a giants force who led by example in every way and has given us this magic stairway to eternal bliss.

I wish you all a very warm, hope filled and blessed Christmas and joyful New Year 2025. ●

Mangalore Cheshire Home

The Cheshire movement was initiated by Group Captain Lord Leonard Cheshire, a war veteran who was devastated by the effects of the Second World War and established the first Home at Le Court, England in 1948.

The Mangalore Cheshire Home was inaugurated in the year 1965 to provide residential accommodation and rehabilitation to 12 women cured of Hansen's Disease. They were housed in a modest cottage built by the pooled resources of generous people of Mangalore.

In a short span of time, the Home housed about 35 service users who were gradually trained, empowered and relocated with their families. Presently there are 17 women Residents who are paraplegic, physically and mentally challenged and the burnt-out Hansen's Disease cases too.

The logo for Cheshire Home, featuring the words "Cheshire" and "Home" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, stacked vertically on a solid black rectangular background.

The focus of activities then shifted from providing just the basic necessities to a more holistic development. Thus, the Vocational Training Centre was started in 1970 to develop 'Ability in Disability', where the latent potential in even severely disabled persons can be developed.

To empower our Residents, under the expert guidance of Instructors, they are trained in Computers and Tailoring. They are also taught to make a variety of useful handicrafts, which are kept for sale at the Home at affordable rates.

Daily exercise, yoga, literacy classes, singing, drama and light games are conducted to keep them active and develop their inner skills.

The Home is run by a team of Board Members and the daily supervision is entrusted to the dedicated Sisters of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul.

A tremendous source of strength is the support of our friends and well-wishers. We are grateful to them.

Mangalore Cheshire Home, Suvarna Road, Kankanady P.O, Mangalore 575002. Tel: 0824 2430468.

Email: cheshirehomemangalore@yahoo.com

Page sponsored by: Mr. George & Mrs. Thelma Pais

Next on Netflix:

An animated Christmas classic? - Leah Sreshta

Have you ever wondered what would happen if Santa made a mistake rewarding the naughty twin? Or if a group of kids who celebrate the same Christmas every year suddenly got to experience it on their own? Or why everything seems to go wrong for the new kid in town? You'll find all your answers Netflix-adapted *That Christmas* set to release on December 4th. Based on Richard Curtis' the series of heartwarming books *The Empty Stocking*, *Snow Day*, and *That Christmas* this animated festive comedy brings together intertwined stories of friends and family navigating holiday chaos with friendship, loneliness, laughter and a spirit of togetherness.

Produced by Locksmith Animation, *That Christmas* marks Richard Curtis first venture into animation. The Honorary Oscar and BAFTA-winning writer-director is well known for his classics such as *Love Actually*, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, and *Notting Hill*. Earlier this year, at the Annecy International Animation Film Festival, Curtis described working on feature animation as "an intriguing process," vastly different from his live-action experiences. "In live-action movies, it's all just print, and you don't see anything until the set is built. To see my words come to life in visual terms was so exciting," he said. It also features the directorial debut of a longtime DreamWorks Veteran, Simon Otto. He's previously known for his work on franchises like *Kung Fu Panda* and *How to Train Your Dragon*. At Annecy, Otto added, "In animation, we tend to tell stories with a single protagonist and big journeys, but what makes a Richard Curtis movie? I wanted this film to live up to his legacy." The 90-minute film features the voices of Curtis regulars such as Bill Nighy, alongside Fiona Shaw, Jodie Whittaker, Lolly Adefope and Brian Cox as Santa Claus, with



the exclusive song "Under the Tree" by Ed Sheeran. *That Christmas* marks the second feature from Ron's Gone Wrong studio Locksmith Animation, in collaboration with DNEG.

Alongside an incredible team of global talent that brought this project to life, Mangalore's own Leah Sreshta has been lending her skill as a Layout Technical Director on this film. Before joining Locksmith Animation, she picked up experience at Boulder media, where she worked on My Little Pony: A new generation, and at DNEG on various VFX projects.

So, this Christmas, whether you're winding down after a big holiday gathering or just looking for a new family favourite, this film is perfect for a cozy night in. Grab some hot cocoa, settle in, and get ready to enjoy a heartwarming holiday classic in the making! ●

Attention Readers!

The Editorial Board invites articles from its esteemed readers for upcoming editions.

Guidelines for Submission:

Articles should be typed. Word count: 300 words (one page) or 600–650 words (two pages).

Selected articles will be published in the upcoming issue. If not published immediately, the article will be retained for future issues.



Categories for Submission:

1. Theme of the Month (to be communicated via WhatsApp).
2. Articles of General Interest for readers.
3. Special Topics, including but not limited to: Law, Finance, Psychology and Counseling, Child Psychology, Medicine etc.

Submission Deadline: All articles must be emailed to caskmangaluru@gmail.com or pauleeda@gmail.com on or before the 20th of the previous month to be considered for the next issue.

Sponsored Content: Sponsored articles, eulogies, institutional write-ups, or advertisements must include the relevant payment to the CASK account.

Specify the page placement for advertisements (e.g., inner front cover, back outer cover, back inner cover, middle pages, or other full pages).

We look forward to your contribution.

The Poor Cry Out to Us: Do we Respond?

- Rev. Fr Cedric Prakash SJ

Part - 1

About a month ago, on 15 October, the 2024 Global Hunger Index was released. India ranks 105 out of 127 countries; with a score of 27.3, India has a level of hunger that is *serious*. On that day, a World Bank report stated that “*almost 129 million Indians are living in extreme poverty in 2024, on less than \$2.15 (about Rs 181) a day.*” These are hard facts by independent agencies, which the Government of India is unable to find fault with. These statistics should not surprise anyone: whilst India boasts of producing some of the richest persons in the world, the fact is that millions of Indians still do not have access to *roti- kapda- makhan* (food-clothing-shelter), clean drinking water and the other basic amenities of life. Theirs is a journey of survival, struggling to eke out a living!



So as the Universal Church observes the **VIII World Day of the Poor**, the one consideration which must be uppermost in the hearts and minds of every disciple of Jesus is ‘the poor cry out to us: do we respond?’ If we do so, it is important that we analyse the nature of our response. Pope Francis has based his message this year on the theme, ‘*The prayer of the poor rises up to God*’ (cf. *Sir 21:5*). He says, “*The World Day of the Poor has now become a fixture for every ecclesial community. It is a pastoral opportunity not to be underestimated, for it challenges every believer to listen to the prayer of the poor, becoming aware of their presence and needs. It is an opportune occasion to implement initiatives that concretely help the poor and to recognize and support the many volunteers who dedicate*



themselves passionately to those most in need. We must thank the Lord for the people who make themselves available to listen to and support the poorest among us”. The message of Pope Francis is his usual incisive style. For

him, the cry (their prayer) of the poor, has a message for all of us! Just as God does, we need to listen to their prayer; but God also wants us to respond proactively and help alleviate their poverty.

The first of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is to ‘*End poverty in all its forms everywhere*’ - something that has to be achieved by 2030! That is indeed a tall order – but if there is the political will to do so, that seemingly ideal goal, can certainly be realised. In the context of this goal, the UN says, “*In 2020, the number of people living in extreme poverty (living on less than USD 2.15 a day) rose to 724 million. Those living in extreme poverty struggle to fulfil the most basic needs (health, education, access to water and sanitation)*”; adding, “*Eradicating poverty in all its forms remains one of the greatest challenges facing humanity. While the number of people living in extreme poverty dropped by more than half between 1990 and 2015 – from 1.9 billion to 731 million – too many are still struggling for the most basic human needs*”.

