# Mangalore

#### Organ of the Catholic Association of South Kanara

Pio Mall, Third Floor, Jail Road, Bejai, Mangalore 575 004 Ph: 0824-2491733 RNI No. - 3699/57

Regn No / MNG /130/ 2021-2023

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

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ASSOCIATION OF
South
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# EDITORIAL



8<sup>th</sup> March is observed as International Women's Day. This year's theme is **'Embrace Equity'** which refers to 'Fairness and Justice' to all, to be differentiated from **'Equality'** which refers to being equal in status, rights and opportunities. Both Equity and Equality are the ultimate dream of all

women and this dream has not yet been fulfilled in most parts of the world. I believe this dream can be fulfilled only with the support and encouragement of MEN.

Unfortunately, International Women's Day is generally celebrated by women, for women without the participation of Men and this should change.

The month of March starts with 'Zero Discrimination' Day on 1<sup>st</sup> March, an important precursor to International Women's Day because women are victims of many forms of discrimination all over the world. The other major groups that face stigma and discrimination include the disabled and the mentally retarded. In India we have the popular Hindu festival of Holi which is being celebrated this year on 8<sup>th</sup> March. It is a festival of colours that is enjoyed by all Indians.

Among the interesting articles this month, is one by Fr Daniel P.Horan titled "Beyond Birds & Flames – Think of the Holy Spirit as Jazz Music" and another titled "Synodal Church, Secular Society Needed" by 'Chotebhai'.

We are pleased to report on the 'Civic Reception' accorded to Dr Ronald Colaco, renowned NRI Entrepreneur and philanthropist, on his receiving the prestigious 'Certificate of Excellence' from the World Book of Records-United Kingdom. The Civic reception was held at a glittering event on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at the Fr Muller Convention Centre-Mangalore.

We have glimpses of three Book Launches – The book titled "Vectors in the Void" authored by Ms Giselle Mehta, held in Mangalore, the book titled "Dr SK Noordeen – Architect of the Global Leprosy Elimination Programme" authored by Dr Derek Lobo, held in Delhi and third titled 'Yeklo Eksuro' translated by Hemacharya.

Until next time......Patsy Lobo



### THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS...

The Month of March is dedicated to St. Joseph, the most chaste spouse of the Mother of God and the protector of the church. Throughout the gospels, St. Joseph remained silent, but his actions spoke louder than words. He lived his life in service of Christ and Mary, in perfect conformity to the will

of God.

March is also a month known to us Catholics as a month of penance, sacrifice, alms giving and fasting. We are in the middle of the Lenten season with most of us contemplating on the passion of Jesus and his suffering, crucifixion and death. We look forward to Easter, the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

"Do things in lent, which by observing will help your fellow human beings. No matter how much time you spend fasting, sleep on the hard floor etc., if it does no good to others, you are doing nothing great." Our Pope is really very down to earth in his thinking and preaching. Whatever he preaches is easy to follow; with a little bit of sacrifice from our side.

The War over Ukraine is still continuing even after one year. The destruction and loss of human life on both sides is mounting. In this war there are no winners. All countries are losers.

International Women's day will be celebrated globally on 8<sup>th</sup> of March. Let us remember the women in our life and the sacrifices they make for the sake of the family and society. God in all his wisdom made woman as man's companion. There are still some elements in society who detest having a girl child. So many abortions take place to get rid of female fetuses. This Lenten season let us remember to pray for those innocent souls.

This past year though we have had good rains, shortage of water is predicted during the peak summer months. These things have been predicted in the scriptures. Many places of worship have been converted into museums and theatres in Europe. For us who have been born and brought up in a God-fearing conservative society, we realize how much the world has drifted away from the creator in pursuit of worldly

pleasures.

We celebrate World Wildlife Day on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, World Consumer Rights Day on 15<sup>th</sup> March, World Water Day on 22<sup>nd</sup> March and World Tuberculosis Day on 24<sup>th</sup> March.

In India our brothers and sisters will be celebrating Holi on  $8^{th}$  March and Ugadi on  $22^{nd}$  March. CASK wishes them on the occasion of these festivals.

Till next month take care......Capt Vincent Pais

## WELCOME TO NEW LIFE MEMBERS OF CASK

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- 15. Mr Robert Pinto
- 16. Mr Stany B. Mathias
- 17. Mr Arul Dsouza

### THIS WOMEN'S DAY – WILL MAN REMEMBER?

### Brian Fernandes, Director - Spearhead Group

Slug: Man emerged from Woman (Check the Spelling of Woman), and yet he tends to forget this aspect of his existence. **International Women's Day** is a time to make him remember!

This Women's day, will Man remember? That from a woman, emerged he, the Man?

Will he remember?

When his cocoon broke, and her water gushed; she experienced pain, she experienced joy, like sunshine in the rain? how could he? emerging, he felt crushed!

She never could believe, when she was suggestively told, that all of it, the joy and the pain, may be in vain. For she was not, and He? He couldn't be. Could he? No, how could he? But deep down she knew. He is Man He is Main

He is Man. He is Main.
He took his time, first in her womb,
then at her breast, then on her lap,
and never let her rest, till she was content
or he had had enough.
The Story of Abel and Cain, All over again.

But the woman, she doesn't mind, the daily grind, or his heartless mind, for she cannot, unknot the ties that bind.
Once lost in her shadow, he now has his own.

It eclipses her sun and the woman, retreats into it.

Burning.

It was no longer fun. And that's not pun.

But Woeman!

He's a Man, He wants more.

He smothers her, tramples her,

And for the finale, Destroys her core.

This woman's day, does Man remember? that from a woman, emerged he, the Man? He may not, and reminded, Is he Anger's fan? Maybe.. He is Main. He is Man!

But times are a changing. He now accepts, it's a woman's day. each day, all day. And the sunshine ray? He is even a fan.

What he did, she does, What he doesn't, are her woes that keep him on his toes.
She's equal, it's legal. But what's the Sequel?
From Man, a Woman?

\*\*\*\*

### **MOTIVATION BEYOND MONEY**

Minoo Jha

There's a motivation beyond money
It's a motivation to create
The artist stands at her easel
And contemplates the colors on her plate.

The musician holds his banjo
And lets his fingers run over the strings
The pleasure of the harmonious sounds he produces
Is beyond anything money can bring.

The writer's fingers fly on the keyboard
Words glide through her fingers one by one
Time flies and she soon has an article, a poem, or a chapter
And a feeling of satisfaction bar none.

The photographer holds up her camera

To take a pic of people, trees, flowers, birds, or the first light of morn. She looks at her handiwork

And has a sweet taste of satisfaction at the memory she has born.

The cook lovingly works on whatever he is making

Determined that it turns out first rate

He keeps tinkering with the heat, the moisture, the timing, and the ingredients

His joy - watching someone relish the food he puts on their plate.

The gardener lovingly prunes
Hoes, mixes, mulches, and plants
The sight of her plants, flowers, and trees
Never fails to make her spirits dance.

None of it has anything to do with money Money is not the be all and end all When it comes to many things Money just has no place at all.

There's a motivation beyond money
It's a motivation to create
It elevates our sense of spirit and agency
And puts us in a blissful, transcendent state.

Yes, there's a motivation beyond money

It's a motivation to create

We should do it as much as we can

Because it will keep us in a blissful, transcendent state.

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## BEYOND BIRDS & FLAMES – THINK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AS JAZZ MUSIC

Daniel P. Horan

A bird or a flame. Traditionally, these are the most common images used as metaphors for the Holy Spirit. The ornithological metaphor is usually traced back to Luke 3:22 when, at Jesus' baptism by John in the Jordan, we are told that "the holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove." The latter, more pyrotechnic metaphor is traced to Luke's New Testament sequel, the Acts of the Apostles, and its account of Pentecost. Along with a "strong driving wind," we are told that the apostles were in a locked room when "there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them" (Acts 2:3).

And with these two biblical metaphors was born a practice of depicting the Spirit in these ways within a range of art forms, from confirmation candidates making posters and banners adorned with white doves and floating flames of fire to the famous stained-glass representation of a dove behind the sanctuary in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

Despite the apparent hegemony of birds and flames, a wide range of metaphors have been used for the Holy Spirit over the Christian centuries. Since there is no doctrinal claim about how exactly the Spirit is to be depicted, Christians have broad leeway in drawing on experience and imagery to assist them in attending to, thinking about and praying to the Holy Spirit.

This range is reflected in the various metaphors used by some of Christianity's most famous saints and mystics. In her excellent study, *Holy Power, Holy Presence: Rediscovering Medieval Metaphors for the Holy Spirit*, historical theologian Elizabeth Dreyer surveys some of the medieval classics.

For example, we are reminded of St. Bernard of Clairvaux's deeply incarnate and physical metaphor of the Holy Spirit as kiss; St. Bonaventure's description of the Spirit as flowing water, as transformer of the affections and divine abundance; and St. Catherine of Siena's

image of the Spirit as mercy and waiter. This second image from Catherine is particularly moving. She envisions the Holy Trinity as "table, food and waiter," in which the Spirit is the one who serves us the Word who is our food — a great eucharistic image.

One of the gifts of Dreyer's study is that it helps open our imaginations and the ways that the Holy Spirit reveals herself to us within our various contexts. One of my favorite metaphors for the Holy Spirit is that of a musician. We find this expressed by the great mystic and composer Hildegard of Bingen. In her "Hymn to the Holy Spirit," she writes:

Praise to you......Spirit of fire!

