

Issue : XXXVI

December 2020



**AGRAGAMI INFO**

**In the  
Fullness  
of Time**



## **AGRAGAMI INFO**

**Vol. XXXVI - December 2020**

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## Editorial

**W**hen the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law.(Gal 4:4) The fullness of time referred here is the account of Gabriel informing Mary of what was soon to be; the birth of Jesus.



After a hard year of unusual happenings, we long for even the illusion of normality; for a chance to be with those we care without fear and to have the freedom to breathe mask free. We live in an irregular time, where our past nostalgia along with our future dreams and fears, distort the reality of our present. We are forced to find the new way of life as usual and normal while future remains uncertain. The best example is our hopes of a near normalcy turning now into worries of a genetically mutated Corona virus unrelenting to the hard earned vaccines. We yearn for the good old days when things were easier and better, when we moved around freely, when we could shake hands without fear and when we saw the other without thoughts of germs and contamination. We realize slowly that human behaviour and perceptions are gradually undergoing a change all over, gaining a new way of thinking, grasping situations and dealing with each other. Corona has not only affected the social systems but the mindsets in a huge way enhancing a 'Me, Mine' attitude which already prevailed. Pope Francis' exhortation becomes so much

relevant in this scenario. He asks us “to go ‘outside’ the self” in order to find a fuller existence in another, opening ourselves to the other according to the dynamism of charity which makes us tend toward “universal fulfilment”. In an unhealthy society that turns its back on suffering and that is “illiterate” in caring for the frail and vulnerable, we are called to become neighbors to others, overcoming prejudices, personal interests, historic and cultural barriers. We all, in fact, are co-responsible in creating a society that is able to include, integrate and lift up those who have fallen or are suffering. Love builds bridges and “we were made for love”.(Fratella Tutti)

Through the incarnation, the Alpha and Omega have converged in our present day, being born into the fullness of our time. Christ’s coming has ushered us to live into the fullness of time, a Kairos time when new credence emerges from what seemed impossible, dry and barren. This time was initiated in the beginning and urges us to live the present moment, at home with God and one another. To live into the fullness of time is to experience the joy of Christmas in our daily lives and spread it all around us. It draws us to love our neighbors and to be a presence beside those who grieve, the elderly, the widow, the wandering, the lonely and lost.

Eugene Peterson puts it this way, “the present moment more resembles eternity than any other, because in the present, the past and the future converge. The result or inability to fully experience the present is a refusal to live freely.”

The incarnation of God in the flesh frees us from the shackles of our past and the worries of what tomorrow will bring. We become free to dwell where Christ is, in the here and now; on the streets, under the bridges, in the hospitals, in the high rises, in our pain, in our joys, experiencing the fullness of our lives. Let us remember that God has His own calendar, His own way of making things beautiful in His time. Only when Christ comes again will we know that God's promises have attained their intended fullness. Until then we witness and wait patiently with confident hope, living the freedom of the children of God.

Let us then tell time differently in the New Year. Because God has come to dwell among us, the fullness of time is counted in every second and every heartbeat. So dear sisters, let us fully dwell where we are so that we may see the joy and peace of Christ's birth unfolding in our midst every moment.

Wish you all a happy Christmas and a prosperous 2021!

**- Sr. Sally**



## Voice of the Mother General

Among the many unique features in our Christian faith, the most fundamental is Incarnation leading to Christmas. The Son of God enters into our world as Jesus of Nazareth, as an ordinary Baby born in Bethlehem. Our normal expectation would have been that the whole world would get to know and even witness in some measures the entry of God into our world. The reality is that God chooses the natural human way of coming into the world. He slips into our world in the middle of night and is born in a cave and laid in a manger. Contrary to all our normal expectations, He is born small, He is born poor, and He is born as an infant. Human infants are the most powerless and other-dependent and they remain so for the longest time among all other living beings. It is an amazing mystery that God is born as an infant. God is born ordinary. If God, who is the Lord of all, had decided to come into our world, He needed to be easily approachable by all; not just by kings but by ordinary people like shepherds, you and me. The majority of people in the world are ordinary persons. So, the incredible happens: God is born as an ordinary infant and enters our world. He becomes fully and truly one of us; Emmanuel; God with us.



Each one of us comes into life, uniquely fashioned and designed by the heart of God. God has obviously a purpose for choosing to place us in this life. He has a mission for each one. Our mission is that we contribute

our share to recreate God's creation and to build His kingdom on earth.

Christmas celebrates joy, a joy that is founded on our belief in God who never gives up believing and hoping in us, who forever loves us. We experience this joy when we selflessly empty ourselves, generously gift ourselves and compassionately engage ourselves with others. In this way, Christmas becomes an everyday event and not a traditional celebration.

Dear sisters, Covid 19 has brought restrictions in our Christmas celebrations. But it can never restrict our value system, our beliefs and positive attitude. Let us continue to believe that God is in charge. "Even the hairs of your head are all numbered" (Mt 10:30)

May this Christmas enrich our lives!! Let the New Year 2021 bring us health and happiness, new life and renewed spirit!!

With hearty Christmas greetings

***Sr. Arpita Mathew***  
(Superior General)





## Provincial's Inspiration

The past 9 months have been a test of endurance, creativity, inventiveness, sensitivity, courage and novelty for all of us. What is heartening to note is that we have learnt to adapt to phenomenal change, increased our reservoir of empathy and compassion and embraced re-imagined processes, skills and knowledge.



It's very true that in times of adversities, the best qualities of humans are expressed and shared. I did realise how empowered, strong and courageous our sisters are who without any hesitation were willing to serve the Corona positive members in the communities and in the hospitals, home for senior citizens and dispensaries. This is the true prophetic witnessing to God who is amidst us and whose Kingdom, we are part of.

The feast of Christmas brings with it a new hope of an empowered people with resilience to stay afloat. The season we are in is a bringer of joy, hope and better tomorrow.

Christmas 2020 is not about whether our campus is sparkling clean; it is not about whether we have made the best Crib for the Lord who was humble enough to be born in a manger; it is not about the variety of cakes we prepare; it is not about the best gift we exchange; it is not about having a vacation at an exotic location, it is not about if our income is stable;...

This Christmas is more about survival. It is about being grateful that we are able to breathe and be alive for this day. It is about being thankful for the love and care from our loved ones in the community and at home and from our neighbourhood which we experienced tangibly during the lockdown days; it is about being with the community/family under one roof and spending time together; it is about lighting a candle for souls who have left us; it is about extending support and spreading cheer to families and friends who have lost their kith and kins; it is about spreading happiness to those who have suffered losses in jobs and businesses.

As we welcome Child Jesus in the manger can we think of practical ways of bringing smile on His face by giving joy to a family in our neighbourhood?

Wish you all an extra ordinary, very meaningful and memorable Christmas 2020.

***Sr. Vidya Joseph***  
(Provincial Superior)



## From the Editorial board

Dear Sisters,

We sincerely thank all those who contribute and enrich each volume of the Info. It is heartening to note that our junior sisters are coming forward more and more with enriching pieces of write ups. Congratulations to each of you. We are sure that you are reading and benefitting from the Info. We also have a steady stream of well-wishers in Sr. Arpita, Sr. Vidya and many of our sisters. We get congratulation notes from fathers who regularly read Info. Thanks dear fathers and sisters for your valuable suggestions, critical evaluations, and encouraging words that assist the steady growth of Info. Your further comments, suggestions and critical feedbacks will help us to be more proficient and apt to make Info more beautiful. Kindly forward the same to the editor to **infowardha@gmail.com**. Letter to the editor will be published in the next issue. We look forward for further enriching contributions from juniors, formees members of our insitutes as well as senior sisters. Please forward your thoughts, inspirations, poems, vocation stories, inspiring and touching life events or experiences even if it is in local language to the given email id or address. Kindly send the Bible quiz answers by 20<sup>th</sup> March 2021 to Sr.Jyotsna.

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### **Congratulations to Bible Quiz Winners**

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1	Sr. Sudha	98	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Sr. Suma	98	1 <sup>st</sup>
3	Sr. Vineeta	98	1 <sup>st</sup>
4	Sr. Bertila	96	2 <sup>nd</sup>
5	Sr. Riya	96	2 <sup>nd</sup>
6	Sr. Dainy	96	2 <sup>nd</sup>
7	Sr. Manjusha	96	2 <sup>nd</sup>
8	Sr. Sunita G	96	2 <sup>nd</sup>
9	Swatinili	96	2 <sup>nd</sup>
10	Florencia	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
11	Maristella	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
12	Sr. Deepa J	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
13	Sr. Jaya	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
14	Sr. Joshna	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
15	Sr. Lucia	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
16	Sr. Martha	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
17	Sr. Rashmi	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
18	Sr. Roja	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
19	Sr. Secunda	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
20	Sr. Flora	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
21	Sr. Nutan X	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
22	Sunima	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
23	Sushanti	94	3 <sup>rd</sup>
24	Kamshila	92	-
25	Nikita	92	-
26	Sr. Archana	92	-
27	Sr. Mariagoreti	92	-
28	Ujwala	88	-

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## A Glance at our Communities

### ❖ St. John's School, Allipur

- August 15: Our school celebrated the Independence Day in a simple way with staff of the school following the regulations of social distance and wearing mask. Sr. Jyotsana the Vice Principal of the school hoisted the Flag. It was followed by a short program to pay homage to our veteran national leaders.

Our staff performed some cultural programs. Teachers sang beautiful patriotic songs. In the background of the Corona pandemic, our teachers paid tribute to all Corona Warriors who were working day and night amid Corona infection. They mentioned the work of doctors, nurses and other hospital staff, health workers and police men who work for the betterment of the society. Sr. Anupa, the in charge of St. John's Kindergarten gave a speech on the occasion. Sr. Anita congratulated all the participants for their wonderful and meaningful performance. Program concluded with Vandemadaram.

- September 5: A programme on Teacher's Day began with prayer followed by garlanding the photo of Dr.Sardar Vallabhaipatel. Students conducted various cultural activities through online. Sr. Jyotsna gave the message for the day. There were games for teachers followed by refreshment.

- School commemorated the Gandhi Jayanti on October 1st by garlanding the photo of Gandhiji followed by a short program like speech, songs and a message by Sr. Anita. Then there was cleaning of school campus and its surrounding by the staff.
- On 12<sup>th</sup> November, there was an integrated program of Children's Day and Diwali celebration. We conducted it through online and students attended it. Teachers performed various dances for the Diwali as well as for the Children's Day celebrations. A message was given by Sr. Rani. She encouraged the students to put their trust in the providence of God. School Leader Miss. Dhanashree proposed the vote of thanks.
- On 23<sup>rd</sup> of November, the school reopened for the offline classes.

#### ❖ **St John's Convent, Allipur**

- Community celebrated the feast of Sr. Sajita on August 23<sup>rd</sup> on the feast day of her patroness St. Rose of Lima. Fr. Martin was the celebrant of the Holy Mass who inspired us with his thoughtful message. It was followed by lunch.
- On October 1<sup>st</sup>, we celebrated the feast of Sr. Rani who has taken St. Therese of Child Jesus as her patroness. Fr. Tomy the acting parish priest of Jeevan Jyoti church, Hinganghat, was the Celebrant for the Holy Mass.

- From November 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>, the members of the community participated in the Charism Retreat of the congregation and renewed our spiritual life.

### ❖ **Vinay Vikas, Pune**

- August 9<sup>th</sup> the first-year novices joined Vinay vikas community. Our newly professed sisters Sarala, Elizabeth, Padmini and Archangel joined their respective communities three months after their First Profession. We wish them all the best for their committed life and the new mission assigned to them. Our candidates Sunima, Florencia and Shushathi went to Wardha for their further formation.
- Months of September and October were the crucial time for the community since most of them were down with fever and Covid-19. It was a time of sorrow, uncertainty, and worries. Sr. Sarita and some formees were affected by Covid-19. The community experienced the powerful support of our Provincial Superior Sr. Vidya and her team, when they visited the community. We express our heartfelt thanks to you sisters for visiting our community. We specially thank all our sisters for your prayerful support during our struggles. We also were supported by the presence our dear Sr. Surabhi who readily extended her help. We pray for you dear sister that you may continue to be a blessing in our province. Sr. Padmini also extended her service in Vinay Vikas during our struggles. God Bless you dear sister. We also remember Sandhya home sisters for their timely support and help.

- Sr. Karuna is transferred to Provincial community. We are grateful to her for the selfless service she rendered for the growth of our formees.
- Month of October was filled with the special devotion to our Lady of Rosary. We could feel her presence and blessings in all our needs. Even though the Covid-19 pandemic brought tensions, it was a time for us to renew our spiritual communion.
- In the month of November, all the community members attended the Charism online retreat. We could renew our committed life during this retreat. We celebrated the feast of Christ the King with lot prayerful preparations. Sisters renewed their vows on the same day.

#### ❖ **Sandhya Home, Pune**

- In the month of September, we as a community decided to read **Saint goes to hell**. While reading the life of Fr. Founder we felt the presence of God. It was a time for us to know his simplicity and prayer life which motivated him to be an exemplary missionary. Sandhya home community participated in the 48 hours chain adoration.
- On 5<sup>th</sup> September Sr. Kripa and staff had a meaningful prayer service for teacher's day celebration by the students of St. Clare's school. We also conducted the novena prayer as a preparation for the feast of our Lady of Health, on 8th September. We celebrated our community feast on the same day along with feasts of Sr. Kripa and Sr. Ursula. Sr.



Vidya and her team visited our community on 9<sup>th</sup> September. Sr. Padmini extended her help for one month in Vinay Vikas as they were in need of our support.

- In the month of October, we completed the chain rosary as it was requested from the province and prayed for the various intentions of the province. We experienced the accompaniment of our mother Mary especially during the month of October. We prayed the novena of St. Theresa of Avila as a preparation for the Province Day. Prayers were offered for the entire congregation. As per the request of our Bishop Thomas Dabre, on 16<sup>th</sup> October we conducted the special rosary and prayers for the Pune diocese.
- We remembered all departed Souls on 2<sup>nd</sup> of November especially those who were with us in Sandhya home. Sr. Kripa along the staff wished the children on 14<sup>th</sup> of November on the birth day Jawaharlal Nehru. We joined Vinay Vikas community for the Charism Retreat. We also celebrated the great feast of Christ the King with lots of spiritual preparations through novenas and holy hour. On the same day we joined Vinay Vikas community for the renewal of the vows and participated in the Holy Mass. We thank Sr. Sarita for her generosity and hospitality. We distributed lot of rations and kits for the needy people during Covid -19. We celebrated the birth day of Dr. Hilary on 26<sup>th</sup> of November.

## ❖ **Asha Kiran, Nagpur**

- I would like to share with you our experiences of the past 6 months of lockdown period due to the Covid-19 pandemic. During this time, about 22 new young girls arrived for shelter from different areas of Nagpur, Gondhia and Sauneir. It was a time of reckoning the Divine protection and providence of our Heavenly Father who helped us to be safe and sound at the time. Many officers and inmates of Shelter Homes at Nagpur were suffering with the Corona virus infection even after taking precautions. Many officers, policemen and social workers visited Asha Kiran during that time because they had selected Asha Kiran to keep the homeless children during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. Girl children below the age of 18 years were brought to our home day and night. After due consideration and understanding their helplessness, we accommodated each child.
- An 8 year old child was brought in because her adopted mother was hospitalized due to Covid-19, and the child's test result was yet to come. The next day, the mother died; and after two days, the child's test result also came as Covid-19 positive. Since she was a very small child, we placed another child along with her in the same room to look after. We took special care of her; and by the miraculous healing power of God, her health improved, and no one else in the Home got the sickness. She came out

of illness after proper rest. Now she stays happily in Asha Kiran.

- It was also a difficult time for us. Because of the sudden strict lockdown in the area we were not allowed to go out to make any purchases. The Sarpanch of the area, however, was kind enough to arrange some provisions for us. Slowly, we could experience God's providence on our Centre through many generous people who came forward to help us in different ways. School teachers, leaders of organizations and individuals, who came to visit the Home, became aware of the situation and work we are doing for the needy girl children of our society.
- Thus, the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown helped us to experience the miraculous work of God through various persons. During this period, we could also reunite 4 girls to their own parents who had come from Mumbai, M.P. and Nagpur. For those children who have their parents, we endeavor to convince both parents and help them to live together with their children as a happy family. In this way, we fulfill our mission of radiating the light and love of Christ Jesus and giving a 'ray of hope' and happiness to broken families.

#### ❖ **St John's Convent, Thoothoor**

- After a long gap, we had Holy Mass in the convent on Sr. Roshni's birthday. The teachers wished her on her birthday. On the same day, we joined the seashore cleaning campaign organized by the youth of Chinnathurai and did our bit in cleaning the

seashore. We celebrated Sr. Tresa's feast day on Oct. 15. The death anniversary our Father Founder was celebrated solemnly with the Holy Eucharist. We prayed the novena in preparation for it. Sr. Tresa's birthday was celebrated on November 15<sup>th</sup>. We solemnly celebrated the feast of Sr. Veena. The parish priest celebrated the Mass. Along with the brothers, the priests joined us for the breakfast.

