



# CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH KANARA

Founded in 1914

(Regn. No. MNG/130/2015-17)

## CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH KANARA

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## EDITORIAL

Could 2015 be a landmark year in the ‘Pursuit of Our Happiness’? I recently came across an article titled “The Pursuit of Happiness” by Jeffrey Kluger in the TIME magazine of July 2013. Kluger talks about the migration of individuals or groups from Europe to America in the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries and tries to elicit the reason for such migration. He says “Not every person suffering under the whip of tyranny or the crush of poverty had the temperament to pick up, pack up and travel to the other side of the globe and start over. Those who did were pursuing something – the most likely pursuit: HAPPINESS. Once that migrant population started raising babies in the new continent, the odds were that the same questing spirit would be bred into or taught to them. And it has been!” He goes on to proffer that ‘Happy’ people don’t just accumulate fortune; they invent things and are also generous. He states that America as a country and Americans as a people are the most generous in the world! Could we in India imbibe that spirit of true and abundant generosity towards the less fortunate starting 2015?

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As a teacher and educationist, as a parent as a grand parent as a citizen of the world, I could not reconcile or comprehend the brutal killing of 132 students and 9 teachers in Peshawar-Pakistan – it will go down in history as one of the most brutal, barbaric and monstrous acts of all time. There is a lesson for all countries – radicalization and terrorism is vigorously brewing around us – it would be a grave mistake to pinpoint it to specific groups or specific countries or specific ideologies or specific religion or specific governments. Could we play a role in promoting tolerance?

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I was inspired by the Christmas Day homily at St Aloysius College, Mangalore by Fr Francis Almeida – Referring to the observance of ‘Good Governance’ Day on 25<sup>th</sup> December, he said Jesus is the best example of Good Governance. I construe that Observance of ‘Good Governance’ on Christmas Day is a tribute to Jesus!

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The 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015 heralds in yet another Republic day... time to catch the trade wings in your sails. Explore, Dare, Dream and Discover - India is a great country. Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come, Whispering that it will be a good year for the Country and all of us, with a prayer on our lips.

I wish to thank the authors of the articles in this issue... we have started the year with a bang! CASK has two programmes lined up - A Paediatric camp at the Fr L.M.Pinto Health Centre in Badyar on 18<sup>th</sup> January and the CASK Reunion on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2015 at the Boat Club-Mangalore. Please buy your dinner coupons in time. You can be assured of an evening of fun and enjoyment.

**The Editorial team wishes each of you, a very happy and rewarding new year 2015!**

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## **Wisdom of the Birds - A Christmas/New Year Message**

*Courtesy - Francis Colaco, Bangalore*

In an ancient temple, a number of pigeons lived happily on the roof top. When the renovation of the temple began for the annual temple feast, the pigeons relocated themselves to a church nearby. The "church" pigeons made the necessary adjustments and happily accommodated the new comers.

Christmas was nearing and the church was being given a facelift. So all the pigeons had to move out and look for another place. They were fortunate to find a mosque nearby. The pigeons in the mosque welcomed them happily. When Ramadan came the mosque was being repainted and all the pigeons moved back to the ancient temple.

One day the pigeons heard some communal clashes below in a market square. The baby pigeon asked the mother pigeon "Who are these people?". The mother replied; "They are human beings.". The baby asked, "Why are they fighting with each other?". The mother said "The human beings who go to temple are called 'Hindus' and the people who go to church are called 'Christians' and the people going to the mosque are called 'Muslims'. They are fighting because they believe they are following God's will."

The baby pigeon asked, "Why is that so? We were pigeons whether we were in the temple, church or mosque. Aren't they similar?"

The mother pigeon said, "We don't have holy books to read, nor do we have a fixed place to stay or worship, but we have experienced God. That's why we can co-exist peacefully. Sadly, these people are yet to experience God. Until they do so, they will continue to fight and kill each other."

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## **THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS**

### **Kindness and Courage are Great Companions**

Greetings! I welcome you to a Healthy, Peaceful and Happy New Year. By now you would have dismantled the Christmas Tree decorations and the Crib items to be reassembled in December 2015. We hope we can see the light of that day and put our faith and trust in the 'Prince of Peace' to cherish his Blessing of Life for the next twelve months.

In December 2014, we saw new disturbing trends in our country. The 'Peace and Development' momentum seems to have been derailed with the Conversion and Re-conversion issues. Disturbed, I am reminded of Rabindranath Tagore's poem: 'Where the Mind is Without Fear' - specially remembering 'where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls' and the last part: 'Into that heaven of Freedom, my Father, let my country awake!'. We need to rise to the occasion, remembering 'We are Indians first' in a pluralistic society nurtured with unity and diversity of culture. Peaceful co-existence is the watchword.

The Amir Khan movie, 'PK', is making box office record collections but at the same time receiving brickbats from some sections of the society. Once again, I quote Tagore: 'Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way, into the dreary desert sand of dead habit'. I saw the movie with the family and it's a piece of art to be appreciated. We should have tolerance and scientific temper to control our anger and emotions to the message conveyed. Let us remember that kindness and courage make good companions.

Talking of scientific temper, we are in the Year of Light. United Nations proclaims 2015 as 'International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies'.

The focus on the science and applications of light seeks to raise global awareness of how optics and photonics can have a positive impact in fields as diverse as energy, education, agriculture and health. I pray that each individual experiences his or her own 'light from above' to become a better person dispelling darkness. If all good people network

promoting goodness we can make our society and the world a better and happier place. Needless to state 'Good always prevails over Evil'.

At the CASK office we are catching up on 'Mangalore' subscription renewals. The Centenary Souvenir dispatches are underway. Due to unavoidable circumstances and logistic reasons we had to postpone the CASK Reunion from the 31<sup>st</sup> January to 15<sup>th</sup> February 2015. Do support us to make the CASK Reunion a memorable one.

We will be celebrating our 65<sup>th</sup> Republic Day on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015 with U.S. President, Mr Barack Obama, as the Chief Guest. There is a lot of excitement all over the country. One thing for certain: you will definitely find me home glued to the idiot box watching the Republic Day Parade as I have not missed this routine for the last 25 years. It brings back happy memories of marching on Rajpath in the same parade on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1975 as a seventeen-year-old NCC Cadet.

***Happy Republic Day greetings too, and long live the Republic of India.***

**Jai Hind.**

***John Prasad Menezes***

**Please  
note change of date**



## **CASK REUNION**

**Date : Sunday, 15th February 2015**

**Time : 7 pm**

**Venue : Boat Club, Sultan Battery, Urwa**

**Dinner : Couple - ₹ 750/- / Single - ₹ 400/-**

**Children 10-15 years - ₹ 300/-/Below 10 years - Free**

***Please buy your dinner coupons at the CASK Office or  
from any of the office bearers***

## CHRISTMAS CENTRED ON THE CRIB!

*Fr. Cedric Prakash SJ*

In the world of today, we are driven and governed by a market which only emphasises crass consumerism with Santa Clauses and Christmas trees, decorations and illuminations, drinking and dancing, new clothes and gifts. These often remain the only focus of our celebrations. It is indeed human to want the material trappings of a festival, however a true Christian will never lose sight of the fact that Jesus, our Saviour is born on Christmas day and that too in a crib. Christmas is therefore all about **CRIB!**

**C**ompassion is the heart of christmas and is the greatest act of a god who shows compassion on every single woman and man of his creation. Because of this compassion, jesus comes down to this world as our saviour, giving us the message of love, and teaching us to reach out to others in acts of total giving. The most profound way in which we can celebrate Christmas is by reaching out in compassion to the poor, the lonely, the rejected, the victims of a society which is becoming more and more insensitive and uncaring.

**R**enewal is the moment of grace which is gifted to each one of us at Christmas. This renewal is preceded by a realisation that Jesus comes into the world for me and He invites me to enter the dynamic of reconciliation with Him, with others, with creation and with myself; allowing His healing touch to make me a new person again. Renewal is above all the ability to start afresh and to be a meaningful instrument in communicating God's peace, love, hope and joy to all whom I encounter in this journey of life.

**I**nteriorisation is fundamental to Christmas; like Mary who treasured all things in her heart. Jesus is the priceless treasure and making Him an indispensable part of our way of proceeding is what Christmas is all about. That's what the shepherds did when they left their flock and ran in haste to worship baby Jesus. The Magi too travelled long distances to meet the true King as they realised that it is only Jesus that matters and not the Herods of this world.

**B**lessedness is what the angels sang about on that first Christmas night – “*Glory to God in the highest and peace to all men and women of goodwill*”. It is what Jesus constantly reminds us of during the sermon on the Mount. “*Blessed are you*”, He tells His disciples who wish to follow Him; a blessedness which is epitomised by St. Joseph who not only takes care of Jesus and Mary but also proves that he is a just man. It is a call to each one of us to radiate this blessedness always.

So as we celebrate yet another Christmas, we need to make every effort to put Christ back into Christmas and to centre Christmas on **CRIB**, a call to **Compassion, Renewal, Interiorisation** and **Blessedness!**

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## **RING IN THE NEW... RING OUT THE OLD**

*Joan Lobo*

As the year winds down and we bid adieu to 2014 and embrace 2015 with open arms, it's the dawn of another beautiful day, another challenging year. We are overwhelmed with dreamz unlimited of glorious days ahead as the new year unfolds. It unravels new hopes, desires close to the heart and far fetched expectations too. In hindsight, we crave to leave behind the junk collected through the past years experiences – hurt and pain caused to us, we hope to forgive and forget the injustice meted out to us and move ahead, to make all our frustrations, anger and disappointments a thing of the past and instead focus on the little joys of life reachable and achievable. Easier said than done but we surely make the effort.

