

IJ MATTERS



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SHRINE HAPPENINGS IN JUNE 2026

At the start of the new Academic year 2026-2027, we bid farewell to Fr Augustine D'mello who had served in the Shrine and community as Assistant Chaplain and Administrator respectively for five years. We welcome Fr Linus D'mello in the same roles.

On June 5, 2026 we celebrated World Environment Day. This date was chosen to mark the opening day of the landmark 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden. First celebrated in 1973, it now engages millions of individuals, communities, and governments in over 150 countries annually. In our own context, the new Administrator brought 12 saplings and we planted each one of them in a different part of the Shrine and School campus. This was our way of caring for and protecting our environment.





The feast of Sacred Heart (which is a movable feast celebrated 19 days after Pentecost or on the Friday following the Second Sunday after Pentecost)) was celebrated on June 12, 2026. (See below the article and poem for more insights). This was followed by the memorial of the Immaculate heart of Mary.

The Solemnity of the birth of John the Baptist was celebrated on June 24, 2026 (for more insights see my article below and the poem by Fr Godfrey D'lima) and on June 29, 2026, the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul who may be regarded as the pillars of the Church founded by Christ.

Fr Errol was invited by the Principal of St Mary's SSC High School to give two sessions to the teachers as they begin the academic year. The sessions were titled, "How to live Joyfully every moment of every day" and "Ethos of a Jesuit School teacher" The sessions were much appreciated. To ensure that what was said was assimilated by the teachers, Fr Errol gave them some individual and group work.





We take this opportunity to wish you and your families all the blessings of the Infant Jesus. We are sure that St Joseph and our Blessed Mother will be your intercessors and guides.

Fr. Errol Fernandes SJ

SCHOOL HAPPENINGS IN JUNE 2026

The teachers were in school on June 1, 2026 to prepare the classrooms and other parts of the school to welcome the children. The School resumed the academic year on June 2, 2026.

On June 1, 2026, Fr. Errol addressed the teachers and made the following points:

1. He welcomed them back after the May break and hoped that they had a restful break
2. He congratulated the staff, Headmaster (Out of 124 students who appeared for the State Board Examinations {SSC} 79% scored a distinction and 21% scored a first class) and Principal (Out of 52 students who appeared for the Grade 10 ICSE Examinations, 75% scored a distinction and 25% scored a first class) on the excellent results of Std X and Grade 10.
3. He exhorted the teachers to think critically and to teach the students to think critically. They must always encourage the students to ask questions. Artificial Intelligence has come to stay. This is why we must teach our students to be critical and keep asking questions rather than accept facts gullibly. Often, with Artificial Intelligence, what you see is not what you get.
4. When sending messages as representatives of the school he requested the teachers, Coordinator and Principal to be very careful with the wording and images that they use. It is better to be as brief as possible and to the point.
5. There is zero tolerance for any kind of violence and the teachers were requested to avoid any kind of aggression or violence towards the students.
6. He requested the teachers to make a distinction between their professional commitment (as teachers in the school) and personal commitments (as daughters/sons/wives/husbands/mothers/fathers/brothers/sisters and other relationships). Sometimes this distinction was not made and the children were lost without their teachers.
7. He reminded that this was one of the very few vocations in which we could touch the future through the influence we have on our students
8. In the Jesuit perception, we do not stop with the good., The good become better, the better becomes better still and the better still becomes still better. This is the meaning of the Magis. We are not people of the status quo, the tried and tested, but always striving to make things better.
9. We are in the field of education because we want to make men and women for others. Our students will not be selfish and self-centered human beings, but men and women who are as concerned about others as they are about themselves. Finally, he exhorted them to use the TORCH as often as possible so that they could make the changes required in their lives



On June 2, 2026 the students were back to school to resume the academic year. Fr Errol addressed the students at the assembly and made the following points:

1. He welcomed the children back to school after the May break
2. He told them about the results of the SSC and ICSE Board Exams
3. He mentioned that while that was good news, the better news was that all the external supervisors were impressed with the discipline and focus of our students. This was an indication that besides excelling in academics, our students had learned values like honesty, hard work, being true to oneself and focus.
4. In the context of the pledge we had recited Errol told the students that all human beings were my brothers and sisters and so I will treat everyone with RESPECT. This was the word he wanted them to remember for the next 15 days. This meant that there would be violence of any kind and no child would raise his/her hand on another child in anger.

Fr Errol meet the students of Grade 8,9 and 10 once every month. This is usually a 30- or 45-minutes sessions giving the students some pointers about life, about challenges of life and how to respond to them. The students are attentive during the sessions. However constant follow-up is needed to ensure that they remain focussed and persevering.



Fr Caesar Faroz SJ was in our school to give a session to the teachers on Wholeness and Wellness on Saturday, June 6, 2026. The session was practical and much appreciated. Two of the comments of the participants are as under:

“Good afternoon Father. Thank you for arranging such a wonderful session for all of us on health benefits. From the start to the end every information shared every exercise shown was useful Father. Specially as you know Father I'm having lungs problem Father Ceasar shared a few simple exercises which I will put in practice from today itself. Thank you, Father, once again, the take away statement was when Father gave your example that Father how by taking care of yourself you are contributing to the society which I never ever thought of Father. Thank you



Dear Father.

I want to thank you from the deepest core of my heart for having Fr Caesar here for us. His session was very good. Teachers started giving their positive feedback back during the session itself. For the first time it was an all and all a practical orientation that kept us engaged from the beginning till the end. We got some great information about our body and how the body itself can heal most of the ailments. Father...this kind of orientation was the need of the hour... Almost everyone benefited from it. It was a real stress buster... Everyone went home calm and relaxed. Thank you so very much for this.



Fr Errol Fernandes SJ, June 2026

World Environment Day

What brings to life our little world
Not wars, nor wild aggression
But care for all creation's gifts
That need a hand to freshen

The sun, the stars, the universe
The rain, the cold, the seasons
If we can treat them with respect
All being has God's own reasons

This world can be a home of joy
When every life can flourish
Let's celebrate Environ's Day
And all creation nourish

Fr Godfrey D'lima SJ

THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Ever since the seventeenth century when St. Margaret Mary Alacoque was granted visions of the Sacred Heart and asked to spread this devotion, the Jesuits represented by her confessor St. Claude de la Colombière, played a fundamental role in spreading this devotion. Colombière, spoke with Margaret Mary a number of times and after much prayer, discernment and reflection became convinced of the validity of her visions.