### ❖ **Aragami Provincial House, Mhasala**

- Aragami Provincial House, Mhasala is going well with all its administrative and community activities. Month of September turned out to be a month of reaching out the Covid affected persons. Sr. Vidya, Sr. Surabhi and Sr. Tessy along with one of our domestic staff visited the Covid affected community of Vinay Vikas- Pune, as Srs. Sarita and Karuna were seriously ill. Sr. Surabhi willingly remained there to take care of the community nearly a month. Thanks to Sr. Surabhi.
- Month of October was a tough going month as 8 sisters of the provincial House were victims of Corona Virus. Thanks for the prayers offered that brought them back to the active life with full vigor and enthusiasm. We could not have our province day celebration on 15<sup>th</sup> October due to the pandemic situation.
- The Feast of Christ the King on 22<sup>nd</sup> November brought all the joys back as we had the province gathering and celebration. Around 70 sisters along with our domestic staff gathered, had a meaningful

thanksgiving liturgical celebration followed by a felicitation program and lunch. Sr. Sally, who won the 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in National level competition on “MY DREAM ABOUT CHANDA MISSION” and the participants were felicitated and awarded by Fr.Binoy CMI. Sr. Vidya was specially felicitated under whose guidance 27 were the participants for the creative writing competition on My Dream of Chanda. We also felicitated our Corona Warriors who did courageous acts.

- Annual Charism retreat was attended by the first group of sisters from 11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> November and the second group from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020. Have a blessed and peaceful Christmas and a new beginning of the year 2021. Student sisters are doing well with their online classes and assignments.

#### ❖ **Aragami Convent School, Mhasala**

- "Ultimately, the greatest lesson that COVID-19 can teach humanity is that we are all in this together. No matter how much falls on us, we keep ploughing ahead. That's the only way to keep the roads clear."
- This togetherness was clearly seen among the staff of Aragami Convent School, Mhasala when school had the celebration of Independence Day, Teachers' Day, Children's Day and Diwali with full enthusiasm and happiness keeping the Covid norms. We move forward in the spirit of love and care for each other to make the way clear. The school was reopened for regular classes of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> standard on 23<sup>rd</sup>

November. The school is functioning well with the maximum number of the students attending.

### ❖ Vinayalaya High School, Nagpur

- Our whole education system underwent a change due to Covid-19 pandemic. The sudden shift of education policies brought lots of challenge in the lives of teachers and students. The teachers started online classes for all the classes from 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2020 onwards.
- Maharashtra SSC Result was declared on 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2020. It was a happy day for Vinayalaya School because all 103 students crossed an important milestone in their lives. We have got 100% result with 5 merits. Anushka Pantawane, the school topper secured 93.20%; Ruchika Gurbaxani, the second topper achieved 92.80%; Reshmi Gupta secured 92%; Laximaishwarya Singh achieved 91.40% and Disha Nagpur secured 90.80 %.



- On 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2020 High school inspection took place. The Deputy Education officer Mr. Renjan Neb visited and inspected our High school section.
- Every year we used have a grand Independence Day celebration but this year the 74<sup>th</sup> Independence Day celebration was limited due to Corona virus Pandemic. Sr. Savita, the principal hoisted the national flag. The celebration was restricted to maintain social distancing and only 5 staff members were present for the flag hoisting. The students and teachers attended the flag hoisting online.



- On 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2020 three poor students from our school were given smart phone for the purpose of their online studies by Sneha Charitable Trust.
- From 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> September online test assignments were conducted for the students.

- Teacher's day was celebrated in a very simple way. A small video clip was sent in teachers' WhatsApp group to express gratitude and love towards them for rendering their service during the Pandemic.



- We organized a small felicitation function for the SSC Toppers 2019-2020. All 5 toppers were felicitated with mementos and bouquets for their excellent performance in the board exam. The programme was attended by the staff members only. The Principal Sr.Savita in her speech congratulated the students, parents and teachers for their commitment and hard work.





- As the month of October is dedicated to mother Mary, Rosary was conducted for 10 days in front of the Grotto of our School. Due to Lockdown only sisters and our workers could attend the Rosary. The devotion to Mother Mary helped us to pray for the people who were suffering from Covid-19. In order to greet students on “Children’s day and Diwali”, videos and photos were sent in students and teachers WhatsApp groups.

### ❖ **St John’s Convent, Hinganghat**

- On September 8<sup>th</sup> we celebrated the Birthday of Mother Mary solemnly. It was also the feast day of Sr. Shubangi. On October 1<sup>st</sup> we celebrated the feast of St. Therese of Lisieux the patroness of Sr.Kusum.

### **New Guest House Inauguration, Hinganghat**



- On the same day guest house and the worker’s cottage was blessed and inaugurated by Fr.Tomy Chirapurath C.M.I. On 5th October we celebrated the feast of St. Faustina the patroness of Sr. Shanti. To express our solidarity with the suffering world we have begun the daily Eucharistic Adoration, from 2 o’clock, concluding it with the evening prayer.

- “To pray the rosary is to hand over the burdens to the merciful hearts of Christ and His Mother.” St. Pope John Paul II. As October month is the month of Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we had the Holy Rosary in our campus for the whole month and we concluded with the Jericho Rosary around the campus. On October 15<sup>th</sup> we celebrated Sr. Preethi’s feast along with our community feast.

### ❖ **Sanjeevani Ashram, Sewagram**

- We give thanks to the almighty God for protecting our community and our inmates from the corona infection despite one of our workers contracting the infection after visiting his home town for an urgent work. During this time of pandemic, we could see the hand of God consistently guiding and leading us, proving for all our needs. We thank the many persons including our superiors who reached out and helped us in all our needs. We had greatly restricted all activities involving the visits of outsiders to the Ashram in view of the spreading illness around. Since the time of relaxation of lockdown, we have resumed the retreat centre activities on a low scale, following all the rules set by the civil authorities. People come in small groups for prayer meetings and counselling. Sr. Divya gives online classes and retreats. On rare occasions she goes to give retreats and classes at selected places. Sr. Sally had an operation for perianal abscess in September. She has almost recouped from the after effects of surgery. She thanks each of you dear sisters

wholeheartedly for being with her and strengthening during the testing times of her pain and difficulties. God bless you all. Sr. Banita is back in the community after a long home holiday due to the country wide lockdown. Sr. Sarala is currently at home for holidays. We have Novice Anjali with us for 2 months for her regency from December 16<sup>th</sup>. Our construction work resumed in October after the lockdown and is progressing well. We thank all our benefactors and well-wishers and all of you sisters, who continue to help us materially, financially and through prayers. Wish you all a Blessed Christmas and a Prosperous New Year 2021

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ON THIS **CHRISTMAS** I WISH  
THAT HAPPINESS AND JOY  
FILLS YOUR HOME AND LIFE.  
MAY YOU HAVE A  
WONDERFUL X'MAS.

## Hope of Christmas

- Sr. Sally

She did hear a sound rising from the streets.  
And so she paused, pulling down the covering sheets.  
It started in a tone so low. Then it started to grow.  
The sound wasn't sad! Why, this sounded merry!  
It couldn't be so! But it was cheery!  
She stared down at streets! She popped her eyes!  
Then she shivered with a shocking surprise!  
Everyone down streets, the tall and the small,  
Was singing! Without any hesitance at all!  
Joyous melodies filled the air  
Bringing hopeful tidings everywhere  
Covid couldn't stop Christmas from coming!  
No matter what, Christ comes all hearts warming!  
And she, with her tubes and lifelines still hanging,  
Yonder the manger her thoughts wandering  
Angels singing, shepherds kneeling  
The Little Baby all sloth dispelling  
"Christmas comes without ribbons and tags!"  
"It comes without packages, gifts or bags!"  
Amazement gripped her, till her lungs felt sore.  
Reminding her of the Virus she had to endure!  
Unlike the yesternight she felt not despondent  
'Coz the Savior is born with a hope so resplendent



## To Be Thankful Always

- Sr. Shruti

**O**ne of my favourite verses in The Bible is “And Be Thankful” (Colo.3.15). The year 2020 reminds us to be thankful. It was a year filled with grace and blessings, challenges and opportunities, joys and concerns. We had been moved by the grace and providence of God towards our Vision always. We should be thankful for new insights, accomplishments and creativity that helped us to reach our goals. We learned to be grateful towards the Almighty though there are stress during this pandemic situations and risks to come together. To be Thankful is that we just express our gratitude, appreciate God’s gifts, count down with humility the blessings that we experience in our ways through different events, inspirations and persons in our journey of life. There are a number of persons to be remembered and a lot of things to be thanked amidst the covid-19.

### **Our Superiors**

Superiors are always in a position to guide, to lead, to teach and to be models. It is according to their vision and attitude towards everything the followers become capable of achieving the goals of the society. It is their courage and capacity to face the catastrophes that shall equip the followers to address the traumatic situations. It urges us to be thankful in our day to day life for the people around us especially the superiors every day during this pandemic. It is our provincial and superiors

who have strengthened and supported us to live our life meaningfully. I would like to applaud, congratulate and thank our superiors for all that they have been to us during the pandemic. Their efforts have borne fruits of success for our comfortable life.

### **Health Workers - Doctors Nurses and counsellors**

An outstanding group to be noticed here in the Pandemic situation of 2020 is health workers i.e. Doctors, Nurses, paramedics, Psychotherapists and social workers. The victims of Covid – 19 and the poor people around the world who are affected badly with the trauma and mental illness. This has really broken bones of society. The health workers had to work hard to address the health problems, its impact and challenges raised by the pandemic. They have no other choice than walking with the Covid affected persons lighting up their burdens especially the patients and their families. The health workers are also helpless if medicine is not found for the better cure for this pandemic. Let God the ultimate healer shine light in the darkness of sickness and may He lead us to the proper care. Their services continue without looking day or night and their own future. Many of them gave life for this cause. Let us be thankful to them and shall be thankful to God almighty for having such wonderful people to care us.

### **Pastors and Spiritual Leaders**

Churches were shut down and loud prayers from the speakers in the churches deadly stopped across the world due to the sudden waves of pandemic and fear of

death. The members of the Church were shocked and the rhythms of life shaken around the churches. But pastors as shepherds took new steps to follow their sheep and made use of technology. They initiated online services and made new methods for all the believers to partake in the liturgy. Their whole hearted support and encouragement made many spiritually nourished. Realizing that all those pastors and other leaders who take initiative to broadcast the spiritual and pious activities using new technologies are blessings, let us be thankful.

### **Zoom and other Online Platforms**

New online platforms were opened that were highly useful during this new pandemic period. Most of the institutions had used zoom and google classroom for classes and meetings. We cannot imagine a life without these kinds of technologies and applications during this situation. Zoom and other technologies have allowed small groups, prayer groups, book clubs and class rooms to stay in touch with. It has opened the door for us to easily enter in to relations, to encourage one another, to support each other and to communicate easily with persons who live far away from us. Let us be thankful.

### **Prayer**

Prayer provides us the strength to live our lives. It is essential and we cannot avoid it in our lives. The amazing truth is that while praying no matter where we are, who we are or what we have done, we have access to the Father through Jesus by one spirit. Even when the

internet is down or nothing else works, we can pray and be always thankful to our dear Lord that we can pray at every moment. When we wake up in the dead of night gripped with worry the Father's ear is always turned towards us ready to listen. For His mercy and love, be thankful.

## Hope

One of the biggest gifts God has given us in the Church is that of a guaranteed happy ending. Jesus has secured the end of all things despite whatever illness prevail or institutions rise and fall. It is this secure hope for the future that allows us to be people of faith and love in the present. During the pandemic, we had the hope that these will also pass and something better will come soon. After all, we are safe in the hands of God and thus, we shall keep in mind that nothing will happen without His knowledge. Come what way, we rejoice in the Lord with a hope of sharing the glory of God and we shall be thankful.





## **The Days Spent with Patients Affected with Covid-19**

**- Sr. Amruta SJB**

**“Life is a journey with problems to solve and lessons to learn but most of all experiences to enjoy”**

MPM Hospital, Jagdalpur like many other hospitals, had not much preparation to manage the emergency and having to pioneer this new move was challenging and scary. Initially I too was afraid of contracting the virus and I was equally worried about bringing the virus home to the sisters in my community. When I thought of my experience of working with HIV/AIDS patients, it helped me to overcome this fear. God kept me safe all the time. Covid -19 has helped me to review what I do and why I do it. I felt exhausted, worn out. But I experienced the providence of God always and I felt all the uncertainties melt away.

To put on the personal protective kit and working with covid-19 affected patients is a unique experience. The personal protective kit would make us sweat; the N-95 mask has left scars on the face and behind the ears. It is still worse when we wear googles, and face shield, it creates fog while we breathe. Communication is very difficult..... difficult to hear what the other person is saying.... We have to speak loudly.

The best way to deal with this crisis is to fight back, doing everything possible by providing best care and

support to the clients. I have seen many patients lose their lives due to this deadly disease without their loved ones around them. But I also have seen many other patients recovering and going home happily. Different medicines, psychological support, good nutrition and oxygen administration and above all being with them are the ways we use to care for the patients and to minimize their discomfort and fear of being in isolation.

The fears about the Corona virus is real, especially when working with patients affected with Covid-19. Two things minimized my fears. First of all, I left everything is in God's hands, I have a firm faith that He plans and makes all things good for me and for all. Holy Communion was made available for us daily. I didn't even realize how the tiresome duty days went on. Most of my duty days were stressful and long. I completed 17 days duty in Covid ward. Secondly, I experienced the prayerful support of our sisters and many others by their messages and calls. With all this I could firmly say that God continues to keep me safe and healthy. I find fulfillment in taking care of the sick, watching them getting better and returning to their homes.

I enjoyed the quarantine days as well. I had good rest and quality time for prayer. Food was provided for me time to time by sisters in the community and I was re-energized for the next duty. My experience is that God is over all everything. He is kind, merciful and ever loving and living. I would like to thank all of you my dear sisters for your valuable prayers and support. Please continue to pray for me.

## Story : The Shoemaker and the Elves

**A** shoemaker, through no fault of his own, had become so poor that he had only leather enough for a single pair of shoes. He cut them out one evening, then went to bed, intending to finish them the next morning. The next morning, after saying his prayers, he was about to return to his work when he found the shoes on his workbench, completely finished. Amazed, he did not know what to say. He picked up the shoes in order to examine them more closely. They were so well made that not a single stitch was out of place. A customer soon came by, and he liked the shoes so much that he paid more than the usual price for them.

The shoemaker now had enough money to buy leather for two pairs of shoes. That evening he cut them out, intending to continue his work the next morning with good cheer. But he did not need to do so, because when he got up, they were already finished. Customers soon bought them, paying him enough that he now could buy leather for four pairs of shoes. Early the next morning he found the four pairs finished. And so, it continued; whatever he cut out in the evening was always finished the following morning. He now had a respectable income and with time became a wealthy man.

One evening shortly before Christmas, just before going to bed, and having already cut out a number of shoes, he said to his wife, "Why don't we stay up tonight and see who is giving us this helping hand."

His wife agreed to this and lit a candle. Then they hid themselves behind some clothes that were hanging in a corner of the room. At midnight two cute little naked men appeared. Sitting down at the workbench, they picked up the cut-out pieces and worked so unbelievable quickly and nimbly that the amazed shoemaker could not take his eyes from them. They did not stop until they had finished everything. They placed the completed shoes on the workbench, then quickly ran away.

The next morning the wife said, "The little men have made us wealthy. We must show them our thanks. They are running around with nothing on, freezing. Do you know what? I want to sew some shirts, jackets, undershirts, and trousers for them, and knit a pair of stockings for each of them, and you should make a pair of shoes for each of them." The husband said, "I agree," and that evening, when everything was finished, they set the presents out instead of the unfinished work. Then they hid themselves in order to see what the little men would do. At midnight they came skipping up, intending to start work immediately. When they saw the little clothes instead of the cut-out leather, they at first seemed puzzled, but then delighted. They quickly put them on, then stroking the beautiful clothes on their bodies they sang: Are we not boys, neat and fine? No longer cobblers shall we be!

Then they hopped and danced about, jumping over chairs and benches. Finally, they danced out of the house. They never returned, but the shoemaker prospered, succeeding in everything that he did.

