

CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH KANARA Founded in 1914

(Regn. No. MNG/130/2021-2023)

CATHOLIC
ASSOCIATION OF
South
Kanara
Dia Mall Ord Flags

Pio Mall, 3rd Floor, Jail Road, Bejai, Mangalore - 575 004 Ph: 2491733, 4271733

OFFICE BEARERS

President

Capt Vincent C. Pais vincent.pais@gmail.com 9343569302

Vice Presidents
Patricia F. Lobo
Mario Saldanha

Secretary
Dr Anand Pereira

Joint Secretary
Gulobi Fernandes

Treasurer
Norbert Shenoy

GOVERNING COUNCIL MEMBERS

Richard Rodrigues,
Nayana Fernandes, Joan Lobo,
Dr Antony Mathias, June Pais
Sharlet Pinto, Louis Pinto,
Archibald Menezes
Jeevan Saldanha, Ratna Pinto,
Paul Mascarenhas
Ullhas Rasquina, Dr Derek Lobo
Olivia Pereira, Suresh Mathias
Dr Libert Anil Gomes

Editor

Patricia Lobo, 9986268404 derpatlobo@hotmail.com

Editorial Team
Joan Lobo, Dr Anand Pereira

Email

caskmangalore@yahoo.com caskmangaluru@gmail.com

Website

www.caskmangalore.org

INSIDE....

APRIL 2022

PAGI

1.	Editorial	4
2.	President Speaks	6
3.	A letter from a mother to her son	8
4.	Old rugged cross	10
5.	Be a rainbow!	12
6.	Cultivation of 'Jasmine' flowers	15
7.	CASK - International Women's Day	16
8.	CASK TEP at Mount Carmel Central School	18
9.	Here, take my baby	20
10.	Oinkers - Adverstisment	25
11.	CASK TEP at Mount Carmel School-Photos	26
12.	CASK - International Women's Day-Photos	28
13.	Pope Francis' visit to Malta	29
14.	Pope Francis - synod must hear 'excluded' voices.	30
15.	Forgive and Forget	37
16.	Points to Ponder, April 2022	40
17.	News and Notes	44
18.	Obituaries	49

"Mangalore" Published by Patricia F. Lobo for and on behalf of The Catholic Association of South Kanara from 3rd Floor, Pio Mall, Jail Road, Bejai, Mangalore - 575 004 and Printed by Fr. Maxim D'Silva at Assisi Press, Assisi Complex, Jail Road, Bejai, Mangalore - 575 004 Editor: Patricia F. Lobo

RNI No - 3699/57; Regn. No. MNG/130/2021-2023; Posted at Mangalore RMS on 11-04-2022



EDITORIAL

So much is happening around us nowadays – an ongoing war, destruction, Covid still lurking around, examinations of our beloved children all over and more.

I was reading in the 'Inspirational Quote' magazine that we have been subscribing to for the

past many years about the "The PHOENIX, A MYTHICAL BIRD WHICH DIES in a self-created fire and rises again from the ashes is a powerful symbol of regeneration". I marveled at its ability to resurrect. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of our Christian faith. This event, which occurred almost two thousand years ago, is the best attested fact in human history and experience. The resurrection of Christ was predicted in the old testament and by Christ himself. During the forty days following his resurrection, Jesus showed himself to be alive from the dead by "many infallible proofs." He appeared at various times and places to many people who told others what they had seen.

On our cover we have the title "The need for Regeneration" We humans are a composite body of mind, heart and soul and we have a tremendous capacity to regenerate. But do we have the time to listen, open up, observe, read, reflect, appreciate and love.

7th April is observed as World Health Day - In the midst of a pandemic, a polluted planet, increasing diseases like cancer, asthma, heart disease, on World Health Day 2022, WHO will focus global attention on urgent actions needed to **keep humans and the planet healthy** and foster a movement to **create societies focused on well-being**.

