

# CSJ RIPPLES

Congregation of Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry - Indian Provinces

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## Editorial



S. Fabiyola A. Morris  
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Province of Nirmala

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is believed to have started in the 11th century, but the devotion didn't spread until Margaret Mary Alacoque, a French nun, began to receive multiple apparitions from Jesus starting in 1673. On December 27, 1673, Jesus appeared to Margaret Mary for the first time when she was praying before the Blessed Sacrament. She described feeling herself, "wholly penetrated with that Divine Presence." Jesus spoke to her saying, "My Divine Heart is so inflamed with love for my people and for thee in particular that, being unable any longer to contain within Itself the flames of Its burning charity, It needs to spread them abroad by thy means..." Jesus had chosen Margaret Mary to help fulfill His

message: "I search for a victim of My Heart, someone who would want to sacrifice herself as an imolated host for the fulfillment of my designs."

We are introduced to the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus through Friday devotions Novenas and Sacred Heart Feast Celebrated in the Catholic Church down the centuries. Another traditional practice is a sacred heart picture mounted on the wall of every catholic home. One of the most profound images Jesus is the image of Sacred Heart.

As children we saw these things and had so many questions in our hearts. Why is this picture placed in every catholic home? Why do

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we stand in front of it and pray? What is that connect between Sacred Heart and us?

Today we know that the heart of Jesus is the best model for us to imitate in our lives. We imitate Sacred Heart of Jesus to show love and compassion for the people who are in need. The heart of Jesus loves everyone without any barrier and differentiation.

Jesus had compassion for people who were in trouble, be it people of any cast and creed. He loved people without looking at their face, without looking at their iniquities, without looking at their infirmities. The Sacred Heart of Jesus challenges us today; to love like Jesus loved.

Jesus does not want us to suffer, although we experience pain

through which He draws us so much closer to His Sacred Heart. That's the time, we should hide in His wounds — so that we could see the Heart of Jesus that bore the pain, returning love with love. Let us pray that the love of Jesus' Sacred Heart may cover us, and that we may unite our own hearts joyfully to His.



S. Teresa Vattakkunnel

Province of Pachmarhi

“What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us. What we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal.”

- Albert Pine

The Covid-19 Pandemic struck heavily on the doors of humanity, leaving people in shock and panic, unable to withstand the restrictions imposed on them. They are engulfed in poverty, joblessness, business failure, financial crisis and with the weekly lockdown all plans and actions are paralyzed. Students are thrown into despair as their budding dreams are shattered. Several members of our school family are equally affected by this drastic phenomenon.

In the midst of this chaos we believe that nothing is impossible. As problems continue to increase, to the extent of losing people closely associated with us in our ministry, our determination,

sensitivity and compassion grows proportionately.

Many Sisters in community reach out to the affected people through phone calls and comforting messages. Our regular contact offers peace of mind, positive energy and a hope-filled life. Continuous counselling brings rays of God's light and courage to families of affected people. Some get healed and return home while others continue to undergo treatment with reduced severity. This is indeed a consolation as we see the power of God working in them.

Our Advocate, Karan Jethi, an ex-student and legal advisor-cum-Managing Committee member, became a prey to Corona virus. Despite all our efforts no one could save him.

Reaching out to others is an unending venture. In Community, we decided to donate, to a hospital in Sambalpur which treats Covid patients free of cost, medication worth a lakh of rupees and a necessary kit.

We feel happy that we participated in this joint venture. We had also informed the Collector of Sambalpur that our school buildings could be used for covid patients. The Sambalpur District Administration accepted our offer to utilize our buildings as Covid vaccination centres.

This noble venture continues till vaccines are available. We hope and pray that the Government carries on this vaccination campaign so that all individuals are protected.

## Brighten the Shattered Tomorrows





S. Rachna Singadiya

Province of Tanmaya

“Nature is painting for us,  
day after day,  
pictures of infinite beauty.”

- John Ruskin

# LOVE your HOME



One fine morning on a lovely Winter day, I was travelling from Bhopal to Ratlam. Cool breeze fanned my face, reviving my heart and mind. I was in a reflective mood. On the way, I thought to myself, how lucky we, humans, are. We are richly blessed with natural resources like forests, lakes, seas, oceans, plains and mountains.

In Chapter One of Genesis we read, “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” Yes, God did so. The words that follow tell us how beautifully God created the rest of the world. In Social Studies we would have studied that the earth is our home.