## My Vocation Story

- Sr. Flora

I was born on 2nd of March 1993 as 6th of the 6 children born to Mr. Marshal Dhanwar and Mrs. Mariam Dhanwar in Palash Basti, Masbat, Udalguri Assam. I was baptized in Holy family church Habigoan, Masbat and was named Flora. I was so much inspired by the sisters, working in my parish to become a religious nun to serve the poor. Sisters from different congregations were visiting my family often during my school days. And I said to every one of them that I would join their congregation. But my call was not to their congregations. I have received inspiration from my parents and brothers to pray more and to grow in prayer. Also, their faith and total trust in God helped me to have a deep basis in spiritual life. I was so much fond of reading the Bible especially the parables in the Gospels. As I grew up, my desire to become a sister grew day by day. The desire of becoming a sister helped me to live a simple life. In the year 2012 I passed my SSLC exam. And the same year two sisters from the congregation of Sisters of St. John the Baptist and Mary the Queen, came to visit me. They were Sr. Esther and Sr. Clementina. That very day I expressed my desire to join this congregation. Thus, I joined the congregation of Sisters of John the Baptist on 22nd June 2012. During my seven years of formation, I was guided by many formators and spiritual directors. The spiritual guidance and regular classes on various topics helped me to discern my vocation and to deepen

my love for God and His people. I am so much convinced of one thing; that is without prayer, religious life becomes meaningless. On 31st May 2019, I made my first profession and became a member of St. John's family. On that wonderful day, my desire to become a sister got fulfilled.

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### Poem

- Sr. Sunita Gandhare

*Give us faith Lord, in this great pandemic*

*Be our hope Lord in this great pandemic*

*Teach us love Lord; let it blaze in our hearts*

*And shine for your glory, O Lord*

*As the Corona Virus surrounds us*

*And the fear has come in our hearts*

*Open up the flood gates of your merciful love*

*Your grace and love keep us strong*

*As the problems are increasing daily*

*Adding difficulties to face these troubles*

*May the words of your promise rekindle our hope*

*Renew our trust in your care*

## Healing Touch of God In Our Lives

- Srs. Martha and Riya

**E**ach moment has something to offer, something to teach, to enlighten us with wisdom so profound, to broaden our vision. It may be any time, at any place even in the hospital, community or college.

Here we would like to share with you our Covid experience since we were once tested positive to corona virus. The book of Isaiah 46:3-4 says, “Listen to me, I have created you and cared for you since you were born, I will be your God through all your lifetime, yes even when your hair is white with age. I made you and will care for you. I will carry you along and be your savior”. The promises of God never fail. This we have experienced when we were affected by Covid -19. It was a personal invitation for us to have personal contact and nearness of God through this experience and it reminded us that we are a mixture of ordinary clay, in the hands of our Lord and the breath we have is His.

It all started with a viral fever and it went on for about one week. We were hospitalized in Sevagram as we tested Covid positive. We had the symptoms of breathlessness, pneumonia, loss of sense of taste and smell, fever, cough, myalgia, and headache. We accepted it; we were positive although we didn't know from where we got it. It made us feel very weak. It became difficult even to take one step. The time we spent in the hospital was full of stress, depression and

loneliness. We were fully isolated and kept away from others. Our meals were delivered by our community through our driver. At this time of isolation, we could feel the relevance of being together in the community. It was a chance to have a real experience with other patients and feel the sufferings and pains of others. We could open our eyes to see the value of our lives as we were seeing the death of many, caused by the deadly virus.

Every day, the selfless warriors were giving their all-in health-care settings while cutting themselves off from their families and loved ones. We could sense the dedication of the doctors, nurses and other staff members for their committed service towards Covid -19 patients. During our stay in the Covid ward, our sister's time to time assured prayers, sent encouraging messages and phone calls that strengthened, and comforted us. It helped us to look forward in hope. After we got discharged from the hospital, doctors advised us to have home quarantine for fourteen days. We were completely isolated in the convent too where we continued the rest, medication and excises as per the advice of corona health department. we were provided a herbal tea - kadhas and food prescribed by the doctors.

We stand at the shore of a new life with endless gratitude towards our sisters who earnestly prayed for us when we were affected by corona virus. Thank you, sisters, for your valuable prayers, love and care you showed us during the times of our sufferings and pains. May God bless you and reward you for your selfless services, love and concern.



## Cousin Tribulation's Story

- By Louisa May Alcott

**A**s a subject appropriate to the season, I want to tell you about a New Year's breakfast which I had when I was a little girl. What do you think it was? A slice of dry bread and an apple. This is how it happened, and it is a true story, every word.

As we came down to breakfast that morning, with very shiny faces and spandy clean aprons, we found father alone in the dining-room. "Happy New Year, papa! Where is mother?" we cried. "A little boy came begging and said they were starving at home, so your mother went to see and--ah, here she is."

As papa spoke, in came mamma, looking very cold, rather sad, and very much excited. "Children, don't begin till you hear what I have to say," she cried; and we sat staring at her, with the breakfast untouched before us. "Not far away from here, lies a poor woman with a little new-born baby. Six children are huddled into one bed to keep from freezing, for they have no fire. There is nothing to eat over there; and the oldest boy came here to tell me they were starving this bitter cold day. My little girls, will you give them your breakfast, as a New Year's gift?"

We sat silent a minute, and looked at the nice, hot porridge, creamy milk, and good bread and butter; for we were brought up like English children, and never drank

tea or coffee, or ate anything but porridge for our breakfast.

"I wish we'd eaten it up," thought I, for I was rather a selfish child, and very hungry. "I'm so glad you come before we began," said Nan, cheerfully. "May I go and help carry it to the poor, little children?" asked Beth, who had the tenderest heart that ever beat under a pinafore.

"I can carry the lassy pot," said little May, proudly giving the thing she loved best. "And I shall take all the porridge," I burst in, heartily ashamed of my first feeling. "You shall put on your things and help me, and when we come back, we'll get something to eat," said mother, beginning to pile the bread and butter into a big basket.

We were soon ready, and the procession set out. First, papa, with a basket of wood on one arm and coal on the other; mamma next, with a bundle of warm things and the teapot; Nan and I carried a pail of hot porridge between us, and each a pitcher of milk; Beth brought some cold meat, May the "lassy pot," and her old hood and boots; and Betsey, the girl, brought up the rear with a bag of potatoes and some meal.

Fortunately, it was early, and we went along back streets, so few people saw us, and no one laughed at the funny party. What a poor, bare, miserable place it was, to be sure, --broken windows, no fire, ragged clothes, wailing baby, sick mother, and a pile of pale, hungry children cuddled under one quilt, trying to keep warm. How the big eyes stared and the blue lips smiled as we came in!

"Ah, mein Gott! it is the good angels that come to us!" cried the poor woman, with tears of joy. "Funny angels, in woollen hoods and red mittens," said I; and they all laughed.

Then we fell to work, and in fifteen minutes, it really did seem as if fairies had been at work there. Papa made a splendid fire in the old fireplace and stopped up the broken window with his own hat and coat. Mamma set the shivering children round the fire, and wrapped the poor woman in warm things. Betsey and the rest of us spread the table, and fed the starving little ones.

"Das ist gute!" "Oh, nice!" "Der angel--Kinder!" cried the poor things as they ate and smiled and basked in the warm blaze. We had never been called "angel-children" before, and we thought it very charming, especially I who had often been told I was "a regular Sancho." What fun it was! Papa, with a towel for an apron, fed the smallest child; mamma dressed the poor little new-born baby as tenderly as if it had been her own. Betsey gave the mother gruel and tea, and comforted her with assurance of better days for all. Nan, Lu, Beth, and May flew about among the seven children, talking and laughing and trying to understand their funny, broken English. It was a very happy breakfast, though we didn't get any of it; and when we came away, leaving them all so comfortable, and promising to bring clothes and food by and by, I think there were not in all the hungry little girls who gave away their breakfast, and contented themselves with a bit of bread and an apple of New Year's day.

## **My Dreams of Chanda Mission and A Ministry of Humble Presence**

**- Sr. Sally**

### **Introduction**

I dream of Chanda Mission streaming with missionaries having renewed spirit, passion, and visions for earnest missionary endeavors. I dream of Chanda where the faithful palpate the mercy of Jesus in the religious and the clergy who carry the emanation of their flock. I dream of Chanda mission where there is fruitful integration and collaboration between the laity, religious, and clergy, whose sole unified focus bears the face and identity of Jesus to people of the land and beyond. I dream of Chanda mission that constantly resources her original sapience, ardor, and commitment to live and die for Christ. With a firm trust that this yearning is still possible, I propose a renewing spirit and a radiating presence for the mission. The renewing missionary spirit concerns a spiritual and pastoral renewal for the mission at hand, while the radiating presence denotes a movement towards the people.

### **Renewing Missionary Spirit**

As committed missionaries, we need a thorough evaluation of the witness value of our presence and service in Chanda's mission and its relevance in people's lives. Renewal of missionaries as individuals and communities shall revive the zeal and original love

for the mission, automatically accentuating our service quality. Appreciating our bygone veteran missionaries' dedication to building up the mission shedding sweat and tears, we need to examine what worked and what did not in the past 50 plus years of the mission. It also implies learning from the past and marching ahead with renewed fealty. In his message for the world mission day 2019, Pope Francis made a passionate call to revive Church's missionary awareness and commitment. Missionaries' lives shall become the witness and evangelization when they radiate Gospel's joy and fragrance in their words and deeds. Our actions should speak louder than words, letting our stories teach, and our actions speak. We need to evaluate time and again if we get unduly caught up by our commitment's socio-political and cultural consequences that hinder the unrelenting nature of our service.

A missionary renewal in practical terms implies refreshing mission's agents, especially the clergy, religious, and catechists. The dwindling number of vocations and scarcity of priests and religious will be crucial problems for Chanda mission in coming years. The measures already in place can be enhanced by conducting Christine retreats, vocation camps and motivating parents to encourage priestly and religious vocations. More importantly, priests and religious of the mission should be living examples of gospel values, which will inspire young minds. Lay ministries and cooperation must be encouraged and empowered at all

levels as they will be pillars of Christian apostolates in the future.

Catechists once played a huge role in faith formation and sustenance in Chanda mission. They should be revitalized to take up an ongoing faith formation among Christian communities in interior missions in the wake of declining vocations. Besides right platforms to listen to their voices, there should be allocations of adequate remuneration that enable catechists to render greater service to church activities. They should also have ongoing formation activities besides periodic evaluations, planning, and accountability assessments. Catechism of catholic children shall be given due importance in all mission centers. Having a boarding/hostel attached to parishes, primarily for quality spiritual care at a pliable age, has yielded great faith and growth in Chanda mission. Besides this, missionaries shall aid families to cultivate a faith environment in homes and communities. Women religious constitute a significant force in the mission. Their representation, spiritual care and maintenance should be serious concerns of the missionary leadership.

### **Radiating Missionary Presence**

As Pope Benedict XVI reminds, “the mission as a whole and all pastors, like Christ, must set off to lead people out of the desert, towards Jesus.” The ushering of stranded sheep into the life of communion with God through the door of faith shall be our pastoral priority. Our missionary engagement shall enable every baptized

man and woman to become mission themselves. As the source and summit of Christian life, liturgy shall be the motivating and empowering feature of people's missionary nature. Many Catholics leave our churches for other sects like Pentecost, Immanuel Emperor and Protestant. Liturgical services with the laity should be creatively enhanced to recompense all aberrations in worship and faith. As a relevant and livable reality, Jesus should abide in people in understandable and acceptable way, not in a language and style that suit us the best. In a world inundated by social media, the fresh voice of the Church should be brief but effective, enticing and hopeful. Fine arts and literature of contextual nature shall be earnestly encouraged to enrich our liturgy and faith as a unifying force for the faithful.

The challenge of creeping individualism and hyper-institutionalization must be faced with a balanced approach in all our endeavors upholding the option for the poor and people in peripheries. Christian approach should be that of a humble presence appealing to all people of the land. Instead of competing with social, commercial and governmental agencies, our presence and impact shall be that of Christ, who humbled himself to redeem the lost and stranded by manifesting the glory of God in His human face of love and mercy.

I posit that my dreams for Chanda mission are essentially aligned with the love of Christ that fills our hearts and impels us. Christian missionaries and faithful in Chanda would have to realize a genuine way of 'being the Church' through radically transformed lifestyle and

attitude. It contrasts the institutionalized model. It should be a sign and challenge to the unjust social conditions in the sense that such an existence constantly seeks to refine itself, transforming the community and hopes to present an ideal vision of life based on the love of God. Our missionary spirit shall open itself to renewal so that it shall radiate, as St Paul triumphantly proclaims, the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing (2 Cor 2:15).

*(This entry won second prize in the national level essay competition on My dreams about Chanda)*

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### Poem : The Magi

*Now as at all times I can see in the mind's eye,  
In their stiff, painted clothes, the pale unsatisfied ones  
Appear and disappear in the blue depths of the sky  
With all their ancient faces like rain-beaten stones,  
And all their helmets of silver hovering side by side,  
And all their eyes still fixed, hoping to find once more,  
Being by Calvary's turbulence unsatisfied,  
The uncontrollable mystery on the bestial floor.*



## St Adelaide - 16<sup>th</sup> December



**St Adelaide** is among other things the patron saint of princesses. She was born in 932, the daughter of Rudolf II of Burgundy, who betrothed her to marry Lothair, son of Hugh of Provence, when she was just two years old as part of a peace treaty. The contract was fulfilled when Adelaide reached the age of 16. Lothair had by then been crowned King of Italy. The couple had a daughter, Emma, but Lothair died in 950, possibly poisoned by his rival, Berengarius, who succeeded him.

Berengarius tried to force Adelaide to marry his son and when she refused, he treated her brutally and jailed her in a castle on Lake Garda. At this time the German king, Otto the Great, was invading Italy from the north and he defeated Berengarius. Adelaide joined him after she either escaped (legend speaks of her flight to Canossa,

where she appealed directly to Otto for help) or was released from prison. In an attempt to consolidate his grip on northern Italy, Otto married Adelaide, who was 20 years his junior, on Christmas Day 951 and they went on to have five children together.

St Adelaide proved popular among the German people even though Ludolf, Otto's son from his first marriage to the English Athelstan, became jealous of the influence of his stepmother and a focus of discontent and rebellion.

In 962 Otto was crowned Holy Roman Emperor in Rome and St Adelaide became Empress. *Butler's Lives of the Saints* tells us that nothing is heard of Adelaide until her husband died 10 years later and was succeeded by their eldest son, Otto II. The new emperor was turned against his mother by his wife, the Byzantine Theophano, so following a succession of quarrels St Adelaide left the court and joined her brother, Conrad of Burgundy at Vienna. She later asked St Majolus, the Abbot of Cluny, who she had wanted to be elected as Pope when Benedict VI was murdered in 974, to intervene in the dispute and finally Otto was reconciled with his mother at Pavia, dropping to his knees to ask her forgiveness.

Trouble erupted again when Otto died while his son and heir, Otto III, was just a baby. His wife became regent and St Adelaide again left the court only to return herself as regent in 991 following the sudden death of Theophano, exercising her political duties with the advice of St Willigis of Mainz.

St Adelaide was a woman who was repeatedly and generously forgiving to her enemies. She had a great interest in evangelization and was amenable to the wise counsel of St Majolus, St Adalbert of Magdeberg and St Odilo of Cluny, establishing and restoring many monasteries and churches throughout Europe. She also pressed for the conversion of the Slavs, whose movements on her eastern borders troubled her closing years.

In the twilight of her life St Adelaide returned to her native Burgundy and she died in Selz, on the Rhine near Strasbourg, on 16 December 999 in a monastery she had founded. Besides princesses, St Adelaide is also a patron of abuse victims, brides, empresses, exiles, people who have problems with in-laws, parenthood, the parents of large families, prisoners, step-mothers, second marriages and widows.

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## **Let Us Dream: The Path Towards A Better Future**

**P**ope Francis is the author of a powerful and timely new book responding to the COVID-19 crisis, and the many factors that brought society to this point. *Let Us Dream: The Path to a Better Future* was published on December 1 in both English and Spanish editions.

Like the rest of us, Pope Francis has had an unusual year. Gone were the tens of thousands of people normally gathered in St. Peter's Square for Easter Sunday Mass. Instead, throughout Holy Week in April, the Pope gave his address in a near-empty St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, and live-streamed his proceedings. In this uplifting and practical book, written in collaboration with his biographer, Austen Ivereigh, the Pope explains why we must-and how we can-make the world safer, fairer, and healthier for all people now. In the COVID crisis, the beloved shepherd of over one billion Catholics saw the cruelty and inequity of our society exposed more vividly than ever before. He also saw, in the resilience, generosity, and creativity of so many people, the means to rescue our society, our economy, and our planet. In direct, powerful prose, Pope Francis urges us not to let the pain be in vain.

He begins 'Let Us Dream' by exploring what this crisis can teach us about how to handle upheaval of any kind

in our own lives and the world at large. With unprecedented candor, he reveals how three crises in his own life changed him dramatically for the better. By its very nature, he shows, crisis presents us with a choice: we make a grievous error if we try to return to some pre-crisis state. But if we have the courage to change, we can emerge from the crisis better than before. Pope Francis then offers a brilliant, scathing critique of the systems and ideologies that conspired to produce the current crisis, from a global economy obsessed with profit and heedless of the people and environment it harms, to politicians who foment their people's fear and use it to increase their own power at their people's expense. He reminds us that Christians' first duty is to serve others, especially the poor and the marginalized, just as Jesus did.