In recent times, one of the most loved and admired Generals of the Society of Jesus Fr. Pedro Arrupe was instrumental in reviving this devotion and placing Jesuits once again at the forefront of spreading this devotion. This devotion according to Arrupe was “the centre of the Ignatian experience”. It is an “extraordinarily effective means as much for gaining personal perfection as for apostolic success”. Arrupe was aware of the fact that the devotion had to be spread using newer symbols and made every attempt to do so.

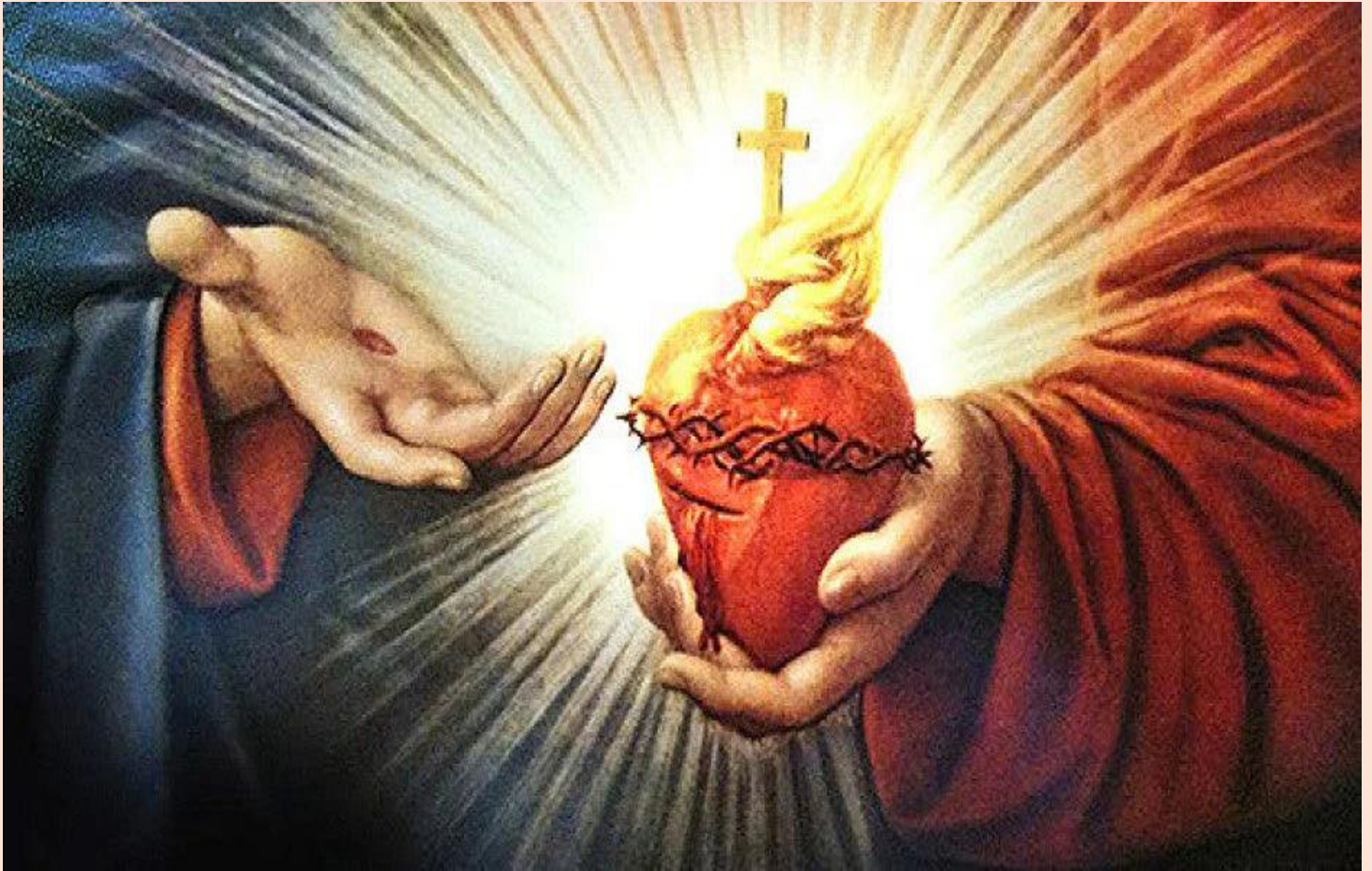
According to one of the visions made to Margaret Mary, Jesus made twelve promises to those who would have devotion to the Sacred Heart. Of these one is of special significance. It reads “Sinners shall find in My Heart the source of an infinite ocean of mercy”. This promise is totally in keeping with the message of Jesus on every page of the New Testament. Jesus, the revelation of the Father’s love, was consistent and constant in his message of the unconditional love of God. His inaugural proclamation as he began his ministry in Galilee was that the kingdom had indeed come, that God’s love and mercy and forgiveness was being given freely to anyone who was willing to open their hearts to such love. His table fellowship with “tax collectors and sinners” (who were regarded as outcasts and so not to be associated with) was tangible proof of this promise. Jesus even went as far as to say “I have come to call not the righteous but sinners” (Mk 2:17). The parables like those of the Lost Sheep, Lost Coin and ‘Prodigal Father’ (Lk 15:1-32) are further confirmation of this promise. As a matter of fact a clear connection is made between the murmurings of the ‘Scribes and Pharisees’, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them” (Lk 15:2) and Jesus’ telling the parable of the Lost Sheep (Lk 15:3-7). Thus, while “sinners shall find an infinite ocean of mercy” in the Sacred Heart is not a new teaching, it is an important reminder to us of how gracious God is, in the heart of Jesus.

What then does the Feast of the Sacred Heart mean for us today? First the heart is a symbol of the whole person and so the Sacred Heart of Jesus represents the whole Christ who is and will always be unconditional and eternal love. This love of Christ is given freely, without reservation and measure to all who open themselves to receive it. Second, the feast reminds us of the constant care and concern that God has even now for each one of us and the whole Universe. By celebrating the feast, we make present the self-sacrifice of Jesus for all humankind. Our God is a God ‘with us and for us’. God is Emmanuel. Third, the feast of the Sacred Heart reminds us of the intimate connection between the Sacrament of the Eucharist and devotion to the Sacred Heart. The Eucharist was that pivotal event in the life of Jesus when he showed how much he loved the whole world. Just as the bread was broken so would his body be and just as the wine was shared so would his blood be spilled. In the Sacrament of the Eucharist we receive the real, whole and risen Christ, so in the devotion that we profess to the Sacred Heart we relive this encounter.

