IJMATTERS



Nashik India: Volume IV Issue 1– January 2025

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SHRINE HAPPENINGS IN JANUARY 2025

The first day of the New Year brings with it many thoughts, feelings and emotions. The fact that it is January and named after the Roman god Janus with two faces already indicates that it brings with it a looking back and a looking ahead.

Thus, it is a day for retrospection and introspection and also a day for planning and goal setting. The retrospection must be with a view to help the planning and goal setting and not an exercise in condemnation of oneself or feeling regret.

This is what the texts says: The Lord bless you and keep you: The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you: The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. There are three pairs of verbs used in the blessing resulting in a threefold blessing. The first emphasizes concrete gifts—blessing and protection. The second stresses the hope that God will be well disposed toward the person and thus temper judgement with mercy and grace. The third asserts that God will pay attention and heed to his people thus providing fullness of life. The central message of the blessing is Peace, which must be translated as wholeness or completeness. The peace of God embraces every aspect of an individual's life.

The priestly blessing of peace pronounced on the people becomes then a blessing pronounced on each of us, as we begin the New Year. We must keep in mind throughout the year that we are no longer slaves but sons and daughters of God. This means living in a fearless and bold manner. It means being able to face all the vicissitudes and challenges of life with equanimity and confident in the knowledge that we are loved unconditionally by God and that God will be with us every step of the way in the New Year.

From December 27, 2024 till January 4, 2025, Fr. Errol gave a Retreat to 9 scholastics from De Nobili College, to prepare them for their Diaconate. They will be ordained Deacons in February 2025. We know you will keep them in your prayers.



Twenty seminarians from St. Pius X Seminary, Goregaon came to the Shrine on January 3, 2025, for a "Shrine and Nashik Darshan". They were with us for a day and left on January 4, 2025. They came to seek the blessings of the Infant Jesus as they move forward in their formation. We had no doubt whatsoever, that the Infant Jesus did indeed bless them.

The Shrine was host to a Football tournament on January 12, 2025 organised by our scholastic Rohan Brahmane. Scholastics Joel and Glen were at hand to help and support him. It was very well organized and the youth who participated from Nashik, Vasai and Uplat had a great time. It was so wonderful to witness so many youths engaged in sports and competing healthily. At the end of the tournament, Sports was the real winner.



The Shrine was also the host for the annual athletic meet of the especially abled children from Nashik Taluka (which includes Igatpuri, Dhule, Sangamner, Shirpur and Shreerampur). A total of 560 special children gathered for the meet. It was heart-warming to witness the "ne'er say die" attitude of all the children. They teach us to "Keep on keeping on" and not let anything get us down. The meet was a whole day event. It began at 9.30 am

and was over by 5.30 pm.







Fr. Bosco went to Mumbai on January 20, 2025 to meet his school classmates, some of whom are Jesuits. Fr. Bosco had completed his Secondary School Certificate (SSC) in 1960, and so this was the 65th Anniversary of that event. He had a wonderful time.

Fr. Errol left on January 20, 2025, for Fatima Convent, Fatima Nagar, Pune to give a two-day seminar to 30 Tertian sisters of that Congregation. These sisters are preparing for their final vows and Fr. Errol was called to help them through his sessions. The sessions were on prayer, community life, the vows and Mission. He was back in Nashik on January 21, 2025 night.

January 26, 1950, is one of the most important days in Indian history as it was on this day the constitution of India came into force and India became a truly sovereign state. On this day India became a totally republican unit. (See below the article of Vincy D'mello in Marathi) It was at the Lahore Session of the Indian National Congress at midnight of December 31, 1929 - January 1, 1930, that the Tri-Colour Flag was unfurled by the

nationalists and a pledge taken that every year on January 26, the "Republic Day" would be celebrated and that the people would unceasingly strive for the establishment of a Sovereign Democratic Republic of India. The professed pledge came to fruition on January 26, 1950, when the Constitution of India framed by the Constituent Assembly of India came into force, although the Independence from the British rule was achieved on August 15, 1947.