To you who sound the timbrel and the lyre.

Your music sets our minds ablaze! The strength of our souls awaits your coming in the tent of meeting.

Additionally, in one of her letters to a Benedictine prioress, Hildegard imagines heaven as "a symphony of the Holy Spirit," further capturing the musicality of God's dynamic movement as Spirit. I love this image. As someone who is admittedly a rather mediocre musician who has played in liturgical settings as an accompanist or member of an ensemble, I have some basic appreciation for the way music functions not only as entertainment but also as prayer.

For those who know how to play an instrument and have the privilege of playing in a band, orchestra or some other group, you also know the feeling of being connected to others in ways that transcend description and that can only be experienced. This is especially true when musicians improvise together.

Yes, there are fundamental frameworks like time, tempo, meter and key that provide a landscape within which exploration and expression can take place, but in such settings there are often no strictly written scores, predetermined melodies or prescribed chords the soloist must pursue during her time improvising against and with the backdrop of the other musicians holding the foundation. Even knowing when one's turn as soloist has begun or ended is itself more often felt than explicitly planned.

One does not have to be a trained or even amateur musician to appreciate the creative power and dynamism of such music performed in groups. You don't need to know music theory or the technical details of musical performance to enjoy and be moved emotionally and spiritually. There is something profound about the depth of connection that is shared among improvising musical performers and the listening audiences that are drawn into the beauty of live music unfolding before and around them.

What bonds the musicians in that preverbal, non-planned, creative and dynamic experience of divine co-creation? How is something so original yet harmonious possible in real time?

I recall being in a jazz club in Boston with a friend about a decade ago. The performance space was small, with limited seating and proximity to the stage that reinforced the sense of musical intimacy experienced by all of us gathered there. As is often the case in jazz clubs, the trio or quartet (or in some rare cases, larger ensembles) performs a range of classic and original pieces, each of which typically includes time for improvisation.

A few pieces into the performance, during a particularly moving series of instrumental solos, I remember turning to my friend and saying: "This is what the Holy Spirit looks like!". It was an impromptu response of both appreciation and awe at what this small group of talented musicians was able to make possible. Each instrumentalist was extraordinarily gifted, and yet, the total experience of their musical collaboration exceeded the sum of their parts. It was inspired and inspiring, an experience of transcendence.

As extemporaneous as my comment was, I have come to reflect on its truth for years. Every time I have been to a jazz club, whether in Boston or Chicago or Indianapolis, that same exclamation inevitably comes to mind. What bonds the musicians in that preverbal, nonplanned, creative and dynamic experience of divine co-creation? How is something so original yet harmonious possible in real time? Indeed, it is the Holy Spirit.

When I think of the Holy Spirit, I think of that invisible connection between improvising musicians, which I have experienced first-hand over the years as a pianist and percussionist, but also experienced as an audience member witnessing the birth of an original moment of musical creation that cannot be predicted and is not individually controlled.

This is how the Spirit works. Moving unpredictably, creatively, forcefully, the Holy Spirit is indeed the "giver of life," but she is also the one who, as *Lumen Gentium* reminds us, makes possible the fact that "all the faithful, scattered though they be throughout the world, are in communion with each other."

The communion that the Spirit makes possible is often hard to wrap one's head around. Like the vagueness typically associated with the Holy Spirit that has resulted in such limited (and limiting) metaphors like birds and fire, that we are all united to one another and Christ through baptism and the Spirit is difficult to conceptualize. That is, unless you consider the way jazz musicians are in communion with each other

As I continue to think about the Holy Spirit as jazz, I find myself reflecting on how difficult it is for some people to accept the practical existence and presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and world. To be a good jazz musician, you must be open to where the music and your bandmates take you. You know the framework, but not the details. You cannot control the experience nor predetermine every detail.

And for those who are obsessed with control and security, the idea of God as Spirit, who moves where she wills, is threatening or at least discomfiting. For such folks, the temptation to "Holy Spirit atheism" looms large.

So, the next time you listen to live music or jam with your friends or bandmates, ask yourself what the condition of the possibility for such an experience is in the first place. Perhaps then you might take comfort in remembering God's creative presence among you and within creation. This is the presence of the Holy Spirit as jazz.

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### SYNODAL CHURCH, SECULAR SOCIETY NEEDED

# chhotebhai

The Indian Catholic Forum (ICF) organised a discernment meeting on Synodality and Secularism on 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> February at Anjali, the Provincialate of the Indian Missionary Society (IMS), Varanasi. 30 delegates, including 7 priests, participated. The ICF chose these two areas for deliberation because both are under threat.

The ICF is an informal platform of like minded persons who are concerned about the renewal of the Church and nation building. It was meeting after a gap of 4 years because its two earlier gatherings at Kottayam (2020) and Bangalore (2021) had to be abandoned because of Covid 19.

Shortly after Pope Francis announced the Synod on Synodality, the ICF conducted an exhaustive online survey on people's expectations from the same. The findings were collated and published as "The Pulse of the People". The report was sent to the Synod Secretariat in Rome, the Catholic media and the bishops of India.

In the spirit of synodality and listening to those at the peripheries, the participants at Varanasi were first asked to express their expectations from this gathering. Some of those were: Renewal of the Church, Inculturation, Implementation of the findings of the Church in India Seminar 1969, the desire to have one's voice heard in the Vatican, propagation of the teachings of Vatican II vis-à-vis the laity and to be a part of the decision making process in the church.

The ICF Convenor, chhotebhai, gave a brief report on its functioning since the last meeting in Kolkata in 2019. He then presented a paper on how Vatican II teachings are central to synodality. He contrasted the ecclesiology of the pre and post Vatican II church. For example, one earlier said that there was no salvation outside the Catholic Church (Extra ecclesiam nulla salus), whereas the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church now clearly states that even agnostics and atheists can be saved (LG 16). Another famous saying was "Rome has spoken, the chapter is closed" (Roma locuta est, causa finita est), while we now acknowledge that the Church should avail of the laity's prudent advice (LG 37).

Earlier the Church was too closely identified with Latin and even Roman customs, like genuflection. Now it recognises the ingenuity of local language, culture etc. This is reflected in its social praxis as well. Blind obedience has been replaced by the right to form labour unions and even to go on strike (GS 69). Meek submission has been replaced by the right to legitimate defence (GS 79). St Paul had said that "It is a good thing for a man not to touch a woman" (1 Cor 7:1), whereas the family is now described as the domestic church (LG 11). Women were expected to keep quiet (1 Cor 14:34). They are now recognised as equals (GS 9). The earlier paternalistic attitude has been replaced by "The laity have Christ for their brother ... they also have for their brothers those in the sacred ministry" (LG 32).

Swami Anildev IMS of Matridham Ashram spoke on the centrality of Jesus to synodality. If we prayerfully reflect on Jesus' life we find him to be a totally synodal person. He lived among the people, listened to them and stood by them, He was constantly surrounded by people and sensed their feelings. Even at Gethsemane he sought the prayers of his disciples and after the Resurrection, returned to the very ones who had deserted him.

Unfortunately at times, the Church seems to have lost sight of Jesus. We are too busy cutting ribbons and becoming flower vases (decorative pieces). Our so-called seminars are reduced to reports that gather dust in libraries. If Pope John XXIII opened the windows through Vatican II, Pope Francis has opened the doors for the laity through synodality. Anildev continued that this going off track has happened because we have stopped praying and seeking Jesus in the Sacred Scriptures. These should be our guiding lights in the synodal process. He also shared his ashram experience of how thousands of people have become believers (Khrist Panthis) and how their lives have been transformed by the Word of God.

Dr Swami Sachidananda bore witness to how he encountered Jesus after an air crash. He was earlier an officer in the Indian Air Force. He opined that the Church in India had missed the boat because it lacked an Indian face. The nascent church had a Jewish face, that later developed into a Roman and Greek one. This was followed by the Colonial Face and then the Commercial face. It was time to rediscover

the spiritual genius of Indian spirituality and evolve a truly Indian face, rooted in the local language and culture.

Ms Lucile Kuriakose presented a paper on the Status of Women in the Church. There was gender equality in the beginning of creation. It was gradually suppressed by a male dominated society. She observed that in the New Testament while Jesus' male disciples deserted him, the women stood by the cross.

Of late the Church had taken some steps for gender equality. Even the Vatican had appointed some women to responsible positions, like Sr Nathalie Becquart for the Synod, but by and large they are still on the periphery. Women have been victims of clerical sexual abuse and they are still far from the decision making process.

She advocated ordination for women and married persons, as there was no theological reason to deny this. There was also dire need for the Church to change its rigid stance on Natural Family Planning. What is really shocking is that a woman who procures an abortion (regardless of the circumstances) incurs a latae sententiae (automatic) ex-communication, without an opportunity to be heard (cf Can 1398).

Rev Sunil Francis Rozario, former editor of The Herald, Kolkata, dwelt on the role of the media in promoting synodality. He said that Pope Francis himself had to rely on the secular media to express his thoughts as the official Vatican media was inadequate. Tragically, the pope seemed to be walking the path of synodality all alone.

During the discussions the issue of online masses and services arose. The participants felt that this had served its purpose during the Covid lockdown, but there was no need to perpetuate them, as they had neither communion nor participation.