WHO estimates that more than 13 million deaths around the world each year are due to avoidable environmental causes. This includes the climate crisis which is the single biggest health threat facing humanity. The climate crisis is also a health crisis. We need to do everything to tackle the twin crisis of climate and health.

World Autistic day is on April 2nd. Let us reflect on the article on Pages 8-10 titled "A letter from a Mother to her Son". I found yet another note from a mother to her Autism child:

My Dear sweet child - I hope you know that I am doing the very best that I can. There are the days that I don't understand what you need. Some days, my patience wears me thin. Many days, my heart breaks watching you struggle, But, there is not a single day that goes by, that I am not the proudest parent ever. You are my life, my purpose and the love I feel for you is never ending. Autism can be hard, loving you is easy.

Children with problems like autism, dyslexia and other cognitive disorders are supposed to attend normal schools but our teachers are not yet geared or trained to cater to their special needs. This requires to be addressed with urgency so that these children are cared for with empathy and understanding in order to feel more secure and confident. I hope the situation will improve with NEP 2020.

Until next time.....Patsy Lobo



THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS...

The month of April is here and for a change, free of the pandemic! Also, after a span of 2 years, this is the first Holy week and Easter where there is no threat of the Coronavirus and the faithful can attend holy week services without fear. In preparation for Easter, Lenten retreats are being

conducted in many parishes. I take this opportunity to wish all our members a Happy & Holy Easter. May the joy of the risen Lord fill your hearts and homes throughout the year.

One month into the Ukraine-Russia war, Pope Francis consecrated Ukraine and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Miraculously, there seems to be a glimmer of hope and peace talks between the two warring parties seem to be making progress. Mother Mary has once again come to the rescue of the faithful. She is always there to intercede on our behalf if we seek her help. Daily recitation of the Rosary is a most powerful weapon against any adversity.

On the Indian front there is the worrying development of the hijab controversy. I remember as kids, we did not have uniforms. Boys and girls came dressed in whatever clothes they had as long as they were modest and clean. We cherished our carefree days and freedom. Our children should be protected from the ugly politics, where a few fanatics want to disturb the peace of our country. For the last 2 years, the pandemic had disrupted the school routine and now this hijab controversy has added to their woes. In the end, it is the innocent students who suffer.

Climate change has definitely made its presence felt during the month of March. There is no respite from the soaring temperatures. The water table is receding in many parts of the city. We have two more months to go before the active monsoons set in.

At CASK, we have been busy through the month of March; we conducted two Teacher Enrichment programs and one Personality development program. Hats off to our dedicated team, who carry out the good work in this sweltering heat. We also celebrated International Women's Day at Milagres Parish with over 100 women and a dozen

men participating.

In the month of April, we invite applications for scholarships. We intend continuing with our scholarships and COVID-related scholarships which we started last year. We reach out to all communities by offering scholarships to most deserving students.

We have 3 major donations to the CASK Trust - Rs.10 Lakhs from Dr Allan Pinto; Rs. 2 Lakhs from Mrs Ramola Pereira, Dr Anand & Dr Geeta Pereira; Rs. 1 Lakh from Mrs May D'Sa. We are very grateful to them for their generous support.

5th of April is National Maritime day, 7th of April is World Health day (WHD) 15th is Good Friday, and 17th is Easter. Schools have closed for summer holidays and are supposed to reopen around the third week of May. Once again, on behalf of CASK, I wish all our members a very happy Easter. May the risen Lord bless and keep us in good health.

God Blessyou all......Capt VincentPais

A LETTER FROM A MOTHER TO HER SON (Dated 2nd April 2020)

World Autism Awareness Day

Zainab Kizilbash-parent, writer, economist and co-founder of Our Small Wonders

Dear son - Today, 2nd April, 2020 I want to say a big thank you to you for being you.

When you were growing up, the world was judging you for all that you couldn't do. And to be honest, we got worried about those things too. It seemed so important that we teach you how to tie your shoe laces; or fold your clothes; or learn how to sit still in classrooms; even teach you how to lie, so you didn't say when you didn't like someone's cooking or the present they gave you. We got books and videos and made up project plans to mark your progress. We took you to therapists and made you work on those exercises every day and every night. We celebrated so proudly when you could do something that we could mark off our lists.