Finally, the Pope offers an inspiring and actionable blueprint for building a better world for all humanity by putting the poor and the planet at the heart of new thinking. For this plan, he draws not only on sacred sources, but on the latest findings from renowned scientists, economists, activists, and other thinkers. Yet rather than simply offer prescriptions, he shows how ordinary people acting together despite their differences can discover unforeseen possibilities. Along the way, he offers dozens of wise and surprising observations on the value of unconventional thinking. *Let Us Dream* is an epiphany, a call to arms, and a pleasure to read. It is Pope Francis at his most personal, profound and passionate.

## A Journey Towards The Origin

- Sr. Jyoti SJB

Let me start by expressing my sincere thanks to the Almighty God for calling me to be part of St. John's family, to Sr. Vidya our Provincial Superior and her team and all others involved in making the charism retreat a reality. A word of heartfelt thanks to Sr. Veena, Sr. Nitya and Sr. Lify. The classes and the reflections were infusing spiritual energy and able to bring far reaching results at this juncture of time.

I was making a journey towards the origin of the Congregation along with Fr. John Mary Haw. It was a unique journey experiencing his noble personality, grasping the depth of his spirituality, charism, and missionary zeal, his love for the Eucharistic Lord and his special devotion towards Mother Mary and the saints.

It was inspiring, challenging and questioning to my own personal life. With wonder I was speaking to my own conscience "What a zealous missionary, who spent his total life for the least, lost and the last with a very poor health."

His uncompromising trust in God's providence helped him remain calm amidst the tribulations and trials. He considered Mother Mary as the real Superior of the congregation. He frequently repeated "Mary our Queen we belong to you". In 1941 when the secret police of Hitler confiscated St. John's league, this holy priest

remained calm and said “We are wholly in Mary’s hands and so we shall get it back”.

Is it not the guidelines that Father Founder is still giving in my everyday life to make my spiritual journey easy and goal oriented? Again, I listen to him. He says, **“The sick are our most zealous members”**. Really even today his words of wisdom will encourage us, that sickness and age bar cannot put off the mission fire. “Fervent prayer must accompany all my actions” is a torch given to us to examine our conscience every day.

Then comes a most important reminder with a firm determination “The glory of God must be like the soul aim of our apostolate”. “If we no longer strive for this goal, if we become worldly minded and ceased to love and practice poverty, then may God bring about the ruin of our league, it must then come to an end”.

I too was trying to get in to the mind of our Father Founder, seriously thinking and realizing how much more I have to go through his writings and guidelines to do my duty towards my Congregation mor effectively. Father John Mary Haw does not like mediocrity and the compromising character of the present time. Lastly his press apostolate, the rehabilitation and retreat centers were power weapons to fight against the evil and then to save souls.

Coming to myself this turning back to the origin gave me a lot of encouragement and satisfaction in the present ministry I am doing. It is nothing great but for me the current mission is precious that started from the time of

lockdown. I started using my phone for proclamation and counseling. It was an urgent need as Corona deaths were very high and the ventilator patients were increasing. Now I have two WhatsApp groups one for proclamation and counseling and to maintain the faith of our converted Christians.

The second is for women laity in my contact and it is for Keralites. My intention is

- To build up their family members spiritually and to help meet the needs of the time.
- To give them realization that the church is their mother and they have to look after their mother instead of throwing stones at her.
- Reminding them about the presence of the false prophets of the time.
- Introducing the intercessory prayer not only for the family circle but also for the suffering masses all over the world.
- Preparation for the second coming of Jesus as we see the signs.

To my happiness, I got a very positive response from the groups. Even from the Ashadeepam rehabilitation center, some old inmates came forward and they are in my contact list now. They share their experiences in Ashadeepam and speak about Jesus. Is it not the right time to revitalize our energy and enthusiasm to boost our prayer life, to re-dedicate ourselves for the mission, to give importance to the least, lost and the lost, as our Father Founder taught us!



## Our Corona Experience

- Sr. Rashmi SJB

**T**he Lord is about to lay waste the earth and make it desolate and he will twist its surface and scatter its inhabitants [Is: 24:1]

Corona.....Corona....Corona....

A small tiny microscopic organism shook the world so much. No one had experienced such a dangerous situation. The world once again experienced the untouchability, not of caste, colour, or creed, but of their own loved ones, totally being isolated and depending on the love, kindness and mercy of God.

Each day began with the only thought of Corona. The T.V news spoke only about Corona and the deaths it brought about. Usual things and thinking became unusual. Corona changed the entire world. It gifted many good things.

Everybody got enough and more time to spend with their families and loved ones. Many people who were far away were brought together. Places of pilgrimage and worship became empty; houses became full and homes lively with love and laughter. Roads became empty and accidents became less and less. Vehicles remained locked at home; hotels remained closed down and people became active in cooking what they want to eat. Extravagant expenses became limited; shake-hands

were limited to Namaste; active people made inactive and lazy due to loss of employment.

Mask, sanitizer, hand washing, and social distancing became part of life. Social gathering nullified but social media got activated. Parents could easily trace their children as outdoor games were vanished and indoor games were strengthened. People became more exposed to online connections. Children became the happiest because there was no school, no homework, no exams and they were freely allowed to use mobile, internet, laptop, tabs etc. These became part of their curricular activities. Most of the people lost their job and their earnings. Some professions were made more active like the health teams, defense etc. with day and night involvement to protect the country from this pandemic and to cure the victims.

For us religious nothing much happened in fact. We are safe and sound as ever. The only change may be that the fear of illness and death brought us closer to the Lord. Some of us became victims and warriors of this pandemic.

Anyway, personally for me, it was a moment of grace experience, I enjoyed the nearness and love of the Lord. It was a time we [Sevasadan community] sisters experienced the love of the Lord more deeply in sharing, caring, and understanding the needs of each other. Our sisters and neighbors helped us boundlessly. Their love had been poured upon us through moral and material supports. Especially Sr. Vidya our Provincial,

Sr.Sunanda and sisters from different communities. Srs.Vidya and Sunanda were really icons of courage and strength to each one of us. They were in contact with us each and every minute by encouraging us guiding us and taking care of our daily needs. We have only our prayers for them to offer. May the wings of faith protect them, the shadow of spirit may cover them, wisdom and knowledge may lead them and above all may the love of the Lord cheer them in the moments of pain and joy. Of course, Mr. Dilip [Provincial house driver] dared to act in our need which we ourselves never could. May the good Lord bless him in hundred-fold.

Sr. Sancy the good Samaritan and friend [ready to lose her life] along with Chaya took courageous steps to care for each one of us. May the good Lord grant her all the blessings and keep her in the center of His heart and never allow her to waver from Him.

Above all, the Almighty was gracious enough to pour His blessings upon us. We are grateful to the Lord at all times and all throughout our lives. May the Lord live and work in us. Once again thanks to all for your love, concern and prayerful support that we experienced. "Do not fear or be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it, you are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? There is no other rock; I know not one". [IS: 44:8].

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## **Tribal Paintings of Orissa**

**O**rissa has an age-old tradition of Painting which stretches from the prehistoric rock shelters to the temples and mathas of this century. Out of these the traditional paintings, the tribal paintings, the folk and rock paintings are of significance.

### **Rock Paintings: -**

Painted rock shelters are situated in the densely wooded tracts of western Orissa. The rock shelters at Ulapgarh and Vikram Khol in Sambalpur district, Manikmada and Ushakothi in Sundargarh district, Gudahandi and Yogimatha in Kalahandi district, offer the joy of discovering a primitive culture, rare in the whole of Eastern India. There are natural rocks in these areas covered with prehistoric paintings. The Ravana Chhata Rock at Sitabinjhee of Keonjhar district contains a painting of a very high order. It depicts the procession scene of a King riding a caparisoned elephant. There are horse-riders and soldiers on the march, holding shafts and banners, followed by a female attendant. This painting carries reminiscence of Ajanta murals. The rock painting in these natural caves are colored with the help of a twig of a palm tree turned into a brush by hammering its fibrous end. The paintings differ from place to place. For example, in most rock shelters, the paintings are mostly linear. But in Manikamada, the paintings have a more pictorial quality and are of a greater variety and range in their depiction of figures and

nature. Here the paintings have received several coats of paint and are thick in texture, while there are some others, which have been very roughly sketched. At Yogimath the painting is clear and rendered in red-orche lines. Usually the rear walls and ceilings covered with paintings have no definite scheme of composition. It is interesting to note that the paintings range from small geometrical and floral patterns to big animal motifs like deer, cattle, stag and sambar. Where human figures are present, they are shown as hunting, domesticating animals, fighting and dancing. The pigments used by the rock painters are oxides of iron which give the colors red and brown; white is derived from lime and green from copper compounds. These colors are mostly available near the rock shelters. Obviously, these paintings have been done by primitive men, the ancestors of the tribals of Central India and Western Orissa. This rock tradition of pictorial painting is carried into the present day in the mural paintings of tribals. The paintings of the Saura tribals in Koraput and Ganjam districts still retain the freshness and vigor of rock paintings.

### **Kandha Paintings: -**

Orissa has a rich tribal culture. The Sauras, the Kondhs and the Santals decorate their houses with motifs of flowers, birds and geometrical designs. The Saura paintings are intimately related to religious beliefs and drawn in order to appease demigods' and spirits. On the occasion of animal sacrifices, the Sauras draw ittals on their walls. The themes of these paintings are usually dream sequences. A medley of objects such as a comb

or even a bicycle map figure in modern Saura paintings. The Kondh wall paintings are generally in the form of geometrical designs. Santals also paint their houses with figurative patterns.

### **Santhal and Saora Paintings: -**

Tribal paintings are like prayers that become part of the offerings made to gods, ancestors and spirits. Members of the Saora tribe draw ritualistic pietographs on the inner walls of their mud dwellings called Mans<sup>24</sup>. The icons are painted to preserve the abundance of the crops, avert disease, honour the dead, promote fertility, honour the tutelary and so on. The spirit is then invoked and invited to occupy the one-dimensional painting which actually represents a house made for it. Once captured therein it is propitiated with appropriate chantings. The icons are a curious amalgamation of an early memory and contemporary impressions. Since they are basically the expressions of an agricultural community there is an emphasis on nature, the great outdoors and also on the cycle of ploughing, sowing and harvesting. But as the outside world increasingly impinges on their lives, cars, chairs, tables and planes have begun to appear innocently in the paintings, and are offered as vehicles for their gods in hierarchical order,

## **Tribal Handicrafts**

### **Pottery: -**

Though there are very few potters among the tribals, the tribal people extend their patronage to the other potters. They have long used the elemental quality of earth as a substance in the execution of both ritual and utilitarian objects. A variety of roof tiles, utensils such as pots, bowls, plates and jars, and cooking stoves meet specific requirements of daily life. Simultaneously the potter creates votive offerings in strong forms of bulls, elephants and horses as well as terracotta temples and toys.

### **Cane, Bamboo, Reeds, Grasses and Wood: -**

Bamboo and cane have all the fertile, lively and tactile qualities of nature's raw materials which crafts persons have successfully harnessed. The structural qualities of bamboo, its high-tensile strength and pliability have led to its widespread use for architectural purposes. Besides which, bamboo splits are woven together to make baskets of diverse shapes and sizes depending on the nature of goods they are required to carry or store. Similarly, the elasticity and sturdiness of cane has been utilized in the manufacture of a variety of domestic goods, while countless local fibres and reeds are used by people with household skills to make ropes, strings, brooms and the like. These products are largely geared for local consumption.

## **Plaster and Papier Mache**

### **Papier Mache: -**

This skill has been creatively practiced by craftspeople from all over Orissa. Paper, waste cloth and different kinds of natural fibres are soaked and beaten into a pulp, then mixed with a variety of seeds and gums for strength and as protection from termites. Special clays and bio-wastes are added for body and reinforcement. The entire process results in a malleable material that it requires little skill to be molded into countless forms. However, despite its versatility this craft has remained neglected.

### **Plasters: -**

The application of plasters to her dwellings is often the rural woman's medium of creative statement reflecting, both in terms of colors and symbols, the close identification of man with nature. From clay come the colours ochre, gheru, charcoal grey and white, which are either used naturally or mixed with pigments purchased in the markets<sup>2</sup>. The images created by her are timeless yet ephemeral, with the sun and the rain taking their toll. The predominantly geometric forms - a straight line, a square covered in dots, waves, triangles pointing to the sky and downwards - can have the most disparate of meanings but the symbolism of fertility is implicit in all of them. The tools used for applying the plasters whether on hut walls or floors are basic. They use twigs, fingers, whole hands and rags.



## Laugh a While

There is a story of the old man who had too much to drink, who came to a revival meeting and got saved. Immediately after the service, the pastor took the candidates out to the river to be baptized.

The man, who had just been saved, was still pretty well "sauced." The pastor took his head, shoved him down into the water, brought him up and asked, "Did you see Jesus down there?" The old boy said, "No." The pastor took his head, shoved him down into the water, brought him up and asked, "Did you see Jesus down there?" Again, the old drunk said, "No."

The pastor took his head, shoved him down into the water, brought him up and asked, "Did you see Jesus down there?" The old drunk said, "No, preacher, are you sure he fell in here?"

### God Is Watching

**The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large tray of apples. A nun lettered a note and posted it on the apple tray: "Take only ONE. God is watching."**

**Moving along the lunch line, at the other end was a large tray of chocolate chip cookies. A girl wrote a note, which she put next to the tray of cookies, "Take all you want. God is watching the apples."**

## **A Short Summary of Pope Francis's Social Encyclical on Universal Fraternity**

The Pope describes the encyclical as a “Social Encyclical” which borrows the title of the “Admonitions” of Saint Francis of Assisi, who used these words to “address his brothers and sisters and proposed to them a way of life marked by the flavour of the Gospel” (Par 1). The Encyclical aims to promote a universal aspiration toward fraternity and social friendship. In the background of the Encyclical is the Covid-19 pandemic which, Francis reveals, “unexpectedly erupted” as he “was writing this letter”. But the global health emergency has helped demonstrate that “no one can face life in isolation” and that the time has truly come to “dream, then, as a single human family” in which we are “brothers and sisters” (Par 8).

### **Chapter One: Dark clouds cover the world**

In the first of eight chapters, which is entitled “Dark Clouds over a Closed World”, the document reflects on the many distortions of the contemporary era: the manipulation and deformation of concepts such as democracy, freedom, justice; the loss of the meaning of the social community and history; selfishness and indifference toward the common good; the prevalence of a market logic based on profit and the culture of waste; unemployment, racism, poverty; the disparity of rights and its aberrations such as slavery, trafficking, women

subjugated and then forced to abort, organ trafficking (see Par 10-24). It deals with global problems that call for global actions, emphasizes the Pope, also sounding the alarm against a “culture of walls” that favours the proliferation of organized crime, fuelled by fear and loneliness (see Par 27-28).

## **Chapter Two: Strangers on the road**

To many shadows, however, the Encyclical responds with a luminous example, a herald of hope: the Good Samaritan. The second chapter, “A stranger on the road”, is dedicated to this figure. In it, the Pope emphasizes that, in an unhealthy society that turns its back on suffering and that is “illiterate” in caring for the frail and vulnerable (see Par 64-65), we are all called – just like the Good Samaritan – to become neighbours to others (see Par 81), overcoming prejudices, personal interests, historic and cultural barriers. We all, in fact, are co-responsible in creating a society that is able to include, integrate and lift up those who have fallen or are suffering (see Par 77). Love builds bridges and “we were made for love” (Par 88), the Pope adds, particularly exhorting Christians to recognize Christ in the face of every excluded person (see Par 85).

## **Chapter Three: Vision of an open world**

The principle of the capacity to love according to “a universal dimension” (see Par 83) is also resumed in the third chapter, “Envisaging and engendering an open world”. In this chapter Francis exhorts us to go “‘outside’ the self” in order to find “a fuller existence in another”

(Par 88), opening ourselves up to the other according to the dynamism of charity which makes us tend toward “universal fulfilment” (Par 95). In the background – the Encyclical recalls – the spiritual stature of a person’s life is measured by love, which always “takes first place” and leads us to seek better for the life of the other, far from all selfishness (Par 92-93). The sense of solidarity and of fraternity begin within the family, which are to be safeguarded and respected in their “primary and vital mission of education” (Par 114).