The following are some salient points of our Constitution:

Fundamental rights: The Constitution guarantees six broad categories of fundamental rights, including freedom of speech and expression, right to equality, and right to freedom of conscience.

Separation of powers: The Constitution separates the powers of the government into three organs: the legislative, executive, and judicial.

Federal system: The Constitution establishes a federal system of government between the Union and the States. **Secular state:** The Constitution establishes India as a secular state that recognizes freedom of conscience and religion.

Free and fair elections: The Constitution guarantees free and fair elections.

Equality before the law: The Constitution guarantees equality before the law.

We pray that all men and women of the country learn to respect and abide by the Constitution of the country.

We celebrate Christian Unity Octave from January 17-25, 2025. Vincy D'mello has written a Marathi article on this theme.

We have introduced two NEW pieces in this Issue. One is a summary of our presentations of "Food from the Heart and to the heart" and the other is "Happening in our School". Happy reading.

We wish each of you and your families a very happy and grace filled New Year 2025. May the Infant Jesus bless you all and may Joseph and Mary always intercede.

Fr. Errol Fernandes SJ

January 2025

SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

Our school opened after the Christmas break on Thursday, January 2, 2025.

The Nashik newspapers had an article about our U14 Girls hockey team which has secured the bronze medal at the State level competitions. It complimented the team for their excellent performance. Our girls team really did the school proud.



We installed a new cut-off system for all the water tanks in the school so as to ensure that no water is wasted. The sensors read the level of water in the tanks and shut off automatically when the tank is full.



Fr. Vincent Saldanha SJ (Gujarat Province) at present the Junior Master at Vinayalaya was in Nashik on January 4, 2025 to give a three-hour session to the teaching staff of the school. The theme of the session was self-introspection and self-awareness. All who attended said they benefitted much from the session.





We began and completed the process for admission to the Nursery of St. Xavier's Playschool. The picture below is of the dedicated and committed teaching staff of the School. It includes the Playschool State Board and ICSE teachers including the Coordinator of the Playschool and the Principals' of the State Board and ICSE.

ST. XAVIER'S



HIGH SCHOOL

ICSE Nashik Road



Staff: Year - 2024 - 2025

Fr. Errol Fernandes SJ January 2025

RELIGIOUS EVERYWHERE

Religious are of varied kinds Formal or spontaneous Each uniquely at the task No service is extraneous

Religious play so many roles Some linked to groups or single Some recognized, some scarcely known Some show reserve, some mingle

> It is a blessing for this earth Religious don't surrender In times so bleak they offer still The best that one can render

The true Religious may not have A creed or doctrined thinking But answering some human need Keeps faith and hope from sinking

"FOOD FROM THE HEART AND TO THE HEART" - DEATH BE NOT PROUD

The inevitability of death. Though we are created for immortality (Gen 1:26) because of our selfishness, our time on earth is limited. Because we are mortal, we know that everyone will have to die someday. We may also know post-mortem, how a person may have died. But, what we cannot know is why a person must die at a particular moment in time. This, only God knows. Because this is true, we need to live each moment as if it were our last.

It is not death per se that leads to tears. If that were the case we would have been shedding tears for the millions of children, women, youth and men who are dying everyday in wars or because of other causes. We do not shed tears for them, because we do not know them and they are not family.

When we shed tears for our loved ones, we are not shedding tears for them. All grief is for the self. We cry not because they are dead, but because WE will miss them.

Three scriptures give us pointers about HOW we must respond to death (a) 1 Thess 4:13 - But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. Paul is telling the Thessalonians and us that if we grieve too much, it means that we have no hope. While it is true that WE will miss the one who has died, our grief has to be a controlled grief. (b) Jn 14:1-3 - "Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. Jesus has assured us that he has gone before us IN ORDER to prepare a place where we will live eternally. This must make us realise that earth is only our temporary dwelling place and that our real homeland is in heaven (c) At the end of the Creed which we recite on Solemnities and every Sunday we say "I believe in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting". If we truly believe then we cannot grieve uncontrollably.

