

SHRINE OF THE INFANT JESUS

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IJ matters





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A word before.....

The month of September is a month in which many events are celebrated. Teachers' Day, International literacy day, World first aid day, International day of democracy, World Ozone day and many others. For Catholics, two great feasts are celebrated. The first is the birthday of Mary, the mother of Jesus and the second is the exaltation of the Cross. Our "IJ Matters" for the month of September has taken into consideration some of these days.

The Nativity of Mary (September 8) and the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross (September 14) are considered as two of the twelve great feast is the Catholic liturgical calendar.

In the first article that follows I have looked at four of the seven "words" of Jesus from the cross and reflected on their meaning for us today. Fr. Augustine's article in Marathi sees Fr. Stan Swamy as one who courageously embraced the cross.

In his song (for which the audio link is also given) "Roses in the sea", Fr. Terry expresses hope that though finding roses in the sea seems as impossible as a camel entering the eye of a needle (Mk 10:24), he will persevere in his search even in this world of pain.

Fr. Bosco has great devotion to Mary. She has played an important part in his life and especially in his vocation to the Society of her son. He expresses gratitude for all the love and care he has received from our mother Mary.

Fr. Tony has had many rich experiences in his life as a Jesuit. The one he shares is about his accident that happened 38 years ago. He does not dwell so much on himself and what happened to him as on the one whom he considers "The Good Samaritan" who came to his aid. Like to Good Samaritan of the Parable which Jesus told (Lk 10:25-37), his Samaritan saw the need and responded. Tony appeals to all of us to rise above our differences and focus what unites us.

Vincy D'mello who writes under the penname Vivek has written an ode to our Blessed mother titled "माझे मारिया महात्म्य !!"

Being as we are in the Shrine of the Infant Jesus, Fr. Bosco has had a close encounter with the Infant Jesus even before coming here physically. He tells us about it in "A close encounter with the Infant Jesus".

Though children have yet to be allowed to come to school physically, our school has been working online and trying to reach out to our students as much as we can. The teachers have been having numerous training programmes. One such programme reported on by teacher Payal was – 'The Joyful Learning of Mathematics'.

Fr. Terry has been one of those who constantly thinks 'outside the box' and this is evident in his article on "New learnings.... New living".

We hope that these articles will give you hope and a new way of looking at life.



Fr. Errol Fernandes SJ

Chaplain, The Shrine of Infant Jesus

Lessons from the Cross of Jesus for our times

The feast of the Exaltation of the Cross of Jesus was celebrated from as early as 335 C.E. It celebrates the victory of Jesus over death in and through the cross. What was considered a barbaric instrument of torture and hopelessness became through Christ a symbol of hope.

The cross which was considered a stumbling-block and foolishness came to be regarded as the power of God (1 Cor 1:18, 23). Though Jesus was terrified before taking up the cross and states as much before his prayer in Gethsemane, he took it up because he trusted God's word. For Jesus, God was the most intimate experience he could ever have. This is why he chose the symbol "Father" (Mt 6:7-17; Lk 11:2-4) to relate to and converse with God. This term communicated both intimacy and confidence.

Jesus did not seem to receive a response from God during his prayer in Gethsemane, yet he arose from his prayer fortified and convinced that it was God's will that he take up the cross (Mk 14:32-42). This conviction came from within. It came because of the relationship Jesus shared with God. He knew – not because he had received a sign - because of his faith that God would never do anything that was not for Jesus' good and God's glory. He knew - through faith - that the cross would not be the end and that God would raise him even from the dead (Mk 8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34).

Out of the seven words that Jesus spoke from the cross, four are relevant for these challenging times.

1. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice 'Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?' which means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' (Mk 15:34). It was usually the case that a person who was crucified would experience a gradual loss of strength and consciousness. Jesus, however, cries out with a "LOUD VOICE". There is no loss of strength and Jesus is fully conscious of what is happening to and around him. In Gethsemane, Jesus addressed God as "Father" and was willing to accept God's will (14:36). Here he addresses God as "Theos" which is the Greek term for "God". To be sure, Jesus still addresses God as close to him by use of the pronoun 'my', yet it is clear that the address here, is not like it was in Gethsemane. If there was intimacy then, there is distance now. The words from the cross from Ps 22:1, are of confusion and incomprehension. Six hours after being nailed to the cross and after three hours of darkness, Jesus feels abandoned by God (Mk 15:25, 33-34).

When the first lockdown was declared, most of us thought that it would last a few weeks. When it did not end after a few weeks, we were convinced that it would last six months at the most.

Today, we are not at all sure when the pandemic will end. From the evidence that we have, it seems that it will be with us for a long time. We too experience bewilderment in this situation like Jesus did. We too feel abandoned by God and want to cry out to God that God has abandoned us. However, we are fortunate that we know the reality. God had not abandoned Jesus. Though God did not seem to be present when Jesus prayed and when he was on the cross, the fact is that God was present all through and was in total control. We need to understand now that even though it may seem that God does not hear our prayer and that God has abandoned us, the reality is that God does hear our prayer and has not abandoned us. We need to persevere in prayer and keep drawing strength from it to face all the challenges that lie ahead. Our prayer are must resemble that of Jesus. We must pray like Jesus did for the scourge of the pandemic to be taken away from us. However, we must end our prayer with the words, “yet, not what I want but what you want” (Mk 14:36)

2. “Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.'” (Lk 23:34). In this verse, Jesus prays not for himself but for all those responsible for his crucifixion. This includes everyone who had a hand in it. Here, Jesus addresses God as “Father” which indicates the intimacy that he experiences even while on the cross. Not only does Jesus ask his Father to forgive all those responsible, he also finds a reason why they must be forgiven. The ignorance here, is not lack of knowledge, but a wrong

understanding about who God is. Even in his hour of pain, Jesus thinks of others. His love for those who consider him their adversary is expressed from the cross. He does not consider anyone an adversary.

The pandemic has made us aware of the fragile lives we live. The larger majority of us have had a close friend or relative who has left this world because of Covid-19 or a related ailment. They were with us at one moment and are no longer with us now. Since our lives here on earth are short, temporary and fleeting, we need to take a cue from Jesus with regard to forgiveness. Some of us hold grudges and un-forgiveness in our hearts for a long time. We keep feeding the grudge and allow it to grow. Soon it becomes enormous that we lose control of it. Rather, it takes control of us. Holding the grudge affects us and harms us and not the person against whom we hold the grudge. We need to learn from Jesus how to let go.