The feast is thus not only a privilege and grace, but also carries with it a responsibility. First, the love that we receive from the Sacred Heart of Jesus is not a private possession, but one that must be shared with all. Just as the Father makes no distinction and makes the sun rise on the evil and on the good (Mt 5:45), so must we in our sharing of the love of Christ. Second, the concern that God has for us and our Universe must be a concern which we must show to our world. The wanton destruction of nature, excessive and abusive use of scarce resources like water, indiscriminate cutting of trees for selfish gain, unlawful and criminal killing of wild animals are signs that we are working against God’s concern. If God cares for us so much, must we not care for our world? Third, the intimate connection of the Sacred Heart and Eucharist reminds us that just as Christ is so easily available to us, we must also be to each other. The Eucharist and the feast of the Sacred Heart ought not to be private and passive devotions, but celebrations that make us ready to reach out in service and availability to anyone who needs us

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEART

Loving Father, as followers of your son Jesus in this his least Society, we ask you to give us the grace to open our hearts to your grace of love. We ask for the grace that Paul received which made him state emphatically “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” (Gal 2:20) And to challenge us to be “imitators” of him, as he was of Christ (1 Cor 11:1).



We renew today the consecration of ourselves to the Heart of Jesus. We promise you all our fidelity and ask for your grace to continue to serve you and to serve your Son wholeheartedly and without expectation. Give us the attitude that Jesus asks invites to have namely after we have done all that we are required to do will say, “We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.” Lk 17:10)

Through the intercession of St Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary who are our constant intercessors and guides, we dare to make our commitment to you and the Sacred Heart of your son Jesus. We pray with all humility through these words, “Jesus meek and humble of heart make our hearts like unto thine”

Fr. Errol Fernandes SJ

Corpus Christi

It's not his corpse we celebrate
But knowing his living being
In Eucharistic signs believe
The Risen Christ we're seeing

Those Eucharistic signs tell us
Christ's Body and Blood will nourish
Not draped in vestments pompously
False dignity to flourish

His Body bled in pain and death
Now comes to us as food
That we may share his Risen Life
His Spirit be imbued

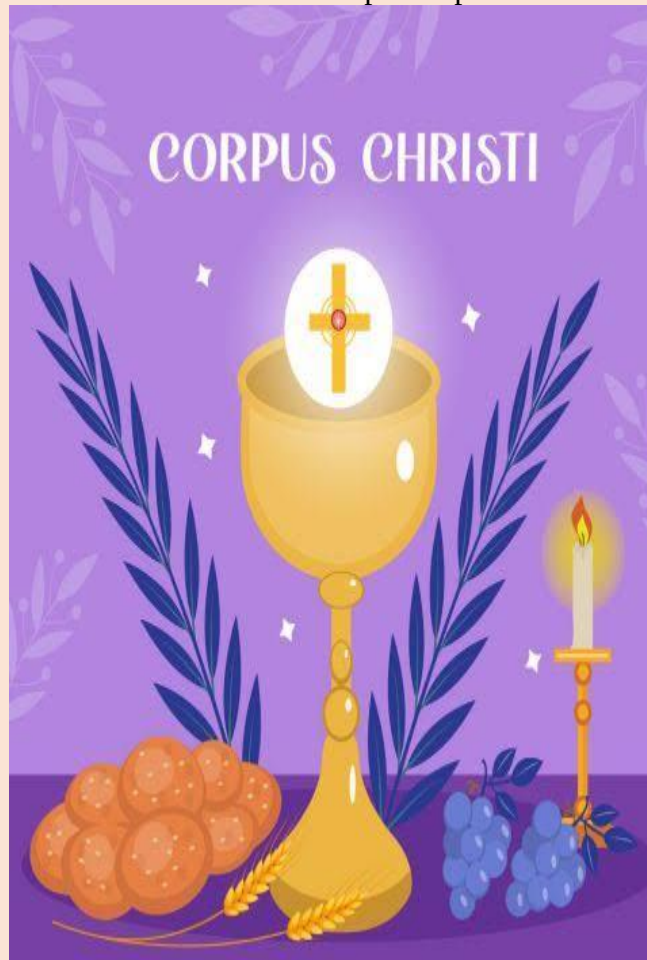
Fr Godfrey D'lima SJ

CORPUS CHRISTI – THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

My parishioners and I went on a picnic one Sunday. As we reached the picnic spot, some of them said to me: “Father, let’s finish Mass, then we can enjoy”. At first, this request took me by surprise, since I had not regarded the Eucharist as separated from life and enjoyment. I later realized what they meant when they made their request. The Eucharist is seen as something to be “finished” as quickly as possible so that real life can begin. It is also often seen as an obligation to be fulfilled in order to be safe from sin and from God’s wrath and punishment.

Those who see Eucharist as something to be quickly finished or as an obligation have missed the point. This is because if one still uses the language of “obligations” when one is referring to the Eucharist or, if one mistakenly believes that the Eucharist is concluded with the final blessing in the Church, then one has not experienced the power of the Sacrifice of Jesus and has not grasped its significance.

The feast of Corpus Christi, or the Body and Blood of Christ, has been interpreted to mean the feast of the Eucharist. While this is certainly true, it would be a mistake to restrict the understanding of the feast to the ritual of the Eucharist. The feast goes beyond the ritual to life itself, just as the Eucharist does. Communion with Christ has always been a mark of the follower of Christ. We would make significant gains in our life of discipleship if we would focus on the Eucharist. It is the deepest expression of our communion with Christ.



The theme brought out powerfully in all the readings for today’s feast is Covenant. The first reading from Exodus recounts the ratification of the Covenant between God and his people made on Mount Sinai. His people agreed to do all that the Lord had commanded them. The letter to the Hebrews speaks about the Covenant between God and people made, not with the blood of animals but, with the blood of Jesus himself. This was, therefore, the more perfect and complete covenant. The Covenant that Jesus made with the whole of humanity

through his disciples is narrated by Mark in the Gospel text of today. At the Passover meal, Jesus offers his body and his blood as the mark and sign of the new covenant.

The covenant with the people of Israel is consummated when, after building an altar and offering sacrifice on it, Moses sprinkles the blood of the sacrificed animals on the alter and on the people. This sprinkling of blood, which is a symbol of life, is also an indication that the people who accepted the covenant are bound by it and will do everything in their power to live it out.

The letter to the Hebrews affirms that, like with the people of Israel, blood was also used to consummate the new covenant between God and humans. However, this blood is no longer the blood of sacrificial animal but that of Jesus himself. It is the blood that he poured out on the Cross and which he confirms that he will shed for many in the Gospel text of today.