And all that time you were watching us and teaching us much more important things about life and living.

You were teaching us about empathy

I still remember when we were going through your autism diagnosis. It was a hot, sticky, summer day. We were in an airless room. I was sitting in front of two people, I think it was a paediatrician appointment or a therapist one and they were going through all the things that you would never be able to do. I remember they were talking about you not being able to understand other people's emotions. The words coming out of their mouths were lassoing across my airways. They were completely oblivious to my emotions. You weren't. You stopped playing with the trains on the floor and put your hand on my knee. You were telling me it was going to be ok. And you were right. I am not a doctor or a professional but I do not agree that people with autism don't have empathy. I think you and others have more of it than anyone else (and maybe that's why you need to shut down sometimes).

You were teaching us about kindness

At the start of this journey, you, papa and I were pretty alone (the magic that is your sister came later). I think I was on my way to becoming very bitter about that but you taught me not to judge people too soon. There were some people in my life that left when you came along. That was for the better anyway – you are a really good test of the worth of people. But there were many many other friends and family who were silent cheerleaders in the beginning, willing us with their love but didn't understand enough of our journey to know how to support us. But along the way, we learnt how to put our arms around them and take them along. And then because of you, I have found and connected with so many more beautiful people. Some of the best of whom helped me set up 'Our Small Wonders' a year ago to create more autism awareness and acceptance in our communities. Some who I have come to know and celebrate because of Our Small Wonders since.

You were teaching me about respecting diversity

You have made me a better leader by understanding that people have, what you call different "default natural settings". Some need to work hard at some things than others. And what you need are environments that allow people to operate on their own settings and bring out their real authentic selves in what they do. And its then that you really get the diversity in thought and perspective that is so important for us all to progress.

You were teaching me the power of unconditional love

You and I both know our story could have been different. You and I both know that you could have decided that you didnt want to learn how to fit into this world that hasn't been designed for you; a world that places so much attention on the things that are really not important. But you didn't. And I know that it is only because of the power of love.

On this World Autism Awareness day, I want to thank you and everyone like you for teaching us empathy, kindness, diversity, love. The world today needs it more than ever.

Thank you for teaching us to be better, braver, kinder versions of ourselves. We promise we will try... For you, and because of you.

BE RAINBOW!

Fr. Cedric Prakash S.J.

St Xavier's School Loyola Hall, Ahmedabad had its Annual Day programme this evening! Actually, it was one of a series of Annual Days; today it was the turn of the Junior KG, Senior KG, Stds. I and II. The littlest ones in the school, all between the ages of four to seven years. Being an event of a community ministry and on the campus itself, I planned to be at the programme for a short while and return. That was not to be! I stayed right through the more than two hours programme and enjoyed every moment of it! I am now back in my room, penning down some of my thoughts that flowed all through the programme and continue to do so!

The theme of the Annual Day programme was 'Be a Rainbow'. The tiny tots performed about a dozen different programmes: mainly dance and action songs! After months of closure due to the pandemic, physical schooling began for them, less than a month ago. Putting up any programme, in such a short time-span, would have been a herculean task for anyone. Much more when one has to deal with those who are so very small. The teachers and trainers and others concerned would surely have put in their heart and soul to get the children to perform.

They did perform: with gay abandonment! In simplicity and in spontaneity! Some did not stand in the place which was assigned to them; some of them were desperately trying to locate their parents in the pavilion and to wave to them; the actions of some just did not synchronise with the rest — but all this did NOT matter! With the innocence which childhood is all about — they were there on stage to be themselves, to enjoy. They did so with gusto and to the vociferous delight of the huge crowd which was present to witness a child-centred performance!