Most doctors and psychologists are agreed that the larger majority of our ailments are psychosomatic. This means that if our Psyché (inner being which includes the mind and heart) is negative, it will have an adverse effect on our sōma (body). From his cross Jesus teaches us that it is not only in keeping with God's will that we forgive and let go, it is also prudent to do so and good for our own health and peace of mind.

3. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last (Lk 23:46). That Jesus was able to cry with a loud voice is in itself unusual.

He would have possibly been exhausted with the carrying of the cross and the crucifixion. Yet, his confidence in God as Father was not exhausted.

On the contrary, it was strengthened. The words that Jesus cries here, are from Ps 31:6 where the Psalmist expresses trust that his fate is in God's hands. Jesus expresses confidence that his future is secure because it is in the loving hands of God who is Father. This is why he can submit his spirit into God's hands in the firm knowledge that he will be delivered. The term that Jesus uses to address God here is "Father". It indicates that Jesus regards God as one in whom he can hope and one whom he can trust. It is in the hands of such a God that Jesus gives up his spirit and breathes his last. He is aware even as he does so that he is in loving and caring hands.

Like Jesus, many of us have been carrying our own crosses. These crosses have been numerous and daily. Examples of these are the loss of a loved one, loss of employment, being infected by the virus, hospitalization, financial constraints and many others. Some of us have been weighed down by them. Others see no light whatever and are on the verge of giving up. However, the Lord appears to us on our road to Calvary, and keeps encouraging us not to give up. He keeps exhorting us to believe that God is with us and in us. We can be confident like him to place our hearts and spirits confidently in God who will come to our aid. We keep our gaze fixed on Jesus and keep drawing inspiration from him. We know from him that our fate is in the loving and

capable hands of God. We also know like Jesus that whatever happens in our lives will happen for God's glory and our good, just as it did in Jesus' life.

4. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. (Jn 19:26-27). Even as he hung on the cross, Jesus makes provision for his mother. Even as his mother is with Jesus in his darkest hour, he is with her and provides for her. It is the beloved disciple who is commissioned to look after the mother of Jesus. However, the mother of Jesus is also handed over to the beloved disciple as his/her own mother.

Two aspects stand out besides others in this scene. The first is that this is only the second time in the Gospel that Jesus addresses his mother. In both instances, he addresses her as "Woman". While in Jn 2:4, the term may be interpreted as a distancing term because Jesus is focussed on the Father's will, here it is not. Some translations therefore add "Dear" before "woman" to indicate that here, Jesus expresses concern for his mother. Though he used a distancing term for Mary at Cana, he did what was required at the wedding only because his mother pointed out the situation to him and despite his "hour" not having come. This indicates that he would come to the aid of his mother even when she would merely point a situation out to him.

That this is so, is confirmed at the foot of the cross, where his concern is expressed in handing over his mother to the “Beloved Disciple”. The second aspect concerns the “Beloved Disciple”. In the Gospel, the beloved disciple is a historical figure. However, he cannot be restricted to that. The “Beloved Disciple” is anyone who loves Jesus. If in the Gospel, the mother of Jesus is handed over to the Beloved Disciple at the foot of the cross, today, Mary is handed over to anyone who loves Jesus as his/her own mother. The Church according to John is made of three interrelated aspects: The Spirit of Jesus given from the cross, the mother of Jesus (Mary) and beloved disciples (anyone who loves Jesus).

Mary teaches us how to respond to God and to the challenges of life. Her own life was filled with challenges from the moment she accepted God's invitation to be the mother of Jesus. These continued as Jesus grew and the final challenge was the experience of her son being nailed to a cross. Despite all these challenges, Mary never ever gave up or gave in. She never lost hope. She did not give in to despair. She kept on keeping on.

As we struggle with this pandemic and the related challenges that it brings, we can turn to our Blessed Mother in this month of her birthday and ask that through her intercession, we too might obtain the numerous graces that she received from God because of her receptivity.



क्रुस खांब भव्य निशान सदैव भुषण रे

येशु पुनरूत्थीत झाला. त्याने मरणावर विजय मिळवला. आपल्या सुःखदुःखाला त्याने नविन अर्थ दिला. अंधारातुन तो आपल्याला प्रकाशाकडे नेतो, असत्यातुन तो आपल्याला सत्याकडे नेतो. याचं आताचं जीवंत उदाहरण म्हणजे फादर स्टॅन. फा. स्टॅन ह्यांनी न्याय आणि शांतीसाठी तसेच आदिवासींच्या हक्कासाठी झटत असताना त्यांना तुरूंगात टाकण्यात आले. त्यांनी त्यांचा क्रुस आनंदाने उचलला “अ केज बर्ड सिंग”, पिंजऱ्यातला पक्षी गाऊ शकतो, अनाथ, अपंग, गोरगरीब, उपेक्षीत ह्यांची प्रत्यक्ष अवहेलना होतांना आपण पाहतो त्यांना आपल्या प्रेमाची, प्रार्थनेची गरज आहे. त्यांना न्याय व शांती मिळवुन देणे म्हणजेच आजच्या जगामध्ये क्रुसाचा विजयोत्सव होय.

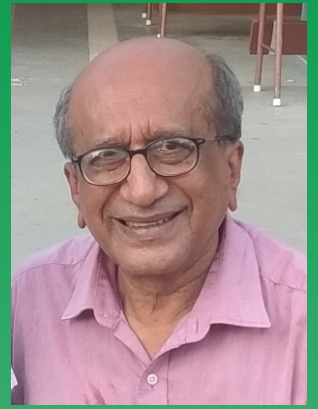
आपल्याही जीवनात आव्हाने येतील, गोरगरीबांची सेवा करताना क्रुस भेटतील पण आपण डगमगुन न जाता विजय झालेल्या क्रुसाकडे पहावे, अंतिम विजय सत्याचाच आहे. सत्य परेशान होईल परंतु पराजित होणार नाही. आमचे फा. सॅम्युयल रॅन दिवस-रात्र लिहण्याचे कार्य करायचे. वयाच्या ८५ व्या वर्षापर्यंत. मी त्यांना विचारलं तुम्ही हे कसे करता त्यांनी क्रुसाकडे बोट दाखवलं. क्रुस खांब भव्य निशान सदैव रे....