From Synodality the focus shifted to Secularism that was under severe threat in the country. Isaac Gomes presented a detailed analysis of how various State governments were enacting Anti-Conversion laws euphemistically referred to as "Freedom of Religion Acts", beginning with Orissa in 1967. It is unfortunate that despite the Christian community's massive contribution to nation building, it is today being viewed with suspicion.

What is particularly worrying is that some of these laws place the

onus of proving one's innocence on the accused, the person involved in alleged conversion. What further militates against human rights is the proviso for taking prior permission from the district authorities for conversion or even for an inter-faith marriage. While placing our trust in the wisdom of the Supreme Court the community needs to simultaneously be eternally vigilant.

M.L. Satyan presented the next paper on the Threat to Secularism. The 42<sup>nd</sup> Amendment to the Constitution, in 1976, declared India to be a secular nation. Articles 16,25,26,27 & 28 lay the foundation for equality of treatment and opportunity for all, regardless of religion.

Satyan said that the agenda of "India only for the Hindus", with one language and one culture is striking at the root of secularism and needs to be addressed socially and politically. But why blame only the majority religion? The speaker showed some videos in Tamil and Malayalam of how Christian preachers also indulged in religious bigotry.

The focus now shifted to specific case studies – the Saffronisation of the North East and the Struggle for Justice in Mysore Diocese.

John Shilshi, a former Additional Director General of Police, native to Manipur State, gave a lucid explanation of how Christian majority States in the North East, like Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland, now have either BJP governments or those in alliance with it; something that Christians living in other parts of the country find difficult to understand.

Shilshi identified the following key reasons for the BJP's success in the region: Infrastructure development, improved security, the China threat on the one hand and on the other, the materialistic mindset of the public, blatant misuse of money power, the inability of the Christian leadership to assume the moral high ground, and the lack of cooperation among various sister churches that are invariably competing with each other.

The last session was devoted to problems in the Diocese of Mysore with four priests from the diocese presenting a graphic account of their struggle for justice against the Bishop who is facing serious allegations. From the time that the ICF came to know of these

developments it has fully supported the aggrieved persons in their quest for justice. After a four year struggle, early last month Propaganda Fide ordered the bishop to go on leave of absence and appointed an Apostolic Administrator but things are still in status quo.

The ICF then planned its future course of action. The Varanasi Declaration had a five point charter:

- 1. It endorsed the recommendations made earlier in the online Survey. They included improving the functioning of parish councils and finance committees, lay involvement in the selection of bishops who should be transferable every ten years, the establishment of Grievance Cells and Arbitration Boards in every diocese, a more humane and pastoral approach to family planning as espoused by the Church in India Seminar of 1969, a non-condemnatory approach to abortion, ordination of women and married persons. The participants would create awareness of these issues through their respective areas of influence.
- 2. The teachings of Vatican II, its ecclesiology and social praxis are central to synodality. Hence a YouTube channel or website would be started to propagate these ideas and values. A special media cell would be tasked with this work.
- 3. A strong commitment to ecumenism, inter-religious dialogue, inculturation of our religious expressions should be the focus of our activities at all levels.
- 4. Efforts at promoting a secular society are needed. We must educate people on the dangers of the anti-conversion laws and those who propagate them, by creating a counter narrative through the media.
- 5. There should be a special thrust for women's equality in both church and society beginning with greater participation of women in all our activities.

Swami Sachidananda says "Begin with yourself, begin now, begin small". This would be the mantra of the ICF, to truly be the salt of the earth (cf Mat 5:13) as Jesus envisaged. The ICF will continue to be a platform, a forum, not an institution or organisation.

chhotebhai described this as being the Fifth Estate, distinct from

the other four estates seen from biblical times, the French Revolution, modern democracy and the institutionalised hierarchical Catholic Church. This was the realm of social media and activists seeking reform and renewal.

The ICF reconstituted its Core Committee tasked with fulfilling this agenda with chhotebhai (Kanpur) as Convenor, John Shilshi IPS (Retd) of Imphal as Convenor for the Media, Isaac Gomes (Kolkata) as the Secretary, and Cornelius Kujur (Kanpur) as the Treasurer. Swami Sachidananda (Kochi) and Rev Sunil Francis Rozario (Kolkata) would be the special advisors.

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# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2023 - WHAT'S YOUR BUZZWORD?

Patsy Lobo

We are celebrating on 8<sup>th</sup> March – International Women's Day (IWD). What's your 'Buzzword' for this year's IWD? To me, a Buzzword is what you live life by. If you choose the right buzzword, it becomes a beacon and guide. I've noted from watching TV, new impressive words and phrases in promoting products or energetic persons or a philosophy or messages such as "Let us be totally transparent" or "Let us think out of the box" or "Let us promote Trust".

Each year, the major headlines in relation to International Women's Day are "Women's Empowerment" and "Equity and Equality for Women" and "Human Rights for All". Women's empowerment is intertwined with Human Rights. Indeed as Charles Malik says "The fastest way to change society is to mobilize the women of the world". Nature has given women a lot of power and energy but the laws of most countries have not given them equal status in decision-making or policy framing. Though women are steadily and increasingly breaking 'glass ceilings' there is wide disparity in the salaries and benefits between men and women, even in developed countries. Gender disparity exists in most countries and women's access to resources, political status, decision-making and well-being is far less in comparison to men. This disparity favouring men is often institutionalized through law, justice and social norms.

Gender inequality weakens women in many areas such as health, education, and business life. Studies show the different experiences of genders across many domains including education, life expectancy, personality, family life, careers, and political affiliation.

The theme for International Women's Day 2023 is "EMBRACE EQUITY". Gender equity is the process of being fair to women and men. To ensure fairness, policies, strategies and measures must be in place to compensate for women's historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a level playing field. Equity leads to equality.

In the light of the continued Gender Inequalities, I think we need to first of all change the way International Women's Day is celebrated by shifting the focus of the celebration on MEN and ensure the participation of MEN in all events related to International Women's Day.

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# ACCUMULATE YOUR WEALTH IN BANK OF HEAVEN THROUGH CHARITY ON EARTH – DR RONALD COLACO DURING CIVIC HONOUR

Renowned Entrepreneur and Philanthropist Dr Ronald Colaco was Conferred with the 'World Book of Records' London Certificate for his Charity Work. Veerendra Sharma, five times UK MP of Indian origin who was also a signatory of the Certificate presented the certificate to Dr Colaco amidst a galaxy of eminent persons who had gathered at the Clarks Exotica Convention Hall-Bangalore, on December 6, 2022, along with other dignitaries presented the Prestigious Certificate to Ronald Colaco.

In honour of this prestigious Certificate from the World Book of Records, a 'CIVIC HONOUR' was organized for Mr Ronald Colaco, at a glittering function at the Fr Muller Convention Centre, Mangalore, by a Felicitation Committee headed by Mr J.R. Lobo, ex-MLA, on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

A galaxy of eminent personalities attended the event which included Archbishop Peter Machado of Bangalore, Bishop Peter Paul Saldanha of Mangalore and the Bishops of Puttur, Udupi, Shimoga &

Bellary; Head of Ramakrishna Mission-Swami Jitakanandaji, Chancellor of Yenepoya University Abdullah Kunhi, Dr Shantaram Shetty-Pro Chancellor, Nitte University. Padmabushan Dharmastala Veerendra Heggade who was to be the Chief Guest, felicitated Mr Colaco through a virtual message and so did Mr UT Khader, MLA-Mangalore. Mr J.R. Lobo gave the welcome address and Mr Ivan D'Souza, MLC proposed the Vote of Thanks.

The programme started with a Video presentation on the various projects supported by Mr Ronald Colaco over the past three decades. In a Press Release prior to the Felicitation, Mr J.R. Lobo gave a summary of Mr Colaco's contributions to society. He said "Dr Colaco's entrepreneurial acumen and unwavering commitment to excellence have enabled him to achieve remarkable success, both in India and abroad. A globally acclaimed business leader based out of the United Arab Emirates, Dr Colaco has maintained and nourished deep ties with his homeland, channelizing his energy and resources to not only modernise but also enrich its social and cultural heritage. He has worked tirelessly to support a wide range of charitable causes, including education, healthcare, and community development. From constructing roads and houses to developing more than 64 schools, building police stations to renovating places of worship across communities, Dr Colaco's legacy of selfless service spans over 25 years".

In his address, Bishop of Mangalore-Dr Peter Paul Saldanha said, "Dr Colaco has done yeomen service to society. He has an abundance attitude while many have a scarcity attitude. Whoever goes to Dr Colaco seeking help, he helps them with a smiling face. We need to ask - Do I possess this kind of Abundance attitude? For so many years, Dr Ronald Colaco's name has been shining for the goodness that he is exuding and propagating. He is an inspiration to us. Another significance of Dr Colaco is, he works beyond the borders and he is a good samaritan. The third point is that his goodness is self-diffusive. When you meet him, you don't come back silent, because it is contagious goodness". Chancellor of Yenepoya University Yenepoya Abdul Kunhi and President of Ramakrishna Math Swami Jitakamanandaji also spoke on the occasion.

Dr Ronald Colaco was felicitated by Archbishop of Bengaluru, Dr Peter Machado along with other dignitaries on the dais with a Shawl, garland, fruits, Citation, and memento.