In January 2023, OXFAM released its report ‘Survival of the Richest’ at the World Economic Forum in Davos, The Report highlighted the large disparity in wealth distribution in India, which makes the country one of the most unequal countries in the world, grappling with soaring levels of both income and wealth inequality. The Report says, that more than 40% of the wealth created in the country from 2012 to 2021 had gone to just 1% of the population, the richest 10 percent of the Indian population lay claim to an astonishing 77 percent of the nation’s wealth. Only 3% of the country’s wealth had trickled down to the bottom 50%. In 2022, the wealth of India’s richest man Gautam Adani increased by 46%, while the combined wealth of India’s 100 richest had touched \$660bn. These scandalous statistics must make any Indian with a conscience to hang one’s head down in shame.

India’s youth continue to grapple with soaring unemployment rates, with nearly 83 percent of the jobless population belonging to this demographic, as per the India Employment Report 2024 jointly published by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Institute of Human Development (IHD) The report (which was released on 27 March 2024)underscores a concerning trend where the proportion of educated young people, possessing at least secondary education,

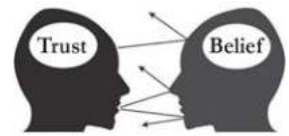
among the total unemployed youth has nearly doubled from 35.2 percent in 2000 to 65.7 percent in 2022.

The Adivasis/Tribals (indigenous people), who constitute a sizable section of India's population are denied their *jal- jungle- jameen* (water-forests-land) and other legitimate rights. Thousands of them are displaced because of mega- projects. Primary education in the remote tribal villages is non - existent and so is medicare for them; a large percentage of tribals have to migrate to urban areas / other States in search of employment. Besides them, most migrant workers, continue to be excluded and exploited! The plight of the Dalits, the OBCs leave much to be desired; untouchability is practiced everywhere; manual scavenging still exists; the reality of the *safai kamdars* is pathetic.

(To be continued)

*(The Author is a human rights, reconciliation and peace activist/
writer. Contact: cedricprakash@gmail.com)*

Belief & Trust



A person started to walk on a rope tied between two tall towers. He was walking slowly, balancing a long stick in his hands. He had his son sitting on his shoulders.

Every one on the ground were watching him in bated breath and were very tense. When he slowly reached the second tower, every one clapped, whistled and welcomed him. They shook hands and took selfies.

He asked the crowd “do you all think I can walk back on the same rope now from this side to that side?”

Crowd shouted in one voice “Yes, Yes, you can...”

“Do you trust me, he asked?” They said, “yes, yes, we are ready to bet on you.”

He said, “okay, can any one of you give your child to sit on my shoulder; I will take the child to the other side safely.”

There was stunned silence. Every one became quiet.

Belief is different. Trust is different. For Trust you need to surrender totally.

This is what we lack towards God in today's world.

We believe in Almighty. But do we trust Him?

CECIL ABREO



(14.1.1977 - 9 .10.2024)

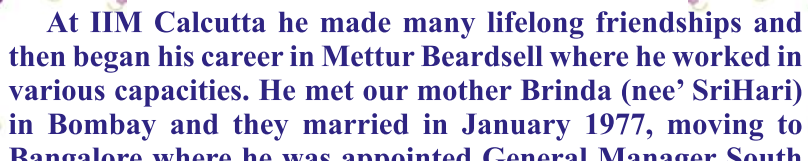
‘Gone too soon’

Cecil was born in Calcutta on the 14th of January 1947 to Edward Abreo and Minna nee’ Rebello. He attended St Xavier’s School and College and obtained his MBA from IIM Calcutta. He concluded his working career as General Manager and Director of Gulf Petrochemicals, Muscat, Oman.

To get a real idea of Cecil the man whom so many people knew and admired, we have given excerpts of the Tribute delivered by his wife Brinda at his first month’s mass and the Eulogies given by their 3 daughters at his funeral on the 12th of October below.

Nayantara Daftary is their eldest daughter. Married to Vijay they live in the U.S. with their son Neal aged 11.

‘Many of you knew my father in different ways- as a classmate, colleague, avid bridge player and friend. But to us he was a caring and extremely loving father and husband. While at St. Xavier’s Calcutta, he proudly represented his NCC wing at the Republic Parade in Delhi- a memory he cherished. He completed his B. Com from St Xavier’s College, where he became President of the All India Catholic University Federation (AICUF) for 2 years.



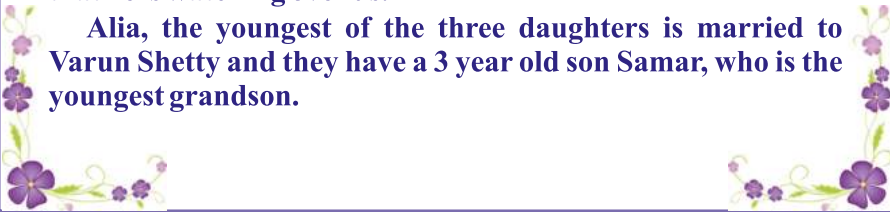
At IIM Calcutta he made many lifelong friendships and then began his career in Mettur Beardsell where he worked in various capacities. He met our mother Brinda (nee' SriHari) in Bombay and they married in January 1977, moving to Bangalore where he was appointed General Manager South with Mettur Bearsell. For over 47 years they shared a life filled with love, travel and countless adventures. They showed us what true partnership looks like, always standing by each other, no matter what life threw their way. Although he is not physically with us today, he will live on in our hearts and the lessons he taught us. He gave us a love of family, a curiosity for discovering new places and understanding that success is not just about achievement but about treating others with kindness and empathy. His inspiration will live on through us his family and everyone who had the privilege to know him. I will always love you Papa. Our loss is heaven's gain and I'm sure heaven is already a little more lively with you there'.

Nandita Abreo Subramanian their second daughter, is married to Shiva and they have two sons, Indran who's almost 18 and Rudra aged 8.

'Papa was always direct and uncompromising. He had an incredible ability to assess a person's character with precision. He was exacting in his expectations, always demanding the best from us, recognising our potential and encouraging us to achieve our goals.

Along with his serious side, he had an equally fun-loving one, always up for a good time. We've shared countless unforgettable moments with him, especially on holidays in Goa.. He shared a deep and meaningful bond with each of his sons-in-law- Shiva, Jay and Varun as well as his four grandsons.

I'll end by saying that losing a father is never easy. Even though we knew the time was coming to say goodbye to Papa, the pain is still profound. But we can find comfort in knowing that he is watching over us.'



Alia, the youngest of the three daughters is married to Varun Shetty and they have a 3 year old son Samar, who is the youngest grandson.

This is part of the letter she wrote to him in June this year which she included in her Eulogy.

‘Papa, you have had an enormous impact on my life. I am the proud daughter of a true legend. You have been a parent, a mentor and role model that I have observed and learnt from and thanks to you and Mama, the three of us had a stable and loving childhood. We came from a generation where Dads did not spend as much time with their kids as they do today but even a short interaction with you was one where you were always present and attentive. An approval from you meant we genuinely did a good job. From an early age, you didn’t indulge us with materialistic things but you invested in giving us wonderful experiences through travel across the world.