ऑगस्टीन डिमेलो एस.जे



ROSES IN THE SEA



Fr. Terry Quadros SJ



[Click here for Audio](#)

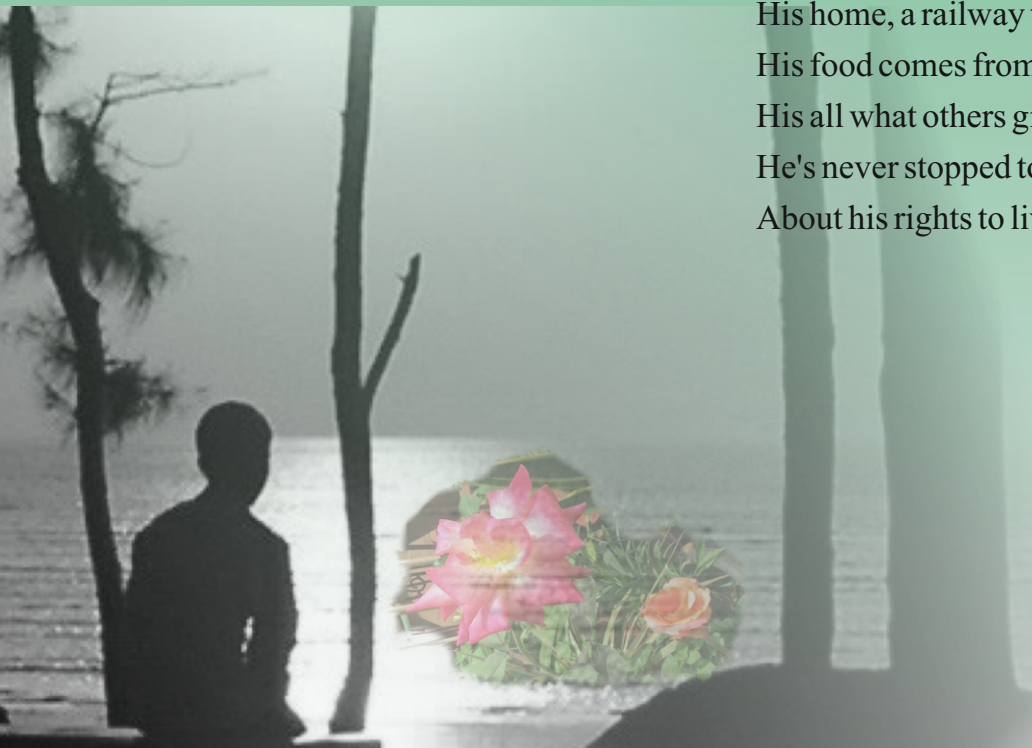
Once on a lovely morning I set out to find my star
All my dreams all my hopes they were calling
Love beckoned to me from afar
I walked through the narrow alleys
Stepped into a world of pain
Threw all my dreams all my hopes away
And started my search again

**I'm looking for roses, roses in the sea
Just for an honest chance to live
An honest chance to be free
I'm searching the wide world over
For life for liberty
It's much easier to find roses in the sea**

Sprawled on a bloody battlefield
a soldier twists in the slime
Half his face has been blasted away
He's fallen for the last time
Far away people are waiting
For Jimmy to come back to them
Poor people they are waiting in vain
They won't see their Jim again

A little lonely hungry boy
Is running in the rain
The alley is his playing ground
His home, a railway train
His food comes from the garbage can
His all what others give
He's never stopped to ask himself
About his rights to live

My searching isn't over
In fact it's just begun
In these few years that are left to me
There's plenty to be done
And on that day i close my eyes
Perhaps then i will see
Those roses that i dreamt about
Those roses meant for me.



‘MARY’S ROLE IN MY LIFE AND IN MY VOCATION’

Fr. Bosco D'souza SJ

Asst. Chaplain The Shrine of Infant Jesus



I was born on 28th of May. Four days earlier is the feast of Our Lady of the Way. I was told later on, that I was born on the Feast of Pentecost that year. A few days later, the doctor in the hospital told my mother that I would not survive. But “Our Lady of the Way” knew that God had already decided that I would. When I was brought home, my elder brother and 2 elder sisters helped my Mum to look after me with love and care. It was then that the seed of my vocation was planted by God, and Mary was there to see that it would get the proper nourishment to develop and grow.

My family consisted of my parents and five children, including myself. We were a close-knit family praying the daily Rosary and having our meals together as far as possible. From a very young age Mother Mary played a very important role in my life. I got admission in St. Mary's High School, Mazagaon, which was run by the Jesuits. Here my love for Mary grew stronger when I joined the boys' sodality, boys' choir and the altar boys' association, under the direction of the Jesuit Fathers Aloysius Pereira and Beneditti. When I reached the 8th standard I was encouraged to choose 'LATIN' as my second language in school. Frs Casasayas and Donnelly

had a great impact on our lives when we were preparing for the 11th Std. board exams. All along, Mary played an important role in my life. After we completed our prelims we had to make a choice, whether to join the Jesuits or not. Five of my classmates said 'yes' but I with the remaining six said that we did not want to join.

I then joined Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd at Worli. A few months later I lost my loving Dad. That is when I decided to leave Mahindra & Mahindra, where I had worked for one year, and with the help of my elder brother Noel, joined Richardson & Cruddas Pvt Ltd in Byculla. Side by side I completed my diploma in Mechanical Engineering. As my place of work was very close to my home, I was able to attend Mass in the evenings at St. Anne's Church, Mazagaon. I even became a member of the Young Men's Sodality in that parish. All this time Mary was leading me to Her Son Jesus.

My classmates who had joined the Society of Jesus in the year 1961 were ordained Priests in 1972. It was then that I decided to give up my job at Richardson & Cruddas Pvt. Ltd and to join the Bombay Province of the Society of Jesus.

I entered the Society on 20th June, 10 years later, i.e. on 24th April 1982, I was ordained Priest by the (late) Cardinal Simon Pimenta, with 8 other Jesuits, on St. Peter's ground, Bandra. My first appointment was at Seva Niketan, Byculla (earlier known as Sodality House) to help in the promotion of Christian Life Communities (C.L.C.). 5 years later I was sent to Sitagarha, Hazaribagh for my Tertainship. My next appointment was at St. Peter's Church, Bandra. I then went for one year Sabbatical to the Retreat House, Bandra. From there I was sent to St. Anne's Church, Mazagaon. Next, I was appointed to Holy Family Church, Andheri. From there I was sent to St.

Ignatius Loyola Church, Vasai as Superior and Parish Priest. I am now helping out at the Shrine of the Infant Jesus, Nashik, as Assistant Chaplain. I have thoroughly enjoyed my work and apostolate in all the Jesuit houses I was sent to and also bonded well with my Jesuit companions in all the respective Jesuit Communities.