As we embark on this new journey into the new year we leave behind, nostalgic memories of amazing people and events. We are delighted to pack our new suitcase with love, joy, peace, courage, strength and determination as we forge ahead. We make the attempt to dust out any unpleasant remains of our earlier journey and start the new journey with renewed enthusiasm to reach the destination of our dreams. New Year eve is a time for parties, champagne, resolutions and a few laughs. While some of us may get sentimental at the ending of the old year, others are out to have a good time. The new year

stands before us, like a chapter in a book, waiting to be written. We can help write our story by setting our goals.”

Also indispensable to the new year is the thrill of making resolutions. It instigates a kind of curiosity in us and prompts us to make amends for what we could not fulfill. Despite the fact old habits die hard, we feel euphoric to take a fresh look at life. Frankly, one does not need to wait for the new year to make these resolutions but we please ourselves choosing this day. We believe that a new year’s resolution cannot and should not fail. Irrespective, whether 2014 had its fair share of laughs, mishaps or regrets, we choose to take the time and effort to make some New Year’s resolutions and start 2015 fresh.

It can be daunting when our list of New Year’s Resolutions is as long as our holiday shopping list. In addition once the festivities have died down and reality sets in, not being able to keep our resolutions by February, March or even January may increase our anxiety. When our xmas decorations are packed up and stored away, the frustration of an unused gym membership, the mirror indicating lotsa extra pounds, the ash tray full of cigarette butts, faces of fond ones we failed to keep in touch come flashing back and other reminders of failed resolutions can make the later months feel hopeless. I for one had decided to visit at least one sick or elderly person every week in 2014. What started with great gusto, lost steam over a period but to rid me of the guilt I attempted it again at the end of the year with renewed determination and well! the abundant joy it brought me was unimaginable.

However, it is important to remember that the New Year isn’t meant to serve as a catalyst for sweeping character changes. It is a time for people to reflect on their past year’s behavior and promise to make positive changes. “Setting small, attainable goals throughout the year, instead of a singular, overwhelming goal on January 1 can help us reach whatever it is you strive for. “Remember, it is not the extent of the change that matters, but rather the act of recognizing that change is important and working toward it, one step at a time.”

By making our resolutions realistic, there is a greater chance that we will keep them throughout the year, incorporating healthy behavior into our everyday life. The tricky part is sticking to resolutions. The



loftier the resolution, the tougher it is to hang on to. It takes steely nerves to achieve them. If you are unable to execute your resolutions when they are fresh, you can have no hope from them afterwards; they will be dissipated, lost and perish in the hurry and scurry of life, or sink in the slough of indolence. It's hard to live by what we resolve more often than not.

As I say tongue in cheek, it's important to be an optimist to make our resolutions work. Be the optimist who sees daylight at the end of the tunnel, and not the pessimist who sees the headlights of an oncoming train. Be the optimist who believes that behind every cloud there is a silver lining, and not just see the potential for rain. This coming year let us resolve to count our blessings rather than crib and curse our luck. - If we have our 3 meals and food stacked in the refrigerator, clothes on our back, a roof on our heads and a place to sleep we are richer than so many in this world; If we have money in the bank, in our wallet and spare change lying at some place we are among the top few of the world's wealthy; If we wake up every morning with more health than illness ... we are more blessed than the thousands who will not survive a new day; If we have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture or the pangs of starvation we are ahead of millions of people in this world.

It is not always easy to recognise the things in our lives for which we should be thankful. When we compare and do so with the less privileged we would realise then... how fortunate we are! 'I had complained and cried that I had no shoes until I saw a man without feet' would be an apt quotation anonymously said to reflect again and again. Let our new year inspire us to count our blessings rather than envy the other.

Into 2015, to make life worthwhile it's important we trust our ability. We are but the product of our thoughts, and what we think... that we become. No attribute is more precious to each of us than our self-confidence. By thinking right and trusting in our ability to do what needs to be done, we enter into all our undertakings in the expectation of success. Expecting to succeed is a powerful motivator and helps us to persist even in the face of difficulties. And of course, positive

expectations tend to lead to positive results. *“Be not afraid of life. Believe that life is worth living and your belief will help create the fact.” - said William James*

This new year “Be a looker-forward and not a looker-back, be a presser-onward upon life’s stony track, don’t waste time regretting the things you cannot mend. Anticipate good fortune at every twist and bend.” Hope is the device that we should use to propel ourselves into the future .Being positive inspires hope and persistence because “optimists live with hope. We also attract life’s riches when we hope and persist in pursuing our goals. Choosing to be hopeful when it feels as if everything is going against you is not easy, but it’s possible . “All the strength and success you want is within you. Therefore make your own future” – in the words of Swami Vivekananda says a lot.

As we advance into the new year lets believe that”Success is failure turned inside out. The silver tint of the clouds of doubt ... and you never can tell how close you are, it may be near when it seems afar. So stick to the fight when you’re hardest hit. It’s when things seem worst that you must not quit.” Our self esteem is important and we should immerse ourselves in it. .Each one of us is talented in this world in our own right. Some get it instantly and others take a bit of time to master the same. If we immerse ourself, we would know what our worth is - for we would be surprised to find out for ourself that we could attain the impossible Sometimes it requires a challenge from others to bring that out. As St. Francis of Assisi had quoted “Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”

On the journey into the new year let us not cling to the past , cos’ the present becomes difficult and the future seems impossible..Man is the only creature to whom God has given wisdom and it is up to us to use that wisdom appropriately. Our most important conversations are the ones we conduct with our self. Self-talk governs our emotional state, which in turn affects our mental and physical well-being. Carefully and thoroughly analysing it over and over again. cannot do much about it ... “ So draw a line that takes half of your burden away as you seek to damage control worrying about the future cos’ When one door of

happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us”- says Helen Keller.

Having good friends is priceless and I choose this opportunity to be grateful to the most amazing friends I made along the way this year. They enriched me with their generosity of thought, inspired me with their never say die attitude, added meaning to my life and surrounded me with their love. All they may have done was just pepped me up with a call everyday, or an encouraging message, but they made the difference. I could have found them be it in an orphanage, or an old age home. They could have been someone who sought help from me or rendered help to me. It could have been a scholar penning beautiful thoughts or a stranger reaching out like a long lost friend. I cherish them all and let the treasure of good friends be yours too, to have and to hold this new year

“Remember, today is the first day of the rest of our lives. A half-empty glass can become half-full; a hardship to endure can become a challenge to overcome. Lets learn to be positive, and thus we can change our mind and change our life. *Our greatest glory lies not in falling but in rising everytime we fall.*” - *was rightly expressed by Confucius. There is no greater truth than this...*

My wish for one and all is that in 2015 good luck becomes our constant companion, happiness our soul mate, peace our privilege. Lets give love in abundance to those who are deprived of it to receive it back millionfold and let justice be the birthright of the honest. Lets end 2014 on a positive note and be grateful for adversity as much as prosperity. So lets extend our.....

Thanks to those who hated us, they made us stronger persons.

Thanks to those who loved us, they made our hearts bigger.

Thanks to those who were worried about us, they let us know that they actually cared.

Thanks to those who left us, they made us realize that nothing lasts forever.

Thanks to those who entered our lives, they made us who we are today.

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## REFLECTIONS ON THE 65<sup>th</sup> REPUBLIC DAY

*Joseph Britto, Bangalore*

*The world is dangerous not because of the few who do harm,  
But because of the many who look at and don't do anything !  
For the few Indians who are willing to lead, we have too many  
followers.*

No land on Earth has such a long cultural continuity as India. Though there were ancient civilizations notably Egypt and Iraq, they were overlaid by new intrusive cultures. On the other hand in India, we still hear the holy man repeating in his daily worship vedic hymns composed over 3000 years ago and tradition recalls heroic chieftans and the great battles fought by them at about the same time.

In respect of continous tradition, China comes second to India, with Greece a poor third. It is this tradition that prevails in the Indian society that gives us a cutting edge over all other cultures. Today, it is not economic value or the nuclear capability that's important, it's only culture. Therefore, it is Culture that makes us a rich nation. "Tradition" sings the Fiddler on the roof is indeed something we have to be proud of and it's this great inheritance that's the hallmark of an Indian.

What is this cultural background? It is a mix of philosophy, tradition, history, myth and legend. Even the entirely uneducated and illiterate shared this background. The old epics like Mahabhartha, Ramayana and other books are widely known among the masses and every incident, story and moral in them was engraved on the popular mind and gave a richness and content to it. Illiterate villagers would know hundreds of verses by heart and none would ever imagine that they knew neither to read nor write. Even non Hindus like me were fortunate to have had a father who knew the Mahabharata & Ramayana by heart and we would wait every night to listen to these great Epics.

We Mangloreans are well-known for advocating the best Education not just for our children but all youngsters irrespective of communities. If one were to traverse the length and breath of India and comb thro the villages, one would see a handsome man or a beautiful woman who would remind one of fresco of ancient times. It is surprising how this

type has endured despite the horror and miseries of rural life in India; what could we not do with these people under better conditions and with greater opportunities opening out to them?