Be a Rainbow that celebrates diversity: The programme was also about that! The children undoubtedly belonged to different faiths and cultures; sizes and capacities. Nothing mattered! They were all there! Giving of their best! A reflection of what India is all about! The beauty in diversity! The wealth it should mean to all of us! The courage to adapt to and to learn from another!

Be a Rainbow that symbolises unity: that's what they were obviously celebrating! Unity in diversity! That togetherness! A synergy which Mahatma Gandhi forged on 12 March 1930 from the banks of the River Sabarmati in Ahmedabad to Dandi in South Gujarat! A salt satyagraha!

Be a Rainbow that vibrates colours: it was indeed a festival of colour! An early celebration of Holi- which is just a week away. The children were dolled up in a colourful array of costumes. They wore them with the pride and exuberance of someone on a cat-walk! They were fully conscious of the graceful colours they brought to the occasion. They were not shy: they were the rainbow!

Be a Rainbow that communicates love: there was absolutely nothing that kept them away from 'being friendly' all through the evening. It would certainly have been exhausting for the little ones. Their parents had to bring them to the school, much before the actual start of the programme! But nothing mattered as they daintily held the hands of each other! It was far more than a 'dil maange more' scene. It was a love that transcended exclusiveness, pettiness and bigotness!

Be a Rainbow that exudes joy: it was sheer joy as they danced (and sang) the disco and the bhangra, the raas and the garba and much more! There was the traditional music and modern off-beat ones – even 'waka, waka'! They demonstrated the impact of digital technology on their lives and exhibited their care for Mother Earth. The atmosphere was pregnant with joy!

Be a Rainbow that radiates light: it has been scientifically proved that rainbows appear after dark and heavy clouds. In more ways than one, rainbows dispel the darkness. After days of being marooned, the ark is opened to the welcome light of the rainbow. The children this evening was certainly rainbows who radiated light. A light so that we, who were watching them could see!

Be a Rainbow that is full of hope: that is exactly what a rainbow is all about! A hope for the future! The promise for a better tomorrow! The staff and the children will ensure that their performance next time will be even better! The children today gave to all a very strong message: that they want unity to vanquish divisiveness, love to negate hate, diversity to kayo majoritarianism, colour to outdo uniformity and truth to triumph over untruth. This is their rainbow of hope!

Jesuit Fr Xavier Amalraj, the Principal of the School, in his address said, "Through such a theme (Be a Rainbow) we wish to convey a message of hope and joy; of peace and harmony; this message radiates so beautifully from our little ones who through their innocence have so much to teach all of us. Their spontaneity, their inclusiveness, their simplicity, their joys, their creativity all contribute to the colourful diversity that make up a rainbow. This rainbow is about our children: a sign of hope, of the radiance in their lives, of the happiness they give all of us. The rainbow is about the diversity which characterizes our beloved motherland reflected so much in St Xavier's School Loyola Hall all these years."

The great American civil rights leader and poet Maya Angelou says, "to be the rainbow in someone's cloud means to cultivate loving kindness as a daily practice in your life. It means tuning in to your heart, practicing empathy and using that empathy to connect to the people around you in a meaningful way. We all have the opportunity to be someone's rainbow".

How very true! We need to learn from her wisdom! All through the programme I could not help humming that song by the famous Swedish duo Nina and Frederik 'Counting colours in a rainbow.' It was quite a hit tune, way back when I was a little child. The song goes,

Counting colours in a rainbow
When the sun has made the rain go
In all those colours I see above me
I count the blessings of someone who loves me
Counting colours in a rainbow
Every time the clouds of grey go
A thrill it gives me to know that with me
There will be millions who can share my rainbow
When our world is dark with stormy weather
Should we fear and tremble? Never, never
Someone who takes care of us forever
Paints a lovely miracle on high

I am still humming that song as I lay my weary self to sleep. I feel all the more challenged now to 'be a rainbow'!