It is the only known planet in our solar system which supports life – human beings, animals, birds and insects. The atmosphere which covers the earth contains 78 % nitrogen, 21% oxygen and 1% other gases. For human beings, we have everything we can proudly say that the earth provides us with. But, from selfish motives, we misuse and abuse its natural resources.

Here in this context, the words of Mahatma Gandhi have great

significance “the world has enough for everyone’s need, but not for everyone’s greed.” Recent scientific studies show that deforestation and conversion of wild species for human food production have largely been blamed for the destruction of earth’s web of life. The report highlights that 75% of the earth’s ice-free land have been significantly altered by human activity and almost 90% of the Global wetlands have been lost since 1700.

Nurturing a negative attitude towards earth and its natural resources would certainly lead to its complete destruction. Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato Si* says “that the Church has been and is near to indigenous communities to safeguard their rights to their own tranquil life, respecting the values of their traditions, customs and cultures, the preservation of the rivers and forests which are a sacred source of life and wisdom.” In his ecological dreams Pope Francis relates our ecological commitment with clear Christological insights when he says that “the Lord, who is the first to care for us, teaches us to care for our brothers and sisters and the environment which

He daily provides.” This is the first ecology we need. Abusing nature is abusing our ancestors, fellow brothers and sisters, creation and God the Creator.

We, Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry are proud to announce that we prayerfully celebrated Earth day with the theme: “Restore the Earth.” This meaningful prayer service was followed by a nature meditation. The question naturally arises in our minds: “What can I do for the betterment of the earth and to restore it? There are several ways to do this. As religious, we could avoid cutting trees, instead we could plant more trees and try to avoid using tissue paper, plastic, inorganic manure, etc. We could carefully use and recycle water; we could use electricity with greater care and attention; food leftovers could be used for plants as manure and could nurture mother earth which God has beautifully created, thus enjoying living in it.

Dear friends let us join hands and pray for the restoration and enhancement of the earth which God has so graciously blessed us with.

# Choose to Challenge

S. Maria Vaz

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Province of Nirmala

“A beautiful woman draws strength from troubles, Smiles during distress and grows stronger with prayers and hope.”



**W**OMAN - This five-letter word is a world in itself. A world, which is beautiful, gentle and calm. When God realized that he could not be present physically everywhere, he created woman in God's own image and likeness and assigned her the most important responsibility - to propel the existence of humankind into the future. A mother, a daughter, a sister, a wife - so many roles for a woman to play, yet she plays them all effortlessly with the same beautiful soul-stirring purity, passion and love par excellence. Sadly, this living god is not respected today due to the age-old typical mindset that a woman is weak and can never stand parallel to a man. She is fragile, submissive and ought to confine herself within the four walls of a home.

Thankfully, contemporary times have made women realize their rights and stand up for them. This very aptly justifies this year's International Women's Day theme - CHOOSE TO CHALLENGE. A challenged world is a world worth living in. Women across the globe have chosen to Challenge the age-old patriarchal society and end

gender inequality. They are now determined to fill the gaps that exist in workplaces, social groups and other spheres of life. Women, through this year's theme, have decided to make a commitment in challenging inequality, biases, discrimination, pre-conceived roles and notions. The challenge is to create an inclusive, difference-free world and to seek out, celebrate and depreciate the roles and contribution a woman offers so as to better Society.

The challenge now is to create an equitable planet. If the age-old norms and patriarchal rules hamper this challenge, the challenge is to confront them. If compassion was reserved only for men, people would not have worshipped Mother Teresa. If courage was reserved only for men, people wouldn't bow before Sister Ann Rose of Myanmar, who chose to risk her life for others.

If professionalism was reserved only for men, people wouldn't have remembered Kiran Shaw who was awarded Entrepreneur of the Year. If strength was reserved only for men, people wouldn't have remembered Mary Kom. If

making one's own country proud was reserved only for men, people wouldn't have remembered Saina Nehwal, Sakshi Malik, Kalpana Chawla, Phogat Sisters and a host of others. If mastery in skills was reserved only for men, people wouldn't have remembered Lata Mangeshkar and finally if leadership was reserved only for men, people wouldn't have remembered Pratibha Patil or 'Didi' Mamta Banerjee.

The day we understand this, that day we will come to believe that women are role models for the entire human race.