Coming to religion, India has always been a land common to all major religions of the world. The Indian of Tirvankur had become Christians long before the people of England and St. Thomas the Apostle is undoubtedly the first great Saint of Christ in India. There are more like Blessed Mother Theresa (who was a living saint) and Sister Alphonsa of recent times.

Islam had perhaps already arrived among the Moplas while Prophet Mohammed was still alive. Similarly the Parsis who are the followers of Zoroaster have been in India since the 10<sup>th</sup> century. When the Jewish temples were crumbling under Roman tyranny, a number of Jews fled to India in order to save their faith and a few are still living happily in South India. Therefore Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Parsi religions have as much claim over India as Hinduism and Buddhism has.

Religion they say is the root cause of all of most problems that beset mankind, but in India it's the opposite. Ignoring the few miniscule aberrations in such large and diverse a populace, it would indeed seem as though nature has made a experiment in unity in India, so that unity of the world becomes possible. If the composite culture of India is true, then some day the idea of world-culture and world-humanity must also come to be true. India has shown the way and the way is that of truth and non violence and it is our own Mahatma Gandhi who pioneered the freedom struggle and the Indian Independence literally marked the end of the British Empire all over the world and actually paved the way for the freedom of several countries under colonial rule.

According to Henry Kissinger(1980's) "the international system of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will contain atleast 6 major powers-the United States, China, Europe, Japan, Russia and probably India. Today's Russia is a truncated land to what it was in 1980 and amongst the 6, India is not probably but certainly there. It also includes a multiplicity of medium sized and smaller countries. Countries down under like Australia, New Zealand have also shown their tremendous natural potential.

Any study into the history the human race should begin with India

and China says Will Durant. Both account for a third of the world's population. The old saying 'Variety is the spice of life' need's to be altered to 'India is the Spice of life'. And now India may well overtake most of the developing countries and by 2040 may even overtake China and perhaps the US as well.

This is distinctly possible, notwithstanding the survival of the planet Earth, what with global warming and greenhouse gases and other calamities, that in the year 2040, the youngest affluent population in the world is slated to be in India and this group is expected to be dynamic and will rule the world. This is where India will score over others especially China. It's our earnest prayer that from this future lucky generation will emerge such a leader who will not only fill the void left by the Mahatma but take the entire mankind into new horizons and dimensions. The Mahatma's aim was freedom from slavery, to wipe away everyone tears and the new emerging young leader, we imagine will lead us to a new era of intellectual freedom, freedom from all chains and imaginary boundaries of class, creed and religion. After all, whether Hindu or Muslim, Parsi or Christian, Sindhi or Gujarathi or Marathi or Punjabi—all posses the identical number of 206 bones and very much the same flesh and blood.

Did not Swami Vivekananda recite :

*"The same atman residing in you, resides in every blade of grass"*

But Man who can hardly understand a little flower, but has created boundaries based on

religion, caste and creed and as Sir Alfred Tennyson famously recites:

*"Little flower –but if I could understand ,*

*what you are, root and all and all in all*

*I Should know what god and man is"*

As India attains Senior Citizenship at 65 and crosses this landmark those born in that Golden era of Independence will recollect the words of the immortal poet Rabindranath Tagore:

***"Where the mind is without fear and the head held high ,***

***Where knowledge is free ;***

*Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls ;*

*Where words come out from the depth of truth;*

*Where tireless striving stretches in arms towards perfection;*

*Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the deary desert sand of dead habitat ;*

*Where the mind is lead forward by thee into ever widening thought and action*

*Into that heaven of freedom , my father , let my country awake “*

*Indeed we pray that this giant (INDIA) will awake !!!*

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## **THE FATAL FLAW IN THE ANTI-RAPE CAMPAIGN**

*Flavia Agnes, Majlis-Mumbai*

As we approach the second anniversary of the horrific gang-rape in New Delhi, which became a symbol of our national shame, it is time for reflection. To take stock of the gains of the sporadic movement — public protests, candlelight marches, talk shows on television channels and articles in newspapers — which broke out in the national capital, but soon spread across the entire country. The common refrain: stringent laws and death penalty. The underlying presumption is that stringent punishment will act as a deterrent and bring to an end sexual violence in the country, despite evidence to the contrary. So, every time a fresh incident of rape is highlighted in the media, the demand for stringent laws gets reiterated.

A similar demand was also raised during the first phase of the anti-rape campaign in the early 1980s, following the adverse Supreme Court ruling that acquitted two policemen who had raped a poor, 16-year-old tribal girl in a police station. The acquittal was based on the grounds that since there were no marks of injury on her body, she must have consented. The girl was dubbed a liar and her character was called into question. The public protests, though smaller in scale, also resulted in reforming the antiquated rape laws in the country. In the intervening

three decades, while there was a steady rise in the number of reported cases, the conviction rate continued to be dismal.

Overriding this clinching evidence, the government enacted a stringent law to bring solace to the campaigners and justice to the victim. The publicity given to the 16 December gangrape and the mandate to record all cases of sexual violence had the predictable result of scaling up the figures of rape and sexual violence in the country. However, the moot point is, has the conviction rate improved correspondingly? That is a difficult question, the answer to which eludes us. Then, where is the deterrent value of the amended law? Despite this, the clamour for even more stringent laws continues.

Of course, we have had some showcase type of convictions in certain high-profile cases, but here conviction was a foregone conclusion - the New Delhi gangrape case, which triggered the campaign, and the Mumbai Shakti Mills case. Both ended with death penalty to the rapists. In the first case, the pre-amendment law had to be applied. Invoking the legal maxim of 'rarest of rare' in cases of rape and murder was nothing new. What was new was the death penalty awarded in the Shakti Mills case, where the victim was alive, by using the legal premise of 'repeat offender', a new provision brought about by the recent amendment.

As an outcome, three young men, including a 19-year-old, from poverty-stricken backgrounds were awarded the death penalty and the rest condemned to imprisonment for the remainder of their life, as per the provisions of the amended law.

Has this proved to be a deterrent and brought down the incidents of rape in the city of Mumbai or the country at large? I am afraid not. The incidents of rape continue to be as brutal. In September 2012, a 40-year-old ragpicker in Mumbai was raped by 10 men, who brutalised her by inserting twigs into her vagina. While conducting medical examination on a four-year-old survivor, broomsticks were found inside her vaginal cavity. Even in the most recent case of rape in a Uber taxi in New Delhi, the accused threatened to insert rods if the victim raised an alarm. These are chilling reminders of the legacy left behind by the 16 December gangrape. Awarding death penalty has had no impact on



these brutalities.

Though rapes by strangers receive maximum media publicity, they are not the norm, and any law that takes into account only this type of brutality is bound to fail as most rapes are by known persons. They occur within our homes, in our neighbourhoods, in our schools. The sexual violence inflicted upon girls, who already suffer from multiple vulnerabilities, hardly gets noticed by our media.

To cope with the emerging concerns, we need a shift in our approach from a conviction-driven one to a victim-centric one. Perhaps then, and only then, will the conviction rate improve, as the victim is able to depose with confidence and without fear and intimidation. Perhaps this approach is worth a try, as our own experiment in Mumbai reveals. As part of a victim-support programme, we have engaged with more than 350 reported cases, studied chargesheets, observed court proceedings, interacted with stakeholders - the police, hospitals, prosecutors - and, most importantly, have travelled the journey with 'victims' from investigation to trial and in the process have helped some to become survivors. This has given us newer insights about the needs of victims and the state of rape trials in our courts.

What would such a programme entail? To begin with, a viable financial support programme. Some states have done this under Section 357A of the Criminal Procedure Code, giving the responsibility to the legal aid department, where the amount is disbursed after the victim deposes in court, or after the conviction. The very purpose of awarding financial support is lost in this process. Perhaps, Maharashtra is the only state that has brought into effect a financial support scheme, Manodhairya, which has proved to be beneficial to more than 600 rape survivors.

This innovative scheme is designed as per the Supreme Court guidelines of 1994, in the Delhi Domestic Workers Union case where the Department of Women and Child Development was entrusted with the responsibility of bringing into effect a comprehensive survivor support scheme.

While the efforts at the Centre were throttled over and over again,

in Maharashtra, working closely with the state government, we were able to give effect to this scheme as the first step in providing support to the survivor.

Under this scheme, compensation is to be paid within a few weeks of lodging the FIR. District Criminal Compensation Boards have been set up under the Collector. This unique scheme, which takes into account the needs of the victim and places the least burden on a victim/survivor, is being closely monitored for its timely and efficient disbursement of funds. This positive model could be emulated by other states as a best practice.

Even among activists and support groups, most view the support as hospital-based, and have attempted to medicalise the issue rather than providing socio-legal support, which must extend beyond the one night spent in a public hospital following the incident of rape. It is thereafter that the actual trauma of rape begins to descend on the victim. What the victim needs is long-term support to help her to reintegrate into the system, a school re-entry mechanism, educational support, help in shifting residence as the stigma attached to rape makes it impossible for the survivor to continue in the same vicinity, healthcare, help in coping with pregnancy-related issues, a caring State-run home to help her to recoup, and support during the trial to face the rigorous cross-examination.