The right to live with dignity cannot be denied to anyone, the Pope again affirms, and since rights have no borders, no one can remain excluded, regardless of where they are born (see Par 121) In this perspective the Pontiff also calls us to consider “an ethics of international relations” (see Par 126), because every country also belongs to foreigners and the goods of the territory cannot be denied to those who are in need and come from another place. Thus, the natural right to private property will be secondary to the principal of the universal destination of created goods (see Par 120). The Encyclical also places specific emphasis on the issue of foreign debt: subject to the principal that it must be paid, it is hoped nonetheless that this does not compromise the growth and subsistence of the poorest countries (see Par 126).

#### **Chapter Four: Heart open to the world**

To the theme of migration, the latter, entitled “A heart open to the whole world”. With their lives “at stake” (Par

37), fleeing from war, persecution, natural catastrophes, unscrupulous trafficking, ripped from their communities of origin, migrants are to be welcomed, protected, supported and integrated. Unnecessary migration needs to be avoided, the Pontiff affirms, by creating concrete opportunities to live with dignity in the countries of origin. But at the same time, we need to respect the right to seek a better life elsewhere. In receiving countries, the right balance will be between the protection of citizens' rights and the guarantee of welcome and assistance for migrants (see Par 38-40). Specifically, the Pope points to several “indispensable steps, especially in response to those who are fleeing grave humanitarian crises”: to increase and simplify the granting of visas; to open humanitarian corridors; to assure lodging, security and essential services; to offer opportunities for employment and training; to favour family reunification; to protect minors; to guarantee religious freedom. What is needed above all – the document reads – is global governance, an international collaboration for migration which implements long-term planning, going beyond single emergencies, on behalf of the supportive development of all peoples (see Par 129-132).

## **Chapter Five: Better politics**

The theme of the fifth chapter is “A better kind of politics”, which represents one of the most valuable forms of charity because it is placed at the service of the common good (see Par 180) and recognizes the importance of people, understood as an open category, available for discussion and dialogue (see Par 160). This

is the populism indicated by Francis, which counters that “populism” which ignores the legitimacy of the notion of “people”, by attracting consensuses in order to exploit them for its own service and fomenting selfishness in order to increase its own popularity (see Par 159). But a better politics is also one that protects work, an “essential dimension of social life”. The best strategy against poverty, the Pontiff explains, does not simply aim to contain or render indigents inoffensive, but to promote them in the perspective of solidarity and subsidiarity (see Par 187). The task of politics, moreover, is to find a solution to all that attacks fundamental human rights, such as social exclusion; the marketing of organs, tissues, weapons and drugs; sexual exploitation; slave labour; terrorism and organized crime. The Pope makes an emphatic appeal to definitively eliminate human trafficking, a “source of shame for humanity”, and hunger, which is “criminal” because food is “an inalienable right” (Par 188-189).

The politics we need, Francis also underscores, is a politics centred on human dignity and not subjected to finance because “the marketplace, by itself, cannot resolve every problem”: the “havoc” wreaked by financial speculation has demonstrated this (see Par 168). Hence, popular movements have taken on particular relevance: as true “torrents of moral energy”, they must be engaged in society with greater coordination. In this way – the Pope states – it will be possible to go beyond a Policy “with” and “of” the poor (see Par 169).

Another hope present in the Encyclical regards the reform of the UN: in the face of the predominance of the economic dimension, a task of the United Nations will be to give substance to the concept of a “family of nations” working for the common good, the eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights. Tireless recourse “to negotiation, mediation and arbitration” – the Papal Document states – the UN must promote the force of law rather than the law of force (see Par 173-175).

## **Chapter Six: Dialogue and friendship**

From the sixth chapter, “Dialogue and friendship in society”, further emerges the concept of life as the “art of encounter” with everyone, even with the world’s peripheries and with original peoples, because “each of us can learn something from others. No one is useless and no one is expendable” (see Par 215). Then, of particular note, is the Pope’s reference to the miracle of “kindness”, an attitude to be recovered because it is a star “shining in the midst of darkness” and “frees us from the cruelty ... the anxiety ... the frantic flurry of activity” that prevail in the contemporary era (see Par 222-224).

## **Chapter Seven: Renewed encounter**

The value and promotion of peace is reflected on in the seventh chapter, “Paths of renewed encounter”, in which the Pope underlines that peace is connected to truth, justice and mercy. Far from the desire for vengeance, it is “proactive” and aims at forming a society based on service to others and on the pursuit of reconciliation and mutual development (see Par 227-229). Thus, peace is

an “art” that involves and regards everyone and in which each one must do his or her part in “a never-ending task” (see Par 227-232). Forgiveness is linked to peace: we must love everyone, without exception – the Encyclical reads – but loving an oppressor means helping him to change and not allowing him to continue oppressing his neighbour (see Par 241-242). Forgiveness does not mean impunity, but rather, justice and remembrance, because to forgive does not mean to forget, but to renounce the destructive power of evil and the desire for revenge. Never forget “horrors” like the Shoah, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, persecutions and ethnic massacres – exhorts the Pope. They must be remembered always, anew, so as not to become anaesthetized and to keep the flame of collective conscience alive. It is just as important to remember the good (see Par 246-252).

### **“Just War”**

Part of the seventh chapter, then, focuses on war: “a constant threat”, that represents “the negation of all rights”, “a failure of politics and of humanity”, and “a stinging defeat before the forces of evil”. Moreover, due to nuclear chemical and biological weapons that strike many innocent civilians, today we can no longer think, as in the past, of the possibility of a “just war”, but we must vehemently reaffirm: “Never again war!” The total elimination of nuclear arms is “a moral and humanitarian imperative”. With the money invested in weapons, the Pope suggests instead the establishment of a global fund for the elimination of hunger (see Par 255-262).



## **Death penalty**

Francis expresses just as clearly a position with regard to the death penalty: it is inadmissible and must be abolished worldwide. Not even a murderer loses his personal dignity” – the Pope writes – “and God himself pledges to guarantee this” (Par 263-269). There is emphasis on the necessity to respect “the sacredness of life” (Par 283) where today “some parts of our human family, it appears, can be readily sacrificed”, such as the unborn, the poor, the disabled and the elderly (Par 18).

## **Chapter Eight: Religion and fraternity**

In the eighth and final chapter, the Pontiff focuses on “Religions at the service of fraternity in our world” and emphasizes that terrorism is not due to religion but to erroneous interpretations of religious texts, as well as “policies linked to hunger, poverty, injustice, oppression” (Par 282-283). a journey of peace among religions is possible and that it is therefore necessary to guarantee religious freedom, a fundamental human right for all believers (see Par 279).

The Encyclical reflects, in particular, on the role of the Church: she does not “restrict her mission to the private sphere”, it states. While not engaging in politics she does not, however, renounce the political dimension of life itself, attention to the common good and concern for integral human development, according to evangelical principals (see Par 276-278).

Lastly, Pope Francis quotes the “Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together”, which he signed on 4 February 2019 in Abu Dhabi, along with the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad Al-Tayyib: from that milestone of interreligious dialogue, the Pontiff returns to the appeal that, in the name of human fraternity, dialogue be adopted as the way, common cooperation as conduct, and mutual knowledge as method and standard (see Par 285).

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### From the Hospital Corner

- Sr. Sally

**M**rs Leena (name changed) was referred to our OPD from the Gynaecology department. In the reference call, it was mentioned that she was continuously crying and refusing to have food for five days. We evaluated her in detail. She was post-delivery 5th day. She was an unwed mother, who had fallen in love with a man in her village. He had promised to marry her. She became pregnant but neither of their family members knew about their affair. Meanwhile the man who was to marry her met with an accident and died. She was five months pregnant then. She was heartbroken and revealed everything to her brother who stayed quite at a distance from his home working in a company. The brother became concerned about her future and brought her to his home without letting the parents know anything about

the pregnancy. It was in pretence of searching for her a job. His wife was also supportive to this move. They tried to abort the baby but since it was more than five months, doctors counselled her to continue the pregnancy. They kept it secret and brought her to Sewagram hospital for delivery when she was full term. The brother supported her only on condition that she would leave the baby behind post-delivery after which they would return to her maternal home. She agreed to abandon the baby as she believed that the baby would bring shame to her and the family since she was unwed. The baby would also be a hindrance to her future marriage prospects if she tried to keep the baby. She had prepared herself to leave the baby in Pratiksha shelter home for orphan babies in Sewagram hospital headed by Chabde madame. But after the baby was born (albeit pre-term) she developed a bonding by frequently feeding it and taking care of the tiny one. The baby sucked well and clung to her for warmth. She was in such a dilemma how to abandon her little one to which she was grown fond of. That was the reason why she stopped eating and kept crying all the while. When I heard her story, I remembered Mother Mary betrothed to Joseph becoming pregnant and the dilemma of St. Joseph. When I saw the helpless child clinging to her bosom for the last few hours warmth, I was reminded of Baby Jesus. This woman was somewhat in a similar predicament like Mother Mary. But the difference was Mary's firm fiat that paved way for the fulfilment of promises. This woman was in a way forced to abandon the baby. It is true that her value systems or support systems were not so strong to keep the baby

and face the consequences since the innocent little one did not do any mistake to be orphaned. No doubt Pratiksha home will take good care of it and in a year or two she will be adopted by someone who will give her a better future. But I was concerned about the mother. I knew she would regret her whole life for this day. Her heart would always be craving to know where and how her little one is. No matter how many children she begets and how wonderful they will be, her heart would always be crying for her first-born preterm baby whom she once abandoned. I felt annoyed with the whole social system that give way to orphan babies and lonely mothers. I felt greater love and respect for Mary for their bold and unparallel decision to protect and raise the Saviour, the decision that changed the destiny of the whole world.

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## **General Introduction to the Old Testament**

**- Sr. Manisha**

**B**oth the Jews and the Christians consider OT as the holy book. It contains the life history of the people, who otherwise have no proper history. It is their faith document. It includes the stories on the basic (universal) unchanged truths of life. It employs various forms to narrate Yahweh's love for the people and his providence etc. The books of the OT also narrate their faith in God whom they experienced in the course of their history.

### **1. The Meaning of History**

Individual human experiences differ. The past experiences form one's own history. Basing on the past data one initiates the present action and the future plans and expectations. For example, if a person suffered long in the past, expects doomed or darkened present and the future. On the contrary, there are also personalities who in faith transform the past sufferings as stepping stones of victory. They see unending happy life in the future. It is customary to analyse the life history of a person to know his/her personality. The OT explains the identity of the people of Israel, their history, their God experience etc.

### **2. Statements of Faith and Victory Songs**

The OT is filled with 'statements of faith' and 'victory songs.' In the early period, the people of Israel used

these (statements of faith and victory songs) orally in their liturgy. People joyfully thanked Yahweh for His mighty deeds and love. They expressed their faith and they began to realize their identity and duty. Eg., 1. Victory song: In Ex 15:1-18 'Yahweh' is personified as the warrior. They realized how He defeated the Egyptians for the sake of Israel and joyfully praised Him for all that he had done for them. 2. Statements of faith: In these statements of faith (Ex 6:20-24, Deut 26:5-24, Josh 24:1-13), they explained the promise made by Yahweh to their ancestor, Abraham, the freedom given to them through Moses, and the land which they inherited as a gift. They thanked and expressed their faith in Him.

### **3. Salvation History**

The focal point (central point) of the statements of faith and the victory songs as well is salvation. The people of Israel realized the salvific act of God, 'Yahweh', in their life and expressed it in their statements of faith. The history of their freedom (salvation) is derived and is shaped from their faith in Yahweh.

In the early period, they considered Yahweh as the redeemer of Israel and expressed this fact in the statements of faith (Cf. Deut 6:20-24; 26:5-10; Josh 24:1-13). The notion of God as the 'Creator' seems to be a later development. The statements of faith belonging to the later period is expressed in Neh 9:6-31. From the salvation given by Yahweh, they realized his authority over nature (Deut 15:12). Thus, they formed the notion

that such a powerful Lord might have created this world. It is normal that even in the secular history the author looks back the birth, childhood and youth of one from the point of his/her victory in the later stage. That is how, the Biblical writers wrote about creation and the call of Abraham from the view of salvation (Ps 10:15).

#### **4. The OT: A Historical Manual of Faith**

The books of the OT are not an exact narration of the history of western Asia. The history of Israel is not the best when it is compared with other west Asian countries. With regard to the culture and civilization, the Israelites were not so much developed as the others. The OT is not the secular history of the west-Asian countries. It contains certain historical elements. The people of Israel realized that God revealed Himself to them, liberated them and called them to serve him through the historical events that occurred in the west-Asian nations. They looked at their history from the faith point of view. In short, we may content saying that the OT is a testimony of God-experience rooted in the faith of the Israelites.

#### **History of the People of Israel**

##### **1. Call of Abraham: A Redemptive Act**

God chose Abraham with a very special motive. Through him He created a new society dedicated for God. This call is also explained from the view point of God's salvific events. It is said that God who made a covenant with Abraham and with the Israelites, revealed Himself in the

form of fire. i. God reveals himself in the form of cloud on the day and fire in the night (Ex 19:18, Gen 15:17). ii. A land is promised to him and to his descendants (Ex 23:23). iii. It is Yahweh who gives them redemption (Deut 7:8; Gen 15:7).

## **2. Patriarchal Period**

The actual history of the Bible begins with the call of Abraham. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the pioneers of the Israelite nation are commonly referred to as the patriarchs or ancestors. Their wives Sarah, Rebecca and Rachel have too played an important role in the history of salvation. The patriarchs may have lived sometime after 2000 BC., as many details of the Genesis narratives reflect the social conditions of that era. Abraham was born at Ur in the southern Mesopotamia. He then migrated west to Canaan making his first stop at Shechem. Famine struck Palestine. Therefore, Jacob and his family settled in Egypt's Nile delta region. They led a comfortable life in Egypt so long as Joseph enjoyed the favours of Pharaoh. They multiplied very fast. However, the situation eventually changed. They were enslaved in Egypt.

## **3. Moses and Exodus**

Moses is the Hero of the Pentateuch. The author of Deuteronomy writes, "Since then no prophet has arisen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face. He had no equal in all the signs and wonders that the Lord sent him to perform in the land of Egypt against Pharaoh and all his servants and against all his land"



(Deut 34:10ff). Moses liberated his people and led them out of Egypt to the borders of Canaan. Liberation from Egypt is the decisive event in the book of Exodus which is the heart of Pentateuch. On the way to Canaan, the Promised Land, the Israelites detoured to Mount Sinai where the Lord promulgated the Decalogue (Ten Commandments) and then ratified the covenant with them. The two tablets of the law were placed in the Ark of the Covenant. The ark served as manifestation of the divine presence among the people. They carried it wherever they went. The remainder of Israel's journey to Canaan was circuitous, taking them through Transjordan so as to enter Canaan from the east. Before they crossed the Jordan River into Canaan, Moses died in Transjordan, east of Jericho. thanked and expressed their faith in Him.

#### **4. Settlement in Canaan**

Joshua, the successor of Moses led the people in their conquest of Canaan. Crossing the Jordan River, the Israelites easily captured Jericho and captured Ai in the central highlands. They were equally victorious in the south. In the north they captured Hazor, the largest city in Canaan. Within a short time they occupied the whole land of Canaan. Afterwards Joshua divided the land among the tribes.

The conquest however, did not occur quite so decisively as the book of Joshua describes. The book of Judges makes it clear that large areas of Canaan pockets still remained unconquered. Joshua gives the impression of

a comprehensive conquest of Canaan. Judges rather conveys the idea of gradual infiltration. Archaeology confirms that the Israelites settled alongside the Canaanites. There they adopted some aspects of their culture and way of life. The Israelites, the traditional shepherds, turned to be also agriculturalist in Canaan.

The Judges is an important source for the events between the death of Joshua and the appearances of Samuel (1220-1000 BC). In a series of epiclike stories the book of Judges relates the deeds of tribal heroes, called Judges. They defended the Israelites against the incursions of neighbouring people including Moabites, Canaanites, Midianites, Ammonites and Philistines. Despite the victories of the judges, the situation of the people of Israel was insecure especially in view of Philistine expansionism. Till then, there was no Israelite national unity. It was a time of anarchy as the editor of Judges remarked tersely, "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what he thought best" (Judg 21:25). So, the rise of the monarchy as a source of national unity was inevitable.

## **5. Rise of the Monarchy**

Samuel, prophet and last of the judges, was responsible for establishing the monarchy. In the beginning he was a bit reluctant to appoint a human king. The people wanted by all means a king who leads them into battles. At last, Samuel gave in to the popular pressure and appointed Saul, the Benjaminite, as the first king of Israel. Saul was an effective military leader. He was inadequate in many

ways in comparison with David his successor, who was Israel's greatest king. Prophet Samuel who appointed him, deposed him. When Saul committed suicide on Mount Gilboa in the midst of defeat at the hands of the Philistians, David became the king over Judah in the south. He ruled from Hebron for about 7 years and then he captured Jerusalem, the Jebusite city and made it a political and religious capital.

## **6. Golden Period**

The reign of David and Solomon were considered to be the golden period of the People of Israel. We have a separate chapter for it.