Since we all come from a woman, receive our name from a woman, there is absolutely no reason to believe that women are not competent to stand parallel to men. It's time to strive for equality and work towards establishing a gender-neutral world and challenge all those obstacles which come its way. There is no limit to what a woman can accomplish because a woman doesn't need to play a masculine role to be considered strong; Womanhood itself is the most powerful creation of God.



S. Olinda Fernandes

Province of Nagpur

# Flight of Voiceless in a Democratic Country



More than a billion people in the world are engaged in agriculture, and in India, one out of four people is a farmer or agriculturist. Farm outputs contribute \$325 billion to India's \$2-trillion economy. Agriculture therefore plays a very vital role in India's economy. Economic reforms and acts are meant to boost the morale of farmers; however, many farmers believe that the three farm laws will adversely affect their farming prospects and their choice of crops.

The 2020–2021 Indian farmers' protest is an ongoing protest against these farm laws which were passed by the Parliament of India in September 2020. Thousands of farmers, mostly from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, have been camping at several Delhi border points since 26 November last year, demanding a repeal of these three farm laws, namely:

- Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020;
- The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020; and
- The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020 which is the main issue behind farmers' protest.

Soon after the laws were introduced, unions began holding local protests, mostly in Punjab. On 26 November 2020, a nationwide general strike of 250 million people, as Trade Unions

claim, took place in support of the farmer unions. On 30 November, an estimated crowd of 200,000 and 300,000 farmers converged at various border points on the outskirts of Delhi.

The farmers demanded the scrapping of these laws which were passed in the Monsoon Session of Parliament. The Government's offer to amend these laws was rejected by over 40 farmer union leaders who have been talking to the Government on behalf of thousands of farmers sitting at five different borders since November 26.

The laws, referred to as Farm Bills, have been described as "anti-farmer laws" by many farmer unions; politicians from the opposition say it would leave farmers at the "mercy of corporates." The farmers have also demanded the creation of a Minimum Support Price (MSP) Bill, to ensure that corporates cannot control the prices. The Government, however, maintains that the laws will make it effortless for farmers to sell their produce directly to big buyers, and stated that the protests are based on misinformation.

Farmers, traders and customers weave through waist-high heaps of chili peppers, piles of ginger, mounds of carrots, green beans and onions at a government-run wholesale market in western India.

The farmer unions believe that the laws will open the sale and

marketing of agricultural products outside the notified Agricultural Produce Market (APMC) mandis for farmers. The new laws prevent the state governments from collecting a market fee or levy for trade outside the APMC markets; this has led the farmers to believe that the laws will "gradually lead to the deterioration and ultimately the end of the mandi system" thus "leaving farmers at the mercy of corporates." They therefore demand the minimum support prices to be guaranteed in writing, by the Government.

The Government offered some amendments in the laws, but unions demanded a complete withdrawal of these laws. By mid-December, the Supreme Court of India received a batch of petitions asking for the removal of blockades created by the protesters around Delhi.

After two months of protests, on 26 January, tens of thousands of farmers protesting against the agricultural reforms held a parade with a large convoy of tractors and drove into Delhi, the movement named Dilhi Chalo, in which tens of thousands of farming union members marched towards the nation's capital.

The Indian Government ordered the police and law enforcement of various states to attack the protesters using water cannons, batons, and tear gas to prevent the farmer unions from entering the capital. The tractor rally turned into a violent protest at certain points as the protesting farmers

drove through the barricades and clashed with the police. Later protesters reached Red Fort and installed farmer union flags on the mast at the rampart of the Red Fort Farmer unions and their representatives have demanded that the laws be repealed and have stated that they will not accept a compromise. On 3 February, farmer leaders warned of escalating the protest and overthrowing the Government if their demands were not met. However, the stay order on the implementation of the farm laws remains in effect as of 29 January.

The farmers, who have braved over 100 days of cold, camping at the city's edges, have dug in their heels for nothing less than a complete repeal of the laws. They see this movement as their best shot at getting the Government

to heed their demands, and they are unlikely to feel much pressure to move before mid-March, when many need to resume working in their fields.

The farmers say more, and not less, state control is needed, and that the new laws leave them vulnerable to corporate greed. They call for stronger enforcement of old regulations, like minimum guaranteed prices for certain essential crops, that helped India emerge from a period of hunger in the 1960s, but that, they say, has been largely ignored in recent years.

Agitating farmers have stressed that unless their demands are met and the new farm laws repealed, they will not move anywhere from the borders of the national capital and their protest will continue.