Even as he did that, he invited those who partook of it to keep remembering and renewing this Covenant of unconditional love. By his own words, this broken bread was now his own body that would be broken and then raised to glory. This simple yet profound action signifies that, as we share this sustenance, we are bound to him and to one another. It is significant that Mark has placed, on either side of the breaking of the bread and sharing of the wine, the predictions of the betrayal by Judas and denial by Peter. This is to indicate that, despite betrayal and denial, Jesus will continue to give of himself. He would continue to give and to love unconditionally.

Though at first, the disciples did not respond to the Covenant that Jesus made with them because of their lack of understanding, their cowardice, and their fear, later they accepted it and boldly proclaimed the Kingdom that Jesus had inaugurated.



The Covenant which Jesus made with his disciples, and continues to make with us even today, has to be constantly accepted by us if it is to be a covenant in the true sense of the word. This acceptance is shown when we first partake of the body of Christ at every celebration of the Eucharist and, in doing so, express our willingness to do the same with others. It is shown when we do not regard the Eucharist as merely a ritual to be celebrated only in the church and only in order to fulfill an obligation. It is shown when we let the celebration of the Eucharist continue in our lives and in our willingness, like Jesus, to become bread for others.

If our celebration of the feast of Corpus Christi is to be meaningful, we need to realize that we, as disciples of Jesus, are today his body and blood. When we are willing to give of ourselves to others as Jesus did, without counting the cost and without heeding the pain then we, in a true sense of the word, make him present today. It is in our doing this that his promise to be in the world till the end of time will become a reality here and now.

Fr Errol Fernandes SJ

The Sacred Heart of Jesus

The artist pictures Jesus' heart
With love's flames always burning
But circled with a crown of thorns
To mark his wounds from spurning

The cross shown rising from his heart
Reminds us of his passion
Thus, artists draw the Sacred Heart
Far from romantic fashion

The Sacred Heart tells of a love
That paid the price of dying
So life would rise resplendent still
From failures faced while trying

No sin, nor fault defeats our hope
When God's love shown in Jesus
Burns strong and bright into our night
A love which never ceases

Fr Godfrey D'lima SJ

The Immaculate heart of Mary

How could the love of Mary's heart
Differ from Christ her son
So full and total was his love
Which our salvation won

Her heart of love didn't stop at prayer
Or cloistered safe remain
It reached to needs of humankind
It shared their joy and pain

Our hearts unite with Mary's heart
And with all those who care
To strive for times of peace and joy
With courage that can dare

Fr Godfrey D'lima SJ

World Refugee Day (June 20)

From ancient times it has been so
The helpless hounded out
Their simple homes are battered low
As tyrants terror tout

Some left on borders bruised and scarred
In harsh environs placed
From wages, food and health debarred
Their very being defaced
But Heaven stands with refugees
As Exodus declares
Marching safe through parting seas
Knowing that Heaven cares

May Heaven bless the refugee
Without respite who roam
That humankind their shelter be
To find a humane home

Fr Godfrey D'lima SJ

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

The date chosen for the birth of John the Baptist has its origins in the date on which Christmas is celebrated. Since Luke tells us that Elizabeth was in her sixth month (of pregnancy) when the announcement of the birth of Jesus was made to Mary, the birth of John had to be celebrated 6 months before the birth of Jesus. We celebrate Christmas in December and thus it is logical that we celebrate the birth of John in June.

In the northern Hemisphere, June 21 is considered the longest day of the year. From then on, the days start getting shorter. This is interpreted as the aim of the life and mission of John as he states, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (Jn 3:30). Significantly, from December 21, the days start getting longer indicating that Jesus increases as John says he must.



This life-mission of John to let the Lord increase manifests itself in his leading people to Jesus. In the Gospel of John, the Baptist is standing with two of his disciples. As he sees Jesus passing by, he points Jesus out to his disciples. Without as much as a thank you or a goodbye, the two disciples go behind Jesus (Jn 1:35-40). John, however, is not surprised or upset. He considers his work as having been completed and he expects nothing in return. He is like those servants who the Lord asked us to imitate, who expect nothing in return for what they have done (Lk 17:10).

John was fearless and righteousness. He was not self-righteous, which means that he did not consider himself better than others. Yet, he was unafraid to tell the truth as he saw it. He confronted Herod Antipas because Antipas had married his own brother Philip's wife named Herodias, even when Philip was alive. This action of John led to his imprisonment and finally to his beheading. He went to his death knowing that he had stood up for the truth.

The celebration of the birth of John the Baptist is an opportunity for us to learn a number of lessons from his life and mission. These are as follows:

Focus; John KNEW what his role in the world was. He knew what God wanted him to do and be. Each one of us also has a role to play in the world. We discern to find out this role. No matter what that specific role might be, we are called like John to be focussed on it.

Self-abasing: John was naturally humble, which is why he could be self-abasing. He realised the stature of Jesus which led him to let Jesus increase even as he decreased.

Knowing where his authority ended: When his disciples left him to follow Jesus, John did not sulk or feel that they were ungrateful. Rather, he felt a deep sense of satisfaction, but he had completed the work for which he was sent. If we imbibe this quality of John we will be at peace with ourselves almost all the time.

Seeing the reward in the action: Since he knew where his authority ended, John had the ability to experience the reward of his action in the privilege of doing the action. He did not expect a pat on the back or applause because of what he had done. It had to be done, he did it and that was the reward.

As we celebrate the Solemnity of John's birth, let us ask for his intercession to imbibe some of his qualities.

Fr. Errol Fernandes SJ

The Birth of John the Baptist

A prophet brave and bold was John
Imprisoned by brute power
He spoke the truth that had its sting
Though jailed he did not cower

It was his mission bringing Christ
To peoples of his age
And when accomplished he gives way
So Jesus takes the stage

We too make Jesus known and loved
Not claiming wealth and fame
But like St. John we will rejoice
When people know his name

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL

There is an old story about the death of St. Peter in Rome during the persecution of Nero. Peter heard about Nero's plan to burn the city and blame the Christians. He figured as the one who presided over the church in the city he would be arrested and put to death. So he did the sensible thing - Peter was always a sensible man - he got out of town, and at night. The Appian Way was dark for a while as Peter snuck down it. However, as the night wore on the sky was illuminated by the flames rising from the city. Peter hurried on and eventually was far enough away from the city that it was dark again. Then he saw someone coming in the opposite direction, someone who even at night seemed familiar. It was the Lord himself. What was he doing out at night and walking towards Rome? "Where are you going, Lord?" Peter asked him. "To Rome", Jesus replied, "to be crucified again in your place". Peter turned around and returned to Rome and according to tradition was crucified there.