As I look back, I can see that all through these years, Mary had played a very important role in my life as a Jesuit, and her loving presence continues to make a deep impression on my life as a Priest, Next year i.e. 2022 will be a milestone in my life. I will be completing 50 years as a Jesuit in the Society of Jesus. My heart is filled with joy and gratitude for all that has happened during these years in which I have experienced tremendous love and support from God and from my Mother Mary, from the Society of Jesus, from all my family members, and from the wonderful people I have met and interacted with, during these past 49 plus years as a Jesuit.

'The harvest is great, but the labourers are few'. Let us pray that many more youth may listen to God's call in their life, and have the courage to say "YES" to God, as Mary said 'yes' and continues to pray and intercede for all of us to remain close to Her Son Jesus, in the building of His Kingdom of love,

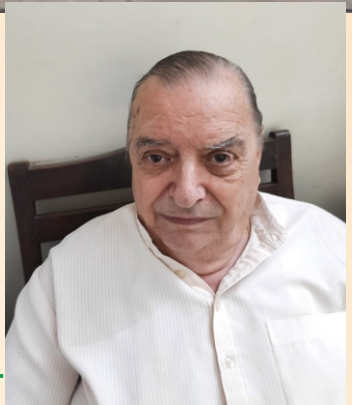




THE GOOD SAMARITAN IN MY LIFE

(Lk 10:25-37)

Fr. Anthony (Tony) Jurschik SJ



Whenever the parable of the Good Samaritan comes in the liturgy of the mass, I always make it personal since I had a similar experience on November 3, 1983. In that year, this date was DIWALI, the festival of lights. I cannot remember anything of what happened. However, later some friends explained what had happened.

I was in Nashik during that time, and I had decided to go to Vasai for the wedding of a friend of mine. A Jesuit friend (George Ribas-Espasa) offered me a seat on his motorcycle. He was riding, and I was behind. We took the Agra road and when we were at the Kasara Ghatswe saw a lorry overtaking another on a curve

and coming towards us. The road was narrow. George had to decide what to do. He could either crash with the lorry or get off the road. He did the latter. There were stones by the side of the road where we got off and the bike rammed into them. As a result, the bike overturned and both of us fell to the ground. At that time we had no helmets and naturally we remained unmoved with our bodies stuck to the ground. There were cars, Lorries, motorcycles passing through. They saw us lying on the ground, helpless, but never stopped (like the priest and the Levite in the parable). Of course, if they were going to take us to the hospital, it mean a lot of time and trouble...

Finally a man on motorcycle appeared, stopped, saw us and decided to take us to the civil hospital of his town (Shahapur). He was our GOOD SAMARITAN! Parking his motorcycle on the road, he stopped a man coming in a jeep and requested him to take us to the hospital in his town, which was not far from there. He informed the man in the jeep that he would take responsibility for us once we were admitted. Once we were in the hospital, George realised that we were in Shahapur which was close to Assangaon, where the sisters of Helpers of Mary have a convent. We would stop there often when on the way to and from Nashik. He requested someone to go to the convent and tell some Sisters to come to the hospital. They recognized us and took us to their hospital, cleansed us, and by ambulance took us to J.J. hospital in Mumbai.

What happened to me afterwards is another interesting story. The important thing is that a Hindu (not considering what religion we belonged to), Sanjay Pitale, was the Good Samaritan for us. I met him later, when I came back to

Nashik after my stay at Bombay Hospital where I was operated and in coma for a month, just to thank him. He said that his father had died of an accident some months before and he felt that he had to help us, not knowing that we were Christian priests. The larger majority of our brothers and sister make no distinction between religion, caste, creed, language and culture. It is just a handful of narrow-minded people who do so. Most realise that we are first humans and as humans are brothers and sisters of one family. We realise that we are dependent on each other and on nature. Indeed not only are we dependent we are interdependent as Covid-19 has shown us.

Let us strive to be like the Good Samaritan of the Gospel of Luke and reach out to anyone in need making no distinction of any kind.

माझे मारिया महात्म्य !!

येशूची आई मेरी हिचा आठ
सप्टेंबर रोजी जन्मदिन आहे.
त्याच्या पूर्व तयारीसाठी
मरियेच्या विवेकी जीवन
मूल्यांवर पुढील नऊ दिवस
चिंतन मनन होणार आहे.
बायबलप्रमाणेच येशूनबीच्या
मातेचे वर्णन कुराणात आहे.
आणि ते अधिक शास्त्रोक्त नि
विवेकी विज्ञान साक्षेपी असे केले आहे. त्यात
मरियेचे मोठेपण दाखविण्यासाठी तिच्या नावे
चमत्कार आदि नाहीत.
म्हणून कुराणातील मरिया महात्म्य अधिक
वास्तववादी आहे. म्हणून ते अधिक अर्थपूर्ण
वाटते.

मरीयेला कृपाळू ममताळू मधुर कुमारी
मरिया ह्या विशेषणांनी
गौरविलेले आहे. तिच्या प्रखर क्रांतीकारी
भूमिकेवरही काही
विवेकी मंडळी चिंतन मनन करीत असतात.
त्यात रक्तसाक्षी फादर
स्टॅन स्वामीही सहभागी झाले होते. असे लोक
स्त्रीयांच्या मुक्ततेचे क्रांतीगीत गातात.

केवळ मूर्ती भक्ती, मरीयेच्या
पुतळ्यासमोरील हार तुरे, मेणबत्ती. केवळ
पालखीचे भोई होऊन कर्मकांड नाही.
आकाशात झेंडा उभारून मिरवणूकही

नाही. तर तिच्या शिकवणूकीतून प्रेरणा
घेऊन समाजकार्यात सहभागी होत असतात.

आज तिच्या नावाने ठिकठिकाणी
तीर्थक्षेत्री अंधश्रद्धेचे अवडंबर नि स्तोम
माजलेले असताना त्यात प्रामाणिक
भाविकांबरोबर समाज गुंड आणि राजकीय
पुढारी प्रत्यक्ष अप्रत्यक्ष आपला स्वार्थी
कार्यभाग साधून घेतात. लुटून मिळविलेल्या
अनधिकृत पैशाची उधळण करतात. खरं
पहाता मरियेची विजयी पताका उंचावण्याचा
जो मान समाजसेवकांचा. तो हिरावून घेऊन
तेथील धर्मगुरूंच्या साक्षीने भरभक्कम देणगी
देऊन प्रमुख पाहुणे म्हणून धनाढ्य
बावट्याची दोरी खेचतात. आणि आपली
मतपेटी भक्कम करतात.