In his address Dr Ronald Colaco said, "I am overwhelmed by the felicitation and appreciation by the felicitation committee. After hearing the appreciation, my heart started to beat faster. We have only an ortho surgeon on the dais, we don't have a cardiologist here. This is my duty towards the society where I was born, grown and lived. When J.R. Lobo read out my achievements, I was humbled. Dr Veerendra Heggadde is my role model, he has contributed a lot to society. The Ramakrishna Mission is holding a cleanliness drive to keep the City clean, likewise, we need to clean our minds too".

Dr Ronald further said, "Many have asked me what made me donate so much money. During the welcome speech, J.R. Lobo said "Behind every successful man there is a woman"; Yes, behind my success, my wife Jean was always there. In 1983, when we got married, we made a promise that a certain amount will be donated to the poor. To date, we have both kept the promises we made on our wedding day. God gives us only one opportunity to pass by this world. Whatever we can do for the less fortunate brethren in society, we should do it now. We count our wealth in money, shares, assets and bank balance. It is equally important to have richness in our minds and heart. We need to think of our wealth in transforming lives. Sometimes our bank balance may vanish, but the wealth we earn in the bank of Heaven will not vanish. We should accumulate our wealth in the bank of heaven which is very important".

Archbishop of Bangalore Rev Peter Machado in his presidential address said "Ronald Colaco, you have made our community proud and hoped that the example of Dr Colaco will be followed by many from our community".

CASK remembers with gratitude the donation of Rs. 6 Lakhs made by Dr Ronald Colaco towards the CASK Centenary Fund in 2013.

Please see photographs on page 24.

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### **MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS FOR LENT 2023**



The Gospels recount the episode of the Transfiguration of Jesus. There we see the Lord's response to the failure of his disciples to understand him. The Gospel of the Transfiguration is read on the Second Sunday of Lent. During this liturgical season, the Lord takes us with him to a place apart. While our daily commitments compel us to remain in our usual places during Lent we are invited to ascend "a high mountain" in the company of Jesus and gain new experience of spiritual discipline.

Lenten penance is a commitment, to overcoming our lack of faith and our resistance to follow Jesus on the way of the cross. To understand the Master, we must allow ourselves to be taken aside by him and to detach ourselves from vanity. We need to set out on the journey, like a mountain trek, requires effort, sacrifice and concentration. These requisites are also important for the synodal journey to which, as a Church, we are committed to making.

In his "retreat" on Mount Tabor, Jesus takes with him three disciples, He wants that experience of grace to be shared, just as our whole life of faith is an experience that is shared. For it is in togetherness that we follow Jesus. Like the ascent of Jesus and the disciples to Mount Tabor, we can say that our Lenten journey is "synodal", since we make it together. For we know that Jesus is himself the Way, and therefore, both in the liturgical journey and in the journey of the Synod, the Church does nothing other than enter ever more deeply and fully into the mystery of Christ the Saviour.

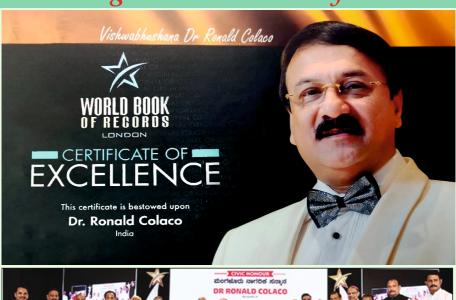
The Gospel relates that Jesus "was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light". This is the "summit", the goal of the journey. During any strenuous mountain trek, we must keep our eyes firmly fixed on the path; yet the panorama at the end amazes us. So too, the synodal process may often seem arduous, Yet what awaits us at the end is certainly wondrous which will help us to understand better God's will and our mission in the service of his kingdom.

The Lenten journey of penance and the journey of the Synod alike have as their goal a transfiguration, both personal and ecclesial. A transformation that, in both cases, has its model in the Transfiguration of Jesus and is achieved by the grace of his paschal mystery. So that this transfiguration may become a reality in us this year, I would like to propose two "paths" to follow: The first path related to the command that God gave. The voice from the cloud says: "Listen to him" The first path, is very clear: we need to listen to Jesus. Lent is a time of grace to the extent that we listen to him. May that word not fall on deaf ears; In addition to the Scriptures, the Lord speaks to us through the faces and the stories of those in need. Such mutual listening in some phases is the primary goal, but it remains always indispensable in the method and style of a synodal Church.

On hearing the Father's voice, the disciples "fell prostrate and were afraid. But Jesus touched them, saying, 'Rise, and do not be afraid.' And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw Jesus". Here is the second path for this Lent: do not take refuge in a religiosity made up of some events and dramatic experiences, out of fear of facing reality and its daily struggles, hardships and contradictions. The light that Jesus shows the disciples is an anticipation of Easter glory, and that must be the goal of our own journey, as we follow him with faith, hope and love, and thus to arrive at the resurrection. Let us go down, and may the grace we have experienced strengthen us to be "artisans of synodality" in the ordinary life of our communities.

May the Holy Spirit inspire and sustain us this Lent in our ascent with Jesus, so that we may experience his divine splendour and thus, confirmed in faith, persevere in our journey together with him, glory of his people and light of the nations.

# Civic Reception to Dr Ronald Colaco Mangalore 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023



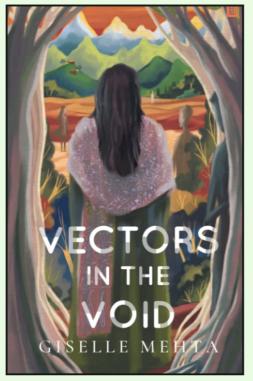


# Tribute by Most Rev Dr Peter Paul Saldanha Bishop of Mangalore

#### Three things I would like to say about Dr Ronald Colaco

- 1. **He has an attitude of abundance,** with a heartfulness of giving. We can see a smile on his face, reflecting happiness and attitude of abundance. We should all try to possess such an attitude of abundance. He is an Inspiration to us.
- 2. **He is a Good Samaritan,** living and working beyond borders, by serving the society and needy irrespective of caste, religion, colour and place. He has followed the message of Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3. **His goodness is self-diffusing** like the aroma of perfume. When you meet this person, you will not return with sadness. Everyone says he is a good man but I want to say he is a very very good man

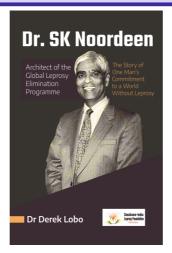
# The Book "VECTORS IN THE VOID" Authored by Giselle Mehta Released in Mangalore



The novel "VECTORS IN THE VOID" was formally released in the home city of the author, Giselle Mehta at a 'BOOK PARTY' event held at the Mangalore Club on February 3, 2023.



Left to Right – Prof. Matilda Pinto, Prof. Phyllis D'Costa, Author- Mrs Giselle Mehta, Prof. Ganesh Pai, Prof. Urmila Shetty



#### THE BOOK

## "Dr SK Noordeen - Architect of The Global Leprosy Elimination Programme"

Author - Dr Derek Lobo Sponsor - Sasakawa - India Leprosy Foundation Released at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023



**Left To Right:** Mr Gaurab Sen – CEO, Sasakawa-India Leprosy Foundation (S-ILF); Mr Tarun Das, Chairman-S-ILF & Former Director-General of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII); Dr Sowmya Swaminathan, former Chief Scientist-WHO (Chief Guest); Dr Derek Lobo, Member-Board of Trustees S-ILF & Author of the Book; Dr Vivek Lal, Team Leader, Global Leprosy Unit-WHO;

# EULOGY TO AUSTIN TAURO 18<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2023

Delivered by Dr Derek Lobo

There comes a time for all of us....When we must say goodbye But memories of those we love.....Live on and never die Although the curtain falls at last.....

Dear Beeba, Anita/Raj, Jan/Jane, Peter/Hazel, Cuckoo & family, Relations & Friends....The Curtain has fallen for Austin, three months short of milestone 95. Austin has been an Icon, a Shining Star of the Mangalorean Community-not just the Catholic but the entire Mangalorean Community, through his dedicated and commendable work in the Indian Audit & Accounts Service and later in the Corporate sector retiring as Chairman—Indian Oil Corporation.



He was born in Pune, did schooling in Coonoor, then Loyola College-Chennai, married a pretty Mangalorean girl called Claire, popularly Beeba in Chennai, and was posted in different parts of India – Assam, Dehradoon, Baroda, Chennai, Goa, and New Delhi and also London-UK(in the Indian High Commission) and Kuala Lumpur but post retirement decided to come back to his roots in Mangalore and settle here – something rare and unique for a luminary and

#### Corporate bigwig.

Beeba and Austin married in 1955 and had 67 years of a blissful married life. On their wedding day, Austin disclosed to Beeba that thus far, the game of Bridge was his first love. This was meant to be a challenge for Beeba to displace his first love with herself – a challenge she successfully met, first by learning to play bridge and then putting the bridge behind her and transforming herself as his first love. I asked Beeba how she would describe Austin as a husband – she said – very tolerant and kind; calm & composed at all times; anger was never in his DNA; What a glowing description of a husband...what a tribute to a great man – apart from attaining the highest positions in Govt and Corporate world, apart from being a highly successful leader, apart from being a mentor and guide for many people -Austin was an embodiment of all that is good...goodness personified.... in konkani we would say 'monshapon' ani 'borepon' at its best – God's Own Chosen Man. He was also the rock of the Tauro family who looked after his three younger siblings after the death of their father. His sister Cuckoo who is here will vouch for what I just said.