Today, none of these are part of any victim support and rehabilitation programme. In a conviction-driven system, these can easily be overlooked or relegated to the background. But it is these concerns that we need to foreground today. Rather than the proposed, one-stop crisis centres, the need is to flesh out the concept of a District Trauma Team comprising experts from different departments, and a local NGO member, who can reach out to the victim within the least possible time and provide the necessary support. This proposed model could, perhaps, help to shift the focus from a conviction-driven system to a victim-support one.

***Flavia Agnes is a consultant to Rahat, the survivor support programme of Majlis Legal Centre, Mumbai.***

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## BELIEVE

*By: Dreamcatcher*

***“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.” - John Quincy Adams***

God in his own image endowed humans with bountiful gifts, infinite possibilities and limitless capabilities. God’s desire for man to constantly evolve manifests itself in everyday stories of his unstoppable pursuit towards boundaries of the impossible. The strength of the human spirit soars way above any odds or adversity that could come in the way of the determined goal.

One such story takes us back to a small town called Tenryu under Mount Fuji, Japan during the turn of the century (circa 1907).

In this small town lived a blacksmith named Gihei and his wife Mika a weaver. As a blacksmith Gihei repaired bicycles. He would buy broken bikes for a knockdown price in Tokyo, repair them and sell them. Gihei and Mika had a son Soichiro. Soichiro helped his father literally from the cradle and the bicycle parts were his favorite toys. Moving parts in the bicycle made Soichiro very interested in machines. Even though growing up, Soichiro was a great help to Gihei in the bicycle shop, the parents insisted on Soichiro’s formal schooling. Soichiro thought differently. He hated school. He felt that formal schooling went against the grain of his dreamt up plans.

At the time of Soichiro’s childhood automobiles were being slowly introduced into Japan. When he saw the first car, he went chasing after it as fast as he could. He simply could not understand how something could move with its own power. Something clicked in his brain that made him think that cars were his calling.

At the age of 15, he left school and headed to Tokyo and obtained an apprenticeship at the Arto Shokai repair shop. As he was the youngest employee, his only work was to clean and prepare meals for the repairmen. This did not deter Soichiro. He observed everything in the repair shop and gained a lot of knowledge on cars and their engines. Despite his lack of hands-on knowledge the owner of the auto repair shop allowed Soichiro to help him in his second workshop, designing a

race car during the nights.

In 1923, Tokyo was hit by a 7.8 magnitude earthquake. 142,800 died and over 40,000 were reported missing. Because the earthquake hit close to lunch time, cooking fires started and spread devastating fires throughout Tokyo. The fire did not spare Arto Shokai. The shop was in flames. Soichiro who had not driven a car till then drove out three race cars from a burning garage. His bravery and loyalty earned him an assistantship with the workshop proprietors – the Sakakibara brothers. Together they designed the Curtiss race car. Soichiro at 18, was a riding mechanic at the races and their team won the Japan Motor Car Championship on November 23, 1924. This championship made Soichiro famous.

When Soichiro turned 21, he left Tokyo and opened up a branch of Arto Shokai in Hamamatsu, his hometown. Soichiro was always dreaming up new ideas. He replaced the wooden spokes to metal ones on the wheels of a bicycle and wanted to improve car engine parts. His passion turned to making improved piston rings. But no one supported him. He literally lived in the workshop, developing piston rings. Progress was slow and he was depleting all his savings. He was almost broke. He even handed over his wife's jewels to the pawn shop. For a man who once said - "If theory promoted creativity, then all teachers would be great inventors" conceded and started learning science. He enrolled in the technological school of Hamamatsu, studying metallurgy. Putting his new found knowledge to work he manufactured piston rings on a large scale. He also developed his own method of engine cooling, which resolved the main problem of all race cars of that time. His engine did not explode from overheating during a race. In 1936, he proved this by racing his car at 120km/h only to crash, and get seriously hurt. The speed was so high that the car rolled over several times to almost kill him. He spent three months in the hospital.

While in the hospital Soichiro received bad news. Out of 30,000 piston rings he produced for Toyota, only three passed quality control tests. He was disappointed, broke and devastated. But he did not give up on his dream.

Being discharged from the hospital, he went back to improving the

piston rings and he invested even more in mass production. This time around, it served him well and his financial situation improved. He now had 2000 people employed in his factory.

In 1937 the Sino-Japanese War a pre-cursor to the Second World War broke out. Soichiro was now supplying piston rings to Toyota, the shipbuilding industry and to the aircraft industry. Because of the war Soichiro's company was put under the control of the Ministry of Ammunitions, and all his male employees were called to war. This was a big blow for production. Soichiro himself started working on the shop floor making piston rings. To meet deadlines, he creatively implemented automation in the factory.

The war brought heavy bombardment of Hamamatsu by the Americans. His factory was bombed and burned. Japan was defeated. He assumed that the country was entering into a period of poverty and ruin and decided not to restore the factory. He sold the business to Toyota.

In 1946 as the effects of the war cooled down, Soichiro recomposed himself to start – 'Honda Technology Research Institute'. Here he became engaged in artisanal production of mopeds. He fitted a generator engine of a tiny army radio to a bicycle, used rubber hot water bottle as a fuel tank and filled it with fir oil. He sold fifteen hundred mopeds in a jiffy. From mopeds he turned to motorcycles, and then cars. With this he changed the company name to Honda Motor Company. By 1958 Honda was the largest producer of motorcycles in the world

Today Honda is a household name. A company built by a boy who chased cars out of fascination and passion for the machine.

As Soichiro Honda was told to recall his life, he had a few quotes which sum up his life, passion and determination:

"Success represents 1% of your work which results from 99% that is called failure".

"What we learn through failure becomes a precious part of us, strengthening us in everything we do. So let the tough things make you tougher".

"We only have one future, and it will be made of our dreams, if we have the courage to challenge convention"

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## IN DEFENSE OF LIFE IN INDIA AGAINST ABORTION AND EUTHANASIA

*Dr Jeanette Pinto, Mumbai*

*(Extracts from the address of Jeanette Pinto, a pro-life activist from the diocese of Mumbai, at the Indian Missionary Congress, 2010).*



I come from a large family. My parents have been a prolife couple who had 12 children. I am the eldest child in the family. I grew up in a small town and have happy childhood memories of growing up with my siblings. My parents gave us all a good education and passed on to us values of respect,

obedience and caring for each other.

I strongly believe that God has a purpose and plan for each and every person. Nothing happens for nothing. The purpose of my life was to be a teacher and I thoroughly enjoyed teaching for over 4 decades. I was happily married, had two sons, and my life revolved around these three men.

About the year 1985, in my early forties, I became a victim of pollution. Constant and severe episodes of breathlessness made me a patient of bronchial asthma. I was often hospitalized during the severe attacks I suffered. This shattered my dreams and wrecked my life, which was smooth sailing until this time. I felt depressed. To add to this, I was widowed at the age of 48. Soon after, my young sons left home to pursue higher education. My asthmatic condition only worsened, and I was unable to teach. I finally decided to opt for voluntary retirement, with no plan in mind of what I would do, or how to continue with my life.

I suddenly felt abandoned and thrown to the winds. One day, during a harrowing episode when I struggled for breath, I cried, “Lord, have mercy on me”. I felt like I was drowning on land as I gasped for a breath of air. Amidst my struggle, I heard a gentle voice whisper, “Fear not . . . Come . . . follow me,” (*Mt*, 19: 21).

The powerful call kept ringing in my ears. Sensing it was the Spirit of the Lord, I answered; “Where Lord, follow you where?”

Show me the way Lord”. My breathing gradually abated. Slowly a peace came over me, and silently I submitted and surrendered to the Lord. I whispered, “Do with me as you please Lord, not my will but Thy will be done”. From thence onwards, I let the Lord take charge of my life.

How did I get into the **Pro-Life** ministry?

I knew nothing about pro-life. But strangely, God led me to meet an octogenarian gentleman, Kevin Fernandes by name, who shared with me his agony and pain over the horrible plight of the unborn child. The issue was close to his heart. Since I was free, he requested me to attend the awareness programs for high school and college students conducted by his team. I watched the documentary films, ‘**The Silent Scream**’ and ‘**The Eclipse of Reason**’. I was shell-shocked to learn of how the horrific killing of the unborn child took place. I wondered how inhuman a mother or father could be to kill their mute, innocent, defenseless baby. Abortion, I thought prevailed only in the West, but realized that in India, the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1971, had unleashed this silent violence on our society too, resulting in thousands of abortions.

An inner voice whispered a missionary challenge to me to go and teach people that abortion is ‘killing’, ‘murder in the womb’, and against ‘the law of God’. A child is a precious gift of God; no one has the right to take away its life. I felt very unworthy. How much and what did I know about abortion, to teach it? My specialized forte was Asian, European and World History. No, I cannot teach people about abortion. Who would listen to me? But then, how can I be silent in the face of such an evil? I recalled Lois McMaster Bujol who wrote: “The dead cannot cry out for justice; it is the duty of the living to do so for them.”

My prayers and deep faith in God assured me that when God ordains, He sustains. This is ‘a vocation within a vocation’. So it simply means that I must return to teaching. But then! How about my asthmatic condition? The thought made me feel weak and powerless. I opened

my Bible; my eyes fell upon 2 Cor. 12:9. I read, “My grace is sufficient for you for my power is made perfect in weakness.” I suddenly felt recharged; indeed, I was God’s chosen one. Yes! God doesn’t call the qualified, He, qualifies the called.