Like the 16th century poet John Donne, we too can say "One short sleep past, we wake eternally and death shalt be no more. Death thou shalt die!"

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark 1:14-20

After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the Good News from God. 'The time has come' he said 'and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News.'

As he was walking along by the Sea of Galilee he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net in the lake - for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you into fishers of men.' And at once they left their nets and followed him.

Going on a little further, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John; they too were in their boat, mending their nets. He called them at once and, leaving their father Zebedee in the boat with the men he employed, they went after him.

The Gospel of the Lord

This text which contains the inaugural proclamation of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark and the call of the first disciples is rich in symbols and meaning.

Jesus Came to Galilee: The arrest of John is a literary device used by Mark to effectively remove John the Baptizer from the scene, so that there is only one character on centerstage which is Jesus. The context of Jesus' public ministry is not mythological. Mark gives an historical account of Jesus public ministry. Christianity is married to history. Christianity is a historical religion. The divinity became one with history. The divinity got incarnated in human history. It is redemptive history. God reveals his redemptive work in history- in space and time. "After John was arrested and put in to prison Jesus came to Galilee." Mark does not mention a specific place in Galilee because he wants to indicate that the Mission of Jesus was not restricted to a particular place, but was Universal. It spread through the whole of Galilee and beyond.

Preaching the gospel of God/ Gospel of the Kingdom of God: Jesus preaches a gospel which belongs to God. It is also a gospel about WHO God is. Jesus is proclaiming the father's gospel. The central idea is the Kingdom of God. Jesus is preaching the Kingdom of God and yet it is fully present in the person of Christ who is now fully human like one of us. The presence of the Kingdom of God means that God's love, mercy, forgiveness, pardon and acceptance are given freely and unconditionally.

The time is fulfilled: The Greek word for "time" used here is Kairos (an opportune time to do something). It refers to a particular moment in history which is so significant that it defines everything that comes after it. Thus, it is a defining moment. It is a moment of opportunity. It is an event shaped in history. The birth of Jesus divided time into BCE (Before the Common Era) and CE (Common Era). The death and resurrection of Jesus is the Kairos. Jesus makes the announcement of this great moment in history.

The Kingdom of God is at hand: It is physically at hand. It is near. It is reachable. We cannot walk away without noticing it.

Response to this moment: Repent and believe. Repentance here means Newness. It is the grace to look at persons, situations and things in a new way. It does not mean "being sorry" and has nothing to do with sorrow, but everything to do with newness. It is instructive to note that the call to repentance comes AFTER the coming of the Kingdom. This means that God's love for us is before we can repent. In other words, we repent BECAUSE we are forgiven and loved by God.

Calling of Disciples: This incident takes place beside the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee teemed with fish and so was *the* place in which to fish. Galilee had a huge fishing industry. Simon and Andrew were therefore not only fishermen, they were also businessmen. Jesus calls them to do the business of God. After the call of

Jesus, everything becomes secondary. Whatever becomes meaningful gains its meaning only in him. In Jewish tradition a Rabbi would never go out to recruit disciples. This rabbi goes out. He is in search of each one of us. We need to respond and experience that Kairos moment in life, a moment that will shape the rest of your life and give meaning to it.

BECOMING BEACONS OF HOPE

Pope Francis has declared this year as a "Pilgrimage of Hope". This triggered me to write something on being pilgrims of hope आशेच्या यात्रेकरू. We are pilgrims on earth and our time on earth is limited. Even though he lived for a mere 33 years, Jesus was a beacon of hope to his disciples and to everyone who encountered him. Hope is the foundation our journey as disciples of Jesus.

Paul encourages us to have this hope in Rom 15:13, where he states: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." This hope is not wishful thinking or "flitting optimism". It is deep unshakeable confidence that God is with us every step of the way. In this same context Paul states, "and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us." (Rom 5:5).