This National protest has received support from the community worldwide. International Organisations, prominent individuals and Indians abroad, expressed concerns and support and strongly spoke in favour of the Farmers' protest. Some referred to the behaviour of the Indian Government with farmers as "shameful." Car rallies and protests were held in support of the farmers.

Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the UN, called on the Indian Government to allow the protests, affirming the right to voice opposition to the Government, stating "...People have a right to demonstrate peacefully and authorities need to let them do so."



S. Francisca D'Souza  
Province of Nagpur

## Incarnating Love and Joy



Jesus said "Whatsoever you do to the least of my brethren you do unto me."

Bearing this teaching in mind, we, Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry, embarked on this mission of serving the Lord in and through the least of the brethren in the town of Managuru, Bhadradi Kothagudam district of Telangana state. We are grateful to Rt. Rev. Bishop Maipan Paul for inviting us to serve in the headquarters of the tribal belt-120km away from the Diocesan headquarters, Khammam.

On 1st October 2020, Sisters Francisca, Bhavani and Fatima, pioneers, ventured into the mission responding generously to the

vision of the Bishop particularly, to reach out to the needy in those areas. We are involved in various social activities like Arbor Micro Credit programmes which involve visiting and conducting awareness programmes in different villages, conducting tailoring classes for unemployed women, organizing remedial classes to encourage education and interact with surrounding families.

We are totally involved in Parish activities, taking care of the needs of the Church, visiting and praying with families, etc. An important day in the parish of St. Paul, is the day of Recollection for families. Married couples, facing each other pray, asking forgiveness from each other

and the family. They also take the opportunity to renew their marriage vows.

It sure is challenging to work in this area, but we have the assurance of Jesus in 2 Cor 12:9 "My grace is sufficient for you." These words encourage us to walk the extra mile and to overcome the little inconveniences and hardships that cross our paths.

Keeping in mind that "All we do is for the glory of God" and to make His mighty name and deeds known around St. Paul's parish and neighbourhood of Managuru, is our only mission.



# A Doctor's Ordeal with Covid-19

Dr. Justin Lobo (MD Physician)

Asha Niketan Hospital, Bhopal  
Province of Pachmarhi

*History will remember  
This War*

*A war that was fought by  
Doctors not soldiers*

*A war that was fought with  
Soap not guns*

*A war that was fought by  
Keeping Distance not contact*

*A war that was fought at Home  
not in the battlefield*

Towards the end of the Lenten season, my family and I participated at a Eucharistic celebration by Cardinal Oswald Gracias, little realizing that one of us was infected with the dreaded SARS-CoV-2 (corona virus). After the Mass, we embraced each other, unknowingly infecting the entire group; thus began our worst nightmare.

The following week, my parents, wife, in-laws began manifesting symptoms. Somehow, I was spared. But at this time, there was a sudden surge of cases everywhere.

It is said - Ignorance is bliss; but that did not apply to me. As a Doctor, I understood very well what was in store for me and my family. One by one, all of us began getting worse, as our oxygen saturation dropped and high fever and cough set in. Then started the phase of sleepless nights and days when I was taking care of everyone at home while attending to critical patients in the hospital.

My parents needed to be hospitalized in the Intensive Care Unit of Asha Niketan Hospital - my own hospital. They were put on oxygen. My wife was at home, quarantined upstairs. I alone was left, responsible for the cooking

and household chores.

Luckily, the hospital was prepared for the 2nd wave, with a good supply of oxygen, even when the ICU and wards were full.

I felt stranded, in the middle of nowhere but did my best to stay positive about the whole situation. On one side I had a sick family to care for and on the other, a ward full of critical COVID-19 patients. At times I used to sit alone, helpless, praying to God Almighty. Faith gave me strength to keep going.

But the worst was not over yet. My son started showing symptoms even as I, myself, started getting skin rash, sore throat and fever. It was time to press the panic button. Help poured in from all sides. On one side, the CSJ Sisters gave me courage to deal with the situation, on the other, friends started sending hot meals, covered with prayers and good wishes. This was my oxygen. It brought respite to me and helped me gather my wits about me.

One day I, myself, was obliged to be admitted into the COVID-19 ward for IV fluids as I felt very weak. This was probably the lowest point in my life as I helplessly watched a nun losing her life to COVID. My condition

did not allow me to intervene. It would not have helped much, anyway. The team of doctors at the hospital did everything possible to save her but in vain.