To my surprise, one day Cardinal Simon Pimenta called me to his office. He expressed his distress over the ‘**Culture of Death**’ prevalent in the world of today and especially in our city and Archdiocese. He requested me to start the ProLife Ministry. This for me was the call of God which I humbly accepted saying; “I will try my best”. And so the Diocesan Human Life Committee was born in 1997.

In 1998, I attended the World ProLife Conference at Toronto, and there met Father Paul Marx, OCB, who is the Founder of Human Life International. He blessed me and said: “Dr. Pinto, you are our only hope for India.” I felt commissioned; it confirmed that God had placed this burden on my heart. I am His ProLife messenger, and my mission is to preach ‘The Gospel of Life which is at the heart of Jesus’ message.’

Sadly, however, I soon realized that nobody wanted to hear anything about ProLife. The sixties and the seventies had already devastated the ‘culture of life’ that prevailed. No one wants to know the truth like, ‘life begins at conception’, ‘abortion is killing of the unborn child’, and ‘contraception is a sin’. Not every married couple wishes to practice Natural Family Planning, when easy options are freely available. Scientists want to play God and support mercy killing and cloning.

The fact of the matter is, we live in a media-saturated culture where reality, truth and values scarcely matter. Love, sex and sexuality are projected everywhere - nothing is sacred anymore. People want the pleasure of sex not the consequences, and so we prolifeers had to face criticism, cynicism and ridicule. We were challenged to argue in favor of the Pope and the teachings of the Catholic Church. But my faith, trust and obedience to the Word of God kept me convicted and committed to the mission. Despite all odds, I patiently persevered in this ministry.

Twelve years later, our Archdiocese celebrates ProLife Day every year on March 25th, publishes quarterly Newsletters, has established ‘**Memorials to the Unborn Child,**’ and creates awareness on various



human life issues. With a sense of pride but in all modesty, I can say we have impacted not only our diocese, but have been a shining beacon to some dioceses in the country.

This ministry has changed my life and me. I am happy I had the courage to answer the call and give it my all.

Well, what can you do to be prolife? First, begin at home. Every family has a variety of struggles. Do you have parents, grandparents or elderly members in the family, give them a little of your time, understanding, and sympathy to ease their hardships and alleviate their fears. Put yourself in their place. Discourage feelings of uselessness and add to the enjoyment of their life.

If some family members have addictions or if there is disharmony in the home due to broken relationships, you could show love and appreciation for any small thing that they do. You could counter feelings of regret over their failures and shortcomings by your understanding, advising, and counseling.

There may be a special needs child in the neighborhood. You can teach, play and spend time with it, and also provide the parents of the child with an opportunity for some recreation time.

Suppose a pregnant teenager confides in you of her anxiety and fears, empathize, counsel, and be a strong support to her. Pray for, and with her.

Finally, you can become a prolife volunteer of the Human Life Committee, by giving off your time or taking the initiative to reach out to others. Help to dry the tears of the broken hearted, feel their afflictions, listen with a loving heart and let their heartaches be your heartaches. Help to make peoples' hopes and dreams your hopes and dreams. To be prolife all you need is to base your life on the foundation of 'Respect for the God-given dignity of the human person... that is our divine inheritance.'

***Dr Jeanette Pinto was the recipient of RACHANA Outstanding Woman of the Year 2014 in recognition of her Pro-Life Campaign and Activism in the Archdiocese of Mumbai. She is also the author of the Book - Indian Widow- From Victim to Victor.***

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## **‘BUCKET IN ORDER’ CHALLENGE!**

*Jacqueline Colaco, Bangalore*

There have been innovative bucket challenges introduced during 2014 like the Ice Bucket Challenge followed by the Rice Bucket Challenge. Recently, it's been the Swachh Bucket Challenge that has hit the headlines if I may boldly rename the campaign, borrowing a catchy nomenclature of the times which involves compatible containers used to start cleaning our India!

At 65, while Bucket Listing fun stuff yet to experience, I'm simultaneously contemplating a purposeful Bucket Challenge of my own! In anticipation of 'kicking' the esteemed item, my daily ponderings include serious issues of personal and domestic clutter clearing, completion of will documentation, putting finances in order, allotments for probable medical needs, plus orderly arrangement of files for a smooth transfer to successors! Deliberating therefore if I should procrastinate and discard these as mere 'timepass thoughts' or take them up as my 'Bucket in Order' Challenge?

Not long ago I'd planned for never growing old while there was still a song in my heart and a tune on my lips. While the former remains, try as I might, the vocal chords these days just don't stretch to that required demisemiquaver to hit the correct high note of my favourite 'Autumn Leaves'. A reminder somehow, that this song now is in sync with my time in life. Similarly, no more can I huskily croon 'Summertime' without a care or thought that a summer's day now entails hiding from the sun because it is too hot and energy levels are depleted; it's a struggle to down a single beer, and I must check what I eat to control weight so as not to overload my replaced arthritic lower limb joints. These old age realities are pitted against memories of halcyon days when I'd gladly guzzle two Beers or a couple of Fenis over an afternoon lazing with local friends on a Goa beach, enjoying their native cuisine unmindful of calories and with no dearth of stamina, ever game for a swim and back to the sands for a singsong by moonlight. So serene were the scenes

there in the '60s, '70s and '80s, akin to Bangalore, my home city.

As time ticks by, realization dawns that dreams belong to nights and today's priority must be my 'Bucket in Order' Challenge. Therefore I want to place before readers who are at my stage of life and perplexed, the fact is that 'do or die' we have to 'get on with it'! Most important is to make a Will. Many shy away from this important document, as it acknowledges mortality. Although termed the Last Will and Testament, the last may be this moment, so get down to brass tacks, as lack of a Will leads to long drawn out legal procedures for our heirs. Document your possessions be they immovable, moveable and financial. Decide to whom you want to bequeath these and in what proportions. Consult a lawyer for drafting and registering the Will to safeguard interests of inheritors. If inclined, bequeath through an endowment by a legacy in your will to Organisations assisting deserving causes.

Medically, should you land in an unforeseen condition when unable to verbally communicate decisions and instructions, you may opt to prepare a living will in advance, in case you do not wish to be placed on life support systems. Consider whether you'd like to donate your eyes, other organs, even your body for medical research or prefer a burial or cremation. In case of proposed donations, get started with registrations with the appropriate medical colleges, hospitals or organizations promoting these causes. Indicate the type of funeral ceremony you'd like performed. This makes all much easier on those who have to make arrangements through their moments of grief, especially if they come from abroad and have to grapple with unfamiliar local procedures. While alive, clear out the excess in the home. There is so much we have not used in years. It makes one feel good and relieved to give. There are jumble sales held by Charitable Organisations where proceeds are used for the benefit of the underprivileged.

**Life is unpredictable. Will you please partner my 'bucket in order' challenge?**

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## SPECIAL PATIENTS

*Dr. Christopher Pais*  
(*Odyssey, KARGERICON 2012*)

My colleague insisted that I write an article for the Geriatric conference and I immediately agreed. It is not because I am a writer like some of my fellow doctors, but it is because my junior colleague is the backbone of our unit, and I dare not displease her. If I disagree, the consequences could be great. If she decides to ‘go slow’ or not to work, I will not be able to have leisure weekends!

Physicians are known to be talkers and surgeons doers. Many of you would have heard the story of a gynaecologist, a physician and a surgeon who were awarded capital punishment for criminal negligence in a hospital. The judge asked them about their last wish before they were hanged. The gynaecologist said, “Your honour, I would like to do three operations before I am hanged.” The physician said “Your honour, I would be happy if you allow me to give a lecture for one hour.” Then the surgeon being asked about his last wish hurriedly said, “Your honour, please hang me before this fellow opens his mouth.” Of course, my intention is not to make my surgeon friends take this extreme step, but to write down about two common problems faced by senior citizens.

For a physician, treating senior citizens is very special and interesting. Commonly they complain about constipation and sleeplessness. Most of the time we find that speaking to the patient and spending time with them helps them immensely. The elderly require company from their family rather than a dedicated nurse or other comforts which are given to them.

Constipation is the most common problem faced by senior citizens. Hippocrates noted that “the intestines tend to become sluggish with age.” Studies have shown that it affects as many as 26 percent of elderly men and 34 percent of elderly women. It may reflect a serious problem such as a mass lesion, the manifestation of a systemic disorder such as hypothyroidism or a side effect of various medications such as cough syrups, analgesics etc and SPECIAL PATIENTS!

The patient with constipation should be questioned about fluid and

food intake, medications, supplements and other remedies. The physical examination may reveal local masses or thrombosed piles, which may be contributing to the constipation. Visual inspection of the colon is useful when no obvious cause of constipation can be determined. Treatment should address the underlying abnormality. The chronic use of certain treatments, such as laxatives, should be avoided. Firstline therapy should include bowel retraining, increased dietary fiber and fluid intake, and exercise when possible. Laxatives, stool softeners and nonabsorbable solutions may be needed in some patients with chronic constipation.