Though this story does not agree with what is narrated in the first reading of today from the Acts of the Apostles, in which we are told that Peter was imprisoned, it does agree with what the Gospels narrate about Peter's denials, and brings out an important facet of the meaning of the feast: Jesus did not choose strong, brave and courageous individuals to continue the work that he had begun. He chose weak, frail and cowardly humans. He chose individuals who would falter and fail. This is the Peter who confessed Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the Living God" and to whom the Jesus handed over the "keys" of the Church, knowing full well that there would be times when the lofty confession would turn into a base denial.

Paul's conversion story is narrated twice in the Acts of the Apostles and Paul himself speaks of it in some of his letters. His commission as an apostle of Christ began with a divine revelation of the identity of the Lord Jesus. He reports the events surrounding his recognition of Jesus as the Lord of glory and his appointment as apostle to the gentiles. Felled to the ground by a brilliant light from heaven and hearing a reproachful voice addressing him by name his first need was to know who it was who broke into his life with such awe-inspiring power. Just as Jesus told Peter that he would assign to him the charge of leading his Church once the Peter recognized his master's true identity, so also Paul's task was given to him only after Jesus revealed himself as the glorified Lord.

The apostles' mission thus grew out of their loving knowledge of the person of Jesus, the Son of the living God. Their work, indeed their whole life, was to follow from this surpassing knowledge of Christ which became the basis of all their dealing with others. They were given to the whole Church to teach us not only what Christ revealed and taught but also how to live as he himself had put into practice the things willed by the Father.



Today we marvel at the transformation of these previously weak human leaders. Peter's newfound passionate commitment to his Lord and to the fledgling church resulted in his imprisonment. Paul too was jailed. He did not see this as failure, but as the destiny that was his in consequence of his commitment to the Gospel. He had fought the good fight, he had run the race, and he had kept the faith. He faced death, and he knew it. That was the price they had to pay for their commitment and fidelity to the Lord.

Their personalities were very different, their approaches to spreading the Faith were very different, and their relationships with Christ were very different. Although the two were both Apostles, there were moments of disagreement and conflict between them. And yet, they are bound together on this single feast, as they were bound together by the one Faith, confessing the one Lord, shedding their blood for him and his mission of peace, justice and love.

Within the recent past, the church has been tossed to and fro in storms of controversy. Not one storm, but many storms, and not in one country, but in many countries. It has been the target of fierce persecution from without, and it has also allowed evil to corrupt it from within. Whether in circumstances of harassment or scandal, the lives of many have been diminished, their confidence undermined and their faith tested.

Without minimizing the suffering in our current situations, we should remember that dire trials are really not new to the church. From its very beginning it has faced opposition. The first reading for today's feast describes one such situation.

Despite its trials, however, the church has survived and even flourished. This is not due to the strength and holiness of its members. Though Jesus told Peter that the church would be built upon him, the church's real foundation was and continues to be Jesus Christ its Lord. He is the one who commissioned Peter; he is the one who assures the church of protection. He is the one who stood by Paul and gave him strength to bring the Gospel to the broader world. The church may have been built on Peter the former denier and spread by Paul the former persecutor, but it is the church of Jesus Christ, and it will endure because of his promise.

Today we celebrate the fidelity of Peter and Paul, sinners like us all. Initially, they were both found wanting. When they eventually repented, they were forgiven by God in Christ. Though they were victims of persecution, their commitment to Christ and to the church made them heroes. Their victory is evidence that the gates of hell shall not prevail. Their victory is evidence that we shall indeed overcome.

Fr Errol Fernandes S

Sts. Peter and Paul

To build the church is no mean task
It needs both guts and grit
And sometimes it may cost our lives
When worldly mores don't fit

So, Paul and Peter years ago
Did strive the church to stand
Peter would lead the nascent faith
Paul's preaching filled the land

You and I build church today
Not monuments to raise
But linking with all humankind
To serve with love and praise

बापवारचा दिनोत्सव! (FATHER'S DAY) वेन्सी डिमेलो.

सालाबाद बापवार साजरा होतो.

अनेक देशांमध्ये तो उंच जून महिन्याच्या तिसऱ्या रविवारी साजरा केला जातो.

जन्मदात्या बापाप्रती कृतज्ञता व्यक्त करण्याचा हा दिवस आहे. वार्षिकोत्सव आहे.

आजच्या दिवशी आदरणीय बाबांच्या जयंती वा मयंतीची प्रकर्षाने आठवण होईल. ज्यांचे बाबा हयात असतील तर त्यांना प्रत्यक्षपणे आदरपूर्वक अभिवादन केले जाईल. आपणास घडवलेल्या त्या क्षणाची याद येईल. त्यांच्याप्रती जरका अंमळ कृतज्ञता असेल तर आठवणीने डोळे भरूनही येतील. आई हे घराचे मांगल्य वात्सल्य नि आध्यात्म असेल तर वडील हे घराचे ममत्व, वास्तव आणि अस्तित्व आहे. म्हणून आपण मातृदिन पितृदिन कृतज्ञतापूर्वक साजरे करतो. यंदा हा *बापवार पितृदिन फादर्स डे हा २१ जून २०२६ रोजी आहे.

बापवार हा वडिलाप्रती कृतज्ञता व्यक्त करण्याचा दिवस. पित्याचे कुटुंबाप्रती कष्ट, त्याग, जबाबदारी आपल्यावर केलेले संस्कार ह्यांची जाणीव ठेवण्याचा हा कृतज्ञता दिवस.

शेतमजूर बाप, कामकरी वडील चतुर्थ श्रेणीत काम करणारे श्रमिक पितामह,

रीक्षा, टॅक्सी, मोटार, ट्रक, चालविणारे

ड्रायव्हर बाप ह्यांचे आपल्या लाडक्या मुलामुलींसोबत आय् सी एस, वकील डॉक्टर, इंजिनियर, आय पी एस ऑफिसर्स, कलेक्टर झालेले असे वडिलासोबचे एकत्र फोटो आपण वृत्तपत्रातून, माध्यमावर पहातो. तेव्हा त्यांचे कौतुक भरले, पाण्यांनी भरलेले डोळे आपण पहातो तेव्हा आपलेही नेत्र आपसूक भरून येतात...

पाणावले पित्याचे

नेत्र ते

भावनेने ओथंबती.

जलद भरूनी येती

श्रमिकांच्या या

नेत्र तबकात जणू

दोन निरांजने तेवती.

असा हा मंजूर बाप आपल्या

मुलामुलींच्या उच्चपदस्थ कार्यालयात

जेव्हा पारंपरिक पोशाखात भेटायला जातो. तेव्हा तेथील रखवालदार रिवाजाप्रमाणे रोखून त्याला धरतो. आणि जेव्हा कळते हा साध्या पोशाखातला माणूस आपल्या बाँसचा

आपल्या साहेबांचा बाप आहे. तेव्हा त्यांची जी तारांबळ उडते. तीही आपण

माध्यमावर पाहिलेली असते.