## **7. The Divided Kingdom**

After the death of Solomon, the empire was divided into Northern Israel and Southern Judah. While the descendants of David ruled Judah, Israel suffered power monopoly of many. Murder became the order of day in Israel. In the time of Hosea there were seven kings ruling Israel. Except one other six reached the throne through murder. The priests failed to teach Torah to the people and went for money and fame. The judges thwarted justice. Injustice increased among God's people. At last Israel was eventually captured by the Assyrians in 722 BC and annexed to their kingdom. Judah enjoyed independence till the Babylonian captivity.

## **8. Babylonian Captivity**

The Babylonians captured Judah in 587 BC. They deported the Jews into Babylon as slaves. Losing their land, king and the temple, the Israelites were in utter despair. They considered that Yahweh himself had abandoned them. At that time of despair and discouragement, the prophets like Ezekiel and Second Isaiah (Deutero Isaiah), a disciple of Isaiah of Jerusalem encouraged and consoled the Israelites. The elders tried their best to comfort the people in bondage. They too intended to strengthen them in their hope of living according to their ancestral laws. Therefore, they gathered the oral information that was prevalent at that time. And they combined them with the Yahwist and Elohist traditions which they had brought along from Judah and formed a new book. Together with the Elohist and Yahwist traditions, the priests combined their tradition which they had among them and called this 'priestly tradition.' Towards the end of the Babylonian captivity the Deuteronomistic tradition should have been combined with the Yahwistic, Elohist and priestly traditions. The book which was the result of merging the four traditions towards the end of the Babylonian captivity is called 'the Torah' or 'the Pentateuch.' We will study about these traditions later in detail.

## **9. The Persian Empire**

Cyrus, the Persian king, gave freedom to the exiled people of Israel in 538 BC. Having been purified by suffering and slavery, the people of Israel returned to

their native Palestine. In order to regularize their life-style, Ezra who was a scribe, enacted a law-book which was based on these four traditions. He read it and renewed the covenant (Neh 8:1-38).

## **10. Alexander, the Great and Hellenism**

Alexander, the great captured the middle-East countries in 332 BC. He tried to spread the Greek culture and language during his time. The Greek language and thought dominated in the Mediterranean region for 600 years (300 BC to 300 AD). The Greek became the second language of many people in Israel. There was an attempt to combine all the wise sayings which had originated even before the time of Solomon. As a consequence, there arose the wisdom books such as Job, Proverbs, Tobit etc.

In 167 BC Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-163 BC) ordered the Jews to abandon the Jewish religion. He punished with the death penalty those who refused to abandon their ancestral faith. He defiled the Jerusalem Temple and forbade the use of Torah. Pigs were sacrificed in the Temple and the Jews were forced to eat pork. Many defenders of faith were killed. At the time, the apocalyptic book of Daniel was written to strengthen the people in their faith. The book recorded that those persecuted and killed for the religion have become 'son of man' in heaven. Revolutionary and resistant groups arose. Mattathias and his sons notably Judas, the Maccabee from the priestly family of the Hasmoneans fought against the vigorous Hellenization. They tried to

strengthen the people in their Jewish faith. Judas conquered Jerusalem in 164 BC and the temple was rededicated. Later the Hasmoneans gained political freedom and ruled an independent Judea from 142 BC until the Romans took it over under Pompey 63 BC. From then on, the Romans controlled Palestine throughout the NT period.

## **11. The Roman Rule**

The Romans captured Palestine from the Hasmoneans in 63 BC. King Herod, the great was ruling Palestine from 40 to 4 BC as the puppet king of Rome. Herod, the Idumean never enjoyed the favour of the Jews. He however, maintained the favour of Rome. The history praises him as a great builder. Many of the buildings were erected for his own convenience and enjoyment. After his death, the kingdom was divided among his three sons, Archelaus, Herod Antipas and Philip. Herod's daughter Salome got some portion to rule. Archelaus was so tyrannical in his rule over Judea, Samaria, and Idumea that he was banished to Gaul in 6 AD. After that Roman prefects like Pontius Pilate governed Judea. Herod Antipas (4 BC-39AD) tetrarch ruled Galilee and Perea (beyond the Jordan). Philip ruled effectively over the districts of Iturea and Trachonitis, southeast of Mount Hermon. Herod Agrippa I grandson of Herod, the great ruled a unified Palestine from 41 to 44 AD.

When the Jews of Palestine revolted against the Romans in 66 AD., Nero sent Vespasian to quell the insurrection. The Roman army tried to suppress the

rebellion. Vespasian was proclaimed emperor in 69 AD. His son Titus continued the siege until Jerusalem fell. Then, the temple was destroyed in 70 AD. Simon Ben Koziba (Bar Kochba) led a second revolt against Rome in 132 AD, while Hadrian was the emperor. Jerusalem was recaptured in 134 AD and re-established as a Roman Colony with the new name of Aelia Capitolina.

## **12. The Reign of David and Solomon**

David created professional army and silenced their bitter enemy, the Philistines. He brought the ark to Jerusalem and made it a political and religious capital. He defeated the resistant pockets of the Canaanites and made it an empire. He was very successful in warfare and in administration. David ruled seven years in Hebron. And then he captured the Jebusite city, Jerusalem and made it the capital of his kingdom. Jerusalem remained in between the northern and southern tribes of Israel. It is an attempt to bring reconciliation and unity between the northern and southern tribes. Since David defeated all his enemies in and around, His son, Solomon had a peaceful reign. He built up very good relationship with all the neighbouring nations and increased the commercial activities of the country. He built up the Jerusalem temple and the palace. His fame spread to many more surrounding countries that even the Queen of Sheba came to visit him with gifts. He divided the country into 12 revenue districts for the effective collection of tithes. His foreign wives diverted his mind from Yahweh and the results were disastrous for Yahweh's movement.

### **13. The Two Kingdoms: Judah and Israel**

After the death of King Solomon, his kingdom suffered a division (922-921 BC). The southern kingdom was called Judah and the northern kingdom, Israel. The descendants of David ruled Judah. As the representatives of the covenant, the kings of Judah remained more loyal to their ancestral faith. The temple of Jerusalem and the ark constantly reminded them of the indwelling presence of Yahweh. The Yahwishtic tradition that originated during the period of David and Solomon was further stabilized in Judah as a sacred history. Prophets like Isaiah and Micah prophesied in Judah.

Since the northern kingdom, Israel was separated from the family of David, the kings were keen on keeping up their positions. They were not the loyal protectors of the faith people. They too forgot to function as the representatives of the covenant. If the people become too much attached to Jerusalem and the temple, they might disown non-Davidic kingship. In that time of religious decay, the prophets like Elijah, Amos and Hosea functioned as the protectors of the faith of the people. Whenever the people of Israel forgot the covenant and consequently worshipped 'Baal', the Canaanite god of fertility and thus lead a unfaithful life, the prophets reminded them the unconditional love of Yahweh in the past. There arose a historical need for forming its own tradition in the north in the 9th century BC. Since God was called 'Elohim,' this tradition was called 'Elohism' tradition. This tradition kept the Exodus



event as its base. It too began with the history of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But this tradition does not speak anything about the origin of the world.

Some scholars of the northern kingdom combined the laws which were given to them by Moses and the laws of their time which were an extension of the mosaic laws to suit their situation. This tradition was called Deuteronomistic tradition. Since the Assyrians captured the northern kingdom in 722 BC, the people who fled from the northern kingdom would have brought these two traditions namely the Elohist tradition and the Deuteronomistic tradition into the southern kingdom. There, around 622 BC, with the Yahwist tradition as the basis, the book of Deuteronomy would have been formed. At this time, prophet Jeremiah prophesied in Judah.

## **Authorship of the Torah and the Documentary Hypothesis**

### **1. The Authorship of the Pentateuch**

The Jewish and the Christian traditions held Moses to be the author of Pentateuch. The Pentateuch is referred as "mosaic holy law" (2 Chro 30:16). The books of chronicles were written in the 4th century BC. Moses however, lived during the 13th century BC. The chronicles do not justify that Moses wrote these laws manually.

In the early years of Christianity, Porphyry and Celsus supported Moses' authorship of the Pentateuch. The Jewish Biblical scholar Eben Ezra in the 12th century AD, refuted the tradition which held Moses to be the author of the Pentateuch. Actually, it is very difficult to acknowledge Moses' authorship to the Pentateuch. Of course, the legislative texts (Ex 20:18-21 Deut 5:23-31) are revealed to Moses by Yahweh. However, the contradictions, repetitions, doublets, repetitions with additions cause doubts over single authorship of the Pentateuch.

## **2. The Documentary Hypothesis**

All that we have said above justify that Pentateuch is not the literary work of a single person (Moses). Many persons and traditions are involved in the compilation. It has taken a few generations to reach the present shape. The scholars have fixed that four important traditions (JEDP) are involved in creating the Pentateuch. It is technically called documentary hypothesis. We elaborate it in the following sections.

### **Yahwistic Tradition (J)**

It is noted by J as German spelling for Yahweh is Jahweh. It is the earliest and most comprehensive source of the whole story. As we have mentioned above, it is written probably in Jerusalem under King Solomon or one of his successors in the late 10th century or early 9th century. It indicates that God's promise to Abraham is fulfilled in the empire of David. It underlines that God loves whom He chooses. This tradition is reflected in the

books of Genesis (from 10th chapter onwards), Exodus and Numbers. It is not found in Leviticus and in Deuteronomy. However, Deut 34:1-4, 10-12 belong to this tradition.

### **A. Special Characteristics of this Tradition**

- i. The name of God in it is Yahweh.
- ii. The author skilfully narrates the incidents. He presents the characters of the story very lively and brings out the inner feelings vividly. He tries to explain psychological truths. This tradition attractively presents the matter.
- iii. The actions of God are described in an anthropomorphic way.
- iv. It explains in detail the cultic centres of the patriarchs like, Shechem, Bethel, Hebron and Beersheba. The place and destinations of the patriarchs and their travel are also explained very well.
- v. In it etiological descriptions are given with regard to the names of persons and places (women - Gen 2:23; Bethel - Gen 28:19), and the names of persons and their mission (Beersheba - Gen 27:33; Jacob, Israel - Gen 32:29).
- vi. It brings out the ideas in a clear, dramatic, attractive and interesting manner.

### **B. The Theology of the Tradition**

- i. The history of Israel is the history of the salvation of the whole humanity.
- ii. Salvation is God's act. He will remain faithful to His word forever.
- iii. The event of creation is a redeeming event. Redemption means 'man being united with God' (Gen 2:16-19). Death is to be separated from God. The fact of sin abounding in the world is also seen in Gen 4:1-6 (Cain), 6:1-8 (sin of humanity) and 11:1-9 (tower of Babel).
- iv. God's promise and Israelites' hope are also seen to be the basic theological traits of this tradition. (Gen 3:15; 4:1; 8:15-22).
- v. A special importance is given in this tradition to the tribe of Judah: The blessing of Jacob (Gen 24:5-7); the blessing of Benjamin (Num 24:5-7).

### **The Elohistic Tradition (E)**

When the kingdom was divided into two as Judah and Israel, the people of the Israel naturally had attachment to the ark and the sanctuary in Jerusalem. The kings of Israel were afraid that such a strong attachment might lead to popular disownment of non-Davidic kingship. Therefore, Jeroboam established sanctuaries in Dan and Bethel and tried to divert the mind of the people. Accordingly, this tradition reflects anti-Jerusalem view. It was probably written in the northern kingdom after 9th century BC.

It is found after the first 11 chapters of Genesis. It is not seen in the major portion of the book of Exodus and in the whole book of Leviticus. A few sections of Deuteronomy and Numbers have this tradition.

### **Special Characteristics**

- i. It names God as 'Elohim'
- ii. God is transcendent. He doesn't speak to anyone directly. He speaks through angels or in dreams (Gen 15:1; 20:3,6; 21:17; 22:11,15;28, Ex 19:11).
- iii. It gives special importance to the cultic places of the north (Shechem, Bethel, Shiloh) and to the cultic tribes of the north (Joseph, Gen 47:31).
- iv. We don't find any interesting and lively presentation of facts. A lot of theological insights and moral code of conduct are found in it (Ex 20:1-17).
- v. It names Mount Sinai as Horeb and Raguel as Jethro.
- vi. Special importance is given to prophets: Abraham (Gen 20:7), Miriam, Moses (Ex 15:20).

### **The Theology of E Tradition**

- i. God reveals Himself as the redeemer and as the ruler of the whole universe.
- ii. Redemption means to get liberated from sin (Gen 15:20).

iii. There is a close relationship between covenant and life. The covenant relationship has to play a vital role in day today life. In order to get life, it is obligatory to remain in covenant fellowship (Ex 19:5-6). iv. It abhors blind belief and empty rituals (Gen 31:18, 35:2).

### **The Deuteronomistic Tradition (D)**

It might have risen in the 8th and 7th century BC, when the J and E traditions suffered from pagan influences and unfaithful kings. It agrees with the E tradition and underlines that the covenant with Moses is more important than kingship. It too insists on total loyalty to Yahweh. It recognizes Jerusalem as the only sanctuary of Yahweh and unity of worship. In 722 BC Israel became a part of the Assyrian province and all the local shrines in the north lost their significance.

We don't find this tradition in the book of Genesis, Leviticus and Numbers. It is reflected more in a few sections of the book of Exodus and in a vast major portion of the book of Deuteronomy.

#### **A. Special Characteristics**

- i. The author takes up a preacher's style. Ideas are repeated again and again (Deut. 6:5, 7-9, 10-12; 11:1).
- ii. The following phrases are some characteristics of these traditions and they occur frequently in the text: Mighty hands and outstretched arms (4:34; 5:15; 7:19); In the land which I give you (4:40; 15:7); From the house of bondage (6:12; 7:8; 9:14); A holy people (7:6; 14:2,21;

26:18); To make His name known (12:5; 14:23; 16:2); To do what is acceptable to God (4:25; 9:18; 12:25; 13:19; 17:2).

iii. It uses a rich vocabulary (Deut 7:6-11).

iv. It enfoldes laws and regulations.

## **B. The Theology of the D Tradition:**

### **i. Selection**

God chose Israel as his own people (Deut 4:34). Hence Israel is his legal possession (Deut 7:6-7). Israel receives life from the moment it realizes that its life is a life of relationship with Yahweh and lives accordingly.

### **ii. God's Love:**

God's love is the only reason for Israel being chosen by God and redeemed by Him. There is no other reason for God to choose Israel. Love is the primary cause (Deut 7:7, 10-15). Prophets Jeremiah and Hosea make the marital love between the husband and wife as the symbol of the relationship between God and His chosen people (Jer 2:2-7; Hos 2:14-15). But the book of Deuteronomy compares this love to the love that exists between the father and the son (Deut 1:31; 8:5; 14:1; 32:8-12).

### **iii. Election and fidelity**

Prosperity or downfall of the Israelites depends on its fidelity to the covenant relationship (Deut 30:19).

Yahweh is the only Lord. Since there is no other god, love which is shown to Yahweh, should be a complete and perfect love. There are two ways of understanding fidelity: 1. The Israelites should do away with all other cultic sanctuaries and they should serve the Lord only in Jerusalem (Deut 4:7; 14:23-25; 15:20; 16:2,6,7,11,15,16). 2. They should faithfully observe all the commandments (Deut 10:12-13). These laws should be observed whole heartedly and interiorly (Deut 6:6; 11:18).

### **The Priestly Tradition (P)**

Much of the P material on cult and law probably dates to the same time of Deuteronomistic. However, lots of new materials are added to it during the exile in Babylon in the 6th century BC. It stresses on obedience to law. God would never withdraw his blessings from them at any cost. It demands on personal commitment to God. It is most probably the editor of the P tradition who arranged all the four traditions in the present-day order around 500 BC, during the exile.

This is the tradition that is found mostly in the Pentateuch (87 sections). Priestly tradition is found in the books of Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy.

#### **A. Special Characteristics**

i. God is transcendent. He is beyond everything else. He created the world with His 'word' (Gen 1:3-6). The world is not a part of God. Rather God and world are different.



ii. The author constructs the narrative on creation in six days. He condenses the creative work in six days allotting three days for the task of separating and another three days for the task of decorating (or furnishing the world).

iii. The reason to describe about the creative act of God is to stress on the aspect of worship. So, the author of this tradition says that God took rest on the 7th day.

iv. Since this is priestly tradition, it gives special attention to revelation, feasts, lists of genealogy, ritual impurity, purity, etc.

v. Since God is holy, the faithful should lead a holy life. Therefore, many laws and regulations were spread out enabling the faithful to lead a holy/pure life.