Talking about constipation, I am reminded of an elderly lady who called me on two occasions and complained about constipation. On both these occasions I asked her to go to hospital and take the necessary treatment. Surprisingly both the times she phoned me a little later to say she was able to relieve herself after speaking to me. I did feel like a laxative!

Sleeplessness is another problem faced by senior citizens. A patient once told me she does not get sleep and is very uncomfortable at night. “Just remember me when you don’t get sleep”, I said. The same night, past midnight, I receive a phone call from this patient. “What’s the matter?” I asked. “Doctor, you told me to remember you when I don’t get sleep. I am not getting sleep, hence I remembered you.” This time I was not lucky, as in the earlier case, as the patient did not get a wink of sleep after speaking to me. Neither did I!

Sleeplessness or insomnia is common in the elderly population, especially in senior citizens beyond the age of 65. It affects approximately 50 percent of the elderly population. The amount of time spent in bed by these seniors may be either the same or sometimes more than that spent by the younger adults. But the quality of sleep is far lower than normal, and there are numerous causes that contribute towards this phenomenon of insomnia in elderly folks. The commonest cause for insomnia in senior citizens is the physiological alteration of sleep patterns.

REM sleep (Rapid Eye Movement sleep is the deepest stage of sleep) is considered to be the most relaxing and refreshing cycle of sleep, and seniors tend to have lesser durations of REM sleep when

compared to younger adults. The chances of experiencing numerous pains, aches and soreness are higher in aged people, and can prove to be frequent reasons of sleep disruption.

Incidences of prostate hypertrophy, diabetes and kidney troubles are higher in senior citizens, and all of these disorders can force the patients to awake from sleep to urinate frequently at night. Depression, Alzheimer's disease, Dementia etc. are some of the mental disorders that affect the elderly. Most of these disorders are associated with insomnia and disruption of normal sleep patterns. Aged people may also have to use a variety of medications which could cause insomnia and disturbance in sleep as side effects. Sedentary lifestyle and lack of adequate exercise are other factors that contribute towards insomnia.

Proper treatment of insomnia has the potential to reverse insomnia-related morbidities, including risk of depression, disability, and impaired quality of life. Furthermore, optimal management of insomnia may improve patient productivity and cognition, and decrease health care use and risk of accidents. Non pharmacologic interventions that target the source of the problem can still be implemented first in this situation, and should be continued even when a medication is required. Physiologic interventions such as a daytime walk, appropriate temperature control, adequate ventilation, and dark sleep environment may also lead to dramatic improvement in sleep quality. Behavioural interventions include relaxation therapy and sleep restriction. Pharmacotherapy involves the use of the lowest effective dose, use of intermittent dosing (2 to 4 times weekly), short-term medication prescribing (regular use for not more than 3 to 4 weeks), and gradual medication discontinuation to reduce rebound insomnia. Medications with shorter action are generally preferred to minimize daytime sedation.

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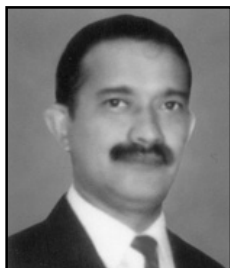
## **A WARM WELCOME TO THE NEW LIFE MEMBERS**

1. Mr Anthony Fernandes, Mangalore
2. Mrs Hazel Barboza, Mumbai
3. Mr Darryl Arjun D'Sa, Ontario-Canada

## EULOGY TO RUEBEN SALDANHA

*Delivered by: David V. Pais*

Sir Walter Scott asked the question ‘Death . . . , the last Sleep?’ He answered it himself ‘NO, its the final awakening and so let us not say in grief, he is no more but live in thankfulness’.



Christmas of 1965, a babe one and half months old, adorned the crib at Mariolands. A child is born, the name given to him, Reuben. Joy had filled the air at Mariolands. 49 years later, I ask a question- has this joy disappeared?, has a pall of gloom descended?, my answer is a firm NO. This takes me to ‘one’ of the meanings of Christmas.

Christmas is a time when we remember the lives of our dear ones gone by. Indeed, when we listen to the lyrics of the famous Carol, ‘Mary’s boy child’ which says,” trumpets sound and angels sing, listen to what they say, that man will live for evermore, because of Christmas Day. Yes, Rueben will live for evermore in the hearts of those he has left behind. He is not dead, while we still speak of him.

Some are bound to die young. In fact it is said, those whom God loves, die young. By dying young, Rueben stays young in our memory. It is not the length of life, but the depth of life. I for one, have absolutely no doubt that Rueben is in that place where all of us would hope to be one day. Rueben lived a simple, humble and an unassuming life. It is my conviction that Rueben lived up to the adage, “Let not the left hand know what the right hand has done”. Truly, I would say that Rueben was one ‘cheerful giver’. He was always there for his two precious jewels, Sandra and Dominic. Ever willing to help, whenever his parents/ siblings needed him. He enriched his spiritual life by his daily visits to this very same house of God. He derived his greatest happiness from helping the less privileged and the orphans. He took over the plantation and it was to the estate he went, least expecting it to be his last sojourn here on earth. His love for the estate, his family, his charity and love for the poor was so great that perhaps he neglected his health. On the morning of December 14th, that huge, loving and giving heart suddenly

stopped beating, it was a massive heart attack. This was God's way of saying and calling, "My beloved Son, I am pleased with you! Whatever you did to the least of my brethren! that you did unto me. Come, Come right now and enjoy the rewards of eternal heavenly bliss".

As Rueben would often tell me, "the happiest moments of my life have been the many, which I have passed at home in the bosom of my loved ones". Yes, we have beautiful memories of Rueben which will live forever in our hearts. Nothing beautiful in this world is ever really lost. We cannot know why somethings happen, but we can know that love and beautiful memories, outlast the pain of grief.

It is said that, death ends a life, not a relationship. Love is stronger than death even though it cannot stop death from happening. But no matter how hard death tries, it cannot separate people from love. It cannot take away our memories either. In the end love is stronger than death.

To you dearest Sandra, Dominic, parents, siblings, inlaws and all the dear and near ones, let me say that the love of Rueben will never die. He will live on in your hearts for ever. Listen carefully, 'Rueben will speak to your heart'. He tells you, Do not shut your eyes and pray to God that I'll come back, but open your eyes and see all that I have left behind. I want you to be full of the love we share.

To conclude, let me go back to where I started. Jesus was born at Christmas and died on Good Friday to be reincarnated to live for ever more. He completed this cycle, so that we will all live for evermore. So let our loved ones who have gone before us be remembered, especially during this season of Christmas.

Reuben, may you have the immortality of fame and to you the bereaved family, the immortality of love. Farewell dearest Reuben, Fare well.

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***Reuben is the husband of Sandra, father of Dominic, son of Norman and Therese Saldanha, son-in-law of Noel and Joan Coelho, brother of Mariola, Aroon and Iona.***

***(Sponsored)***

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# GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY

*Dr Anand & Dr Geetha Pereira*

The UN General Assembly had designated 2014 “International Year of Family Farming”, giving a strong signal that the global community recognizes the important contribution of family farms to world food security. In both developed and developing countries, >500 million family farms, run by family members, produce the food that feeds billions of people. In many developing countries family farms represent up to 80% of all farm holdings.

The United Nations forecast of global population is around 9 billion in 2050 and 11 billion at the end of the century - 50% born in Sub Saharan Africa and another 30% in South/South East Asia. The rising world population begs the question to policy makers, “Will there be enough food for the present as well as future generations!”. The FAO estimates that 60% more food is needed to feed a world population of 9 billion people.

A bird’s eye view illustration paints a very critical canvas. Today’s total global population stands at approximately 7.2 billion, of which a great majority are very poor. Nearly one billion plus people exist on the edge of starvation. People, especially in the third world Countries are struggling to raise their standard of living. Unplanned development has resulted in depleting half of the world’s tropical forests. The last frontiers of the world are effectively gone. Plant and animal species which are important for the future of food and medicine are disappearing even before they can be documented. In short, the wreckage of the Green Planet Earth by a consumer driven society has left an ecological foot print worldwide, which is 20% larger than the area of land available for cultivation and production of food crops.

In the Indian Context, the International Year of Family Farming assumes great significance because the Country is home to 17% of the global population. While poverty in India is falling, concerns over food security are increasing. The performance of agriculture is important for availability and access to food as more than 55% of people in the country are dependent on this sector, including 70% in rural areas.

Although India’s food supply is now largely self-sufficient, the

country's hunger and malnutrition levels are still extremely high, and great inefficiencies remain within the agricultural sector. Ensuring food security ought to be an issue of great importance for India where more than one third of the population is poor and 50% of all children malnourished. About 25% of India's land is turning to desert and degradation of agricultural areas is becoming a severe problem, potentially threatening food security in the world's second most populous Country. India occupies just 2 per cent of the world's land but is home to 17% of its population, leading to over-use of land.

The state of India's Sustainable nutritional security is worsening. Every individual needs access to balanced diets and safe drinking water. However, the cost of food items is increasing rapidly, making them unaffordable to a majority of the people. Added to these woes is the short supply of pulses and edible oils. Pulses play a critical role in the diet of the people of India, where large sections are vegetarians. It is established that a human body requires a daily intake of about 50 gm of protein; in India the per capita daily intake is only about 10 gm. This endangers health and work performance. Approximately, 44% of households are deficient in calorie intake.