तर काही ठिकाणी ज्या बापाने कष्ट करून, खस्ता खाऊन, कोर्टाच्या पायऱ्या झिजवून, प्रसंगी जमीन गहाण ठेवून ज्या पाल्यांना त्यांनी शिकविलेले असते अशी अपत्ये आपल्या जन्मदात्यालाच विसरलेली किंवा अब्रू जाऊ नये म्हणून ओळख दाखविण्यास मागेपुढे करणारी कृतघ्न हराम पिल्लावळही माध्यमावर आपल्याला पहायला मिळते. तेव्हा खूप वेदनाही होतात.

बापाबद्दल वात्सल्य नसेल. तर मग बाप ह्या सज्ञेची व्याख्या वासनेतून मैथूनातून जन्मलेली किटकांची ही पिल्लावळ का? बापाला विसरणारी अशीही विषारी दुधारी पिल्लावळ आज आधुनिक जगात वावरताना दिसते आहे. अशांचे वडील सत्तर ऐंशीच्या वयातही राबताना दिसतात. वृद्धाश्रमात सडताना दिसतात.

लाचार लाभार्थी होऊन एका मुलांकडून दुसऱ्या मुलांकडे टीचभर पोटाच्या भुकेसाठी, विश्रांतीस्तव पडून राहण्याच्या छपरासाठी, वणवण भ्रमंती करतानाही दिसतात.

ही सारी शोकांतिका घडताना पाहून आजचा बाप थोडासा सतर्क आणि व्यवहारी बनला आहे. आयुष्याची सारी मिळकत, धनदौलत, संपत्ती, घर, स्वताचा जमीन जुमला हा जितेपणी मुलांना न देता. मृत्यूपत्रातून देण्याचा प्रघात त्यांनी पाडला आहे. आणि हा सुज्ञ, शहाणपणाचा असा त्यांचा विवेकी निर्णय आहे.

ह्याचा अर्थ त्यांनी आपल्या मुलांना पूर्ण पणे सोडून दिलेले आहे असेही नाही. अशा व्यवहारी व्यापक दृष्टीमुळे अशा बाप्पांची मुले सुना नातवंडे आज ऐक्य साधून राहताना दिसतात. म्हणून व्यवहारी बाप हा आपल्या आप्तांना जेवणाचे ताट जरूर वाढतात पण बसण्याचा पाट मरणोत्तर देतात.

ह्या व्यावहारिक विवेकीपणा त्यामुळे नाती टिकून राहतात. आणि त्यामुळे बापाला रस्त्यावर येण्याची वेळही येत नाही.

आज शासन दरबारीही अशा अभागी दुर्दैवी बापाची कैफीयत ऐकून घेतली जात आहे. निष्ठूर मुलांसाठी कायदेही कडक करण्यात आले आहेत. वृद्ध

आई वडिलांसाठी अनेक योजनाही

राबविण्यात येत आहेत. अशा ह्या बापवार पितृदिना निमित्ताने

एकच शहाणपण उपयोगाचे आहे ते म्हणजे जीवनात अति भावनाशील न होता. व्यवहारी राहणे प्रत्येक बापाच्या हिताचे आहे.

गाँड फ्री पलस शिक्षण पॅटर्न!! वेन्सी डिमेलो.

मराठी मुलूख खान्देशातील अशा सरहद्दीवरची गावे. जिथे शासन अजूनही तोलामोलाच पोहचले आहे. आणि अशा शिक्षण महर्षी सानेगुरूजींच्या शैक्षणिक कर्मभूमीतील एक शिक्षणप्रेमी आणि शिक्षणतज्ञ जेजूट मिशनरी गाँडफ्री डिलिमा.

गेले चाळीस वर्षे तो अथक मुलगामी शैक्षणिक क्षेत्रात सेवा कार्य करतो आहे. कधी शोधक असतो. कधी प्रायोगिक. कधी मुलगामी. खेडूत विद्यार्थ्यांच्या सुलभ शिक्षणासाठी विविध शैक्षणिक प्रयोग करीत आहे.

त्याचे नाव गाँडफ्री आहे. मुंबईकर असून इथे पूर्ण मुळावला आहे. आम्ही त्याला मराठमोळ भाषेत आदराने मुक्तेश्वर म्हणतो. त्यावर तो म्हणतो मी तर ईश्वरमुक्त आहे. गाँड फ्री आहे.

गाँडफ्रीचे म्हणणे असे की.... "आपण मिशनरी म्हणून ईश्वरमुक्त असले पाहिजे. म्हणजे सेवाकार्य करताना कुठले धर्म, जात, पात, समाज, पक्ष, भाषा, रीतीरिवाज, ह्याचे अडथळे निर्माण होत नाहीत. धर्मांतराचे आरोपही होत नाहीत. खरा निसर्ग मानवता धर्म आपण जगत रहातो.

प्रभूची लेक्रे सारी
तयाला सर्वही प्यारी
समस्ता बंधू मानावे
जगाला साक्षर बनवावे.
मळयात माझ्या कुंपण पडणे
अगदी ना मला साहे"

शिरपूर तालुक्यातील विश्व मंडळ सेवाश्रम आणि नंदुरबार येथील जनसेवा मंडळ येथे मिळून जिल्हा परिषदेच्या दूर्गम भागातील एकूण ऐंशी शाळा त्यांनी दत्तक घेतल्या आहेत.

आणि तेथे तेथीलच ग्रामीण आदिवासी साक्षर स्त्री पुरुषांना प्राथमिक अध्यापनाचे ट्रेनिंग देऊन मराठी, इंग्रजी, गणित, विज्ञान ह्या चार विषयासाठी तयार केले जाते. चौथी इयत्तेपर्यंत शिकवण्यास पक्के केले जाते. त्यासाठी ह्या मिशनरीने एक सहज सुलभ पाठ्यपुस्तके व चित्र तक्ते तयार करून सृजनशील असा अभ्यासक्रम सुरू केला आहे. क्रिएटिव्ह शिक्षण पॅटर्न तयार केला आहे.

म्हणजे खेडून मुले जेव्हा शहरी शाळेतील पाचवी यत्तेत प्रवेश घेतात तेव्हा ही मुले ह्या चारी विषयात परिपक्व परिपूर्ण पक्की झालेली असतात. हिंमत साहस आलेले असते. त्यांची शिक्षणातील भीती न्युनगंड गळून पडलेला असतो.