In this Jubilee year, we are called to renew our hope not just for ourselves, but for the world around us. As we dream of a brighter future, we must act in the present for it. We must be mindful of how we can bring hope to others through acts of kindness, compassion and service, by embodying the hope we have in Jesus. We the become as Jesus exhorts to be "Salt of the earth and light of the world" (Mt 5:13-16). Our tasteless world definitely needs salt and our bleak and dark world needs light.

As pilgrims of faith, we are not simply moving towards a destination. We are living each moment of each day with purpose. The dreams we carry rooted in faith become the motivation for how we live, how we love and how we serve. We are bold, because we "Can doi all things in Christ who strengthens us" (Phil4:13)

Augustine D'mello

प्रजासत्ताक!!

पंधरा ऑगस्टला आपण ध्वजारोहण साजरे करतो. म्हणजे त्या दिवशी खाली बांधलेला ध्वज आपण उंचावतो. आणि आम्ही भारताचे नागरिक सर्वस्पर्शी स्वतंत्र आहोत ह्याची ग्वाही देतो.

आज २६ जानेवारी. आज आपण आम्ही भारताचे प्रजासत्ताक देशाचे सार्वभौम नागरिक आहोत ह्याची कबूली देतो. तसे मान्य करतो.

एव्हाना उंच बांधलेला ध्वज आपण फडकवतो. आणि त्या ध्वजाला मानवंदना देतो. भारतीय घटनेची संविधानाची आठवण करतो....

भारत स्वातंत्र झाला. आणि दोन वर्षे अकरा महिने अठरा दिवसांनी हा संविधानाचा महान पवित्र ग्रंथ २६ नोव्हेंबर१९४९ रोजी आपणास प्राप्त झाला. आणि त्याची अंमलबजावणी २६ जानेवारी १९५० साली प्रजासत्ताक दिनी सुरू झाली.

स्वातंत्र्यानंतर १३ दिवसांनी २९ ऑगस्ट १९४७ रोजी भारतीय घटना, संविधान लिहिण्यासाठी सात जणांची एक सुकाणू समिती गठित करण्यात आली होती. त्यात..

ए.के.अय्यर एन.गोपालास्वामी बि.आर.आंबेडकर. के.एम.मुंन्शी एम.साडुल्ला बी.एल मीतर डि.पी. खैतान आंबेडकर ह्या मसुदा समीतीच्या प्रमुखपदी होते.

देशातील एकूण ३८९ सभासद होते. त्यात पंधरा महिलांचा सहभाग होता. त्या पंधरा विद्वान महिलांमध्ये ...

हंसा मेहता. दक्षयानी वेलायुधान अनु स्वामीनाथन ॲनी म्हस्करान्हेस लीला राॅय बेगम रसूल दूर्गा देशमुख राजकुमारी कौर रेणुका रे कमला चौधरी मालती चौधरी सुचिता कृपालानी विजयालक्ष्मी पंडित सरोजिनी नायडू पूर्णिमा बॅनर्जी आदि महिला प्रतिनिधीत्व करीत होत्या.

जेज्वीट फादर जेरोम डिसुझा आणि भाषा तज्ञ बेनेगल नरसिंहराव ह्या दोघांनी मिळून संविधान मसुद्याचा इंग्रजी अनुवाद केला.

संविधानात एकूण एक लाख पच्चेचाळीस हजार शब्द आहेत आणि चारशे सत्तर कलमे आहेत. संविधानाच्या प्रस्तावनेत स्वातंत्र्य समता बंधुता एकता न्याय ही मूख्य मूल्ये आहेत आणि सार्वभौम समाजवादी हे परवलीचे शब्द आहेत. प्रस्तावनेतील पंचशील मूल्ये प्रत्येक जबाबदार भारतीय नागरिकास प्रार्थना साधने समान आहेत. ती माहीत नि मुखोद्गत असणे आवश्यक नि अभिप्रेत आहे. ...जय संविधान!

...जय गणराज्य!!

बंधूंचे मिळणे... Unity Octave!!वेन्सी डिमेलो.