The first and foremost lesson I learned from this experience was that the symptoms of COVID-19 should not be neglected but rather prompt aggressive treatment should be started. Secondly, you cannot handle some things alone. My colleagues, hospital staff and friends saved the day. You should have a plan B mapped out if things go wrong. When the going gets tough, the tough should get going instead of landing oneself into depression.

Finally, every family member recovered for which I will always be grateful to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry for their support.

My prayers go out to the families of those who are sick, who have lost their lives or lives of loved ones to this dreaded disease.

In the following days of my recovery, I kept working with COVID patients and till date am continuing to do so, thanking my stars that I lived through this harrowing period to share this experience with you.



S. Matilda Kha kha

Province of Pachmarhi

# How do we respond to the Pandemic?



India is reeling under the impact of the second wave of the Pandemic. It has caused unimaginable devastation. Heartbreaking images in the public domain, floating of dead bodies in the River Ganges, lack of basic facilities of our system, people profiteering in the midst of this crisis are matters of deep anguish. With the new variant and mutation of the virus, three types of fungus, uncontrolled death and fear stalk our communities alongside the disease. The Pandemic has its own distinctive character - state of emergency, nation-wide lockdown, travel bans, closure of most of the public institutions and dire economic repercussions. One thought keeps haunting every human mind – the nagging thought – when will this Pandemic come to an end?

The Church in India has become far more sensitive to the prevailing and persisting human tragedy and has rightly become proactive. Religion and religious institutions have always helped humanity to emerge from difficult situations giving hope and life whenever plague, war or calamities arose.

But this time around, the so-called spiritual lifeboat or the spiritual oxygen cylinders such as Churches, Temples and Mosques are closed. Human beings are desperate, confused and at the risk of sinking physically and spiritually. So what can we as spiritual leaders do?

Should we close the doors of our

convents, parishes and religious institutions, sit back and wait when millions are suffering outside? This Pandemic year has taught us to discover God in our communities, in the silent misery, in the agony of people.

Let us never forget that the Church is missionary by nature. But whatever the next few months may bring, we are called to take our place as witnesses to God's providence through our reaching out to those most harmed by the virus. To do so is to recognize God at work during this Pandemic.

There is a tangle of Covid-19 challenges. How can we begin to unknot them? There are various ways by which we can be instruments of God's generosity. Churches have become beacons of hope and carriers of light...

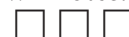
a. Being emphatically kind to our neighbours who have been hit hard by the virus and other financial constraints. Let us consider this formidable challenge as an opportunity to "Live Jesus, Love Jesus, Give Jesus." Our widow's mite and a generous helping hand will make a huge difference. Let us ponder the following question: "Am I brother's keeper?"

b. This Pandemic should not pin us down. By using social media, we can spread God's saving grace, love and protection. May these modes of communication be a platform to ventilate the grievances of those in anguish.

May we be channels to provide food for their spiritual hunger. Can we BE the "The Good News?"

Confined to our homes or in voluntary self-isolation will we celebrate the victory of life hoping to fight death this year? More than ever, current events remind us how much Christian hope is a significant dimension of faith. "For in hope we were saved," affirms St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, before concluding "Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what we do not see, we wait for with patience." (Rom 8:24-25).

We pray that misinformation may be curbed; that fear may take no hold of our hearts and minds and that we may trust in the truth of God's goodness towards us. We pray that things will not get as dire as many foresee, that lives will be spared and the shutdown of society will level the spread of the virus so that the medical system is not overwhelmed to the point of breaking. Let us believe that nothing is predestined and whatever the next few months unfold or have in store for us, we are challenged to take responsibility for ourselves and pray that God may "have pity on us miserable sinners, who now are visited with great sickness and mortality," as Kevin Brown notes.