CASK ORGANIZES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY FOR MILAGRES CHURCH PARISHIONERS

Address - Dr Derek Lobo

I am happy that you are celebrating International Women's Day on March 8, 2022 at the Parish level in a very meaningful and befitting way. Kudos to Fr Bonaventure Nazareth and Team and Catholic Association of South Kanara (CASK) for all the joint efforts. While celebrating this important day, we generally exclude the **MEN**. I am happy to see that this year, the men were also invited and there are in this audience more than twelve men! Aspecial welcome to them!!

International Women's Day is to express women's solidarity and to promote women's advancement, women's empowerment, gender equality etc in all walks and all aspects of life. The theme for this year is "Break the Bias". This cannot be achieved without the active support, cooperation, involvement and a change of attitude by MEN. Solidarity for Women's empowerment has therefore to come from Men as much as from women.

Some years ago, the Diocesan Commission for Women organized a series of workshops to provide orientation to the clergy and laymen of Mangalore Diocese on the problems and needs of women and to discuss ways of promoting a greater role for women in the Church. I had the privilege of being the main speaker at two of these workshops. Sadly, I found that the participation of the clergy at these workshops was limited and the participation of a few Men who attended was lukewarm. It only goes to prove that there is much to be done in trying to bring about a 'Change in Attitudes' of Men.

The Bible in Galatians – chapter-3, verse-28 says "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all ONE in Jesus Christ"; Are Men and Women really ONE, are they equal in their roles, do they have equality in terms of status and dignity, in terms of opportunities, choice of options, earning capacity, decision-making, governance? The answer to all of those questions is NO. There is much work for all of you women!

Even at the parish level, I wonder whether we know all the women who are victims of domestic violence, women who suffer due to the alcohol problem of their husband, women who are in serious financial trouble because the husband has wrongly invested or gambled or women who are lonely, depressed etc and if we know, are we helping them as ONE parish family? This is for you to answer and act.

Anyway, Today is a day to inspire Women; A day to remember and remind ourselves about the negatives that women still face such as violence, discrimination, abuses, harassment and atrocities and a celebration of the positives that have occurred over the years in the advancement and empowerment of women. Let us work towards Elimination of the NEGATIVES and further improvement and strengthening of the POSITIVES.

"When at some future date, the High Court of history sits in judgment of each of us, our success or failure in whatever office we hold, will be measured by our answers to 4 Questions: 1. Were we truly men or women of courage? 2. Were we truly men or women of integrity? 3. Were we truly men or women of judgment? 4. Were we truly men or women of commitment and dedication?

I hope the answers from all of you will be a resounding YES.

In conclusion.....Let us focus today's vision towards a society built by the strength of its women – young and old; And honour their role in peace & security; Let us undertake ardous searches to clear any Obstacles to promote Women's Rights; And erect bridges rather than walls, to achieve tomorrow's mission on aesthetic sights.

Friends, the fight for Women's Rights and Gender Equality continues; To promote energy & effervescence – throughout the world where thoughts will swell. Today, let us offer our unstinted support to create the culture of peace and encourage the MEN to harness the Power of Women that we cannot afford to suppress.

Happy Women's Day to all Women And All Men..... Photographs on page 28.

HERE, TAKE MYBABY

Dr Jeanette Pinto-Mumbai/Canada

I recently read an extraordinary story of a new fertility trend and felt convinced to share it to create awareness. It will help and enlighten married couples to discern and make decisions if they are infertile. Parents are giving away their extra frozen embryos to childless families! One wonders why? I have edited and condensed the story for clarity.

This true story, "Here, Take my baby" is about the love between two couples in Canada, strangers on opposite sides of the country, spiraling for years through the same fear: 'that we may never have children in our family to love and now we're surrounded by more family than we had ever imagined.'

Joanna Long relates how she and her husband Tyler had everything going for a good happy married life; but keen on having children, their great disappointment was their infertility. Together, they had been through 5 years of scary diagnoses, surgeries, hospital stays, drugs and finally in-vitro fertilization (IVF). Their arduous journey started until one fine day, the fertility doctor extracted eggs from Joanna's body, and fertilized by her husband's sperm the doctor announced he had 7 healthy embryos ready to be transferred into Joanna's body to create their family.