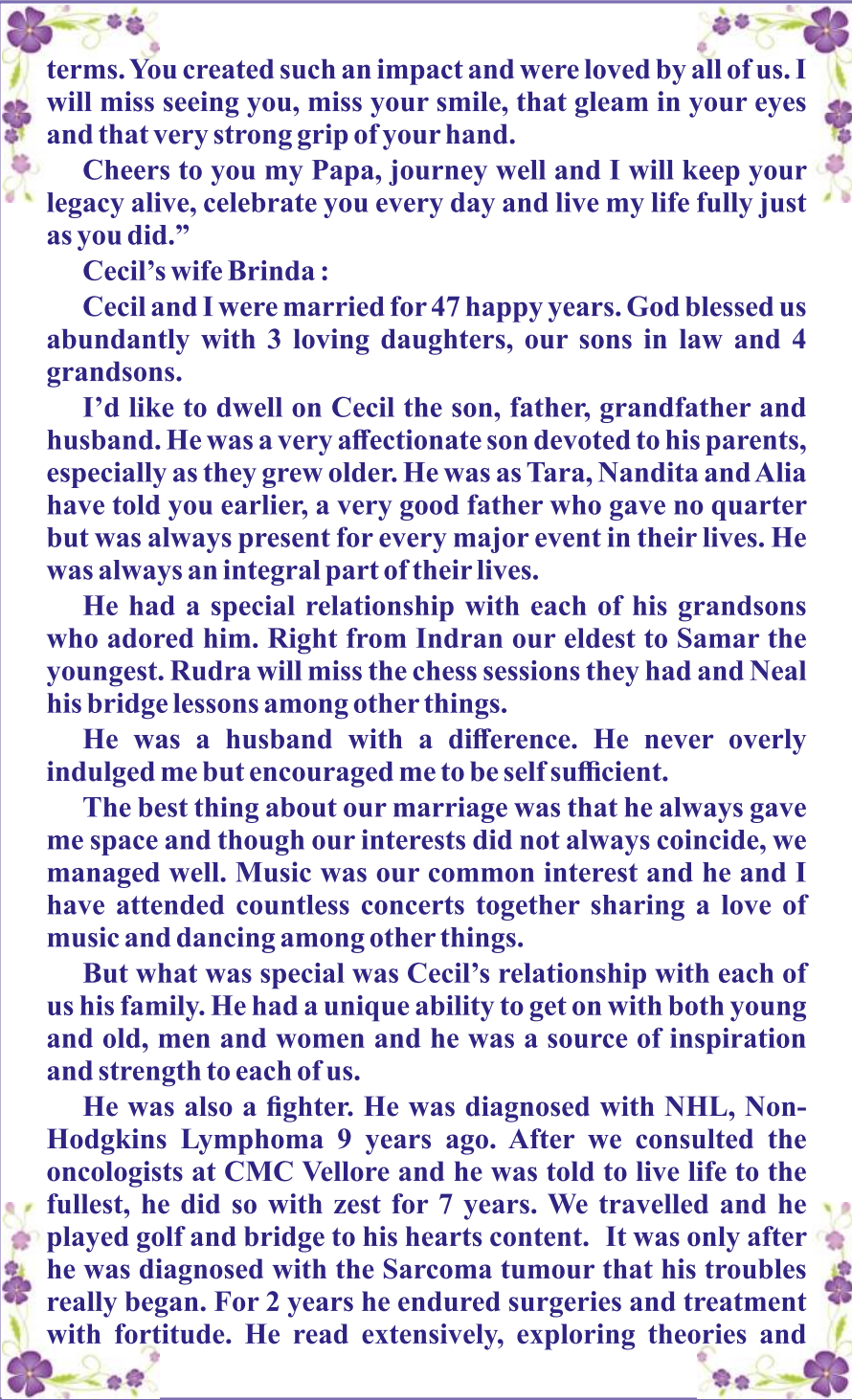
You are possibly the most intellectual and well-read person I have ever met. Your ability to get your point across in the most tactful yet respectful way is an art that left me in awe.

The last couple of years in particular were challenging . But like a phoenix, you emerged from every setback stronger and with grace and an amazing sense of determination.

I am going to struggle with your departure to the next life but I seek comfort in the fact that for the time you were here with us, you lived your life to the fullest, and on your own



Cecil and Brinda on their wedding day- 29th January, 1977



terms. You created such an impact and were loved by all of us. I will miss seeing you, miss your smile, that gleam in your eyes and that very strong grip of your hand.

Cheers to you my Papa, journey well and I will keep your legacy alive, celebrate you every day and live my life fully just as you did.”

Cecil's wife Brinda :

Cecil and I were married for 47 happy years. God blessed us abundantly with 3 loving daughters, our sons in law and 4 grandsons.

I'd like to dwell on Cecil the son, father, grandfather and husband. He was a very affectionate son devoted to his parents, especially as they grew older. He was as Tara, Nandita and Alia have told you earlier, a very good father who gave no quarter but was always present for every major event in their lives. He was always an integral part of their lives.

He had a special relationship with each of his grandsons who adored him. Right from Indran our eldest to Samar the youngest. Rudra will miss the chess sessions they had and Neal his bridge lessons among other things.

He was a husband with a difference. He never overly indulged me but encouraged me to be self sufficient.

The best thing about our marriage was that he always gave me space and though our interests did not always coincide, we managed well. Music was our common interest and he and I have attended countless concerts together sharing a love of music and dancing among other things.

But what was special was Cecil's relationship with each of us his family. He had a unique ability to get on with both young and old, men and women and he was a source of inspiration and strength to each of us.

He was also a fighter. He was diagnosed with NHL, Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma 9 years ago. After we consulted the oncologists at CMC Vellore and he was told to live life to the fullest, he did so with zest for 7 years. We travelled and he played golf and bridge to his hearts content. It was only after he was diagnosed with the Sarcoma tumour that his troubles really began. For 2 years he endured surgeries and treatment with fortitude. He read extensively, exploring theories and

opinions on the afterlife etc, finally settling for the traditional path and trusting in Gods mercy.

He leaves behind an amazing legacy, and I know the next two generations will do him proud. He was so appreciative of the love, care and concern he was given in abundance that kept us strong to the end. And God was kind. He granted him a very peaceful, painless departure for which we are so grateful. 'God's Will be done' is what we believe and we bow to His infinite wisdom.

We are grateful to the team of doctors of Karunashraya, the Palliative Care Hospice that guided and helped us for the last six weeks of his life. He was well prepared to meet His Maker and we deeply appreciate the spiritual care given by Rev.Fr. Adrian Mascarenhas and Rev.Fr. Juvy Andrade. He left us without fear, safe in the knowledge that eternal rest is given to all who trust in our loving merciful Father in heaven.'

Cecil is survived by his wife Brinda, his daughters Tara, Nandita and Alia, his grandsons Indran, Neal, Rudra and Samar and his two sisters Lorna Pais and Margaret Mascarenhas. He lost his brother Tony in April 2021.

Cecil a was a gifted man with a sharp intellect. The family chose to donate his brain to the Brain bank at NIMHANS Bangalore, for research. It is the only brain bank in India. If you would like information on how you may do so, please email Brinda Abreo at bsmabreo@yahoo.com



The family photo taken on 14th December 2022 at Brinda's 70th birthday

Charles Mascarenhas Prabhu (92)



Son of late Major William, MD & late Lucy Mascarenhas;

Devoted husband of Una;

Loving father of:

Ayesha/Timothy Coelho, Dr Navin/Dr Godavari;

Doting grandfather of:

Tara/Vishal, Rahul / Dr Sanjana, Rohan and Dr Pooja/Ravi

Proud great grandfather of:

Sameeksha, Tanya, Keanu & Nishmitha

Passed away on October 11, 2024

Funeral Eulogy on 14 October by Rohan Coelho:

Today we are here to celebrate the life of Charles Mascarenhas Prabhu, a man who has been a pillar of strength. He built from the ground up many things including his career and his family, of which I am very proud to be a part.