To have been chosen to give this tribute is a great honour for me. I have many credentials starting with friendship with Cuckoo and her husband late Francis Coelho and then after my retirement in 2007, for Patsy and I, to have had the privilege of friendship with Austin & Beeba. This friendship was strengthened by Austin's strong support to the Catholic Association of South Kanara (CASK) which has been the beneficiary of his donations and his support to the 'Mangalore' magazine which being the voracious reader he was, he read from cover-to-cover each month and often complimented the Editor. When CASK decided to promote Organ and Whole Body Donations, Austin and Beeba were one of the first to contact me and obtained the Organ Donation forms. I was further inspired by Austin as a

colleague in the Board of Trustees of 'Vishwas', an NGO established by Austin's first cousin – Dr Olinda Pereira, for the care of the elderly. For Olinda, Austin's views and counsel was the ultimate not only for Vishwas but also for Roshni Nilaya, the School of Social Work established by her. She invariably rushed to Austin whenever she faced any problem at Roshni. Austin had the unique capacity to capture the essence of any problem, analyze it quickly and give valuable advice.

Thus, we are celebrating today, the life of this great icon, star and luminary of our community. In line with his spirit of Giving, as per his wish, his body is being donated to Fr Muller Medical College for research & education. I wish to conclude with the following beautiful words of TABHU:

#### I Remember.....

Today, you do not see any more but it was your vision that made us see the light.... I remember thee for thy foresight

We will hear you no more, but it was your voice that lent tranquility to our lives.... I remember thee for thy guidance

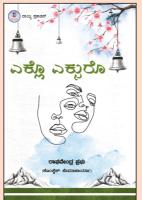
You will not hold us now, but it was your touch that reassured us in the dark nights.... I remember thee for thy lovingness

We cannot share your memories, but it was your experience that anchors our past with our present.... I remember thee for thy kindred spirit

You are amongst us no more, but it is your presence, I look forward to in the hereafter.... I remember thee and wish to be with you again

And Austin, we all wish to be with you again and be beneficiaries of your brilliance, your valuable counsel & guidance and above all your Goodness..........Farewell dear Friend.......

# POETICA KAVIGOSTI-13 & RELEASE OF "YEKLO EKSURO" TRANSLATED BY HEMACHARYA







Poetica Kavigosti-13 was held on January 14, 2023 at St Aloysius College. Poet and writer Hemacharya's 'Yeklo Eksuro' Konkani translation was also released on the occasion by the Chief Guest – Lion Dr Austin Prabhu of Chicago-USA.

The Kavigosti was inaugurated by the editor of Veez Konkani E-magazine - Lion Dr Austin D'Souza Prabhu. Richard Moras - President, Chicago. Konkani Writer's Association, was the guest of honor. Mr Anil Fermai, Chairman MCC Bank, Daijiworld representative Hemacharya, Alwyn Pinto, Pingara Konkani magazine editor Raymond D'Cunha, Naveen Kulshekar. and Machcha Milar were present.

CASK congratulates Hemacharya on the Release of his translated book "Yeklo Eksuro" and wishes him continued success.

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# CONTRIBUTIONS OF NIRMALA NIKETAN & ROSHNI NILAYA IN PROMOTING SOCIAL WORK IN INDIA

Hundreds of nuns and priests serving the Indian church as social workers say they owe their inspiration and training to a French congregation "Daughters of the Heart of Mary" that came to India seven decades ago and established two renowned Schools of Social Work – Nirmala Niketan in Mumbai in 1955 and Roshni Nilaya in Mangalore in 1960.

Sr. Maria Nirmalini, President of the Conference of Religious in India, says "The Daughters of the Heart of Mary have "trained a workforce within the church to create a justice-based society". Nirmalini is a member of the Congregation of the Apostolic Carmel. She describes social work as a major mission of the church where hundreds of religious work to empower the poor.

Sr. Philomena D'Sa, provincial of the Daughters of the Heart of Mary's southern province, said her congregation's main apostolate in India is to train social workers, especially nuns and priests. Men and women from various congregations who attended their two colleges of social work now head thousands of projects at the grassroots across India, she said, and many alumni have started Non-Governmental organizations and community-development programs.

"We are happy that they stand for justice, peace and equality, the core values of social work," D'Sa told Global Sisters Report.

The Daughters of the Heart of Mary came to India in 1951 and now train around 100 Catholic religious and others every year in social work at the College of Social Work at Nirmala Niketan (House of the Immaculate) in Mumbai and the School of Social Work at Roshni Nilaya (House of Light) in Mangaluru, Karnataka.

Nirmalini said alumni of these two institutes "are the backbone of the church's works on the periphery. These institutes have changed the mindset of their students, especially the nuns, on their vocation as well as social work," she told GSR.



Nirmala Niketan, which was founded in 1955 under the congregation's northern province, was the first church-based college of social work in India. Today, it produces around 40 trained social workers, mostly nuns, annually.

Sr. Lidwin Dias, its principal, told GSR that the institute only offers bachelor's and master's degrees in social

work, with 60 students in each batch.

"More than 30% of our students are priests and nuns, which means we indirectly contribute to the vision of the church's social apostolate," she said.

Dias also pointed out that the college manages nearly 50 social work projects that give practical training to its students through community development programs, medical and psychiatric social work, and work in correctional facilities.

Roshni Nilaya under the southern province was founded in 1960 by Sr. Olinda Pereira, who is considered the mother of social work in southern India. Until her death in 2020, she motivated hundreds of young people, nuns and priests to work for a justice-based community.



The institute currently teaches around 600 students for bachelor's and master's courses and also offers master's degrees in counseling and psychology.

Students are assigned guides for field work who

assist them in integrating theory and practice. Students receive

supervised clinical practice at the campus' kindergarten, family service agency, family counseling center, and helpline for children in crisis. The college conducts specialized courses in community development, medical and psychiatric social work, human resource development, and criminology.

Sr. Evelyn Bennis, who heads the community development department, said Roshni Nilaya engages in several social work projects as an extension of the training. One of them, a waste-management project started in 2016, unites people of all religions and cultural backgrounds, she said.

Sr Bennis said "We initially trained 10,000 school students about the importance of waste management, and through them, we reach out to their homes"

Sr. Juliet Joseph Chirakkaparambil, a former Roshni Nilaya principal, recalls facing several hurdles and challenges in the school's initial years. "Social work was not recognized as a professional course when we started, so we had few takers in the initial years," she said. In the third year, they had only three students, and two dropped out. The nuns decided to close the institute and asked the lone student to quit the course. "But she was adamant to continue. We are here today because of her," Chirakkaparambil said.

She said the limited number of students and absence of other professional courses has always been a challenge for the institute, but they go forward anyway because of the mission of training social workers. Nuns who have graduated from the two institutes say their education in social work has given them more meaning and purpose in their religious life.

Queen of Apostles Sr. Leena Valookaran, who graduated from Roshni Nilaya 12 years ago, now works among village children in Honnavar, a coastal region in Karnataka.

"My vocation was driven by my passion to serve the poor, but my social work education has given me knowledge and skills how to do it," Valookaran told GSR. For her, social work is not charity, but a prophetic mission to liberate people from oppressive structures.

Similarly, Sr. Shanthi Vincent of Congregatio Jesu said her idea of social work changed from "charity to empowerment" after her master's program at Nirmala Niketan. She now works among the Dalit (formerly known as "untouchable") communities in the eastern Indian states of Bihar and Jharkhand.

"If we give the poor a fish, they will have a tasty dinner; but if we teach them to fish, they will continue to have fish curry meals every day," Vincent told GSR.

Apostolic Carmel Sr. Marykutty Joseph, who works among a tribal community in Nilambur in the southwestern Indian state of Kerala, said she absorbed many values during her studies at Roshni Nilaya.

In 2015, Joseph received the Best Social Worker Award from the Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council for organizing people through self-help groups to implement government developmental programs.

Sr. Catherine Gonsalves of the Canossian Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor said she finds "true meaning" in her vocation when she is with people at the grassroots. The 52-year-old nun, who graduated from Nirmala Niketan in 2019, organized 11 self-help groups during the COVID-19 pandemic that helped migrant laborers and mobilized government welfare programs.

Some students of Roshni Nilaya have even joined the Daughters of the Heart of Mary, Chirakkaparambil said. One of them, Sr. Colin D'Souza, told GSR that she was attracted by the simple lifestyle of the nuns, who dress like common people and mingle easily with students and others. She said several former students have contributed tremendously to empower the poor in various parts of India.

Nirmalini, the leader of more than 130,000 Catholic religious in India who grew up near Mumbai's Nirmala Niketan, said she was influenced by the Daughters of the Heart of Mary's passion for social work.

"They were among people listening to their cry and helping whenever they could," she said.

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## 'VECTORS IN THE VOID' AUTHORED BY GISELLE MEHTA

# A Book Review by Phyllis D'Costa presented on 3rd February 2023 at Mangalore Club

I feel honored and proud to present my review on the novel, "Vectors in the Void" by Giselle Mehta for three reasons: 1. I have been greatly impressed and impacted by the language and literary quality of the book; 2. What kept me glued to Giselle Mehta's "Vectors in the Void" is her remarkable use of apt expression, figurative language, alliteration and a smooth flow of words daring to meet the truth, be it human frailty, instinctive involvements, spells of passion, unreciprocated love or reaction to uneasy situations. The author has researched on and resurrected the significant past to weave a socially encompassing narrative, historically and politically significant into a rich literary repast. 3. I must say that reading and re-reading the novel has enhanced my vocabulary, enriched my expression and broadened my take on life.