Even though the situation is desperate, there are encouraging signs to generate optimism. The FAO has proposed a new concept in agriculture where technology development needs to ensure ecological sustainability and economic efficiency involving all key players which includes small and marginal farmers.

Agro Ecology or Sustainable or alternative agriculture is a new type of agriculture, rich in technology and information and less intensive in the use of fossil and other non renewable energy. These farming methods are less resource oriented and work in harmony with nature and society. The FAO is ready to accept a combination of modern technology, such as genetically modified crops, hybrids, high yielding varieties, combined with ecological strengths of traditional wisdom and age old farming practices. Agro Ecology can address the challenge of ending both hunger and malnutrition in all its forms. It is more than just a science. It is also a social movement for justice that recognizes and respects the rights of communities of farmers to decide "***what they grow and how they grow it***".

The U.N. has recognized that women play a pivotal role as the world's major food providers, from farmer to housewife, to working mother, women are intensively involved in the food cycle. It also means recognizing small and marginal farmers who are the most vulnerable and most hungry. Scientific evidence shows that small farmers play a key role in feeding the world. All World Agencies involved in policy decisions have recognized that including small farmers in policy making is critical in solving both hunger and food production. This is especially true in developing Countries where small farms face extinction because of the younger generation migrating to urban centres. As per this trend, 75% of the human population will live in urban areas by the year 2050.

A vast majority of rural farms in India are women centred. Women play an active role in taking care of society's basic needs like food, fodder, fuel and shelter. The Government should empower rural women make informed decisions by providing credit at reasonable rates of interest, fertilizers and genuine seed material during the sowing season and real time satellite aided weather forecasts. Building their self confidence, self respect, and enhancing their management capabilities will go a long way in addressing food security.

**Conclusion:** An estimated 25% of the world's food calories and up to 50% of total food weight are lost or wasted before they can be consumed. This waste occurs in homes, restaurants, super markets, weddings, functions, unreliable storage and transportation.

Another important aspect of addressing food security is in understanding as to where the produced food goes. Today, only 55% of the world's crop calories feed people directly, with 35% fed to livestock and 9% turned into bio fuel or Industrial products. It would be far easier to feed 9 billion people by 2050 if more of the crops ended up on tables.

For every 100 calories of grains we feed animals, we get only about 40 calories of milk, 22 calories of eggs, 12 calories of chicken, 10 of pork and 3 of beef. Curtailing the use of food crops for livestock and bio fuels could also go a long way towards enhancing food availability.

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## EULOGY TO DR MARIA RASQUINHA MENEZES - BOSTON - 20<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2014

*Delivered by: Nisha Rebello*

*Grief is the price we pay for love*



On behalf of all of us here I would like to offer our heartfelt condolences and prayers to Our beloved Uncle Melvyn and Andrea and all you relations and friends of my Aunt Maria. I want to tell you from our hearts do not cry for Aunty Maria – she is in heaven. From today onwards, we have to celebrate the beautiful life of Dr Maria Rasquinha Menezes.

You are loved when you are born. You will be loved when you die. In between we have to manage... and how well Maria managed her entire life of 62 years.

She says today to each one of her family and friends - Remember me with smiles and laughter, for that is how I will remember you all Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free

I'm following the path God has laid you see.

I took His hand when I heard him call

I turned my back and left it all.

Maria was born in Mangalore, India, the fourth child of 7 siblings – two sisters and five brothers. My mother Priya, whom some of you know is the eldest. Born with a silver spoon in her mouth, God gifted Maria with immense talent. From her childhood she was a perfectionist whether it was in studies, medical college, music, her family relationships. She did everything with great commitment, integrity, love and excellence. This gave her a special place in everyone's heart because she carried all this with great humility. Maria would have wanted us to celebrate her life and speak of our fond memories with a smile on our face. Let's not dwell on sadness but instead focus on paying tribute to Marias remarkable life. school life, career, friends and interests.

As a child - the eldest of her nephews and nieces - whenever I stayed in my grandfather's home, a home full of noise, fun, music and hospitality, I used to look up to her, admire her poise, her doctor's coat, the stethoscope, driving her beautiful car, her impeccably starched saris, jewellery to match, her talent on the piano and ability to laugh at herself. I grew up thinking my Aunt was a wonder woman, she was a prankster and enjoyed laughing and making others laugh. She always had a smile on her face and could brighten the darkest days. Maria

would always have a joke or funny story to tell whenever we saw her and I loved her positive fun-loving attitude. She had so much life left to live.

As a 5 year old I could not pronounce the name Maria correctly and so I used to call her Aunt May. This mystical Maya lived up to her name and will always be remembered for her positive attitude, compassion, generosity and love for life.

She was always a winner at academics and extracurricular activities. It was difficult to find a suitable partner who would match her personality.

She said no to many and finally when U. Melvyn came on the scene there were sparks. We would call this made for each other pair in India - Jodi No. 1. Both became high achievers and had a great life. Maria said to Melvyn 'You can do what I cannot do' and Melvyn said to Maria 'You can do what I cannot do. Together we can do great things' and that is how they blended splendidly.

U. Melvyn always jokes with my mother saying 'Priya you lied to me when I met Maria that she was a great cook' whereas the bride entered America and started burning water on the fire. Her father's home that she came from had marvelous cooks so Maria hardly went to the kitchen after her hospital work. But Maria did not let down her sister. In a few months she learnt all the Mangalorean and Western culinary delights and surprised everyone. I asked my mother why she told Uncle that Aunt was a good cook and that he would die for her soufflés. My mother said those days, in order to catch a bridegroom in India, the girls needed to have some domestic talents. So she laughingly said that her marketing gimmick helped in supporting the sister that she never let her down. All this had a happy ending as U. Melvyn soon lost his trim waist line with his wife's cooking.

Boston was declared second home to her entire family. She would be at work, yet when we visited her she did not deny us anything. Her hospitality and warmth of heart used to move us to tears. Uncle Melvyn was more than a match to my Aunt. He has an unique talent of pouring his attention to his guest to such an extent that teetotalers visiting their home were converted to be good wine drinkers. God forbid if you extended your holiday in their home, you would return to India looking like a pregnant oversized little ball who needs gym workouts at once to get back to shape. Andrea automatically got all the talents of the parents.

Maria went through her illness with the same spirit of her life. She never sulked, was always smiling and showed tremendous grace under fire.

If we have to select the husband of the year hands down U. Melvyn will win this Grammy award. The best gift that Maria got from the Lord

was her husband who personally looked after his wife with immense love, grace and patience. We want to let you know Uncle how much our family is touched and moved at the care you extended to your wife along with much love. The Lord will bless you always and keep you safe and happy. We, the members of Marias family, want to tell you that we see in you, our Aunt who was so happy in her last days. You are welcome to ask us anything and would like return the love you showed our Maria. You are a marvellous man. God bless you.

Andrea, your mother loved you immensely. When you were out of Boston, she used to wait for your calls with so much love and always wanted you to be happy and enjoy whatever you were doing. In death, she will be besides you guiding you and watching you like an angel. We are sure you will not disappoint her.

It is time to say good bye to our beloved Maria. We love you Aunt and you will always have a special place in our hearts. Pray for all of us and help us all to go through life's journey as well as we can.

U. Melvyn and Andréa, on behalf of my Aunt Maria, I would like to translate her thoughts to you. This is what she wants to say to you now before she says goodbye.

I am the soft star that shines at night.

Do not stand at my grave and cry

I am not there.

I did not die. I am besides you invisible but there.

Each time you feel a gentle breeze,

It's my hand caressing your face.

Each time the wind blows,

It carries my voice whispering your name.

When the wind blows your hair ever so slightly,

Think of it as me pushing a few stray hairs back in place.

When you feel a few raindrops fall on your face,

It's me placing soft kisses.

At night look up in the sky and see the stars shining so brightly.

I'm one of those stars and I'm winking at you and smiling with delight For never forget you are both the apples of my eye.

May I request all of you to stand up and give a standing ovation to this beautiful lady called Dr Maria Rasquinha Menezes and tell her for the last time how much we love her and remember her always.

*(Sponsored)*

## NEWS & NOTES

### **BISHOP OF MANGALORE INAUGURATES 'MARIAKRIPA' HOUSING PROJECT FOR THE HOMELESS**



On 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2014, Bishop Aloysius Paul D'Souza of Mangalore, inaugurated the 24-House Mariakripa Housing Complex at Maria-Ashram Parish, Talapady in Kasargod district on the outskirts of Mangalore. The

Housing project is part of the Diocesan Project in honor of the 125 years of the formation of Mangalore Diocese. A total of 161 Homes for Homeless have been constructed in different parishes as part of this project. Some of the Homes were sponsored by Different Catholic Organizations.

**The Catholic Association of South Kanara(CASK) and the Sylvester Frank Foundation were the sponsors of a Home each, among the 24 Homes at Talapady inaugurated on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2014. This complex was built by Mr Navin Cardoza of Marian Constructions in a record time of 8 months on a 'At Cost only' basis. Mr Cardoza was duly thanked and honored by the Bishop.**



Each Home consists of a Sitting-cum Dining Room, one bedroom, a kitchen and toilet. CASK is proud to have sponsored a home as part of the CASK Centenary Celebration through a contribution of Rs.3.5 lakhs.