Charles was one of 5 children and grew up in Mangalore. He graduated in Mechanical Engineering from Guindy, Madras. He was employed in Simpsons as part of a team that manufactured India's first Diesel Engine. By 1959, he was made Assistant Foreman in Tata Steel Jamshedpur.



Subsequently, he worked for Caltex oil and later for Burmah Shell. He pursued a Management course with the British Institute of Management, UK. While at Hindustan Alloy Steel in Durgapur, he was awarded a scholarship for a one-year French Management program in Paris. For the next 17 years, Charles worked at Mumbai with International Computers Indian Manufacturers (ICIM), finally retiring in 1990. Though, knowing Papa, I doubt he ever truly retired.

What Charles truly built was his family. He believed in education beyond all else. My mother, with her four degrees, and my uncle, a doctor, can both testify to that. In fact, he did not stop with his children. Whenever I visited, I would get an impromptu lecture on how I could further qualify myself though I am a Postgraduate! Papa's enthusiasm for education never waned, and nothing delighted him more than hearing that one of his grandchildren had topped a class or taken up a new qualification.

He did not just encourage us; he actively helped. My mother tells me he used to summarize large textbooks for her MA into concise notes, saving her study time. Growing up, all of us grandchildren received some divine intervention in exams due to my grandfather storming Heaven.





Charles was insistent on self-reliance in all areas of life. One striking fact was that, until a year ago, he would visit the kitchen and make his breakfast and his signature filter coffee, even while being supported with his walker. Vishal, my brother-in-law was surprised to receive a cup of coffee from his 90-year-old grandfather-in-law! He emphasized gender equality and would encourage me to learn cooking and take care of myself, using his Paris stint as an example.

My best memories of Papa are of our summer vacations in Mangalore. Every year, he and my grandmother Una would take us—four excited grandchildren—on daily adventures, whether to Panambur beach, boat rides at Bandar, or rides on the toy train at Kadri Park. No day was complete without Ideal ice cream. His love affair with ice cream continued right to the end. Two days before his passing, Papa enjoyed a chocolate dad with my uncle.

Papa's love extended beyond family to all living things. The trees in his compound were practically sacred—he refused to let a single branch be trimmed, watering his plants well into his eighties. He even watered my grandmother's cactus collection, which led to some amusing disagreements between them. He had a deep bond with his pets, from his beloved Poppet to his cat, Sheeba. Together, he and my grandmother cared for countless strays around Lighthouse Hill.

My grandfather was very devoted to his Una darling. He often reminded her to take her medicines. He was very grateful for all that my grandmother did for him.





He would forever oversee the maintenance of his house and knew intricate details about his property and history which he would often share with us.

Charles by all accounts was a humble man. He believed in simplicity and would be pleasantly surprised by the number of people gathered here today at his funeral. To end, I would like to recite a small poem I wrote for him:

*Papa you are going to a different
place far from here
Leaving all of us your friends and
family who hold you dear
In the shade of coconut and
mango trees may you find
Fruits of you being so humble
and so kind
I know it is really tough Papa that
we are apart
Till we meet, we each will keep
you in our heart*





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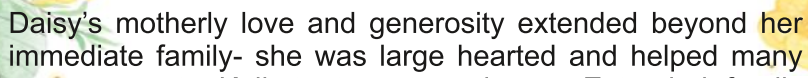


Daisy Victoria Lobo

2 -11-1924 to 3-12-2008

On what would have been the 100th birthday of Daisy Lobo nee Goveas, we pause to honour a remarkable woman whose legacy lives on in the hearts and lives of her three daughters - Merlyn, Maureen, and Miriam. Daisy was a woman of both heart and mind, a rare combination of warmth, intelligence, and steadfast dedication. Her talents, both practical and spiritual, continue to shine through her children, who carry forward her values with grace and strength.

Daisy, a much loved and respected teacher in Don Bosco, Kolkata taught there for 25 years. It is a testament to her impact that till this day several of her former students keep in touch with the family and continue to speak of her with much love and admiration. As a teacher, Daisy nurtured not only the minds of her students, but also the souls of those around her. Her daughters, Merlyn and Maureen, have followed in her footsteps, dedicating their lives to the noble profession of education, passing on wisdom and compassion just as their mother did. Miriam took on the task of looking after her aging parents right till the very end.



Daisy's motherly love and generosity extended beyond her immediate family- she was large hearted and helped many newcomers to Kolkata to set up home. Extended family members were warmly received and looked after while they furthered their education or explored new avenues. It was almost impossible for visitors to leave her house without being fed a hearty meal! Those who knew Daisy, often recount stories of her love for the finer things in life: the joy of good food & music, the elegance of beautiful clothes, and an appreciation for life's many blessings.

Her husband of 58 years, Harold, adored her deeply and cherished the many ways she enriched their lives, especially through her unwavering love and support. She too, was a supportive wife to Harry and was a fitting first lady, when he was President of the KCA and Scout Master, often preparing delicious traditional dishes for the annual picnics. Daisy's melodious voice, regularly heard singing hymns or favourite tunes, filled their home with warmth and joy, becoming one of the many enduring memories of their time together. She was a loving and caring mother, and grandmother who spoiled her grandchildren rotten, yet instilled in them discipline, good values, scrupulous principles, and a strong faith. Daisy's deep spirituality and her profound concern for the downtrodden have inspired her daughters and many others to follow in her footsteps. They continue her legacy of kindness, strength, and untiring compassion, standing up for those who need a helping hand, just as Daisy did throughout her life.

Today, as we remember Daisy, we celebrate the qualities and the countless lives she touched. Her spirit lives on, a guiding light that continues to inspire, comfort, and elevate those fortunate enough to have known her. The words of author Jodi Picoult aptly sum up Daisy Lobo - "... she is beautiful, softened at the edges and tempered with a spine of steel. I want to grow old and be like her."

A tribute of Love from her daughters

Merlyn Brito, Maureen Lobo, Miriam Mukherjee,

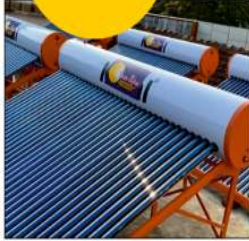
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Living our lives in Gods' Presence

- Sangeetha Fernandes

For treading the path of virtue one of the best guidelines is to show your devotion to God. A mirror image of God in our lives gives us the strength to uphold virtues despite numerous challenges.



All joining our hands and working together with fellow humans and other creations makes this world a paradise.

Life is the most precious gift given to each one of his body. That one breath of life put into US is what keeps us alive. Plants insects birds and animals all have life. Everything in this world has a purpose. We are made in gods own image and likeness. He has a plan for each one of us. It is up to us to recognise and follow the plan. Many a times in the daily din of living and surviving in this competitive world, we fail to recognise and understand god's ways and the purpose of our life.

We start drifting, running desperately behind Worldly pleasures. These give us pleasures and keep us happy only momentarily. Then we have to continue this crazy quest of running behind happiness. We can never be completely happy. Contentment and peace comes from within as, we cannot get it outside. The moment we realize that our happiness and inner peace is in our hands we will become balanced human beings. We need to give time to ourselves. Each day spend at least 15 minutes to talk to yourself. Make a list of what you did during the day, seek Gods' blessings, ask pardon for all the wrong doings and thank him for keeping you and your dear ones safe.