## **B. The Theology of the P Tradition**

i. Indwelling presence of God

The priestly tradition divides history into four periods: a. Creation, (b) Period of Noah, (c) Period of Abraham and (d) Period of Moses. The genealogy is given before each period. We can see God dwelling in humanity at these important moments of history: Adam (Gen 1:26-39), Noah (Gen 9:8), Abraham (Gen 17:2), Moses (Ex 25:15a-18b, 25-31, 35-40).

ii. The uniqueness (singularity) of the people of Israel

The priestly tradition took shape when the people of Israel were in utter darkness as exiles in Babylon. They

lost their king, land and the temple. In this situation, they stressed the importance of Sabbath observance, circumcision, etc. in order to preserve their uniqueness (Gen 17:10; Lev 12:3; Ex 31:12-17; 35:1-3).

### iii. Strengthening them in faith

This tradition talks much about the promised land, because the Israelites in Babylon were eager to return back to their own country (Gen 17:8; Ex 6:4,8; Num 27:12). The fidelity of God does not depend upon the fidelity of the people. God is always faithful. He invites them to live new life (Gen. 17:7-8).

## **Divisions of the Old Testament**

### **The Deuteronomistic History**

Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings are the books that are found in this section. The book of Deuteronomy serves as a good introduction to these books. This history recounts all the events from the Exodus in Egypt till the release of Joachim in Babylon. Martin Noth proposed the theory that one editor (Deuteronomist) compiled all these books.

### **A. The Purpose**

The people of Israel broke the covenant with the Lord often and lived as it pleased them. They failed to heed to the warnings of the prophets. Therefore, the northern region (Israel) was destroyed. The southern country Judah failed to learn from the destruction of Israel. Its

total disloyalty to God's covenant brought untold sufferings. At last, the temple was destroyed. The king was imprisoned. God's own land was ruled by the alien kings. The People of Israel were exiled to Babylon. It is only a temporary punishment. God exiled them that they might realize their state of sinfulness and infidelity. Once they regret for their sinfulness and repent for it, God will give them their land back. There are so many advises in several places of these historical books (Deut 4:1; 6:1-4; Josh 1:12-18; 10:16-43; 1 Sam 2:22-36; 12:6-14; 2 King 17:19). These books do not narrate the complete history of the kings. They evaluate their rule from the view point of the covenant. The kings who obeyed the covenantal obligations of the Lord are praised as king par excellence. The unfaithful kings are accused (1King 21:25-26) even though they are politically successful. Many incidents are shortened. In order to drive home some truths, some incidents are amplified too. In short, the Deuteronomistic history is a sacred history. It is seen as a history that would describe the divine truths.

### **The Chronicler History**

1, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah belong to this section. This history begins in Adam and ends with the revolution of Ezra and Nehemiah. The events that are found in the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic historical books are repeated in them. Some events narrated here come from non-biblical source: Eg., Books of the kings of Israel and Judah (2 Chro 27:7; 35:8), chronicles of the kings (2 Kings 15:11), details of the kings (2 Chro 24:27), Chronicles of the prophets (1 Chro 29:29), visions (2

Chro 3:32) etc. It deals more with the theology of the history and gives the explanation about the history of Israel. The deuteronomic history and the chronicler history have many of similar events. They however, differ in their narration. The Deuteronomic history insists on the history of God's kingdom, established by the kings David and Solomon. The chronicler history esteems these both kings. It assures that the Messiah will come in the tradition of David and liberate Israelite from all their enemies. Hence, the Israelites, as the royal priesthood and a holy nation should live in accordance with the laws. They should conduct genuine liturgy. It explains the liturgy, priests, Levites and the laws very well. The Messiah will redeem not only Israel but the entire humankind.

### **3. The Prophets**

The English term of the prophet is derived from Greek prophets, as translated by LXX. In Greek, it means 'spokesperson', "one who speaks in the name of another". The prophets were the conscience of the society and voice of the voiceless. They could not tolerate someone breaking the covenantal traditions. They wanted to establish the just society before death. They warned that God would punish them for their sins. They spoke in the name of God. They brought forth the thoughts, motivations and feelings of God in their words. They condemned every form of injustice. They preached through words and symbolic actions. Their very life was the message. They preached the true religion of Yahweh.

## **The Kinds of Prophets**

We generally divide the prophets into two major categories: former and later, or preaching and writing, or non-classical and classical prophets. We have stories of the deeds, preaching, active involvement in the life and often politics of the time (Elijah etc). We have very little about the content of their preaching. we have little about their activities and lives of the classical prophets. But we have the whole collection of their messages and oracles to people. The message of the early prophets is directed primarily to the rulers and the kings of Israel. On the other hand, the recipients of the classical prophets are people of Israel as a whole. They mostly spoke in public to be heard by all. Under the section of Deuteronomic history we deal with the non-classical prophets. However, under this section we deal with the important classical prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

## **4. The Wisdom Literature**

The biblical books such as Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, the Wisdom of Solomon, Psalms and Sirach come under this section. Wisdom is the common theme of these books. Yet these books differ from one another. The book of Proverbs and Sirach are the best examples for the wisdom literature. The book of Ecclesiastes contains both the individual and collection of statements of profound meaning. The book of Job does not come under the category of the wisdom

literature. Yet it is called so as it gives the reason for the sufferings of the just. The Wisdom literature contains some philosophical elements and it was written in Greek. Though the Song of Songs deals with the relationship between husband and wife and a few psalms alone are wisdom songs, the both books are placed under the Wisdom Literature.

## **The Content**

The main ideas of the books are: Wisdom of the wise brings forth prosperity and goodness and the folly of the wicked brings forth disaster. Wisdom teaches one to live in his/her own environment. Wisdom teaching emerges from the living experience. It shows the way. The goal of wisdom is life with joy and fullness of days.

## **5. Midrash**

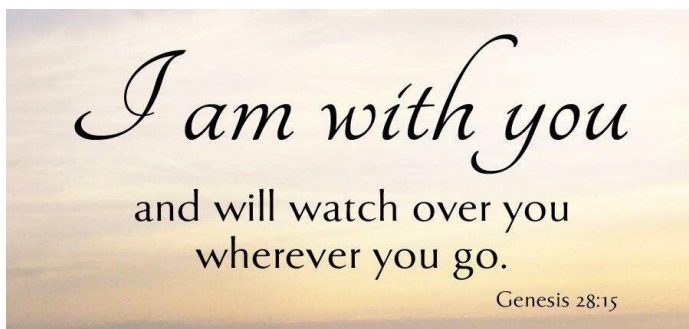
Generically, the term Midrash can refer to a type of biblical interpretation found in the rabbinic literature. Rabbinic midrashim (plural of Midrash) may be defined as a type of literature oral or written which stands in direct relationship with a canonical text (the Revealed word of God.). It is normally a story that is formulated to explain the canonical text of the Bible. Midrash also designates a type of writing based on a distinctive Jewish use of the OT.

Two types of Midrash are distinguished: 1. The Halakhah (walking i.e. conduct) and the Haggadah (narrative). The Halakhah is an explanation of the law, deriving principles of conduct. And the Haggadah is an

explanation of the narrative passages of the Pentateuch. It looks for the maximum of edifying lessons. Its goal is always the practical application to the present.

The books like Daniel, Jonah, Tobit, Esther belong to the Midrashic literature. In the OT God revealed Himself through various ways and means. Christ is the fullness of such revelations (Heb 1:1-5). In the OT Yahweh made a covenant with Abraham. He renewed the covenant with the people of Israel through Moses. But the people were not faithful to the covenant. They could not lead a faithful life according to the covenant. They were in need of God's help. As a result, Yahweh promised them through the prophets namely Jeremiah and Ezekiel that He would create a new heart and a new spirit among the people (Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 36:26-32). This promise was fulfilled in Christ. Christ forms the new Israelite by giving his spirit.

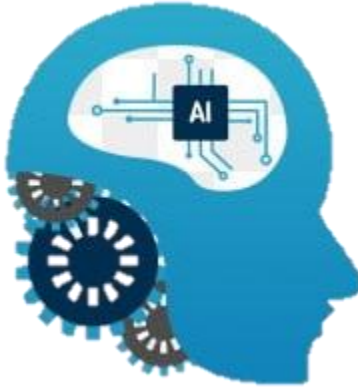
Therefore, the OT is considered as the time of promise and the NT as the time of fulfillment. What was spoken indirectly in the OT is stated directly in the NT. Thus, the NT becomes the fulfillment of the OT.





***Good to know ...***

## **Artificial Intelligence**



### **Artificial Intelligence History**

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the ability of a digital computer or computer controlled-robot to perform tasks commonly associated with intelligent beings. It is the endeavor to replicate or simulate human intelligence in machines. The term is frequently applied to the project of developing systems endowed with the intellectual processes characteristic of humans, such as the ability to reason, discover meaning, generalize, or learn from past experience. Since the development of the digital computer in the 1940s, it has been demonstrated that computers can be programmed to carry out very complex tasks—as for example,



discovering proofs for mathematical theorems or playing chess—with great proficiency. Still, despite continuing advances in computer processing speed and memory capacity, there are as yet no programs that can match human flexibility over wider domains or in tasks requiring much everyday knowledge. On the other hand, some programs have attained the performance levels of human experts and professionals in performing certain specific tasks, so that artificial intelligence in this limited sense is found in applications as diverse as medical diagnosis, computer search engines, and voice or handwriting recognition.

Less than a decade after breaking the Nazi encryption machine Enigma and helping the Allied Forces win World War II, mathematician Alan Turing changed history a second time with a simple question: "Can machines think?"

At its core, AI is the branch of computer science that aims to answer Turing's question in the affirmative. The expansive goal of artificial intelligence has given rise to many questions and debates. So much so, that no singular definition of the field is universally accepted.

Scientists Norvig and Russell goes explore four different approaches that have historically defined the field of AI:

- Thinking humanly
- Thinking rationally
- Acting humanly
- Acting rationally

## **AI in healthcare**

The healthcare industry is ripe for some major changes. From chronic diseases and cancer to radiology and risk assessment, there are nearly endless opportunities to leverage technology to deploy more precise, efficient, and impactful interventions at exactly the right moment in a patient's care.

At the 2018 World Medical Innovation Forum (WMIF) on artificial intelligence presented by Partners Healthcare, a leading researchers and clinical faculty members showcased the twelve technologies and areas of the healthcare industry that are most likely to see a major impact from artificial intelligence within the next decade.

### **Unifying mind and machine through Brain-Computer Interfaces**

Using computers to communicate is not a new idea by any means, but creating direct interfaces between technology and the human mind without the need for keyboards, mice, and monitors is a cutting-edge area of research that has significant applications for some patients. Neurological diseases and trauma to the nervous system can take away some patients' abilities to speak, move, and interact meaningfully with people and their environments. Brain-computer interfaces (BCIs) backed by artificial intelligence could restore those fundamental experiences to those who feared them lost forever.

Brain-computer interfaces could drastically improve quality of life for patients with ALS, strokes, or locked-in syndrome, as well as people who experience spinal cord injuries.

### **Developing the next generation of radiology tools**

Radiological images obtained by MRI machines, CT scanners, and x-rays offer non-invasive visibility into the inner workings of the human body. But many diagnostic processes still rely on physical tissue samples obtained through biopsies, which carry risks including the potential for infection.

Artificial intelligence will enable the next generation of radiology tools that are accurate and detailed enough to replace the need for tissue samples in some cases. Succeeding in this quest may allow clinicians to develop a more accurate understanding of how tumors behave as a whole instead of basing treatment decisions on the properties of a small segment of the malignancy.

Providers may also be able to better define the aggressiveness of cancers and target treatments more appropriately. Artificial intelligence is helping to enable “virtual biopsies” and advance the innovative field of radiomics, which focuses on harnessing image-based algorithms to characterize the phenotypes and genetic properties of tumors.

### **Expanding access to care in underserved or developing regions**

Shortages of trained healthcare providers, including ultrasound technicians and radiologists can significantly limit access to life-saving care in developing nations around the world. Artificial intelligence could help mitigate the impacts of this severe deficit of qualified clinical staff by taking over some of the diagnostic duties typically allocated to humans.

For example, AI imaging tools can screen chest x-rays for signs of tuberculosis, often achieving a level of accuracy comparable to humans. This capability could be deployed through an app available to providers in low-resource areas, reducing the need for a trained diagnostic radiologist on site.

### **Reducing the burdens of electronic health record use**

EHRs have played an instrumental role in the healthcare industry's journey towards digitalization, but the switch has brought myriad problems associated with cognitive overload, endless documentation, and user burnout.

EHR developers are now using artificial intelligence to create more intuitive interfaces and automate some of the routine processes that consume so much of a user's time. Voice recognition and dictation are helping to improve the clinical documentation process, but natural language processing (NLP) tools might not be going far enough.

Artificial intelligence may also help to process routine requests from the inbox, like medication refills and result

notifications. It may also help to prioritize tasks that truly require the clinician's attention making it easier for users to work through their to-do lists.

### **Containing the risks of antibiotic resistance**

Antibiotic resistance is a growing threat to populations around the world as overuse of these critical drugs fosters the evolution of superbugs that no longer respond to treatments. Multi-drug resistant organisms can wreak havoc in the hospital setting, and claim thousands of lives every year.

Electronic health record data can help to identify infection patterns and highlight patients at risk before they begin to show symptoms. Leveraging machine learning and AI tools to drive these analytics can enhance their accuracy and create faster, more accurate alerts for healthcare providers

### **Creating more precise analytics for pathology images**

Pathologists provide one of the most significant sources of diagnostic data for providers across the spectrum of care delivery. Analytics that can drill down to the pixel level on extremely large digital images can allow providers to identify nuances that may escape the human eye. Artificial intelligence can also improve productivity by identifying features of interest in slides before a human clinician reviews the data. AI can screen through slides and direct us to the right thing to look at so we can assess what's important and what's not. That

increases the efficiency of the use of the pathologist and increases the value of the time they spend for each case.

### **Bringing intelligence to medical devices and machines**

Smart devices are taking over the consumer environment, offering everything from real-time video from the inside of a refrigerator to cars that can detect when the driver is distracted.

In the medical environment, smart devices are critical for monitoring patients in the ICU and elsewhere. Using artificial intelligence to enhance the ability to identify deterioration, suggest that sepsis is taking hold, or sense the development of complications can significantly improve outcomes. Inserting intelligent algorithms into these devices can reduce cognitive burdens for physicians while ensuring that patients receive care in as timely a manner as possible.

### **Advancing the use of immunotherapy for cancer treatment**

Immunotherapy is one of the most promising avenues for treating cancer. By using the body's own immune system to attack malignancies, patients may be able to beat stubborn tumors. However, only a small number of patients respond to current immunotherapy options, and oncologists still do not have a precise and reliable method for identifying which patients will benefit from this option.

Machine learning algorithms and their ability to synthesize highly complex datasets may be able to illuminate new options for targeting therapies to an individual's unique genetic makeup.

### **Turning the electronic health record into a reliable risk predictor**

EHRs are a goldmine of patient data, but extracting and analyzing that wealth of information in an accurate, timely, and reliable manner has been a continual challenge for providers and developers.

Data quality and integrity issues, plus a mishmash of data formats, structured and unstructured inputs, and incomplete records have made it very difficult to understand exactly how to engage in meaningful risk stratification, predictive analytics, and clinical decision support.

### **Monitoring health through wearables and personal devices**

Almost all consumers now have access to devices with sensors that can collect valuable data about their health. From smartphones with step trackers to wearables that can track a heartbeat around the clock, a growing proportion of health-related data is generated on the go.

Collecting and analyzing this data – and supplementing it with patient-provided information through apps and other home monitoring devices – can offer a unique perspective into individual and population health.

Artificial intelligence will play a significant role in extracting actionable insights from this large and varied treasure trove of data.

### **Making smartphone selfies into powerful diagnostic tools**

Continuing the theme of harnessing the power of portable devices, experts believe that images taken from smartphones and other consumer-grade sources will be an important supplement to clinical quality imaging – especially in underserved populations or developing nations. The quality of cell phone cameras is increasing every year, and can produce images that are viable for analysis by artificial intelligence algorithms. Dermatology and ophthalmology are early beneficiaries of this trend.

Researchers in the United Kingdom have even developed a tool that identifies developmental diseases by analyzing images of a child's face. The algorithm can detect discrete features, such as a child's jaw line, eye and nose placement, and other attributes that might indicate a craniofacial abnormality. Currently, the tool can match the ordinary images to more than 90 disorders to provide clinical decision support.

### **Revolutionizing clinical decision making with artificial intelligence at the bedside**

AI can provide earlier warnings for conditions like seizures or sepsis, which often require intensive analysis of highly complex datasets. Machine learning can also



help support decisions around whether or not to continue care for critically ill patients, such as those who have entered a coma after cardiac arrest. Leveraging AI for clinical decision support, risk scoring, and early alerting is one of the most promising areas of development for this revolutionary approach to data analysis.

By powering a new generation of tools and systems that make clinicians more aware of nuances, more efficient when delivering care, and more likely to get ahead of developing problems, AI will usher in a new era of clinical quality and exciting breakthroughs in patient care.