१८ जाने. ते २५ जाने. हा ख्रिस्ती ऐक्य सप्ताह (Unity Octave) पाळला जातो. कॅथोलिक आणि प्राॅटेस्टन ह्या मधील हा सालाबाद चालत आलेला पायंडा आहे. ख्रिस्त आणि त्याचा समता बंधुत्वाचा धर्म रूजावा हा ह्या एकत्र येण्यामागील शुद्ध हेतु आहे.

ह्या ऐक्य सप्ताहाचे वर्णन कविवर्य रेव्ह. ना.वा. टिळक ह्यांनी शतकापूर्वीच यथोचित शब्दात वर्णन केले आहे. त्यांच्या अर्थपूर्ण नि काळानुरूप काव्य पंक्तीत ते म्हणतात..

"बंधुंचे मिळणे मधूर हे बंधूंचे मिळणे. जरी देव पाहिजे इथेच तरी तो भक्ता सापडणे. चरित्रे ही भिन्ने आमुची चरिते ही भिन्ने तरी एकतेमध्ये गोविली ही सुंदरशी रत्ने"

ख्रिस्त एक आहे. त्याची ख्रिस्तसभाही एक आहे. अवयव वेगवेगळे तरी शरीर एक आहे. "बटेंगे तो कटेंगे". हा धोका ओळखून 'एकरुप होऊ सगळे'. हा जप जपू या. विविधतेतील एकता जपताना. विविध गुण कौशल्ये एकत्र आणूया आणि आपला ख्रिस्त बलवान नि सुदृढ करूया. हा हेतू ह्या ख्रिस्ती ऐक्यात आहे. तो जपू या...

हे ऐक्य भंग व्हायलाही पंधराव्या शतकात तशीच कारणेही घडली. त्याकाळी योग्य त्यागमय निस्पृह सेवा नेतृत्वाचा अभाव होता. तरूण मार्टिन ल्यूथर हा जर्मन धर्मगुरू मठात त्याकाळच्या जाचक नि लादलेल्या धर्मशिकवणूकीवर धर्म चिंतन करीत होता.

प्रेम, दया, क्षमा, शांती, सेवा ही ख्रिस्ती धर्माची मूलतत्वे. ह्याला तिलांजली देत त्या ऐवजी पैसा, पदे, प्रतिष्ठा, संपत्ती मानसन्मान ह्यांनी येशूच्या प्रेम संदेशाला घेरले होते. धर्मरक्षक धर्मगुरूही तसेच अन्यायी वागत होते. ह्या प्रतिष्ठेसाठी धर्मधुरीण साम, दाम, दंड, भेद आदि आयुधे वापरून खिसाभरू असे गलेलठ्ठ बनले होते.

भोळी भाबडी विश्वासू रयत भक्तमंडळी मेटिकुटीला आली होती. धर्मांध छद्मी असा कर लादून धर्मधुरीण स्वर्गप्राप्तीची खोटी आश्वासने लोकांना देत "पास" वाटप करीत होते. हा धर्मधुरिणांचा जाच नि ढोंगीपणा मठात धर्म चिंतन नि साधना करणाऱ्या इशज्ञानी युवक मार्टिनला सहन झाला नाही. त्यांनी धर्मधुरिणांना ह्याचा जाब विचारला. तेव्हा त्याला त्याकाळी धर्म बहिष्कृत करण्यात आले होते.

मार्टींनच्याविचारांचे अनेक पुरोगामी सुशिक्षित सुसंस्कृत युवक युवती त्याकाळी हाच विधायक विचार करीत होती. योग्य नेतृत्वासाठी थांबली होती. मार्टिन ल्युथरच्या रुपाने त्यांना व्यासपीठ मिळाले. आणि सत्यधर्म विरुद्ध धर्मांध धुरीण असे ख्रिस्ताचे चर्च विभागले गेले. दुभंगले गेले ते आजपावेतो.