Now at the crowded table at Christmas in 2012, Joanna and Tyler announced that they were finally pregnant. Their anguish seemed at an end. Nine months later their first son was born. They had a second son soon after, an unexpected natural conception, which is "a surprisingly common occurrence after IVF," their doctor told them. Now finally, she thought their fertility journey could stop. Their family was complete, and they also defined themselves as exhausted parents. The children were born so close to each other that they were like twins. Just as she felt that their struggle was over, and they were moving on in life Joanna started waking up to a crazy nightmare. Recalling the remaining frozen embryos she thought, "my children were locked in a freezer." The nightmare persisted. Being a psychiatrist herself, she had provided psychotherapy for people who had experienced extreme traumatic events, including murder and torture. One day her own

therapist reminded her to pay the annual fee to keep the embryos frozen, "Your family is in the freezer," she reminded her.

Every year a form arrived in the mail. "Would we like to keep storing the frozen embryos at the clinic, dispose them or donate them to science?" Joanna and Tyler made the decision of making no decision: to keep freezing. The choice of not choosing is common, leaving embryos in 'indefinite cryopreservation.' There are no records of the number of frozen embryos currently being stored in fertility clinics in Canada, a rough estimate is around a million. Fertility clinics are left holding the legal and ethical nightmare of storing embryos even after their patients discontinue contact.

One possible solution to a surplus of embryos is donating them to another individual or couple who can't conceive on their own. But uptake for embryo donation is still relatively slow. The process brings controversy as it's been tied to religious and cultural debates around interfering with nature or God's will and what constitutes human life. Even within Pro-life religious groups embryo donation can be seen as moral (saving an embryo) or immoral (playing God). Joanna had been offered various options of anonymous donations, but she turned them off, wondering if her genetic offspring would be one whom she would see in the grocery store someday, or if one of her children later would marry one of their genetic siblings.

Finally, her nightmare stopped when she learnt of a private adoption agency called - **Beginnings Family Services (BFS)** which was to offer open embryo donations, where donor and recipient families communicate openly rather than staying anonymous. This seemed a plausible solution, and so they immediately applied to BFS, as embryo donors. Prospective recipients were to learn of their sociocultural background, medical history, ages and faiths, Also, participation in sports, the arts, their favourite colours, songs, movies, all to offer a taste of their temperaments, values, lifestyles and personalities. As embryo donors and recipients are deciding to enter a lifelong relationship together, choosing the right family can feel as important as choosing the right spouse.

Howlett Nero from the organization met with them to evaluate their appropriateness for the program, ensure that prospective donors are emotionally prepared to accept embryos of another family. The question was, "who will end up raising a child that could have been theirs." Openness is widely accepted as a gold standard for adoption and is likewise becoming acceptable for embryo donation. However, today adults have a right to their conception history and genetic information. Says Sonja Goedeke, a psychologist at the Auckland University of Technology, researching embryo donation, "Secrecy and anonymity create a whole lot of issues (for children) around the burden of daily secrets, feeling betrayed by their parents and not having access to all the information about their identity." But disclosure isn't always easy.

A psychology researcher at England's University at Warwick, Fiona MacCallum's 2012 study showed that embryo donation parents were far more reluctant than adoptive parents to tell their children about their genetic origins. The question is, "Can young children understand the mechanics of conception?"

Lisa and Norbert were a young couple in Montreal and they desired to start a family. When they didn't get pregnant on their own after many cycles, they were referred to a fertility clinic. They both underwent invasive fertility procedures but nothing happened. The doctor happened to inform them of this new approach and they wondered!! Norbert said, "Our hope had been crushed like 12 or 15 times in the past." But then they decided to try it. "Why not take one more step?"

They applied to BFS, and before long the magic happened. Joanna and Tyler met Lisa and Norbert over Skype, with Howlett Nero facilitating. Then they began chatting over many things, sharing pictures, recipes, hobbies, values, culture, community and the like. Soon Lisa says, "We found our family soul mates, we complete each other in a way that is beyond a regular love story: it has love and family."