प्रामाणिक असल्याचा मुखवटा प्रधान करून
पुढेपुढे मिरवत राहतात. ती त्याच्यासाठी
चालून आलेले पर्वणी ते समजतात.

हा खर्च ते कोठून उचलतात? विधवांच्या
घरावर नांगर फिरवून हा लबाडीचा,
हरामाचा पैसा तर नाही? हा प्रश्न भीतीने
बलाढ्यांना कुणी विचारत नाही?
पण हे श्रद्धेच्या प्रामाणिक शेतातील पेरलेले
निंदण असते हे लक्षात घेता खुरपे घेऊन हे
निंदण काढून टाकण्याचे आव्हान आज
येशूची क्रांतीकारी आई मरिया आपणास
तिच्या वाढदिवसाची पूर्व तयारी करीत
असता करीत आहे.

तिला आपण फुले वाहतो. खरे पाहता ती फुले निर्मात्याच्या सृष्टी सृजनतेवरील वेदीवरच अधिक शोभून दिसतात. तरीही आपण त्या सुमनांप्रमाणे सात्विक सुंदर, सुगंधी असावे हा त्या मागील भाव आहे. सुमनावरचे चमकणारे दवबिंदू व्हावे. आपण मेणबत्ती वाहतो. ती प्रेमाची ज्वाला आधी काळजात तेवावी. आपल्या अंतरीचा दिवा झाकून नव्हे तर दिवठणीवर असावा. पुष्पांजली, दीपांजली प्रमाणे आपण सुगंधी धुपांजली अर्पण करतो. आपल्याद्वारे मूल्यांचा सुगंध दरवळत असावा. असा त्याचा अर्थ आहे.

कुटुंबातील गावातील देशातील जगातील स्त्रियांना पुरुष प्रधान गुलामी अजूनही सोसावी भोगावी लागते. तिच्या पायातील वाळे हातातील कंकण नाकातील नथ केसा भांगेतील गुलाल ही

स्त्रीच्या अलंकाराचीच नव्हेत तर ती युगानुयुगे जखडून ठेवलेल्या पारतंत्र्याची ती लक्षणे आहेत .

ती साक्षर होऊ नये म्हणूनही काही धर्माध नाग आजही वारूळापाशी टपून बसले आहेत.

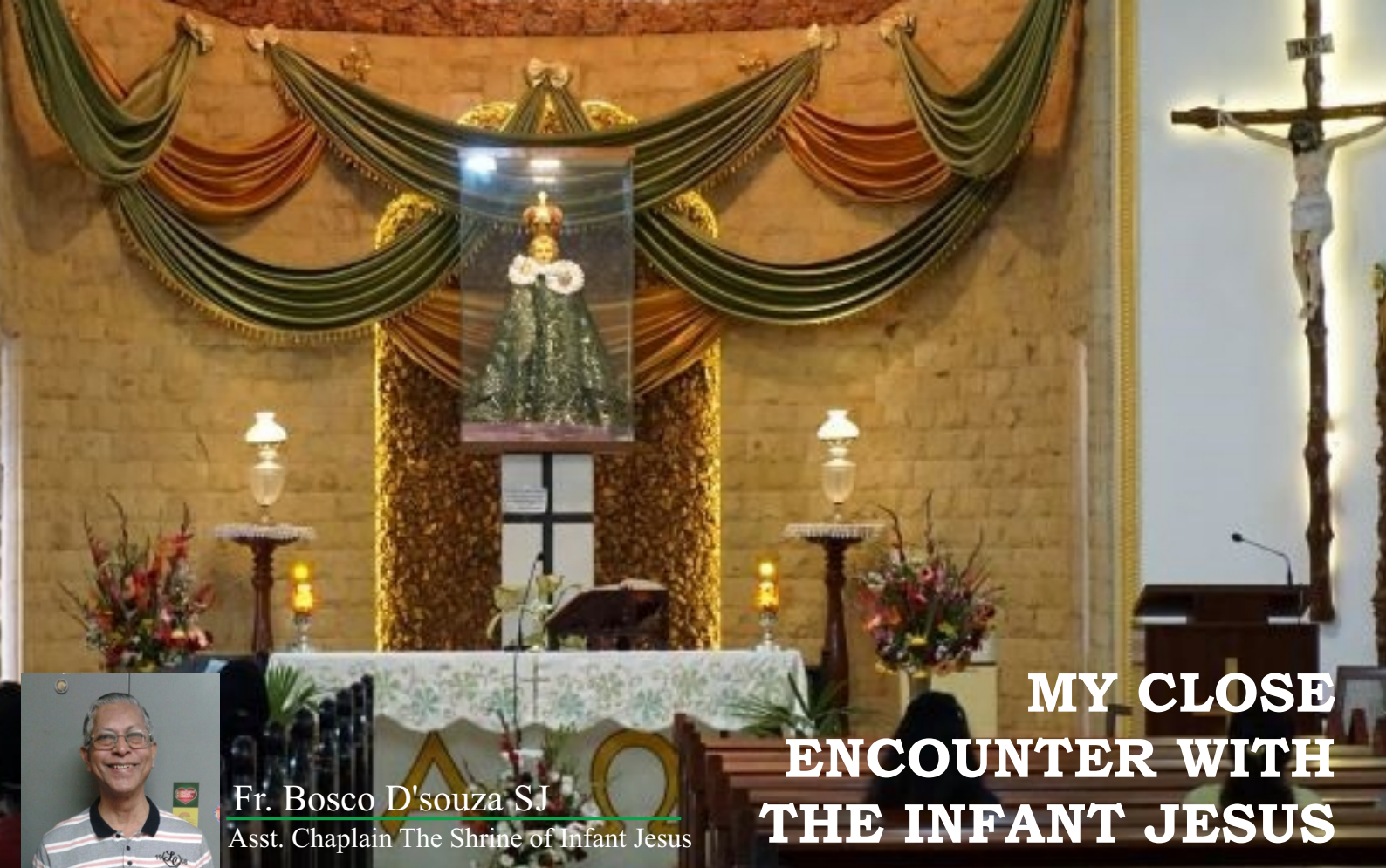
धर्माचा सत्तेसाठी जादूयी वापर करणारे प्रत्येक धर्मात आहेत. मारिया पूत्र म्हणणारे तथाकथित भक्तही त्या धर्माधतेला ऊन दूर नाहीत. त्यांना योग्य वेळी ओळखले पाहिजे. गव्हाबरोबर निंदण जरूर वाढू ध्यावे. मात्र कापणी वेळी भेसळ होऊ देऊ नये.