The compelling storyline encompasses multiple stories, both linear and parallel, tied together by the persona and narrative of the powerful female protagonist Zara.

"The Cuckoo of Karachi flew away in silence, the molten melody of her songs replaced by the clamorous bawling of her baby's will to be." Zara's life is bound to be eventful, from the complex circumstances of her conception. Her birth on a turbulent day during India's freedom struggle extinguishes her mother's life. The Holocaust and the Second World War in Europe reach her as a schoolgirl in Murree, pre-Partition India's picturesque hill station. Her teenage love affair with a Jewish refugee sheltering in the vastness of undivided India from Nazi persecution in Europe drives the tale in its lasting consequences, creating a meeting point between members of two ancient but geographically distinct ethnicities.

Rising above the pain and loss of her youthful adventures, the ambitious and multifaceted Zara forges a new destiny in a prudent marriage. While business and Swathantra Party politics engage her ,the

Sino-Indian conflict leaves a family grappling with loss and mystery. Emergency too spells terror and suffering to them.

She negotiates through tumultuous family responsibilities: the contrasting needs of twin daughters make it a tight rope walk for Zara. Her brilliant sons are each determined on their own course in life. Zara and her family collectively brim with compelling inclinations and adventurous choices, charting out their respective paths to personal significance. Zara stands out as an intrepid single parent holding the fort of family and business while her spouse follows his own intellectual compulsions and suffers an unforeseen consequence.

Giselle's versatility at imagination, narration, dialogue and excellent character delineation and development along with her creative intensity makes her a notable novelist on par with world famous novelists.

Zara is the character who centres the different elements and aspects of the novel, being also the reference point for the exceptional destinies of her offspring. The author has given the protagonist depth and credibility. As much as 'Gone with the Wind' is about Scarlett O' Hara, one may say the soul and substance of 'Vectors in the Void' is Zara. The unexpected twist towards the end of the novel holds the interest of a reader to the very end.

What a reader can also look for is practical philosophy, snippets of wisdom, the novelist has garnered from life and the artful weaving in of history, political life and culture to enhance the novel's universal appeal. It is a rare book where one finds the world of grand opera juxtaposed with social justice movements and emerging ideas from quantum physics.

The novelist, Giselle Mehta, with her effective and tasteful use of language tries to get as close as she can get to the blatant truth; this is a striking testament to her talent at character delineation and situational description.

The novelist drops truth bombs gently and deliberately to express the personality traits and quirks of character and fate. Even if it means, the brutality of innate sexual urges or intuitive responses, the novelist is keen to speak the hard truth in easy, flowing language. The author highlights the conflicting ideological nuances between the father, Evander Bastien and the protagonist of the novel-Zara, the daughter. Evander follows the dictates of his time and society, to protect his progeny from the indictive finger by the society, the girl being an unwed mother. In contrast with this approach, his daughter Zara, (the blooming flower of the desert ) allows her children, the freedom of choice of their career and life. This is in line with Jean Paul Sartre's musings in his work, "On Being and Nothing." As a nurturant mother, Zara permits her children to exercise their freedom at every step of their life, thus building up their own personality and 'substance.' Thus, the author projects Zara and the children as "Vectors in the Void" and in the process, they make their own rich 'being.'

Yet another noteworthy feature of the novel is that the novelist being an ardent vegan and animal lover promotes a vegan diet and alongside advocates the feeding of stray animals and rehabilitation of the "furred, feathered and finned" as the novelist alliteratively puts it.

In its geographical spread, the novel expansively connects locations that range from Thailand to the United States, England/ France/ Germany and Haifa in Israel, Karachi and Murree (currently in Pakistan), Bombay/ Calcutta / Madras. Much of the action is in the quasi-fictional coastal city of Manjooran as the epicentre. The storyline derives from the author's awareness of the 'Canara Diaspora' into different parts of undivided India and the erstwhile British Empire. Similarly the author refers to historic events that go back to ancient Palestine and the Jewish diaspora across Europe and the world, the Spanish Inquisition, the genocide of Jews by the Nazi regime and the formation of Israel as a new country. The formation of India and Pakistan as separate countries consequent to Partition is a significant driver of the tale in terms of the choices it demands of the characters. In effect, Zara's life is impacted by the birth of three nations.

To language lovers, Vectors in the Void is not merely literary but also refreshing knowledge generating, entertaining and engaging. A reader keen on intelligent expression, picturesque language, family encounters and engagements will not put down the novel until fully read. Flashes of philosophy and practical wisdom will entice you and make you stop and ponder. Matching the fallout of conflicts and crisis

from the world outside are the dramas of family life that incline towards the dysfunctional. Beyond the personal and political, there's still a cosmic dimension that informs the whole narrative, as the very title of the book might suggest.

The length of the novel is judiciously kept at 310 pages on one eighth size paper and is colourfully, paper bound, thereby making it attractive and easy to read.

Every writer is a maker of public opinion. Giselle Mehta has written "Vectors in the Void" which makes one think that even "void" can be a medium to progress and to enrich personalities.

Please see photographs on page 25.

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# NIKHITA SEQUEIRA – A YOUNG & BUDDING ARTIST OF DIVERSE TALENTS



### By a Well-wisher

There are several achievers in our Mangalorean Catholic community who have excelled themselves in various walks of life and have been duly recognized in different forums through honours, awards and felicitations. However there are quite a few unsung heroes and heroines

in our midst, whose talents and outstanding achievements have by far gone unnoticed and need to be identified and brought to limelight with their name and fame. And true to the Vision of CASK, it would be expedient to highlight such of them who deserve recognition and appreciation, which would motivate and spur them on to attain higher goals and better performance in their chosen arenas.

Here is a young achiever who has made a mark for herself as an Artist of immense caliber and great talent, a multi faceted personality, having emerged as a well known fitness trainer of repute of Mangalore, where physical fitness has assumed much importance in recent times due to fast changing life styles. I am pleased to introduce Ms. Nikitha Sequeira to the enlightened readers of 'Mangalore'.



Her diverse talents range from being: A Prolific Dancer, Qualified Zumba Instructor (ZIN), Group Fitness Instructor cum Coach, Personal Trainer, Avid Teaching Enthusiast, Wedding First Waltz & Group Dance Choreographer, Popular Emcee, Actress in Song and Dance themes, and a Fashion Enthusiast.

She is one of the few trainers who has specialized in Zumba & Dance Fitness, bringing

dance as a mode into fitness training, Ball Fit and Pilates, which are key work outs in Fitness Training sessions, and perhaps the only Mangalorean to have attained this feat at a very young age. Like her flexible physique, she has been gifted with a powerful voice for effective commands during group sessions. Her passion for teaching is clearly visible through her unique style of conducting fitness classes, specially for beginners with simple techniques to make them feel at ease. When it comes to fitness classes she shows up every day with devotion at the break of dawn.

"Because when you want to do something, you never think 'how are you going to do it?', I always believe in exploring oneself. Unless you try out and see for yourself, you will never know how good you are in that particular area." she says. She has groomed herself very well to become a 'trainer par excellence' having started her journey in fitness at a young age - 21. A remarkable achievement indeed for all of us to be proud of.

She has acted in the first ever Konkani video song and dance film titled "TU YE GOPANTH", released on Feb 23, 2022, which became a new sensation in the Konkani entertainment world. The debut song has already been watched by more than **57,000** viewers on YouTube and entered the list of fastest moving video songs in Konkani. Music lovers are going to be enthralled with the second part of the song which is planned for release very soon.

Nikitha Sequeira is an alumnus of St. Aloysius College, Mangalore. A BBA graduate having passed out with distinction, she has been a rising star at college with her stellar roles in song and dance events.

She has actively participated in every college day celebration during the years 2015 to 2019, with her breathtaking dance performances, thanks to her superb physical fitness, mesmerizing movements, keeping the audiences spellbound and winning praise. She lit the stage on fire with her spirited dance performance at the College Day 2019 function, evoking boisterous applause from the young spectators to become a rave among the then student fraternity. She has participated in various Inter-Collegiate competitions, State & National level Fests in Dance during her college days winning prizes and certificates of appreciation for her outstanding performances. She participated in Indian Hip Hop Championship 2019 and got selected to represent Karnataka at the semifinals.



Nikitha takes keen interest in the cultural activities of her Parish, and has participated in Diocesan level events organized by ICYM Derebail, Her performance at the Fashion Show event viz., 'Retro

Fire 2019' was adjudged the best and she won the title 'Ms. Retro 2019'.

After graduating from college, she has taken up Fitness Training as her fulltime occupation, training both the young and the old alike in various fitness exercises with special emphasis on her favourite - Ball, Zumba, Dance, Resistance, Strength & Conditioning, Personal and Group Fitness Classes. She has been instrumental in establishing an exclusive Senior Citizens Batch. Her contribution towards the cause of Senior Citizens' Fitness is laudable.

Presently she is associated with 'GROUP EX FITNESS', a leading Fitness Center of Mangalore and Bangalore, as Manager & Fitness Coach, offering physical fitness training and solutions to all age groups. Simultaneously she has plans to pursue her MBA in pursuit of achieving higher goals in her career path.