Go to bed with a peaceful mind and wake up refreshed. Look forward for the new day, which is like a wrapped gift, whose wonders we will unravel in time. It is in our hands to make this day a beautiful and enjoyable one for ourselves and those around us. If each of us takes up this responsibility of making our lives pleasant, we in turn can also change the life of those living around as and set an example for others. This is an ongoing process and needs continuous work. Let us all join hands and work together to make this world a better place to live in.

(The Author is a retired Teacher)

‘CASK IgniteU’ - A Bold New Initiative to Provide Quality Health Care

Bringing Healthcare to the Community: Free Medical Camp Initiative at Mother Theresa’s Home, Falnir. On November 10, 2024, the Catholic Association of South Kanara (CASK) lit the spark of compassion with the launch of its new initiative, centered around community well-being, commenced with a free medical camp at Mother Theresa’s Home in Falnir, Mangalore in association with Kanachur Hospital, Deralakatte. CASK’s initiative made a profound impact, providing essential healthcare services to the elderly and underprivileged.

The medical camp, which was a reflection of CASK’s unwavering commitment to service, was led by CASK’s dynamic Vice Presidents, Dr. Rohan Monis and Ms. Marjorie Texeira, who also serves as the Program Director of ‘IgniteU’.

The day began with a prayer that set a hopeful tone for the event, reminding everyone of the power of collective compassion. Distinguished guests present at the event included Mr. Abdul Rahaman, Director of Kanachur Medical



College, CASK President Mr Ronald Gomes and Rev. Sr. Yesu Theresa, Mother Superior of Mother Theresa’s Home. Their presence highlighted the importance of collaboration in driving meaningful community service. Other key attendees included Secretary Peter Pinto, Treasurer Ronald Mendonca, General Council (GC) members Prof. Gerard D’Souza, Ian Lobo, Marcel Monteiro, Dr. Henric Lobo Dr. Eric Lobo and dedicated members Ms. Anita Gomes and Ms. Neena Monteiro.

Kanachur Medical College mobilized a team of 25 skilled specialists from various fields, including ENT, OB/GYN, Dermatology, and Ophthalmology. These experts, supported by essential staff, offered medical consultations, health assessments, and counselling to 48 elderly

residents and 13 staff members. In addition, the camp provided free medication to all beneficiaries, ensuring that they had access to the healthcare they needed.

Impact: Total Beneficiaries - 48 elderly residents and 13 staff. Follow-up for referrals: 4 inmates were identified for further treatment, including three for cataract surgery and one for dermatology care.

This event was more than just a medical outreach—it was a celebration of community care, empathy, and solidarity. The ‘IgniteU’ initiative, led by CASK’s new leadership, ignites the flame of compassion, inspiring others to take part in creating a better, healthier society. It is through efforts like these that CASK’s work continues to make a tangible difference in the lives of those who need it most. The success of this initiative reflects the power of community partnerships. The event left a lasting message: through acts of service, we can build stronger, healthier, and more compassionate communities.

CASK extends its heartfelt gratitude to Kanachur Hospital and to all the members and volunteers who contributed to the success of this medical camp. As the ‘IgniteU’ initiative moves forward, it promises to continue spreading hope and health, touching more lives in the future. With every step taken, CASK builds a more connected, compassionate world—one that will inspire many to join in and make a lasting difference.

(Report by Mr. Ronald Mendonca for CASK)

CASK
CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH KANARA

CASK
Christmas Program
At Nympha Sadan, Senior Citizens Home, Bolar, M'lore
16 th Dec. 4.30 pm

PROJECT : IGNITE U
Session on
'Stepping into the Corporate World'

Speaker
Mr Allwyn Noronha
Retd. Executive Vice President,
Projects, ITC Ltd Hotels Division

8th January, 2025
10:00 am
St Agnes MBA College, Mangalore

An Interview with Santa Claus

- Brian Fernandes

Santa Claus, also known as Saint Nicholas or Father Christmas, is a legendary figure revered as the bringer of gifts to good children on Christmas Eve. Depicted as a portly, joyous man with a flowing white beard, spectacles, and a red suit, he resides at the North Pole with magical elves and nine flying reindeer. Together, they manage the Herculean task of delivering presents to children worldwide.



But who is the real Santa behind this iconic image? With Christmas fast approaching, I sought to unmask Santa. The response to my email request at SantaKlaus@heaven.com was swift, and soon angels whisked me away to meet him - not at the North Pole, but in heaven.

Meeting Santa

Santa's office was modest - a simple desk and chairs in a circular, airy room surrounded by seamless windows overlooking white clouds. Despite his slightly weary appearance, his warm smile radiated optimism.

"Welcome!" Santa greeted me. "The media is vital for spreading our message this year: love your neighbour and share."



I asked him about his mission. "It's about spreading Jesus' message of love," Santa explained. "While children do enjoy toys, many also embrace this deeper message. Some donate their own gifts to others in need, like the child from India who sent me balloons for a pediatric cancer ward. Witnessing the joy those balloons brought was overwhelming."

On Naughty and Nice

Curious, I asked if he truly distinguishes between "naughty" and "nice" children. Santa

chuckled. “Children are born innocent. Their so-called naughtiness often reflects unmet expectations. My role is to guide them with love. Even the ‘naughty’ ones feel a tug on their conscience when they open a gift. Love always works.”

Maintaining the Legend

I pointed out that people know it’s their loved ones who play Santa’s role. How does the legend persist? “You maintain it,” he said, smiling. “Humans crave magic and wonder, and Santa provides that spark. The legend endures because it reminds people of joy and Jesus’ message of love and brotherhood.”

On Logistics

With billions of homes to visit, how does he manage? “It’s a colossal task,” Santa admitted. “Delivering to 22 million children per hour requires teamwork. Thankfully, parents and loved ones are my co-conspirators. Without them, it would be impossible.”



Thoughts on Earth

I asked what God thinks of Earth’s struggles-wars, crime, and strife. Santa sighed. “Human greed has overshadowed the humanity God instilled in you. But God hasn’t given up. Every year, He sends reminders through angels, saints, families, and even natural disasters. The choice to listen lies with humanity.”

The Secret to Agelessness

When I asked how he remains ageless, Santa laughed heartily. “The love of children keeps me going.”

Wrapping Up

As the interview concluded, I asked Santa about his favorite Christmas carol. With a twinkle in his eye, he said, “Santa Claus is Coming to Town.”

My return journey was uneventful, but Santa’s message lingers: love, share, and spread joy. Through this article, I pass on his timeless message to the world. ●

When Medicine Outpaces Prejudice: The Evolution of HIV Care

- Dr. Oliver DSouza

By the time the 1980s rolled around, the scientific community was celebrating humanity's triumph over diseases that had once been a death sentence. With the advent of antibiotics and a range of vaccines, there was growing hope that mankind might be on the brink of eradicating illnesses entirely. But then, something unexpected happened.



In a small group of patients, antibiotics suddenly ceased to work. These individuals began experiencing rapid weight loss due to muscle wasting, coupled with a collapse of their immune systems, leaving them unable to fend off simple infections that would otherwise pose no threat. Upon further investigation, scientists discovered that a critical type of immune cell had drastically diminished in these patients. By the end of the 1980s, a virus was identified and named Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), with the disease it caused classified as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). The race to find a cure was on.