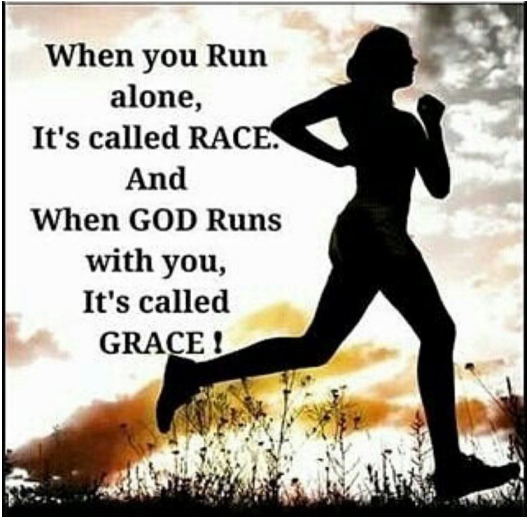


# Revival to Call



S. Priyanka Horo  
Province of Tanmaya

God answers the mess of life with one word: "GRACE."  
- Max Lucado



On 24th April 2021, the community at Tanmaya provincial house, attended a webinar on Revival of our Call, which was a panel discussion organized by the Digital Group of Jesuits.

The webinar was really a heart-, mind-, eye-opener. Revival of our call and how to deal with the pandemic situation were the topics stressed. It is said, that where there are religious there is happiness and this pandemic gives us an opportunity to be people of hope.

We are an Easter people and Alleluia is our song! But the sad reality is that the more we are together the more we are in conflict. We know that each one has the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, so we need to have recourse to dialogue to express our feelings and emotions. If one dialogue fails, use the next. All these are good in theory, but in practice it works very little. For this, we need creative fidelity which implies openness and a non-judgmental attitude. We tend to

categorize people and label them; we become judgmental. This creates blocks.

The solution is not to make them feel different or to make them aware of where the judgment comes from. Jesus loved sinners and hated sin.

Everyone is called to the same level of holiness. My call is not to be a religious or a member in a particular congregation/order but my call is to be united with the Lord. Therefore, "what is the meaning of my existence?" Our senses take us outside, but our true self takes us within. To find our true identity we need to retreat, we need to have self – awareness, for which St. Ignatius has given us the Consciousness Examen. Our focus should be on union with Lord and this happens when we are happy. Stay connected, stay focused.

As religious we are influencers – setting an example which may not be easy. Sometimes we are judged for what we are and what we do. Therefore, the first and most

important aspect is to build trust. We need to value confidentiality, so people can trust us. Deal with others as one of them not as someone in authority.

Nowadays many religious are addicted to social media. Virtual relationships have increased. We need to be social but also aware of worldliness. Whether religious or lay, all run the rat race. If we add "G" to race it becomes "Grace" which God bestows to live a life worthy of Christ.

To be happy and to move on during this time of pandemic, there are a few tips which we could practice daily.

They are: Follow your passion, stay connected with people, indulge in walking the extra mile and LIVE every single day of your life. Let us begin to discover our own security and this will happen through our spirituality. Further, God will surely accompany us on our journey of life, energizing and empowering us at every step of the way. □ □ □

# Offline versus Online Education



S. Clara Rocha  
Province of Nirmala

The School is a temple of learning. However, the Covid-19 pandemic compelled educational institutions to shut down and people realized that learning could take place anywhere.

ONLINE EDUCATION soon became the "New Normal," as most schools adopted digital methods to impart education. However, now that the

Covid-19 vaccine is out, and the pandemic is almost under control, State Governments are considering the re-opening of schools. Online education was the need of the hour, enabling students to complete their syllabus on schedule. Although the transition from physical classroom to virtual has been a major challenge for most schools, it was equally difficult for students to adjust to this new learning method.

“Digital learning is not ineffective. It just gives a different experience. I do miss the classroom fun and close interaction with teachers. However, the good thing about online learning is that it is more relaxed. There’s no rush for getting to school on time besides saving of time and cost of commuting. However, if I must choose between online and physical learning, then learning at school is best for me. There are many distractions at home, whereas in school, I am more focused,” says 12-year old Ayush Nair.

Reactions from students are mixed and varied. While some kids miss the classroom interaction and fun, others feel online education is a boon, as it gives them the option to record the lecture to go through it later in order to better understand the concepts. “Except for the change of place, everything else is the same.

Teachers are equally involved in teaching us. We do get assignments or homework every day, which we save in the common drive, where the



teacher checks and returns it with remarks. Also, the best thing about online learning is that I have the option to record the lesson, if I miss it for some reason. Earlier, I needed to ask my friends to share what I had missed. Nonetheless, the only issue is internet connectivity. ‘Whenever there’s a network issue or power cut, I lose the connection of the online class which becomes a big hindrance,’ says 19 year old Varun Mishra.