### **How can AI be dangerous?**

Most researchers agree that a super intelligent AI is unlikely to exhibit human emotions like love or hate, and that there is no reason to expect AI to become intentionally benevolent or malevolent. Instead, when considering how AI might become a risk, experts think two scenarios most likely: The AI is programmed to do something devastating: Autonomous weapons are artificial intelligence systems that are programmed to kill. In the hands of the wrong person, these weapons could easily cause mass casualties. Moreover, an AI arms race could inadvertently lead to an AI war that also results in mass casualties. To avoid being thwarted by the enemy, these weapons would be designed to be extremely difficult to simply “turn off,” so humans could plausibly lose control of such a situation. This risk is one

that's present even with narrow AI, but grows as levels of AI and autonomy increase.

The AI is programmed to do something beneficial, but it develops a destructive method for achieving its goal: This can happen whenever we fail to fully align the AI's goals with ours, which is strikingly difficult. If you ask an obedient intelligent car to take you to the airport as fast as possible, it might get you there chased by helicopters and covered in vomit, doing not what you wanted but literally what you asked for. If a super intelligent system is tasked with a ambitious geoengineering project, it might wreak havoc with our ecosystem as a side effect, and view human attempts to stop it as a threat to be met.

As these examples illustrate, the concern about advanced AI isn't malevolence but competence. A super-intelligent AI will be extremely good at accomplishing its goals, and if those goals aren't aligned with ours, we have a problem. You're probably not an evil ant-hater who steps on ants out of malice, but if you're in charge of a hydroelectric green energy project and there's an anthill in the region to be flooded, too bad for the ants. A key goal of AI safety research is to never place humanity in the position of those ants.

### **Why the recent interest in AI safety?**

Stephen Hawking, Elon Musk, Steve Wozniak, Bill Gates, and many other big names in science and technology have expressed concern in the media and

via open letters about the risks posed by AI, joined by many leading AI researchers.

The idea that the quest for strong AI would ultimately succeed was long thought of as science fiction, centuries or more away. However, thanks to recent breakthroughs, many AI milestones, which experts viewed as decades away merely five years ago, have now been reached, making many experts take seriously the possibility of superintelligence in our lifetime. While some experts still guess that human-level AI is centuries away, most AI researchers at the 2015 Puerto Rico Conference guessed that it would happen before 2060. Since it may take decades to complete the required safety research, it is prudent to start it now.

Because AI has the potential to become more intelligent than any human, we have no surefire way of predicting how it will behave. We can't use past technological developments as much of a basis because we've never created anything that has the ability to, wittingly or unwittingly, outsmart us. The best example of what we could face may be our own evolution. People now control the planet, not because we're the strongest, fastest or biggest, but because we're the smartest. If we're no longer the smartest, are we assured to remain in control? Our civilization will flourish as long as we win the race between the growing power of technology and the wisdom with which we manage it.

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## Aragami Bible Quiz

(Ruth & 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel)



1. How many loaves of bread the man at Bethel was carrying?
2. How many months the Ark of the Lord was in the country of the Philistines?
3. How many years did Eli judge Israel?
4. Name the city of David.
5. Name the daughter in law of Naomi who had gone back to her people.
6. Name the father of Perez.
7. Name the judges who took bribes and perverted justice.
8. Name the parents of Samuel.
9. Name the sons of Elimelech.
10. Name the three sons of Saul.
11. To whom did the people of Israel ask to pray for them without ceasing?
12. What did David say that he did not bring, as the king's business required haste?
13. What did David take from the encampment of Saul?

14. What did Naomi do when she had heard that the Lord had considered his people and given them food?
15. What did Samuel do when the Lord called a fourth time?
16. What did the Israelites do when the ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the camp?
17. What is the meaning of 'Ischabod'?
18. Where did David go from Gath?
19. Where did Israel encamp as they went out to battle against Philistines?
20. Where did Saul send his messengers three times?
21. Which city of Philistines has belonged to the kings of Judah?
22. Which place was called the Rock of Escape?
23. Which was the ancient proverb quoted by David?
24. Which was the tribe of Saul?
25. Who had hidden himself among the baggage?
26. Who had taken the wives of David captive?
27. Who loved David as his own soul?
28. Who said, "As the Lord lives, you deserve to die, because you have not kept watch over your lord, the Lord's anointed."?
29. Who used to go up year by year to worship the Lord at Shiloh?
30. Who was formerly called a Seer in Israel?
31. Who was Gad?
32. Who was given the charge of the ark of the Lord at Kiriathjearim?

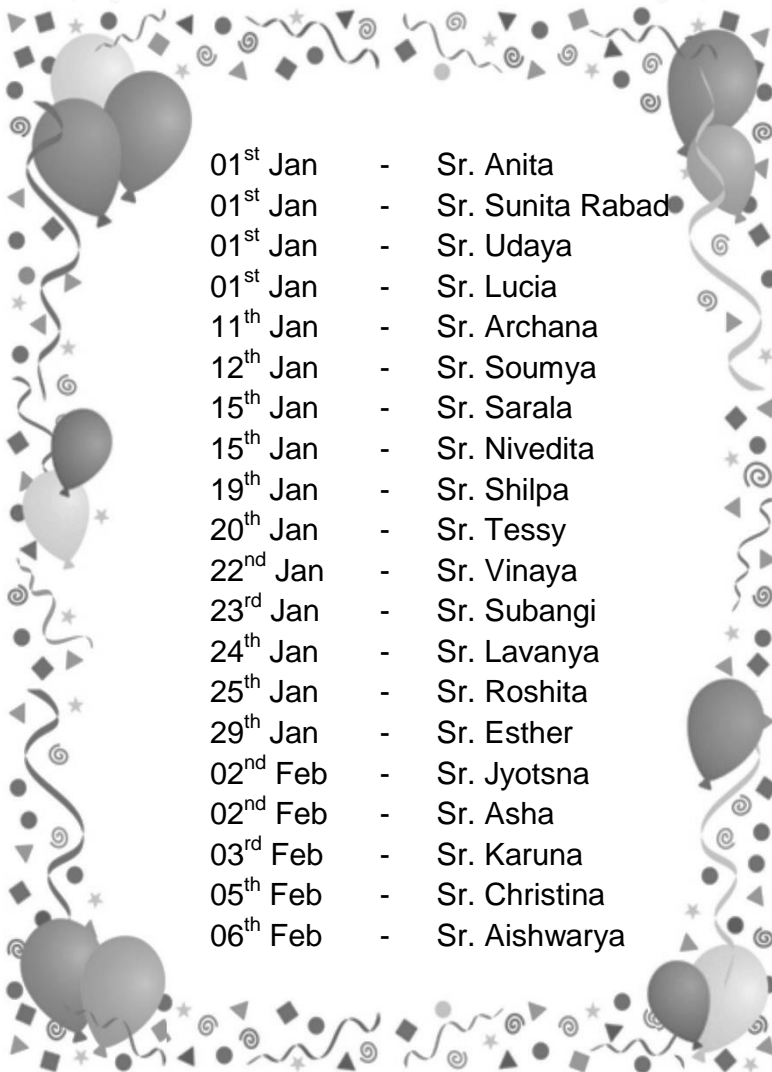
33. Who was given the sword of Goliath?
34. Who was in charge of Saul's servants?
35. Who was the father of Abiathar?
36. Who was the father of Hophni?
37. Who was the father of Kish?
38. Who was the husband of Merab?
39. Who was the mother of Chilion?
40. Who was the mother of Obed?
41. Who was the wife of Malhon?
42. Who were buried at Jabesh?
43. Why David did not leave anyone alive when he had made raids on the Geshurites, the Girzites and the Amalekites?
44. Why David had success in all his undertakings?
45. Why did David behave as a madman?
46. Why did David go into the forest of Hereth?
47. Why did Saul come to the land of Zuph?
48. Why did Saul go to the wilderness of Ziph?
49. Why the people of Israel did not have swords and spears?
50. Why was Saul afraid of David?

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# ★HAPPY★ BIRTHDAY!



01 <sup>st</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Anita
01 <sup>st</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Sunita Rabad
01 <sup>st</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Udaya
01 <sup>st</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Lucia
11 <sup>th</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Archana
12 <sup>th</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Soumya
15 <sup>th</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Sarala
15 <sup>th</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Nivedita
19 <sup>th</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Shilpa
20 <sup>th</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Tessy
22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Vinaya
23 <sup>rd</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Subangi
24 <sup>th</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Lavanya
25 <sup>th</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Roshita
29 <sup>th</sup> Jan	-	Sr. Esther
02 <sup>nd</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Jyotsna
02 <sup>nd</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Asha
03 <sup>rd</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Karuna
05 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Christina
06 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Aishwarya



10 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Meera
12 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Lima
14 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Kavita
16 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Sneha
16 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Rashmi
19 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Savita
20 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Shubha
28 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Seji Dainy
28 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Suthara
28 <sup>th</sup> Feb	-	Sr. Alka Xavir
02 <sup>nd</sup> Mar	-	Sr. Flora
04 <sup>th</sup> Mar	-	Sr. Rani P
06 <sup>th</sup> Mar	-	Sr. Nitya
10 <sup>th</sup> Mar	-	Sr. Manisha
12 <sup>th</sup> Mar	-	Sr. Victoria
12 <sup>th</sup> Mar	-	Sr. Amala Nirapel
17 <sup>th</sup> Mar	-	Sr. Jacinta
23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar	-	Sr. Geeta
23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar	-	Sr. Veena
25 <sup>th</sup> Mar	-	Sr. Atulya

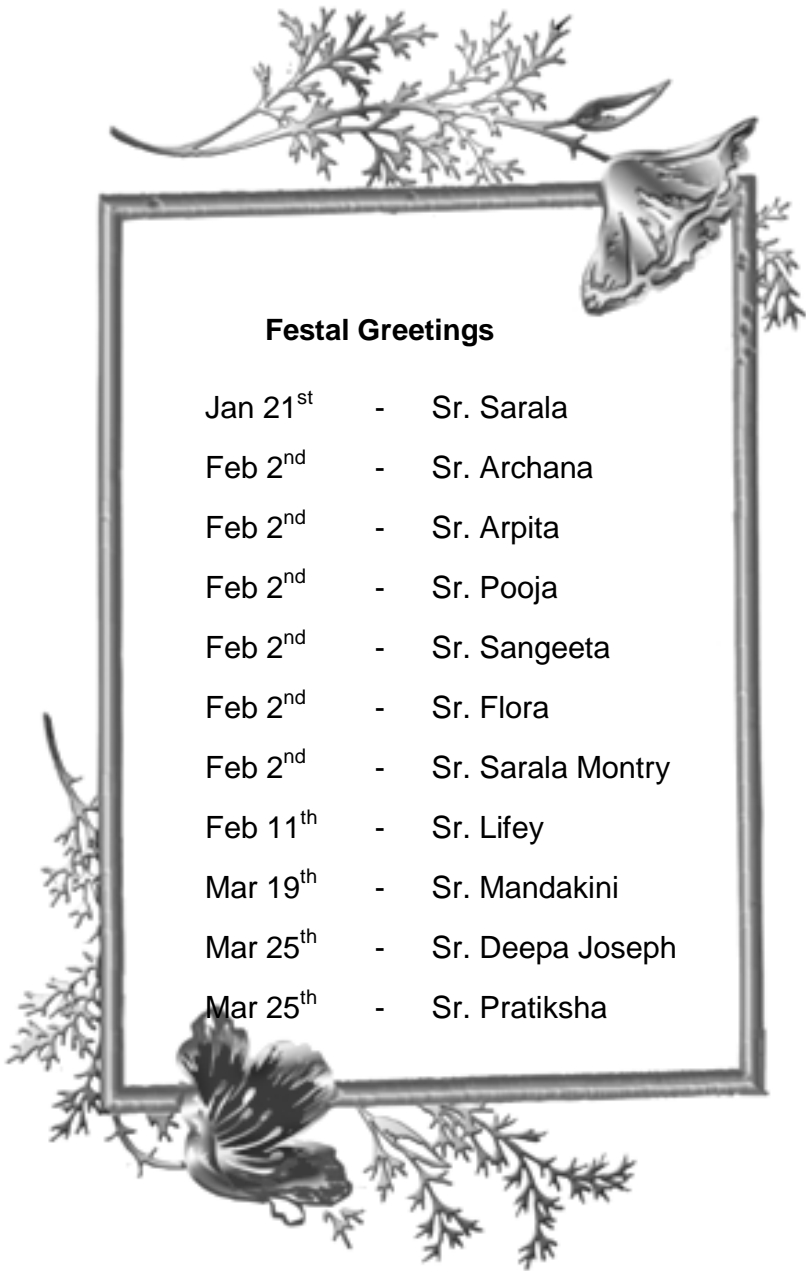




# ★HAPPY★ BIRTHDAY!



25 <sup>th</sup> Mar	-	Sr. Riya
26 <sup>th</sup> Mar	-	Sr. Flowery
01 <sup>st</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Abhaya
01 <sup>st</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Banita
01 <sup>st</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Sarita
01 <sup>st</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Sushila
02 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Roja
02 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Ashirta
05 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Rani John
06 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Hemalata
06 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Lincy
06 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Linmy
06 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Shantammal
10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Joshana
17 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Maria
18 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Valsa
20 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Margret
22 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Nutan
23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Amala.R
23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Padmini
27 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-	Sr. Kalpana



### **Festal Greetings**

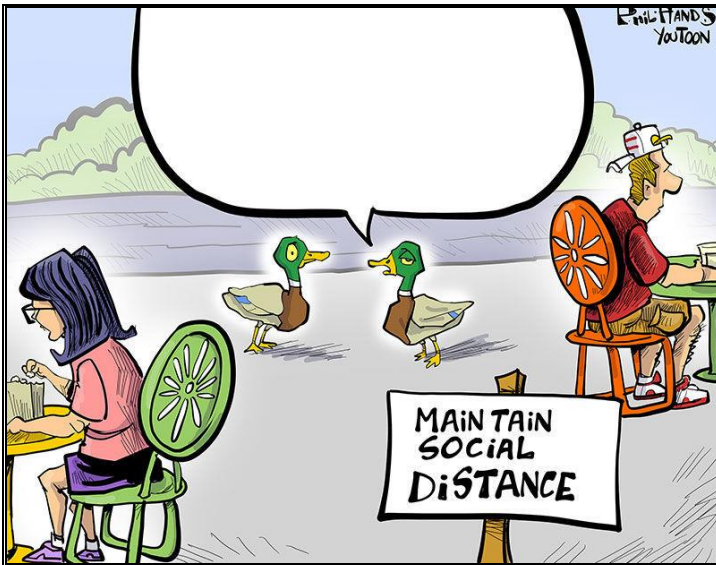
- |                      |   |                   |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|
| Jan 21 <sup>st</sup> | - | Sr. Sarala        |
| Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | - | Sr. Archana       |
| Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | - | Sr. Arpita        |
| Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | - | Sr. Pooja         |
| Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | - | Sr. Sangeeta      |
| Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | - | Sr. Flora         |
| Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | - | Sr. Sarala Montry |
| Feb 11 <sup>th</sup> | - | Sr. Lifey         |
| Mar 19 <sup>th</sup> | - | Sr. Mandakini     |
| Mar 25 <sup>th</sup> | - | Sr. Deepa Joseph  |
| Mar 25 <sup>th</sup> | - | Sr. Pratiksha     |



### **Festal Greetings**

- Mar 25<sup>th</sup> - Sr. Lalita Baa
- Mar 25<sup>th</sup> - Sr. Lalita P
- Mar 25<sup>th</sup> - Sr. Manjusha
- Mar 25<sup>th</sup> - Sr. Maria
- Mar 25<sup>th</sup> - Sr. Sally
- Mar 25<sup>th</sup> - Sr. Seema
- Mar 25<sup>th</sup> - Sr. Ranjita Lakada
- Apr 4<sup>th</sup> - Sr. Anisha
- Apr 4<sup>th</sup> - Sr. Jyoti
- Apr 29<sup>th</sup> - Sr. Sudha

*Give a suitable caption to the given picture*



*The winner will be awarded with an exciting prize  
The caption should reach the editorial board  
by 20<sup>th</sup> March 2021*

The Winner of the August 2020 Volume is **Riya**

**Caption- "Success in any endeavor  
does not happen by accident"**



## Congratulations to the winners of Bible Quiz 2019



## Thanks to Covid-19 Warriors



**Congratulations to Sr. Sally**  
Second Prize winner of National Essay Competition on  
'My Dreams for Chanda Mission'





## Christ the King Feast Cum Province Day



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# O, Holy Night

O Holy Night! The stars are brightly shining,  
It is the night of our dear Saviour's birth.  
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,  
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.  
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.  
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!  
O night divine, O night when Christ was born;  
O night divine, O night, O night Divine...