While a complete cure proved elusive, a breakthrough came in the form of a cocktail of antiretroviral drugs that could manage the disease effectively. The good news was that HIV-positive individuals could now lead longer, healthier lives. The bad news was the prohibitive cost of these medications, which put them out of reach for those who

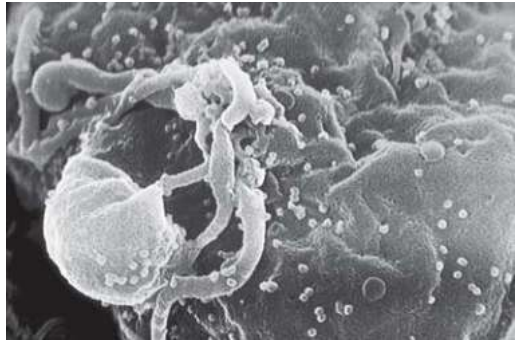


needed them most. This opened the door for Indian pharmaceutical companies to step in, mass-producing these life-saving drugs at a fraction of the cost charged by their Western counterparts,

thereby making treatment more accessible globally.

However, the late 1990s saw an alarming spike in reported AIDS cases, causing widespread panic. This surge was not due to an actual increase in infections, but rather a change in treatment protocols. The threshold for when a person living with HIV could start treatment was lowered, allowing those diagnosed to begin receiving care much earlier. This was a turning point, shifting the focus to managing the disease from the onset of diagnosis.

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receiving care much earlier. This was a turning point, shifting the focus to managing the disease from the onset of diagnosis.

The news hit Victor and Mary like a thunderbolt. Amidst the joy of expecting their first child, they learned that Mary was HIV positive. The revelation was a shock, a sudden storm cloud darkening their hopeful future.

The doctors immediately outlined a plan. Mary would be put on a rigorous medication regimen. These medications would suppress the virus in her body, significantly reducing the risk of transmitting it to their unborn child. Regular monitoring of both mother and baby would be crucial to ensure the baby's health.

Victor, unfortunately also tested positive for HIV. He would be put on lifelong medications to suppress the virus coursing through his body. Counseling sessions were also offered to both of them to help them cope with the emotional and psychological impact of the diagnosis.

Mary went into labor and had a beautiful baby girl. She was scared of her daughter being HIV positive. To everyone's relief the baby tested

negative for HIV but to err on the side of caution anti HIV medications were given to the baby for few days.

The Doctors had informed Mary and Victor that as long as both of them took their medications regularly, they could lead a normal life. The same as someone without HIV. This and the fact that their daughter was not infected, was the only thing that kept both of them going.

The couple's journey would be challenging, but they were determined. With the support of their medical team and loved ones, they faced the future with hope. As their baby grew, they prayed for a healthy outcome, knowing that modern medicine and their unwavering love would guide them through this difficult time.

Today, anyone testing positive for HIV is promptly started on antiretroviral therapy. Although there is still no cure, HIV has become a manageable condition akin to chronic diseases like diabetes or hypertension. Daily medication is so effective that individuals living with HIV can expect to lead long, healthy lives comparable to those without the virus.

Yet, despite these medical advancements, the stigma surrounding HIV remains. Initially, the virus was most commonly spread through unprotected sex with multiple partners or by sharing needles among drug users. As a



result, those infected were often ostracised by their families and communities. Today, HIV bears the societal burden once held by leprosy, serving as a painful reminder of how prejudice can thrive even in an era of scientific progress.

If we are to move forward as a compassionate society, we must challenge these outdated beliefs. Acceptance, understanding, and empathy towards those living with HIV are not just moral imperatives, they are the hallmarks of a truly educated and civilized community. Only by setting an example of inclusivity can we truly call ourselves progressive.

From Snowflakes to Sand Dunes; Celebrating Christmas in Saudi Arabia

- Whilma DSa

I thought I had seen it all and found myself chuckling somewhat gleefully that I had seamlessly made it to life's finish line. However, this Christmas, I will be celebrating in a place that is far from what I had imagined, yet perfectly in tune with where I am now in life. As I reflect on my journey, I find that the joy of the season has shifted, grown and deepened in many ways.



I had been living and working in Dubai since the 1980s, a time when the city was rapidly transforming into the bustling metropolis that it is today. The early years were marked by immense struggles, becoming tragically widowed at the age of 30, struggling to balance my career, family responsibility and the crippling weight of grief. Life, in general, was an uphill battle, comprising only hard work and personal sacrifices. However, I found joy, over the years, in watching my children grow into wonderful human beings.

Fast forward a few decades, I left the hustle and bustle of Dubai, choosing to spend the next chapter of my life in the tranquility of Canada and with both my kids. But lady luck again had other plans. My children, along with their growing families, decided to move across the globe. My son, Keith, settled in the green pastures of the UK, while my daughter, Andrea, embraced the vibrant culture of Saudi Arabia. Happily, I decided to become a globetrotter.

Presently, retired, but not tired, I have found a happy balance



between the United Kingdom & Saudi Arabia. This year, in particular, I will be celebrating Christmas in Saudi Arabia, surrounded by my family, in a home that is filled with love and laughter. The holiday will be different no doubt, perhaps less traditional but more meaningful. What matters most is that the joy I feel this Christmas comes from within i.e. from the love of family, the bonds that we share and the understanding that life, in all its stages, is a beautiful journey.

Sure, there are no Christmas trees dusted with snow, mulled wine and all the seasonal trimmings that I am used to. But I have quickly realized that life in the desert has its own kind of magic. Our beautiful compound, a little oasis in the heart of Dhahran, full of lush greenery, has become a place that I look forward to each day. The community here is wonderfully diverse with people from all over the world coming together to form a tight-knit neighborhood. There is something so enriching about being surrounded by so many different cultures and experiences; with each person contributing their own piece to the mosaic of life in this unique part of the world.

The house radiates with joy with my grandkids (two lively mischievous little ones); each creating their own brand of festive chaos as they scurry about. They recently even toppled the Christmas tree and broke a few ornaments. They remind me every day that the most important gifts in life are not wrapped in decorative paper and bows. Rather it is the love that we share and the tight hugs and kisses that they shower me with constantly are the moments that make us smile – thereby creating a collage of memories and connections along the way.

These precious moments are woven into my heart, reminding me that home is not just where you are. More importantly, it is where you have been, who you have loved and the traditions that stay with you. This is the true meaning of Christmas for me. Over the years, I have learnt to navigate the world with a fierce sense of independence, resilience, and a deep love for my family, friends & community that carried me through the toughest of times. As I raise a glass to the forthcoming festive season, I do so with a heart full of gratitude. My life has been tumultuous and a rollercoaster ride indeed but triumphant and extremely fulfilling in the end. I might have a couple of presents under the Christmas tree with my name on them, but truly, I have everything that I need, and I could not ask for anything more. ●



Kuswar Recipes

SOFT CRISP KULKULS

Ingredients: 500 gms all-purpose flour (Maida)
75-100 gms melted butter
½ - coconut (Extract thick milk)
2-3 tablespoons powdered sugar (If adding to the dough)
½ tsp salt, ½ tsp Cardamom powder

Method I:

Sieve maida at least 2 or 3 times, add salt & mix it well.

Heat butter, add to the flour and mix well.

Warm little of the coconut milk with the sugar and add to the flour little by little to form a soft dough.

Knead well by adding cardamom powder and cover with a damp cloth.

Make marble size balls of the dough.

Press each of the ball on a kulkul making comb, roll towards the end to form into kulkuls.

Heat refined coconut oil on medium fire and fry the kulkuls in batches till light golden brown.

Drain them on a kitchen paper.

Cool and store in an airtight container.

Method II: SUGAR COATED KULKULS.

Knead the dough same as above without adding the sugar.