जेज्वीट मिशनरींचे धोरण आहे. जेथे कुणी पोहचले नाही तेथे सर्वप्रथम पोहचावे. काही वर्षांनी हा भाग विकसित झाला की एखाद्या संस्थेच्या सेवाभावी होतकरूच्या हाती सोपवून पुढील अविकसित मिशन शोधत रहावे. हा जेज्वीटांचा रिवाज आहे. जगाने नापसंत केलेल्यांना कोनशिला बनवावे. जिथे ना वित्त वा विद्या तेथे सुविधा पसराव्या.

नव्यांनव मेंढरे सांभाळणे त्यांना विशेष आव्हान वाटत नाही. हरवलेले एक मेंढरू शोधून काढण्याचे ते मोठे आव्हान स्वीकारतात. ऐंशी नव्वद टक्के मार्क्स ट्यूशन लावूनही मिळतात. परंतु ज्यांना तीस पस्तीस टक्के मार्क्स मिळतात. तेथे चाळीस पंचेचाळीस टक्के मिळवून देण्यात ते आनंद नि समाधान मानतात.

देशात आजही साठ टक्के जनता निरक्षर आहे. तेथे त्यांना साक्षर करण्याचे ते आव्हान स्वीकारतात. कुटुंबातील एक व्यक्ती शिकली तरी कुटुंब साक्षर होते. आणि एक कुटुंब शिकले तर त्याचा पूर्ण प्रसार गावात होतो. हा आहे जेज्वीट पॅटर्न जो मिशनरी गाँडफी शिरपूर आणि नंदुरबार ह्या आदिवासी बहुल भागात गेली तीन तपे राबवत आहेत. शालांत परीक्षेपर्यंत हा विद्यार्थी भाषा, विज्ञान, गणितात आत्मविश्वासपूर्वक पारंगत होतो. अशांची काळजी घेतली जाते.

ह्या शैक्षणिक योजनेला चळवळीला PALAS पळस म्हणजेच. Public Action for Literacy, Agriculture and Self- help. *साक्षरता, कृषी आणि आत्मनिर्भरतेसाठी लोकचळवळ. असे म्हटले जाते.

सोबत AFARM म्हणजेच Action for Agriculture Renewal In Maharashtra कृषीप्रधान महाराष्ट्रासाठी कृतीशील परिवर्तन. स्वातंत्र्योत्तर महाराष्ट्रातील शेतकऱ्यांची गरज ओळखून आज शासन दरबारी नावाजलेल्या ह्या संस्थेचे आध्यप्रवर्तक पुरोगामी जेज्वीट मिशनरी असले तरी आज ही संस्था सनातनी विचारांच्या अखत्यारित चालवली जात आहे. पुण्यात कार्यरत असलेल्या ह्या संस्थेवर सध्या वर्चस्व कर्मठ उजव्यांचे आहे. जे व्यवसायाने शेतकरी नाहीत. असो.

अल्पभूधारक शेतीसाठी पाटबंधारे, छोटी धरणे. पाणी अडवा पाणी जिरवा, पारंपरिक पिकातून आधुनिक शेती प्रयोग, पोशिंद्याच्या मुलांसाठी शिक्षण, आरोग्य आदी अफार्मची उद्दिष्ट आहेत.

आज नंदुरबार जिल्ह्यातील धडगाव आणि धुळे जिल्ह्यातील शिरपूर ह्या आदिवासीबहुल भागात हा जेज्वीट शिक्षण पॅटर्न गाँडफी ईश्वरमुक्त असलेले जेज्वीट राबवत आहेत.

जपान देशात चित्रलिपी आहे. सहज आकलन होते. जल, जंगल, जमीन औषधी वनस्पती, जडीबुटी, हर्बल गार्डन परसातील औषधी बाग, आरोग्य, फळफळावळ, अशा विविध विषयांवरील चित्रमय तक्ते तयार करून सानथोरांसाठी हा शैक्षणिक पॅटर्नचा उपक्रम तयार करण्यात आला आहे. शाळेच्या जीवनातून हा विद्यार्थी जीवनाच्या शाळेत सहज उत्तीर्ण होतो. ही ह्या शैक्षणिक पॅटर्नची इथली विशेष खासियत आहे.

असे असले तरी ह्या मिशन सेवाकार्याला पाश्चात्य छाप आहे. हे सेवाकार्य पाश्चात्य प्रकल्प (प्रोजेक्ट) वर बांधील आहे. ह्या पॅटर्नद्वारे ज्ञान, शिक्षण, शिस्त, विवेक शहाणपणा जरूर शिकविला जातो. परंतु संस्कृती अभावी हे पाश्चात्य रोपटं ह्या जमिनीत अजूनही हवे तसे मूळ धरू शकलेले नाही. हवे तसे रुजले नाही.

सानेगुरूजींनी ते इथे संस्कारात रुजवले. कारण.... मातीचे मार्दव सांगे कोंभाची लवलव

हे जाणणारे तिथे सांस्कृतिक हृदय होते. म्हणून गुरूजी खान्देशी कर्मभूमीत या मातीत आणि संस्कारात रुजले होते. शिक्षणतज्ञ बनले होते. भारतीय मातीत खोलवर रुजण्यासाठी आपल्या त्यागी निस्वार्थी सेवाकार्याबरोबरच भारतीय संस्कृतीकरणाचा जेज्वीट मिशनरीना हा प्रयत्न करावाच लागेल. जो भारताच्या इतर दक्षिण आणि उत्तर भागात जेज्वीट भाऊ राबवत आहेत.

योगसाधना !! मीना बनसोडे.

ही एक आपल्या तनमन संतुलनासाठी सर्वात उचित सर्वस्पर्शी अशी साधना आहे.

योग म्हणजे तन मन बुद्धीची एकरूपता युती. आणि साधना म्हणजे मी एक साधन आहे जे मी रोज वापरीन रियाझ करीन. जे मला माझ्या सभोवतालच्या जगाबद्दल अधिक स्पष्टता देते.

जे एके काळी मनुष्याच्या अस्तित्वासाठी नैसर्गिक असे साधन होते. आणि भ्रमण आणि अलिप्त होते याला योग साधना असे म्हणतात. हे आत्म्याशी किंवा परमात्म्याशी एकीकरण आहे. ईश्वर मीलन साधण्यासाठी जीवा शिवाचे मिलन होण्यासाठी गुरुच्या सानिध्यात राहून त्यांच्या मार्गदर्शनाखाली योग साधना करावी लागते.