Nikitha is the daughter of Stany Sequeira and Violet D Souza of Derebail. Her siblings Venisa and Pravitha, both well accomplished and achievers in their own right, are based in Bangalore. She can be followed on Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/\_nikki\_sequeira

## THE LENTEN SACRIFICE

#### Trisha Lara D'souza

The message of Pope Francis for the Lenten period of 2023 speaks of the Transfiguration of Jesus. He says the goal of our journey together during our Lenten sacrifice should be to have a synodal experience as we make our Lenten sacrifice together. He very aptly compares the journey as a trek that seems daunting and strenuous but the goal to reach the top of the mountain should be the reward to keep our eyes on.

I myself went on a trek a couple of weeks ago and each step needed deep breaths and determination. As one should always practice, the way forward is one step at a time. I chanted the phrase 'We're almost there!' and had the support and enthusiasm of my friends who also said the same. The terrain altered from a muddy path to a climb filled with tree roots and branches we maneuvered through. It finally approached steep rocks that seemed almost impossible to ascend! We huffed and puffed up the peak, hands bruised, and legs numb. I refrained from looking up and kept one foot forward with only the next rock in sight. Each rock had us sway to the rhythm of nature's beauty. And finally, the two people ahead of me said, 'We reached! you're almost there!'. The last step that gave us the view of infinite skies and rocky mountains adorned with lush green shrubs was breathtaking.

Like Pope Francis explains, during a mountain trek we must have our eyes firmly fixed on the path before the panorama opens and amazes us. There were times when the voice in my head urged me to stop, telling me that I will not make it. It is the same voice that haunts so many of us every single day. And the easy thing to do would be to blindly listen to it without breaking a sweat. But those beads of sweat that run down your face also give you the feeling of exhilaration and reminds you that pushing yourself in all parts of life will give you an experience like no other. It truly was confounding and brought with it a perspective of a world much greater than is.

I compare this with the Lenten sacrifice that brings forth phrases saying, '40 days! Oh no, I just cannot do it', 'I know I'll give up anyways so why start?'. The road to adding value to your life starts with one

small step with an attempt to dull the voices that tell you otherwise. Just as Jesus touched His disciples saying, 'Rise and don't be afraid.'

The period of Lent involves powerful sacrifices as it takes a lot for one to follow a path of spirituality in a world full of by lanes. Engaging your body and mind in a sacrifice strengthens the journey of a path less traveled. All of what we think we are not capable of comes to reality with the power of restraint and prayer. We are blessed to have a repeated chance to make ourselves better, to help others and to be part of a process that goes beyond our boundaries.

In the press conference of the Lenten message where Cardinal Michael Czerny, S.J. intervenes, he speaks of how Pope Francis connects Lent and beauty. Of beauty that comes from change just as Jesus offered three of His disciples a bright moment on the mountain. In addition to this, he speaks of the element of charity to be approached in a more radical way. The destruction that has taken place in the last few years calls us to question what is most important. It impels us to convert our vices to meaningful experiences that will solidify our faith and commitment to goodness. Surely, this is a change that must come from within. The mountain of goals feels lofty at times but let's take it one step at a time and it will be worth it in the end.

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### POINTS TO PONDER, MARCH 2023

Norbert Shenoy

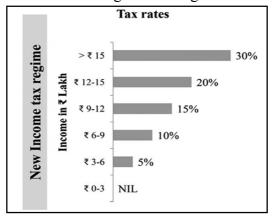
**Budget Dialectics** - It is a moot point if the Finance Minister is subscribing to Hegelian dialectics of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. But in Budget 2023, she has given us the old tax regime with tax breaks and the new (default) tax regime without tax breaks, with likely eventual synthesis being the new tax regime with a few more tweaks to make it more acceptable.

The budget also provides revenue impact of tax incentives, which in the latest budget is estimated at Rs 2.11 lac crores. But despite the much flaunted transparency in budget making, repeated queries made under the RTI Act, seeking the methodology adopted to compute the revenue impact of 100% tax exemption under Section 80GGC of the

IT Act (contribution to political parties) have been conveniently forwarded to Central Processing Centre (CPC) for processing IT Returns. But alas! CPC has found it expedient to hide behind the fig leaf of technical mumbo jumbo! The excuse for not providing the required information is that, given legacy software which governs the end to end automation of IT return processing, providing data in the required form would require the intervention of an expert team and even then it may not be feasible to download the information in a manually readable form. Quite a tale indeed! When it comes to safeguarding the "Sarkari" secret surrounding the electoral bonds, the mandarins in CBDT bureaucracy seem to be at their creative best in weaving a convoluted story.

Be that as it may, the question that the tax payer needs to answer is which tax regime would be beneficial to her/him. The main features of the new tax regime are:

- 1. Tax free threshold raised from Rs 2.5 lacs to 3 lacs.
- 2. Income Tax slabs reduced from 6 to 5 with 25% slab scrapped.
- 3. Standard Deduction of Rs 50000 is allowed for salaried employees and pensioners.
- 4. Rebate under Section 87A increased for taxable incomes up to Rs 7 lacs.
- 5. Surcharge on incomes above Rs 5 crores reduced from 37% to 25%
- 6. Tax rates under the new regime are as given below:



Some of the common deductions available under the old tax regime are as follows:

- O Section 80C (PPF, ELSS, Life insurance etc): Rs 1.5 lacs.
- O Section 80 CCD (1B) (National Pension Scheme): Rs 50,000
- O Section 80D (Mediclaim): Rs 25,000 (for self) + Rs 50,000 (for senior citizen parents)= Rs 75,000
- O HRA (House rent allowance): Lesser of (a) Actual rent paid or (b) 50% of basic salary + DA (for metro cities) or 40% of basic salary + DA (for non metro cities)
- O LTA (Leave travel allowance): Will depend on the maximum LTA provided by your employer and your actual cost of travel by air (economy class only), train (up to First AC fare) or bus.
- O Section 24 (home loan interest): Rs 2 lakhs

Choosing the beneficial tax regime would depend on tax payer's level of income and the tax breaks that are availed. Following examples might help in choosing the beneficial tax system.

## **Old Regime**

Total Taxable Income		25,00,000
Tax Saving Investment *		4,75,000
Net Taxable Income	Rate	20,25,000
Up to 2,50,000		0
2,50,001 to 5,00,000	5%	12,500
5,00,001 to 10,00,000	20%	1,00,000
10,00,001 to 20,25,000	30%	3,07,500
Total Tax		4,20,000
Health & Education Cess		16,800
Tax Payable		4,36,800

\* 80C investments 1.5 lacs, health cover 0.75 lacs, NPS 0.5 lacs, housing loan interest 2 lacs

#### **New Regime**

Total Taxable Income	Rate	25,00,000	Savings in Tax
Up to 3,00,000	0	0	2500
3,00,001 to 6,00,000	5%	15,000	15,000
6,00,0001 to 9,00,000	10%	30,000	30,000
9,00,001 to 12,00,000	15%	45,000	35,000
12,00,001 to 15,00,000	20%	60,000	30,000
15,00,001 to 25,00,000	30%	3,00,000	
Total Tax		4,50,000	1,12,000
Health &Education Cess		18,000	
Total Tax Payable		4,68,000	
Break even tax savings 3.75 lacs			

It can be seen that the tax rates coalesce at the income level of Rs 15 lac onwards. Without reckoning with any tax breaks and the reduced surcharge level of 25% for incomes above Rs 5 crores, a tax payer under the new regime with income of Rs 15 lacs or more will save Rs 1.12 lacs vis-à-vis old tax regime, which means that a person with income of 15 lacs or more will have to have investments/expense in tax saving instruments to the tune of Rs 3.75 lacs under the old regime to be on par with the new regime. Manipulation of data on simple spread sheet would help in choosing the beneficial regime. But there is no need to despair if you do not want to calculate the trade off between the old and new regime. The CBDT website provides a calculator to help tax payers choose between the two systems. Well, some of the times the tax man does try to be helpful to the tax payer.

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# **GENTLE REMINDER**

To all subscribers of 'Mangalore' in India and Abroad. Please renew your subscription to 'Mangalore'. The validity of your subscription is indicated on the postal slip on the back cover.

Cheque in favour of Catholic Association of South Kanara.

NEFT transfer to Catholic Association of South Kanara Account

No: 0046053000043007; IFSC: SIBL0000046

South Indian Bank Ltd, Hampankatta, Mangalore.

After executing NEFT, please send an email to caskmangalore@yahoo.com giving details

### **NEWS & NOTES**

# SHIVANI MARIA MONTHIERO OF ST AGNES COLLEGE SECURES THIRD RANK IN ACCA-UK



We are delighted to note that **Shivani Maria Montiero**, a student of 3<sup>rd</sup> B.Com of St Agnes College, pursuing the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)-UK, has secured the **THIRD Rank** in the Financial Management Paper in the examination held in December 2022.

Shivani said "Achieving a rank was not something I anticipated, but I am truly honoured and blessed. First, I would like to thank my mother for her continuous encouragement and support and thank the principal, my lecturers, and classmates for motivating and inspiring me."

St Agnes College is the first college in Mangalore to offer BCom with ACCA affiliation, since 2016. ACCA is a globally renowned accounting body offering the 'Chartered Certified Accountant' qualification. The students of ACCA easily secure jobs in Accounting firms in India and abroad. ACCA is an organization with 241,000 members and 542,000 students in 180 countries. Shivali is the daughter of Valentina Monteiro

CASK congratulates Shivani on her creditable achievement and wishes her a bright future.