Once the Kulkuls are fried keep them aside.

Dissolve 250-350 gms of Sugar with ¼ cup of water till you get a thread consistency of the Sugar Syrup.

Lower the flame and add cardamom powder and immediately put



in all the kulkuls and stir in fast to coat the kulkuls with the Sugar Syrup.

Put off the flame - Cool & Store in a airtight jar.

KOKISAS (ROSE COOKIES)

Ingredients: 1 tea cup raw rice (wash & soak for atleast an hour

250 gms all purpose flour (maida)

1 large coconut (Extract thick & thin milk)

2-3 eggs,

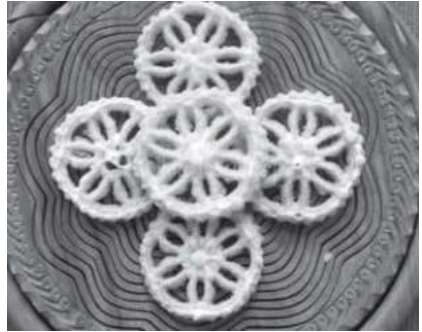
¼ tsp Salt

250-300 gms sugar

½ grated nutmeg, ½ tsp cardamom

powder

Refined oil or coconut oil for deep frying



Method:

Grind the coconut and extract thick & thin milk.

Grind the soaked rice with the thick milk along with the nutmeg powder and cardamom powder

Whisk the eggs with the sugar and salt.

Add the ground rice batter and mix it well.

Sieve maida and add little by little along with the remaining coconut milk.

The batter should be smooth without any lumps.

The batter should be thick to coat the back of a spoon.

Take a wide shallow frying pan (“3-4” deep) as you can fry at least six to seven Kokisas at a time.

Heat refined or coconut oil, do not over heat.

Drop a teaspoon of the batter, if it pops up its ready.

Dip the KOKISA MOULD into the hot oil & leave it for a few seconds.

The Mould should be hot enough to be dipped in the batter.

Now lift the Mould & shake off the excess oil and immediately dip it in the batter to cover only the sides (Do not allow the batter to cover the top) and back into the oil. Shake the Mould little for the Kokisas to

come off easily into the oil. Fry till light golden on both sides.
Drain on a wire mesh, then on kitchen paper.
Cool and store in air tight container.

NEURIOS (SWEET MUFFINS)

Ingredients: 500 gms all purpose flour (Maida)

50 gms kuskus

100 gms White theel (gingerly)

100 gms Bombay Rava

150 gms nuts & plums (chop nuts into tiny bits)

10 Pods of Cardamom cleaned & powdered

250-300 gms whole sugar (granuls)

1½-2 tablespoons of ghee, pinch of salt. Refined or coconut oil for deep frying.



METHOD- FOR THE STUFFING:

Dry roast Bombay Rava on low flame till crisp.

Dry roast Theel on low flame till it crackles.

Dry roast Kuskus on low flame just for a few seconds.

Mix altogether and keep aside.

Heat ghee in Kadai, add chopped nuts & fry till light golden then add the plums and lightly fry.

Add all the roasted ingredients and mix well. Add the sugar, cardamom & salt, put off the flame and mix well. Taste and add sugar if needed.

FOR THE DOUGH

Sieve flour with the salt. Knead the flour with required quantity of water into a soft dough.

Roll out the dough into a large chapati-cut out rounds using a sharp edged lid about “3-3 ½ “in diameter.

Fill each poori with a teaspoonful of filling (more if required)

Damp the edges with water, fold pressing with a ZIG ZAG CUTTER.

Deep fry in medium hot oil till light golden.

(You can even use a Muffin Mould)

Christmas Quiz

- Marjorie Aranha Teixeira



1. What year was the 1st Christmas Card sent?
2. Which country donates the Christmas Tree placed in the Trafalgar Square in London every year?
3. What was the original name of the carol Silver Bells?
4. Which is the world's largest Christmas - themed amusement park?
5. Which European country is credited with the custom of placing shoes out for St. Nicholas Day?
6. What is the significance of Poinsettias plant during Christmas Season?
7. In the Carol "Jingle Bells" what type of sleigh is mentioned?
8. According to tradition, what do French call Christmas Eve?
9. What is the title of the Carol that begins with the lyrics "Christmas roasting on open fire"?
10. What is the traditional English name for the candy cane?
11. What is the name of skin condition caused by a reaction to Pine tree sap?
12. In the Christmas Carol "I saw Morning kissing Santa Claus" Who is dressed as Santa Claus?
13. What Christmas tradition is said to have originated in Germany in the 16th century?
14. Which Christian Carol was originally written for Theology?
15. In which country did the tradition of putting up a Christmas tree originate?
16. What is the Italian Word for Christmas?
17. What are the names of the 3 Wise men?
18. In which century did the tradition of hanging stockings by the fire place originate?
19. What is the significance of mistletoe during the Christian season?
20. What do children leave out for Santa Clause on Christmas Eve?
21. In the Carol "Silent Night" where did the shepherds leave their flock?
22. What meat is traditionally eaten for Christmas in the UK?
23. What gifts did the 3 Wise Men bring to Jesus?
24. Which is the best selling Christmas Carol of all time?

25. Which Christmas Carol was the first one to be broadcast from Space?

Above Quiz Competition is only for members. Answers have to be sent to caskmangalore@yahoo.com by 24th December 2024. Maximum number of correct answers will win a prize. If there are more than one claimants, then lots will be picked.

10 Greatly Helpful Uses of Mustard

Mustard has a large number of alternative uses, mostly related to health. Herbal medicine is known to stimulate and accelerate blood circulation in the body. This can prevent and alleviate a great host of diseases and symptoms, Besides therapeutic use, it also has useful cosmetic properties: Soften hair, treat dry skin and remove odors.

1. Mustard relieves a sore throat

Mustard can be used as a natural solution to relieve a sore throat. For the preparation of the solution, mix mustard, lemon juice, a teaspoon of salt, a teaspoon of honey and half a cup of boiling water. Let the solution stand for 10 minutes then gargle it. The effect is supposed to last for a few days, but if the pain returns, prepare another solution.

2. Mustard fights bad odors

Many products are packaged in attractive bottles, jars and boxes, the problem is that in most cases, it is very difficult to remove the odor of the materials previously stored in those tools. In this regard, mustard is a great solution. Pour a little mustard in the dish, add hot water and shake vigorously. Wash the contents of mustard and water, the smell should completely disappear.

3. Mustard as a cosmetic mask

Besides improving the taste of food, mustard can highlight the beauty of the skin, especially facial skin. Apply a thin layer of mustard on the skin, let it sit a few minutes then rinse well. After washing, the face will feel smooth and fresh. As mentioned, check first that you are not allergic to mustard.

4. Use Mustard to treat fever and flu

Prepare an infusion of mustard seeds. On a low heat, cook in a pot of boiling water, and a teaspoon of mustard seeds for about five

minutes. Let the brew cool and then drink it all.

5. Mustard relieves chest congestion

Mustard can help prevent the accumulation of mucus in the body. Prepare a compress made of mustard and flour in a ratio of 1:3, add water until you get a mixture, apply it to a cloth and place on the chest for 20 minutes. Another option is to apply the mustard to the ribcage area and lay over it a cloth dipped in hot water. Within a few minutes you will feel better. If you suffer from sinusitis, apply this method to the forehead.

6. Use mustard to calm muscles

Athletes and the elderly tend to suffer often from tense and aching muscles. An effective way to relieve pain is by sprinkling mustard and Epsom salt (magnesium- sulfate salt) in a tub. Mustard enhances the therapeutic effects of Epsom salt, which will help relieve muscle pain.