Now, BFS shares with donors the recipients home study assessment preparing the couple for this event, looking into the social, psychological, and financial in addition to criminal and child welfare checks. Both donors and recipients need to agree on the match, and either may decline potential pairings. The narrative of donors as, 'kind people who gave us a gift', only tells one side of the story and can create unhelpful expectations of recipients feeling indebted. Its actually a **mutual exchange**. Lisa and Norbert were also helping in the process.

Lisa went into labour just before Christmas. She and Norbert Skyped Joanna and Tyler from the delivery room. Joanna recalls how her anxiety grew with a long silence, and how she realized the gravity of her love for Lisa, Norbert and their baby, and also how separate they were from us. This was their journey now. Soon after baby Emma was born, they received a photo of the healthy baby in her mother's arms. Gradually many of their friends, seeing the pictures expressed fears about going through this process. So much can go wrong, they warned. The number of What IF's.... that cropped up were innumerable. There are all real possibilities, one never knows.

Joanna: "Three months later my husband Tyler and I travelled 4,500 kilometres from BC. to Quebec to meet 3-month-old Emma. "Would you like to hold her Lisa asks. I dropped my suitcase and bound towards her my arms open wide. Emma's large dark eyes and ski-jump nose popped out of her blanket with the same spunk that our two sons showed at that age. Its hard not to notice all the similarities – she is my sons' full genetic sibling, after all. But unlike our children, Emma didn't grow in my body and my husband and I are not her parents. Emma is the daughter of Lisa and Norbert. When Emma's and my matching brown eyes connect, my body erupts in that kind of love parents feel when we realize our heart now lives outside ourselves in the most fragile and uncontrollable container of a child."

Joanna: "I do dream that our connection with Lisa and Norbert and Emma will continue over decades. We love to imagine Emma knowing she can always rely on us in a way families do. But I also see our rich relationship with each other as an unexpected bonus of giving our embryos a chance at life: its free to wax and wane over our lifetimes, as all relationships may. We really don't know how its going to turn out."

At their first Christmas Joanna gave Lisa and Norbert a framed picture of a lotus flower, a symbol that carried solace for her throughout

the struggles of her life. Underneath it she wrote, "Out of the mud blooms the most beautiful flower." In return they sent them a picture of Emma lying next to the photo which she keeps on their dresser. Their two families regularly chat, visit and exchange photos and video of their kids. Their friends gush with her and say: "How is this for you? It must be so hard."

The following April, Lisa and Norbert chatted over Skype with Joanna and Tyler now marveling not just over Emma, but over their new baby boy as well, who's also their children's full genetic sibling. "There are four of us parents, and now there are four of them," says Lisa. "We'll all be together: us having a great time, and I'm counting on them having a great time together too!"

"But its going to be up to them," says Norbert. "In the meantime, there is an outstanding question that is up to all four of us to answer: what to do with our two remaining leftover embryos?" Initially, they assumed they'd donate again to another family, but they've started to admit that their tables are very full. Its hard to imagine opening our hearts again at this intensity, finding another fit as perfect as the one we have with Lisa and Norbert, or balancing the complex dynamics of a third family of siblings to our children.

In concluding, Joanna says, "I realize I haven't even thought of the embryos in some time, and I'm at peace with letting them go. But for now, the easiest decision is to make no decision. This may seem a viable option, but I don't want others to feel the heartbreak. Its not an easy thing you can decide in a moment". So, the embryos are going to wait in the freezer a little while longer.

Having briefly presented this story I'm wondering how WE – in the world, are rightly being accused by the next generation of the environmental ruin and destruction we have irresponsibly caused to planet Earth. Now, are we also going to leave a myriad human relationship issue and psychological confusion for our children of the future?

Source: MACLEAN'S – Canada's Magazine, October 2021 -Volume 134- Number 9