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## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ‘HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY’



An International Conference on the Theme ‘Higher Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – Opportunities & Challenges’ was organized by the departments of Social Work and Psychology of St Joseph’s College-Bangalore, in collaboration with the College of Education and Public

Service, Saint Louis University, USA, on 11-12 December 2014 at St Joseph’s College, Bangalore.

Professor Dr M G Krishnan, the Vice-chancellor of Karnataka State Open University was the Chief Guest and Key-note speaker. The other speakers included Fr Antony Joseph UG-Vice President, Bangalore Jesuit Education Society, Dr Fr Praveen Martis-Principal, St Joseph’s College, Dr Amrita Chaturvedi, Assistant Professor-Saint Louis University, Professor Kiran Jeevan-HOD, Department of social work, St Joseph’s College and Sr Dr Judy Lewis-HOD, Department of psychology-St Joseph’s College.

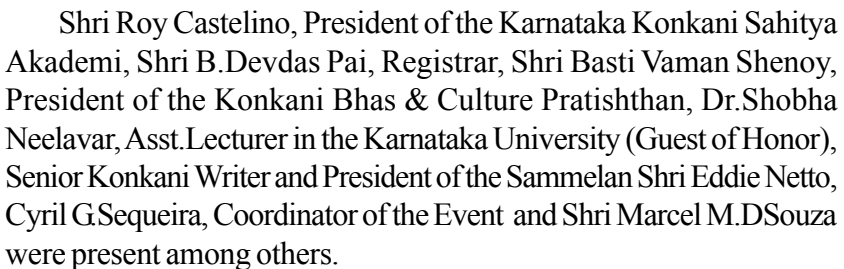
In his key-note address, Professor M G Krishnan referred to Winners of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize - Malala Yousafzai and Kailash Satyarthi, and urged the students to take their example for striving towards achieving equal access to education to all children. “Many of the top executives in large multi-national companies are Indians including some women, but the sad part is that most of the illiterates and poorest are also from India. The challenge before all of you is to help eradicate illiteracy,” he said.

Various paper and poster presentations were presented from across the world during the conference. The two day conference ended with the inspiring and thought provoking valedictory address of Fr Dr Ambrose Pinto. Sr Dr Judy Lewis thanked all the visionaries, dreamers, participants and all those who contributed for the success of the conference.

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Edwin JF DSouza's magnum opus, 994+xiv pages, 'Unnya Bhavadthache" (People of Little Faith) in Konkani (Kannada Script) published by the Karnataka Konkani Sahitya Akademi was released during the Konkani Sahitya Sammelan-2014 on 20 December 2014 by Kannada Litterateur, Nrupatunga Awardee, Kumbara Veerabhadrappa.



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## SYLVESTER FRANK FOUNDATION CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS WITH INMATES OF VARIOUS CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS

The Sylvester Frank Foundation organized a christmas celebration on December 28, 2014 for inmates of the following five institutions:



1. Mother Teresa Home
2. Preethi Nidhi Sadan
3. De Mercede Orphanage
4. Jeevadhan
5. Prashanth Nivas

A total of 450 inmates gathered at Prashanth Nivas, Jeppu, Managlore for a meaningful celebration presided over by His Lordship Bishop Aloysius Paul D'Souza.

The Bishop had the unique privilege of sharing the dais with representatives of the above five institutions and lit the lamp jointly with



them. This was followed by a cultural programme and a shared lunch. The Bishop after the cultural programme mingled with the children and other inmates of these shelters and also joined them in the luncheon that followed. In addition to the 450 inmates present in the

hall, another 250 persons were also provided with lunch at their respective shelters.

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## **Obituaries - December 2014/January 2015**

**CASK offers its sincere condolences to the families of the following members of our community, who passed away recently:**

1. Lambert D'Souza (47), Kuwait/Kulshekar, wife of Janet, father of Shanan & Siona, on December 2, 2014.
2. Albert Mascarenhas (89), Kulshekar, husband of late Justhin Mascarenhas, father of Louis, Flavey, Lidwin, Jacintha, Lancy, Clifford, Gretta & Ramcy, on December 3, 2014.
3. Merlyn Philomena Pereira (77), Bendur, wife of Henry Alexander, mother of Loy, Oniel, Bruno, Aaron, Kenneth, on December 5, 2014.
4. John Edmond Veigas (76), Bendur, husband of Stella Veigas, father of Ronald/Anitha, Reema, Laveena & Diana, on December 6, 2014.
5. Pascal Lobo (82), Bondel, husband of Lilly Lobo, father of Sr. Emilia Lobo, Thresa/Richard, Marcel/Violet, late Simon/Jennifer, Veena/Felix, on December 8, 2014.
6. Rosline Jasmine D'Costa (23), Jeppu, daughter of Reginald & Shalini D'Costa, sister of Royston D'Costa, on December 9, 2014.
7. Hazel Violet Fernandes (80), Bejai, wife of late Frank Antony Fernandes, mother of late Reginald/Angeline, Capt. Edrich/Cheryl, late Desmond/Lenny and Adrian/Judith, on December 9, 2014.
8. Pauline Lasrado (82), Valencia, (originally from Puttur) wife of late Inthru Lasrado, mother of Felix/Agnes, Sabina/Thomas, Mary/Vincent, Maurice/Molly, Fr. Charles (SJ), Lucy Veera/Praveen, on December 10, 2014.
9. Hilda D'Lima (79), Milagres, mother of Irene, Mable, Cyril, Richard, Vincy & Joyce, on December 13, 2014.
10. Ruben Saldanha (49), Milagres, husband of Sandra, father of Dominic, son of Norman & Therese Saldanha, brother of Mariola/Hugh Brito, Aroon, Iona/Aneel D'Souza, on December 14, 2014.
11. Novel Lasrado (73), Derebail, husband of Carmine Lasrado, father of Naina/Rony Moras, Neil/Preema, Nirmala/Anil, Nisha/Sandesh, on December 15, 2014.
12. Maria Irene Serrao (70), Urwa/Borivali (native of Urwa), wife of Marcel Serrao, mother of Vanessa & Nolan, on December 15, 2014.
13. Juliet M Pinto (85), Bendur, wife of late Bertie Pinto, mother of Meena/late Don Nazareth, late Dr Patrick, late Cyril (Chinna)/Marguirete, June/Joey Pais, Joe/Manira, Anand, Luke and Aviva/Marvin Rodrigues, on December 16, 2014.

14. Dr Maria Menezes, (63), Milagres/Boston (USA), wife of Melvyn Menezes, mother of Andrea, sister of Primus, Titus, Linus, Vitus & Cletus Rasquinha & Priya Mascarenhas, on December 16, 2014.
15. Lucy Sequeira (85), Urwa, wife of late Lawrence Sequeira, mother of Cynthia/late Johnny, Sylvia/Vincent, Sybil/Loy, Cytric/Shanthi, Cedric/Jennifer, on December 16, 2014.
16. Fredrick Basil Pinto (84), Kulshekar, husband of Dorathy Pinto, father of Richard/Savitha, Joshila/Onil, on December 16, 2014.
17. Cyril Pais (65), Bajpe, husband of Nancy Pais, father of Ashok/ Pramila, Shoba/Maxim, Nishanth, on December 21, 2014.
18. Merlyn Anne D'Souza (93), Mumbai, daughter of late Dr. Frank Joseph Saldanha, wife of late Melville D'Souza, mother of Noel/ Jennifer, Conrad, Roy/Mary and Michael, on December 23, 2014.
19. Valerian D'Souza (54), Karkal, husband of Winnie, father of Valisha, Elroy, brother of Fr Vincent D'Souza (Bela Church), on December 25, 2014.
20. Monica B. Lobo (84), Bejai, wife of late Cyril Lobo, mother of Clarissa/Arthur, Loyola/Joyce & Lydia/Ronald, on December 25, 2014.
21. Casmir Anthony D'Silva (88), Mumbai/Karkala, husband of Jessie, father of Lydia & Alwyn Tauro, Clifford & Grace D'Silva, Veena & Robert D'Mello, Meena & Nelson Passanha, on December 27, 2014.
22. Michael V. D'Souza (86), Valencia, father of late Alwyn R. D'Souza/ Gracy, Enid/Dolphy D'Sa, Cynthia/Joseph Lobo, Sr Leera Maria BS, Prakash/Veena D'Souza, Freeda/Theodore D'Souza, Naveen/ Eliza D'Souza, Aldrin/Sunitha D'Souza & Laveena/Milton Ferrao, on December 28, 2014.
23. Norbert Coelho (69) Bejai, husband of Louisa coelho, father of Lavita/Rocky, Lenita/Maxim, Canute, Lolita /Daniel on December 30, 2014.
24. Irene Pinto, Bejai, sister of late Henry/Mabel Pinto, Dorothy/Albert Sequeira, on December 31, 2014.
25. Thomas Mendonca (90), Kulshekar, husband of late Carmine Mendonca, father of Sevrine/late Joseph, Celestine/Maurice, Urbaan, Daniel/Gretta, Basil/Hilda, Peter & Gretta/Jerome, on December 31, 2014.
26. Valerian Miranda (65), Bondel, husband of Felciana Miranda father of Fiona / Roshan & Desmond Vijay, on January 2, 2015.
27. Robert C D'Souza (79), Milagres, husband of Rita D'Souza, father of Shaila/Vitus Saldanha & Manoj/Prabha D'Souza, on January 2, 2015.