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#### ORGAN DONATION AWARENESS PROGRAM



An Organ Donation Awareness program was organised by Mrs Marjorie Texeira, Founder of "Life Immortal". She spoke on the need to donate organs so as to give life to others. She explained the various organs a person can donate when a person is brain dead or when the cause of death is natural or death due to old age. 1500 students of St Agnes College took a pledge to donate their organs.

Promotion of Blood, Organs and whole Body Cadaveric donations is one of the major programmes of CASK. We are happy to note that Mrs Marjorie Texeira, a member of CASK Governing Council is promoting awareness through her organization "Life Immortal".

# Please see information on procedures for Organ Donations on page 51 (inside back cover)

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# TENNIS LEGEND BJORN BORG GIVES A LESSON IN PUNCTUALITY



The Karnataka State Lawn Tennis Association (KSLTA) had organized a Felicitation programme on 21st February 2023, for the Tennis Legend from Sweden – Bjorn Borg during his recent visit to Bangalore. Borg who has to his credit eleven Grand Slam titles was in Bangalore to participate in the Bangalore Open Tourney and also watch his son Leo, who had a wildcard entry for the main draw of the Bengaluru Open at the KSLTA.

The famous Indian Punctuality acted as the spoil-sport. The Chief Minister of Karnataka – Mr Basavaraj Bommai who was to be the Chief Guest at the Felicitation function was late by more than 90 minutes. By then, Borg was in the stands watching his son Leo play and politely declined to join the Felicitation function!

We in India are used to such delays and constantly bear with such situations but people from Western countries are not used to such delays. Bjorn Borg has given an important message on 'punctuality' but it is unlikely that it is going to have any effect.

With a playing style that combined power with concentration Bjorn Borg possessed two particularly remarkable qualities: the first was his mindset. Björn Borg was the first player to display unfaltering focus on the court: nothing could distract him. This earned him the nickname "Iceborg". Because of this, he was unbeatable, and his opponents often felt like they were playing against a brick wall.

His second exceptional quality was his technique. Far from adopting a conventional playing style, he produced incomparable topspin from his two-handed backhand and boasted a formidable forehand.

Björn Borg's career was scattered with records. Between 1978 and 1980, he won every Roland-Garros and every Wimbledon tournament. From 1976 to 1980, the Swede won the London tournament five consecutive times. His victory against John McEnroe in 1980, after 3 hour 53 minutes of play and five sets, went down in history.

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# FATHER MULLER COLLEGE OF SPEECH & HEARING CELEBRATES 'WORLD HEARING DAY'



The World Health Organization (WHO) observes 3<sup>rd</sup> March each year as World Hearing Day under the auspices of WHO Programme for Prevention of Blindness

and Deafness. The objectives of the World Hearing Day Campaign objectives are to share information and promote actions to prevent or control hearing loss and improve hearing care. Each year, the WHO selects a theme, develops educational materials and makes these freely available in several languages. Individuals and communities involved in hearing care are encouraged to organize activities to raise awareness about the importance of ear and hearing care and encourage them to seek help and services.

The theme for World Hearing Day 2023 is "Ear and hearing care for all! Let's make it a reality". The ultimate goal is to integrate Ear and Hearing care within primary care, as an essential component of universal health coverage.

The World Hearing Day was celebrated in Fr Muller College of Speech & Hearing by conducting a Free Ear Screening Camp from 27th February to 4th March for the Mangaluru City Corporation

workers at Father Muller Hospital, Mangalore. Along with Free Hearing Screening, the hospital provided free ENT checks, and distributed Free Hearing Aids to deserving patients. A detailed Audiological Evaluation was conducted for those who fail the screening program.

A formal function was organized on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 at the Fr Muller Medical College premises with Ms Deepti, KAS, Assistant Executive Engineer, Environment at Mangaluru City Corporation as Chief Guest. Fr Richard Coelho, Director FMCI presided. A skit was presented by the students of the college who portrayed four different scenes in everyday life, where hearing deficiencies create an imbalance to harmonious living in one's life.

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## **OBITUARIES - FEBRUARY/MARCH 2023**

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

- Johnson Pradeep Palanna (59), Valencia, son of Shanthi Palanna, on February 06, 2023.
- ❖ Jacintha Veera Martis (58), Bejai, wife of Eric Martis, mother of Elvis, Viola and James, on Friday, February 10, 2023.
- Richard Dalmeida (66), Bejai, husband of Juliet Patrao, father of Rithin /Helston Dalmeida and Rickson Dalmeida, on February 14, 2023.
- ❖ Edward Miranda (76), Bejai, husband of Cynthia Miranda, father of Calvin/Glena and Caren, brother of the Jessy, Irene, Franky, Leena, Godwin, Lydia and Austin, on February 15, 2023.
- ❖ Teresa S Pais (97), Bendur, wife of late Frederick M Pais (Founder, Asian Trading Corporation), mother of Dr Christopher C Pais/ Irol, on February 16, 2023.
- ❖ Nathalia Sequeira (93), Bendur, wife of the late Sebastian, mother of Winnifred/Charles Aranha, the late Ronald/Nancy, John/Flavia, the late Blany/the late Leena, Boniface/Janet and Melwyn/ Jyothi, on February 16, 2023.
- ❖ Austen J A Tauro (94), (Ex-Chairman Indian Oil Corporation), Milagres, husband of Claire Tauro, father of Anita/Raj, Jan/Jane,

- Peter/Hazel and late Paul, Brother of Elaine (Cuckoo) Coelho, on February 17, 2023.
- ❖ Ida Rodrigues (59), Milagres, wife of Stany Rodrigues, mother of Shiny Rodrigues, on February 18, 2023.
- Juliana Francis Fernandes (61), Bejai, wife of Francis Fernandes, mother of Romola Fernandes and Roland Fernandes, on February 19, 2023.
- ❖ Harry Pinto (83), Kulshekar, husband of Juliana Pinto, father of Stanly/Janita and Sheela/Santhosh, on February 20, 2023.
- Christine Lobo (103), Kulshekar, wife of late Thomas Lobo, mother of Cyril/Victoria, Joe/Philoo, Felcy/Sylvester, Oswald/Evelyn, Bertrum/Elizabeth, late Charles/Dicy, Gladys/Louis Vas, on February 22, 2023.
- ❖ Sr M Joanina BS (92), (nee Montina Maria Pinto) Kulshekar, Bethany Congregation, daughter of the late Rosario Pinto and the late Mercina Fernandes, on February 25, 2023.
- Patrick Sequeira (87), Kulshekar, husband of late Felcy Sequeira, father of Sachin/Maria Leona, brother of the late Norbert, the late Gilbert, the late Lizzy, Rosie Fernandes, the late Sr Carmelita Tarbes, Fr Richard Sequeira SJ, the late Sr Linus AC, Sr Carissima AC, the late George and Lyta, on February 27, 2023.
- ❖ Sr Susheela Maria UFS (49), Jeppu, on March 2, 2023.
- Dolphy Raphael D'Silva (64), Kulshekar, husband of Jacintha D'Silva, father of Dipti & Jyothi D'Silva, brother of Sr Justine D'Silva (Sisters of Charity), Cecilia D'Souza and Flavia D'Silva, on March 2, 2023.
- ❖ Prameela Joan Rego (64), Milagres, daughter of the late Saturnine Rego and the late Pauline Rego, on March 03, 2023.
- ❖ Richard Alex Lobo (72) (Joint Secretary of Corporation Bank Employee Union and Former Director of MCC Bank), Bejai, husband of Zita R. Lobo nee Mendonca, father of Roger/Divya Mascarenhas and Runa/Dr Rallyn Fernandes, brother of the late Joseph, the late Monthu, Irene, Dr Lancy Lobo SJ, Martin, Lucy and Peter, on March 03, 2023.

# **Vision & Mission of CASK**

# **Vision**

Striving to create and enrich a connected community that cares, of all those with roots in this beautiful corner of the globe, called Konkan Karaval

**Mission** 

Reaching out to the marginalized by extending support for their education, health care and housing needs. Preserving and promoting the unique culture of this region and joining hands with all those committed to the preservation of environment.

# Information on Organ & Whole Body Cadaveric Donations

CASK is actively promoting blood, organs and whole body cadaveric donations to Fr Muller Medical College

#### **PROCEDURES:**

Organ Donation: Make a pledge to donate your Eyes and other Organs upon your death. We suggest that you include this gift in your Last Will.

Donation of Body after Death for Education & Research - For those in Mangalore or DK District

- Make a pledge to donate your body after death to Fr Muller Medical College. We suggest you include this gift in your Last Will;
- Collect two Body Donation forms from CASK Office or from the Office of the Medical Supt, Fr Muller Medical College Hospital situated in the Outpatient block-ground floor;
- Fill up the forms and give one copy to Fr Muller Medical College Office of Medical Supt and register yourself in the Register kept outside his office; Keep one filled form with you or your spouse or an adult child;
- After death, your spouse or children or a person authorized by the family
  has to collect one more form from the Office of the Medical Supt Fr
  Muller Hospital, fill the form, give it to the Medical Supt, who will give
  approval for Body Donation;
- The Undertaker usually knows these procedures and can assist the family in complying with all the procedures;
- After the Church funeral service, the body is taken directly to the Morgue of Fr Muller Medical College. It is preserved in the morgue for 24-48 hours and then handed over to the Anatomy Dept of the Medical College;



If not delivered, please return to: Catholic Association of South Kanara, Pio Mall, Third Floor, Jail Road, Bejai, Mangalore 575 004

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