आता हे प्रमाद नि उन्माद आणि चुका ख्रिस्त सभेच्या धुरीणांच्या लक्षात येऊ लागल्या आहेत. पोप पासून पास्टरपर्यंत आता ह्यावर गंभीर चिंतन करीत आहेत. मानवी ऐक्यासाठी प्रार्थना करीत आहेत. कॅथोलिक प्राॅटेस्टन ऐक्य मेळावे भरवत आहेत. शिक्षण, आरोग्य, सामाजिक आणि शैक्षणिक क्षेत्रात एकत्र येत आहेत. हे सौख्य आजच्या ख्रिस्त मंडळींसाठी जमेची बाजू आहे. प्रभू सेवेत एकत्र येत आहेत ही स्तुत्य बाब आहे.

मुंबई, पुणे, नाशिक, नगर भागात असे ऐक्याचे अनेक प्रयत्न होत आहेत.

साहित्यिक क्षेत्रात मराठी भाषेच्या सारस्वतात दोन्ही कडून भरपूर योगदान लाभले आहे. रेव्ह. टिळकांचा ज्ञानोदय, कॅथोलिकांचे नाशिकहून प्रसिद्ध होणारे आपण साप्ताहिक, वसईहून प्रसिद्ध होणारे सुवार्ता मासिक, पुण्याहून प्रसिद्ध होणारे निरोप्य मासिक आदि ह्या संवाद ऐक्यातील सुचिन्हे नि आशेची किरणे राहिली आहेत.

भारतीय ख्रिस्ती मराठी उपासनेतील गीत रचनेतूनही हे कॅथोलिक प्राॅटेस्टन ऐक्य अबाधित राहिले आहे. रेव्ह. टिळकांची भक्तीगीते कॅथोलिक उपासनेत चर्चमध्ये आवळली जात आहेत. हा एक सुखद असा अनुभव आहे.

यंदा रोम शहरी कॅथोलिकांचे सर्वेसर्वा पोप फ्रान्सिस ह्यांनी 'आशेचे यात्रेकरू' हे पत्रक प्रसिद्ध करून ख्रिस्ती ऐक्यासाठी जगात आशेचे किरण प्रकाशित केले आहेत. संत पाॅल म्हणतात."आशा निराश करीत नाही." ह्याच आशेवर आजही ख्रिस्ताच्या ऐक्याचा डोलारा जगात दिमाख्याने उभा आहे. तो आपण ह्या ख्रिस्तीमंडळी ऐक्य सप्ताहाद्वारे सुरक्षित नि अबाधित ठेवूया.

नाशिकमध्ये आचार्य स.ना.सूर्यवंशी संपादक राहिलेल्या "आपण" ह्या साप्ताहिकानंतर बऱ्याच वर्षांनी हे साहित्यिक 'ख्रिस्ती ऐक्य' सांभाळण्याचे स्तुत्य कार्य उद्धारक साप्ताहिकाच्या माध्यमाद्वारे काळाची गरज ओळखून नाशिकमध्ये संपादक श्री आनंद त्रिभूवन ह्यांनी सातत्य पूर्वक चालू ठेवले आहे. या उपक्रमाला कॅथोलिक आणि प्राॅटेस्टन दोन्ही पंथानीही सर्वोतोपरी बळ द्यायला हवे.

आद्य प्रेषित प्रवर्तक नि सुवार्ता प्रचारक पिटर आणि पाॅलने आपल्या त्यागमय जीवनाने आणि बलिदानाने महत प्रयासाने उभी केलेली ख्रिस्तसभा त्याची शकले व्हायला कालौघात तशीच काही गंभीर कारणेही घडली. ते सर्वश्रुत आहे. परंतु आज आधुनिक युगात त्यावर साधक चिकित्सा होत आहे. चुका टीका मान्यही झाल्या आहेत.. ही त्या ख्रिस्ती अनुयायींना एकत्र ठेवण्यातील पवित्र आत्म्याची नि प्रार्थनेची किमया आहे. भेट आहे. ख्रिस्ती ऐक्यासाठी ह्या देव कृपेचा स्वीकार करूया. आणि ऐक्य अबाधित राखण्यासाठी दोन्ही बाजूने प्रयत्न करुया.

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