तर अशावेळी काही धाडशी साहसी ललना पूजापाठ बाजूस ठेवून मर्दानी मरियेसारख्या समता, न्याय, स्वातंत्र्यासाठी लढत आहेत.

भेद सारे मावळू द्या
वैर सान्या कल्पना
मानवाच्या एकतेची

वेन्सी डिमेलो एस.जे





MY CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH THE INFANT JESUS

Fr. Bosco D'souza SJ
Asst. Chaplain The Shrine of Infant Jesus

It happened a few years ago, and ever since that day, it has been etched in my memory, never to be ever forgotten. Each time I think about it, it is like re-playing the incident over and over again. This is how it took place. One day a parishioner of mine by the name of Lorna, gave me a beautiful picture of the Infant Jesus which she had got from Prague. As soon as I looked at the picture, I thought of my brother Noel and sister-in-law Bertha, and decided to give the picture to them. At that time I was posted at Holy Family Church, Andheri, while they were staying at Byculla. And so I planned that after a few days, I would go to visit them. As it was the rainy season, I put the picture in a plastic bag to prevent it from getting wet, and left for Andheri Station. At Andheri

Station, I bought a return ticket, and proceeded to catch the fast local for Mumbai Central.

As I was walking on the railway bridge, I saw that the train was already at the platform waiting to leave. The steps were wet and slippery, and so I had to climb down very slowly, while my eyes were fixed on the train which would start moving at any time. That is when I noticed that the train was indeed moving, and so I hastened my pace and reached the platform just as the train was gaining speed. With my left hand I clasped the picture of the Infant Jesus close to my chest, and with my right hand I grasped the centre vertical bar of the train and jumped on to the foot board of the running train.

Since the foot board was wet, my foot slipped, and I found myself once again on the platform and running as I still held on to the vertical bar. It was then that I suddenly felt as though I was being picked up by some invisible hands and being placed gently in a sitting position on the foot board of the moving train. Within a few seconds the train had cleared the platform, and I found myself looking down at the rails with my legs dangling in the air. It was then when two passengers approached me, held me by the hand and gave me a place to sit on an empty seat. For the rest of the journey I sat completely silent, uttering not a word. It was a near miss between life and death for me that day. Yet I know and believe very strongly that it was the Infant Jesus who had carried me lovingly in His arms, and had placed me so gently on the foot board of the moving train, before it left the platform, and thus saved me from sure death. Praise be to the Infant Jesus!

After alighting at Mumbai Central station, I continued my journey to my brother's place and shared my experience with him and my sister-in-law. I also felt some pain on my right leg, and on checking it, I found that I had bruised my shin while slipping from the foot board of the train. I washed it with Dettol and applied some iodine to prevent any infection from setting in, I then

gave my brother the beautiful picture of the Infant Jesus and we thanked God for saving me from the jaws of sure death.

I am now posted at the Shrine of the Infant Jesus at Nashik, where I am writing the account of this very touching and memorable experience of my close and personal encounter with the Infant Jesus in my life. Tears of joy and gratitude are welling up in my eyes as I am sharing this personal experience of mine with you. I know that there are thousands of devotees of the Infant Jesus who are just waiting for the present pandemic to subside, so that they can once again be able to come to Nashik to experience the deep love of the Infant Jesus. We therefore have an online Mass being streamed everyday at 12.00 noon, starting with the recitation of the Angelus.

May the Infant Jesus bless and protect each one of you from all kinds of danger and harm, and keep you and your family safe at all times. And may Mary Our Mother whom Jesus gave to us, pray and intercede for us to remain always close to her Son and follow Him faithfully in our daily lives.

'The Joyful Learning of Mathematics'

held on 23rd July 2021.

Resource person-Mr. Matthew K Thomas

Ms. Payal Mascarenhas

Asst. Teacher, St. Xavier's School, Nasik Road



A webinar was arranged by Orient Black Swan on **Joyful Learning of Mathematics** on the 23rd of July 2021. It began at 4.00p.m. It was hosted by Mr. Matthew K Thomas, a teacher, teacher educator, a consultant as well as an author.

The webinar was conducted with regards to -

- The National Education Policy 2020 which lays increased emphasis on mathematics at all levels.
- To achieve this, Mathematics should be taught through activities and games to make the process lively.
- The NEP also proposes experiential learning and application of Mathematics in real life situations.
- The students should be able to find Mathematics in all walks of life including arts and music.

Mr. Thomas took over the meeting by telling the viewers to involve the students while teaching, which is the most important aspect of learning math. He highlighted that children should not only be listeners as this will make the teachers unsatisfied with their experimental outcomes. For better involvement of the students, he shared a few **interactive websites** like www.geogebra.org wherein the teacher as well as the student can easily solve

sums, draw geometrical diagrams digitally. He emphasized that the traditional thought of math being tough and boring which is imprinted on the child's mind by the family, society and others should be changed by gamification of the subject.

Mr. Thomas introduced a few concrete examples-

- To teach trigonometry and algebra allow the students to make their own problems and encourage project-based learning.
- Use plenty of teaching aids for teaching fractions, bills, geometry etc.
- Play games like PING PONG, Sudoku, Math race, Bounce ball questions, Dice, Estimation, stand and sit (those who think the answer is 20 stand).
- Set up a Hopscotch grid for solving integers, square roots, cube roots etc.
- Make it Hands-on where the children will be actually understanding age related sums, solving worksheets which are application based.
- Learning shapes, area, volume length, height, congruency, patterns, similarity from the nature outside the classroom (observing spider-web, honeybee comb, dating of tree etc).
- Making of models- 2D, 3D, Prisms, pyramids.

Mr. Thomas then threw light on the subject -learning of statistics, an applicable topic in banking, census, cricket scores, temperature, humidity etc. Math anthakshiri, crosswords can be played in the class to make stats interesting, comparing and contrasting can also be done using real life objects. He also suggested showing students a scene of any sport and telling them to note down the scores and the time period between successive goals or wickets etc.