योगामध्ये अनेक निवडक आसने आहेत. जशी की प्राणायाम, शुद्धिक्रिया , धारणा , ध्यान , यांचा सुंदर संगम आहे. त्यामध्ये "ध्यान" हे एक महत्वाचे आसन आहे. ध्यान ही एक अशी शक्ती आहे की जी आपल्याला देहात गुलाम ठेवणाऱ्या आणि आपल्या विकृतीमध्येही प्रतिकार करण्यास मदत करते. "ध्यान" हे आनंदाचे डोही आनंद तरंग अशा समाधीप्रत पोहोचण्याचे द्वार किंवा प्रार्थना मंदिर आहे.

ध्यान हे आपल्या निरामय शरीरासाठी चांगले असते. ध्यान केल्याने मन स्थिर राहते. चिंता ताणतणावापासून मुक्तता होते. माणसाच्या अंतर्बाह्य संतुलनास प्रोत्साहन देते.

ध्यानाची ही मौल्यवान प्रथा भारताच्या प्राचीन अशा वैदिक काळापासून आहे. जीवनाच्या विज्ञानामध्ये वापरल्या जाणाऱ्या पद्धतीपैकी एक म्हणजे "ध्यान" ही एक व्यापक नैसर्गिक आरोग्य सेवा प्रणाली मानली जाते. जी भारताच्या प्राचीन ऋषीमुनींनी त्यागकष्ट, ध्यानातून तपसाधनेतून निर्माण केली आहे.

"ध्यान" करण्यासाठी शांत जागा निवडावी. ध्यान केल्याने माणसाची आतील जाणीव जागरूकता, दयाळूपणा, संवेदना, सहानुभूती, आनंद आणि मानसिक शांती यांचा सराव राहिल्याने स्वतःशी दयाळू आणि इतरांप्रती कळवळा निर्माण होतो.



यामध्ये एकूण नऊ प्रकार आहेत.

माईड फुलनेस, (सतर्क) मेडिटेशन (ध्यान) एकाग्रता अध्यात्मिक ध्यान, केंद्रित ध्यान, सजगता ध्यान, हालचाल ध्यान, मंत्रध्यान, अतिद्रिय ध्यान, आणि प्रगतिशील विश्रांती, प्रेम, दया, ध्यान, आणि विहज्युवलायजेशन विपश्यना ध्यान.

सर्वच ध्यानशैली प्रत्येकासाठी योग्य नसतात. या पद्धतीसाठी प्रखर अशी विविध कौशल्ये, किमया साधना आणि विशेष म्हणजे मनाची एकाग्रता देहाची एकरूपता आवश्यक आहे.

माईडफुलनेस ध्यानामध्ये गौतम बुद्ध यांची साधना दिसून येते. विचार मनातून जात असताना त्याकडे लक्ष केंद्रित करते. विचार किंवा भावना निश्चित होतात. श्वासावर लक्ष केंद्रित करणे गरजेचे वाटू लागते. येथे मार्गदर्शनाची गरज नसते ते सहज आपण एकटे सुद्धा करू शकतो.

ज्यास विपश्यना म्हणतात.

अध्यात्मिक ध्यान हे सर्व धर्मातील परंपरांमध्ये आहे. हे ध्यान धार्मिक अर्थाची सखोल समज आणि उच्चशक्तीशी संबंध विकसित करण्यावर, जीवाशीवाशी नाते जोडण्यावर आहे.

चिंतनशील प्रार्थना, ईश्वराचे स्मरण, नामजप, जपमाळ

ज्यांना अध्यात्मिक वाढ आणि उच्च शक्ती किंवा आध्यात्मिक शक्तीशी संबंध हवा तेव्हा आध्यात्मिक ध्यानाची गरज असते.

केंद्रित ध्यान हे पाच इंद्रियांपैकी कोणत्याही इंद्रियांचा वापर करून करता येते. उदाहरणार्थ डोळे मेणबत्तीच्या ज्योतीकडे एकटक पाहत राहणे, तुमचे श्वास मोजत राहणे, चंद्राकडे पाहणे. मन भरकटत असेल तर ते एकाग्र करण्यासाठी ही साधना चांगली.

हालचाल ध्यान हे अवयवांची हालचाल होत असताना करता येते. शब्द स्पर्श रूप रस गंध तसेच ऐकणे. पहाणे, हुंगणे, रूची चालणे, बाग काम करणे अशावर लक्ष केंद्रित करून करता येते.

मंत्र उच्चार ध्यान (चॅन्टींग) हे हिंदू आणि बौद्ध परंपरेनुसार ध्यानाचे एक प्रमुख प्रभावी अस्त्र आहे. त्यामध्ये पुनरावृत्ती होणारा रव आवाज वापरतात.

अतिद्रीय ध्यान (ट्रान्सेंडेंटल मेडिटेशन) येथे मंत्रांचा वापर करतात आणि हे साधकाद्वारे शिकवले जाते.

प्रकृतीशील टेहळणी निगराणी हे ध्यान इंग्रजीमध्ये (बॉडी स्कॅन मेडिटेशन) म्हणून ओळखले जाते. ह्याला योगनिद्रा असेही म्हणतात. शारीरिक विश्रांती आणि तणाव निर्मुलनासाठी हे ध्यान केलें जाते.

प्रेम दयाळू ध्यान हे इतरांप्रती करुणा, कणव, दयाळूपणा सेवाधर्म जागवून स्वीकृती भावना मजबूत करण्यासाठी करतात.

व्हिज्युअलयजेशन हे ध्यान सकारात्मक दृश्य, प्रतिमा किंवा आकृत्या नजरेत साठवून मनशांती आणि शांतीच्या भावना लक्ष केंद्रित करून दृढ करण्यासाठी आणि प्रेरणा वाढवण्यासाठी हे ध्यान करतात.

ध्यान करण्याचे अनेक प्रकार आहेत तसेच अनेक फायदे आहेत.

आरोग्य आणि मानसिक संतुलन, ताणतणाव कमी, निवांत झोप, निरामय भावनिकता, यमनियम, नैराश्य, वैफल्य, चिंता मानसिक तणावापासूनची मुक्ती प्राप्त होते.

ध्यान म्हणजे सक्ती नाही. तो व्यायामही नाही. श्वास घेतो उच्छ्वास सोडतो तसे ते उपजत हवे. लीलया लयबद्ध हवे.

ध्यान जर का आपण जबरदस्तीने करू तर ते एक कर्म होईल. तो देहधर्म व्हायला हवा. अंतःकरणाच्या भावनेतून, अंतर्द्वाराच्या गाभाऱ्यातून ते झाले तर ते सकारात्मकतेच्या भावनेकडे नेते.

आरोग्यम् धन संपदा!

निरामया धन संपदा !!

ध्यानमय धन संपदा !!!