7. Mustard to relieve tired feet

Usually, after a busy day of running around, we suffer from the swollen and painful soles. For relief, make a calming solution in the following way: Mix 2 tablespoons of mustard with warm water in a pot or in a bowl, immerse your feet in the bowl for half an hour, and it should calm the pain and swelling.

8. Mustard treatment for painful knees

For people who suffer from chronic knee pain or seasonal pain, or during physical effort, it is recommended to perform a warm massage with a mixture of olive oil and mustard oil.

9. Mustard to treat back pain

Back pain often limits the movement of the body, but the long ordeal can be reduced with a hot mustard bath. This is good and effective for back pain, muscle aches, arthritis and sprains. Fill the tub with warm water, add 220 mg of mustard, stir until they mix and then dip in the solution for 20 minutes. The pain will be reduced considerably.

10. Mustard to prevent the growth of weeds in your garden

According to scientists, the materials secreted by white mustard seeds can prevent the growth of weeds on the same ground. Plant a handful of mustard seeds near the plants, or sprinkle the seeds around the garden. The amount of weeds will be significantly reduced, so you can move them easily with bare hands. Please note before you plant: the seeds may harm other plants, so make sure to check first. ●

News & Announcements

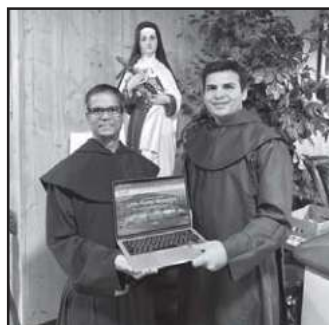
FKCA Supports Cancer Care

The Federation of Konkani Catholic Associations (FKCA), Bangalore, achieved a significant milestone in philanthropy by donating Rupees Ten Lakhs to Father Muller Charitable Institutions (FMCI) for the Oncology Department. The occasion brought together FKCA members, FMCI dignitaries, and well-wishers.

Little Flower Monastery Vancouver Canada Unveils Its New Website

Little Flower Monastery, Carmel Hill Deroche, Vancouver Canada, run by the Canadian Carmelite Friars of the Karnataka- Goa OCD province, India launches its new website developed by Rev. Fr. Stephan Lobo OCD. The website will be instrumental in connecting the faithful to register for retreats and spiritual activities. Rev. Fr Dr. Rudolf V D'Souza

OCD president of the Canadian Carmelite Charitable society spearheaded the initiative. The website was inaugurated in the presence of Rev. Fr. Jerome Moras OCD and Rev Fr. Frank Sharma OCD



MCC Bank: 18th Branch Started at Beltangady

MCC Bank Ltd has inaugurated its 18th branch in Belthangady on Sunday, November 24. The inauguration was officially opened by MCC Bank Chairman Sahakara Ratna Anil Lobo. Fr Walter D'Mello, parish priest of Holy Redeemer Church, Belthangady, blessed

the new premises. The new branch is located at Vaibhav Arcade, near Church Road on Belthangady Highway.



Rachana Celebrates Silver Jubilee

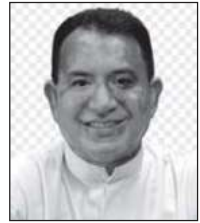
Rachana, Catholic Chamber of Commerce & Industry celebrated its Silver Jubilee on Sunday, November 3, 2024. Rachana Catholic Sauharda Cooperative Society was inaugurated during the event.



Arch Bishop of Bangalore Rev. Peter Machado, Bishop of Mangalore Rev. Peter Paul Saldanha, Rear Admiral Nelson DSouza, NM Commandant, MIT, Pune & Michael DSouza graced the occasion.

Rev Fr. Dr. Praveen Martis SJ Nominated Best Principal 2024 by AIACHE

The All India Association for Christian Higher Education (AIACHE) has nominated Dr. **Praveen Martis** SJ Vice Chancellor of St. Aloysius deemed to be University as best Principal 2024. The prestigious award will be presented to **Dr. Praveen Martis** SJ at **AIACHE Triennial Conference** (December 27th to 29th, 2024) at Bhubaneswar.



He will receive a memento and citation for his dedicated service and impactful leadership in education.

CASK congratulates Rev Fr. Dr. Praveen Martis SJ for his commitment to academic excellence and Leadership.

Rev. Dr. Lawrence DSouza, Former Secretary of CESU Passes Away

Rev. Dr. Lawrence D'Souza (75), former Administrator of Fr. Muller's Medical College of Nursing, Mangalore, former Director of St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences, Bangalore, Secretary of Catholic Education Society Udupi (CESU) of Udupi Diocese and Rector of Milagres Cathedral Udupi, passed away on 12 November 2024.



Our Achievers

James Mendonca awarded Dubai Karnataka Rajyotsava Award

NRI Entrepreneur James Mendonca, a distinguished entrepreneur and philanthropist, was honored with the prestigious Dubai Karnataka Rajyotsava Award 2024. Renowned for his generosity, Mendonca has made significant contributions to schools, hospitals, churches, and numerous charitable organizations.



Dr Antony Pais receives KMC Ratan Award

Dr Antony Pais is the recipient of the KMC Ratan Award given to its Alumni by the college. He was one of the 40 awardees. The Award is given to him for his dedication and various achievements in the Medical field. He is the son of CASK former President Chev. Clarence Pais. CASK congratulates Dr Antony Pais for receiving the prestigious Award.



Lenisha Malaika Moras excels in ACCA Global Examination

Lenisha Malaika Moras, a talented young scholar has achieved an outstanding feat by securing the all-India 2nd rank and worldwide 5th rank in the strategic business reporting examination conducted by ACCA global in September 2024. Her remarkable achievement highlights her expertise in finance and accounting, bringing pride to the community. This accomplishment reflects and serves as an inspiration to aspiring students, emphasizing the value of perseverance and academic excellence. Lenisha, daughter of Lancy P M Moras and Cynthia Maria Moras, residing at Bejai, Mangaluru.



WEDDING



Llewellyn Vinod Lobo *with* Erica Nikita D'Souza

On November 3rd, 2024, Mr. Llewellyn Vinod Lobo, eldest son of Mr. Lloyd George Lobo, Advocate and Honorary Legal Advisor of KCA, Chennai and Mrs. Violet Lobo led to the altar Ms. Erica Nikita D'Souza, eldest daughter of Mr. Clarence and Mrs. Anita D'Souza of Hyderabad.

The nuptials were solemnized at the St. Sebastian Church, Bendur, Mangalore followed by a reception and dinner at the Bendur Centenary hall, Mangalore.

Dr. Michael Lobo of Camelot, Bijai, Mangalore raised the toast of the bridal couple. While elucidating the high academic and other achievements of the bridegroom and bride, Dr. Lobo recalled the bridegroom's grandfather Late Chevalier George P.F. Lobo, former Spanish Consul and also Late Mrs. Inez Lobo, former Spanish Consul who were awarded the Knighthood of Civil merit by the Spanish government, a rare honour for an Indian Catholic. Further, Dr. Lobo, also mentioned that bride's father was a Director in Agastan Bio Cheme Pvt. Ltd. in Hyderabad and he hails from Belthangady, Mangalore. The bridegroom and bride appropriately replied to the toast by thanking Dr. Lobo and all those present.

In conclusion, the bridegroom said that he owed his success in his career entirely to his parents Lloyd and Violet Lobo.



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