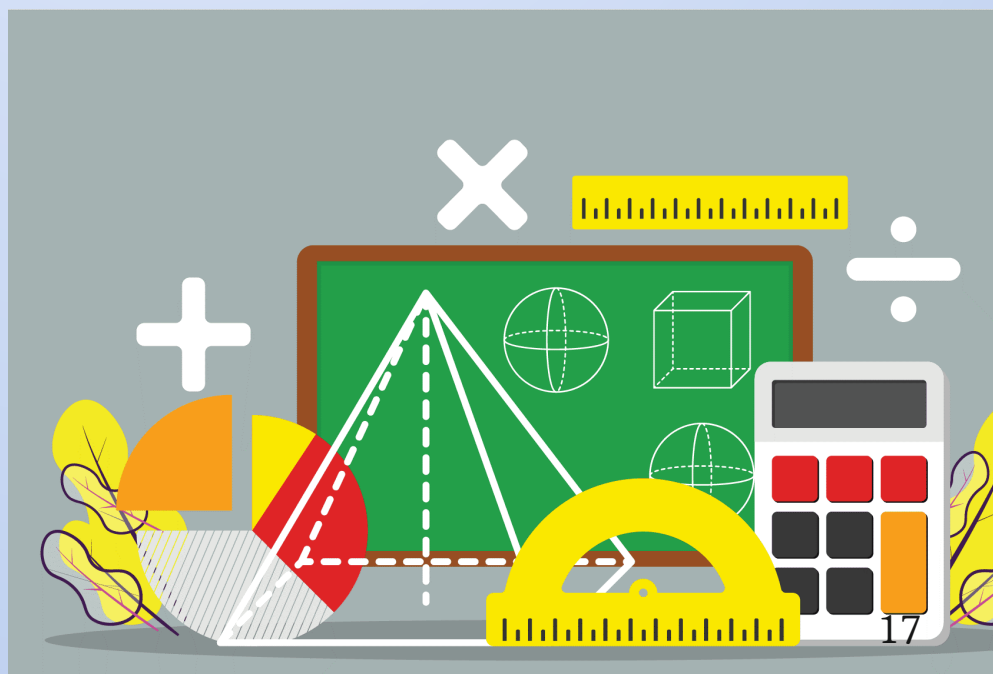
Mr. Thomas also suggested how to encourage children by listing the following points-

- Display the name of the child who has done extraordinary work in math during the weeks' time on the notice board.
- Integrate math with other subjects like arts, sports and music.
- Make learning groups with a blend of musicians, artists, students who are good at sports, students who can calculate faster etc.
- Celebrate Pi day, Mathematics day to encourage students and increase the importance of learning math.
- Everyday give them a fun and interesting fact about math like goog in googol means 10 to the power 100 , in a jiffy means $1/100^{\text{th}}$ of a second etc.
- Relate food and math for example pizza shapes for learning triangles and sectors.
- Chapters like Probability and Ratio can be explained live in the class by involving students.

At the end Mr. Thomas concluded by suggesting some activities for fun learning of math-

- Math newspaper- Students can be assigned topics on a monthly basis to create columns in a term newspaper which will encourage them to work in collaboration.
- Maths fair- A carnival setup can be created to give students to apply their logic, mathematical skills and problem-solving ability.
- Intra-class and Inter-class maths quiz- by using multiple rounds and keeping a puzzle round based on tangram puzzles, estimation etc.

The meeting ended with a beautiful quote by Mr. Thomas- Maths is a gift to mankind to make good use of it. The inputs given by Mr. Thomas will definitely bloom interest for maths in the future generations and the age-old mantra of maths being difficult will completely be forgotten.



NEW LEARNINGS... NEW LIVING

There is so much excitement and wonder in new learnings. In today's world, technology provides so much for this. Computers, smartphones, updates, apps, gadgets and a million other things added daily... making our living so much more comfortable and fascinating.

All this in the material world, material things. So what about the spiritual word, spiritual things?

Jesus himself gave us so many new learnings, different from the old ones that the religious leaders of his time based their living on:

“You have heard that it was said... but I say to you...” (Mt 5:21-48). In all of his preaching and in his whole life itself there were new learnings from Jesus for better living.

I would like to offer you some new, simple and practical learnings to add to your human and spiritual living experience.

But first an assumption that needs to be clarified.

We assume that we are human beings and that makes perfect sense.

We are rational and free and are capable of making choices.

True... for most of the time.

And our spiritual duties, though occasional, are also part of our lives.

In brief, we consider ourselves to be human beings having a spiritual experience.

Is that true? Or are we actually spiritual beings having a human experience?

Don't we say that we are created in the image and likeness of God? What is that but admitting that we are basically spiritual beings? If we really believe this and live in accordance with it then life changes radically i.e. 180 degrees for us.

We live as spiritual beings having - for the time we are alive - a human experience.

With this assumption let us come to the new learnings I am offering you.

There will be three learnings in three different areas for your spiritual and human living.

I. THREE NEW SINS THAT ONE SHOULD BE CAREFUL ABOUT

1. The sin of the forbidden tree.

It was not going near the tree that was forbidden but eating the fruit of that tree that God forbade Adam. So going near the tree was not forbidden. Sitting under the tree and having a picnic there was not forbidden. Enjoying the shade of the tree was not forbidden. Only the eating of the fruit of that tree that was forbidden. But Adam and Eve, disregarding their own vulnerability went near the tree, were enticed by the wily serpent and disaster! (Gen 3:1-7).

Playing around the occasions of sin can cause us to fall. The forbidden tree can be as dangerous to us as the fruit itself. As might happen when you are watching questionable sites on the internet. “I know what I am doing...” and “I know where to draw the line...” could turn out to be famous last words preluding doom! Like Adam and Eve, we too disregard our own vulnerability and go where we ought not to go. This is a sure recipe for disaster. We need to ask ourselves if it is not better to stay as far away from the tree as possible.

2. The sin of excuses

We often make excuses when we do something wrong or when we omit to do good.

“I do not have time...” we might say helplessly. “I cannot control my temper...” “I couldn't help it...” “That is the way I am”.

The one listening to us might sometimes feel sorry for us. We soon get comfortable with these excuses and use them time and again. Without our realizing it, they become part of our personality. So the wrong continues because of the excuses we make. If we want to get over this sin, we need to convince ourselves that the way forward is to stop making excuses. One sign that we have grown up is when we accept responsibility for our actions. This means that we have stopped making excuses.

3. The sin of 'Trying'

A small exercise might help in understanding what this subtle sin is all about:

Close the fist of your right hand.

Listen to the instructions and follow them: Open your right fist.

Do it again: close your right fist. Now open it.

A third time: close your right fist. Now open it.

I am now going to change the instructions. Please follow them and not the old ones:

Try to open your right fist.

I did not say, 'open your right fist', I said 'TRY to open your right fist.'

The fist, you will notice, remains closed!

Many of us are trying to be holy, trying to be good, trying to pray more.

Maybe even trying to give up smoking and drinking and abusing others.

A mother walks into the room and sees her adolescent son or daughter still in bed.

“What are you doing? She asks him/her.

“Mom,” he/she answers, “you don't understand. For the last two hours I have been trying to get up!!”

Nothing happens when you try. Just do it!

Once again when you announce that you are trying, you get sympathy from the listeners. At least he/she is trying, they might say. Our attempt to do what needs to be done must be backed up with regular follow-up and reflection.

The **forbidden tree, excuses and trying** are subtle sins that come in the way of our spiritual growth and progress.

II. THREE NEW WAYS OF PRAYING

1. The prayer of presence.

When you raise your mind and heart to God, you pray. This should be natural if you are a spiritual being.

It is natural for a mother to raise her mind and heart to her baby. And that is 24/7 – all the time. It is not that she is spending all of her actual time with the baby. Her mind and heart is with that baby all of the time even when she is busy with household chores and otherwise things.

Sometimes you are sitting down in a church wanting to pray but your mind seems empty and your heart seems dead. You might think that you are wasting your time and not really praying.

But you are praying.

You are there present to God. You are in God's presence.

Like the mother who is present sitting next to her sleeping child.

You are not wasting your time. You are in the presence of God. You are praying the prayer of presence. The prayer of presence is being aware that I am and God is. Hang in there. God is with you.

2. The prayer of waiting

Often we say that we have no actual time for prayer. There is always so much to do.

How much of our time is spent waiting for something to happen – waiting for the bus, for invited guests to come, for the baby to wake up, for the milk to boil?

Perhaps half of our lives is spent waiting for something to happen!

Waiting time can be converted into prayer time, surely – the prayer of waiting!

Zacchaeus climbs a sycamore tree and waits for the Lord (Lk 19:4). He is not impatient. He knows he cannot hasten the coming of the Lord. All he can do is **wait**. And wait he does.

Writing to Theophilus in the second book, the Acts of the Apostles, Luke tells him how Jesus asked his disciples to **wait** for the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4).

The ten bridesmaids in Matthew's parable of the same name are also waiting for the coming of the bridegroom. None of them knows at what hour he will come. All they can do is wait patiently. "Impatience", someone said "is going faster than the Holy Spirit".

Share your life and time with God while you are waiting for something to happen.

Remember, you are a spiritual being and this should come to you naturally.

3. The prayer of distractions

We go to prayer and just cannot concentrate. Our minds are full of swirling distraction we just do not have control of. And we fidget around physically and mentally wondering whether we are really praying. We want to pray but we are distracted. It is often the case that it is that which distracts us which is the foremost of our concerns.

This is why we need to turn our distractions and worries into prayer! You are not just distracted any more - you are raising your worries and distractions to God.

God has the power to turn our distractions into prayer. And that is prayer too.

Remember you are a spiritual being having distractions as a human experience.

You are taking these and sharing them with a God who loves and understands you.

III. THREE NEW PRINCIPLES FOR BETTER LIVING

These would apply more for our human experiences.

They might surprise you at first but read and discover the practical sense in them.

1. Don't be positive. There is some negative in life as well. **Be realistic.**

Everything in life comes in a package – good and not so good.

And it has to be dealt with as a package.

Celebrate the positive good and deal with negative 'not so good'.

Be realistic. You will find that in the packages coming across to you, the good is far more than the not so good.

In a race, running your fastest is in your hands.

Coming first depends on the speed of the other runners.

2. Do not control your temper. Lose it early when it is a mild irritation.

Most of us control our tempers for an unnecessary long time. Then we explode in anger damaging the other person as well as ourselves.

If you lose your temper early and gracefully, no all-round damage is done!

3. Don't give up bad habits. Build so many good ones that you do not have time for the bad!

Trying to give up bad habits keeps them in your attention all the time. Turn your attention to forming good habits. Enjoy them fully and the bad will drift away almost imperceptibly and will no longer trouble you.

If watching pornography is an uncontrollable habit for you, shift to watching musicals, adventure movies, westerns and even cartoons. If you can enjoy these then the craving for pornography subtly slips out of your system.

In other areas as well. Just build many good habits and your better living grows on you.

Finally, two inspirational notes from God to confirm you being a spiritual being having a human experience:

God says it like it really is

“Stop searching for me. I have found you already!”

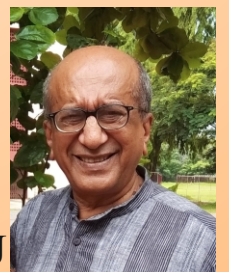
“When I created you I performed half a miracle. Now go and complete it!”



Our human experience is precisely that – celebrating the fact that God has found us and completing the miracle that God performed when he created us.

What a wonderful orientation is that about how we are to live out our lives!

And the good news is that He continues being with us with His presence and grace all the time, all the way!

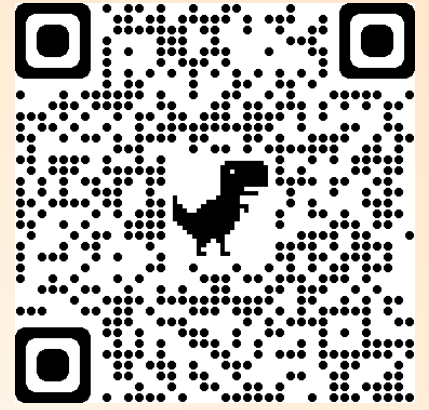


Fr. Terry Quadros SJ



Daily Reflection

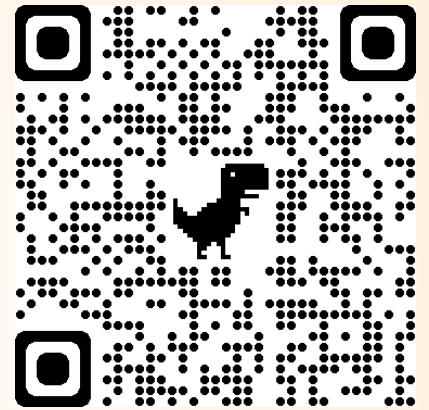
I have a youtube channel and I post reflections on it every day. You can reach my channel by scanning the QR Code or Tapping on the QR Code. Do subscribe to My channel. **Subscription is Free**



-Fr. Errol Fernandes SJ



The Shrine of the Infant Jesus, Nashik also has a youtube channel. On this channel the 12 noon Mass is live online everyday. You can reach this channel by Scanning the QR Code or Tapping on the QR Code. Do subscribe to this channel. **Subscription is Free**



We thank you for your generous donations and contribution to the Shrine. The money that you donate is used for the poor and the upkeep of the Shrine. If you wish to donate, you may do so by UPI (Unified Payments Interface) or by NEFT, the details of which are given below.

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