However, most teachers believe that classroom teaching is more effective than online teaching. Ma’am Vrunda, a school teacher, concludes, “Virtual

teaching was needed last year, but I don’t think it is an ideal platform in the long run. Besides, it is difficult to capture a student’s attention online.

I doubt whether online exams are fair and reliable. But we had to hold such exams considering the situation. We handed over the responsibility to parents to ensure that they don’t use unfair means at home, during online exams.

Hence, my belief is that learning in school is important for a student’s overall development and growth.

## Embrace the NOW

A drop of honey attracts more flies than a barrelful of vinegar. Yes, you read it right! It’s an old saying, relevant for all ages. Richard McKenzie one of his poem writes, “I have only one mouth, yet can choose to speak wisely. I have only two eyes, yet can choose to see hope. I have only two ears, yet can choose to hear joy. I have only one heart, yet can choose to love unconditionally. I have only one mind, yet can choose to think positively. I have only two feet, yet can choose to stand up and make a difference.” Do you experience something similar? Suppose we had more of them, what would this world have been? Can we give this a thought?

God has given us two gifts: one is CHOICE, the other is CHANCE. Choice is to select the best and it is up to each one of us to make a choice. “In life never be like the hand that crushes the flower but be like a crushed flower which leaves behind a fragrance in the hand which crushes it.” Problems, sufferings, pains, sorrows come and go. Do not linger with these, for they too will pass. Just become aware and live with your true self. Always remember you are

precious, special, loved, and a unique masterpiece of God, the Master Craftsman.

“Life is a one-way street. No matter how many detours you take, none of them drives you back. So, enjoy life’s every moment as none of them will be the same again.” Try not to hang on... Just let it occur and let go. Learn to find joy in all the happenings... this is what St. Ignatius means, “Finding God in all things.”

Recently, in my readings, I came across the seven questions posed by Robert D. Smith on how to seize the Essence of Today. They are:

1. Whose life am I going to brighten today?
2. What three things am I most grateful for today?
3. What memories am I going to create today?
4. What challenges am I going to overcome today?
5. What value am I going to create today?
6. How much joy can I create for others and myself today?
7. What life changing decisions am I going to make today?

S. Laveena D’Souza  
Province of Tanmaya



An old tale goes thus. Once a parched seeker tracked down an unseen clay pot filled with water. He approached the pot for a drink. As he drank the cool water from the pot, he asked the pot for no specific reason, “Dear pot, why are you so cool in this hot summer?” The pot coolly replied, “See, my past is clay, and my future too is clay, then in the remaining days between, why do I need to be hot. Let me be cool.” This is what we are called to be. “Remember thou art dust, and unto dust thou shall return.” So be humble, be grateful and be present; enjoy the ‘now.’ It’s up to each one of us what we want to become - ‘A drop of honey or a barrelful of vinegar.’

As you walk along and the path of life seems hard to plod, then muster courage to sing aloud...  
“One day at a time sweet Jesus  
That’s all I’m asking of you.  
Just give me the strength to do every day what I have to do.  
Yesterday’s gone Sweet Jesus,  
And tomorrow may never be mine.  
God help me today, show me the way,  
one day at a time.”



# Service Beyond Province

S. Navya Neelam  
.....  
Province of Pachmarhi

It was indeed a privilege and honour for us, Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry, to be an integral part of the College Administration in this Capital City of Lakes. Sr. Maurice served for the past 5 years and 3 months in this marvellous laboratory of learning: “The Bhopal School of Social Sciences.”(BSSS) an

autonomous Institution, managed by the Archdiocese of Bhopal, accredited 'A' Grade by NAAC.

Here is an acknowledgement and appreciation letter from the Principal to Sr. Maurice as she completes her contract and says goodbye to the College.



30th April 2021

Dear Sr Maurice,

Hope you are in good health.

*This is in continuation to the short conversation we once had in college: about your service at BSSS. I had discussed this with two of the councillors during breakfast to think about replacing you with another Sister, considering solely the age.*

*I have penned to your Provincial today, a letter of appreciation for your selfless service. I have also informed her that we may not need this service from the next academic year as the future looks grim; even if the sister I thought of, could replace you.*

*With these few lines, I express my gratitude to you, Sr Maurice. You have put in your cent percent in every work you have undertaken. Your meticulous paper work and relentless follow-up have been a lesson for many. Your experience in administration was vivid in all that you handled on behalf of the administration.*

*The Certificate course has grown and doubtlessly matured during your tenure. The end result has been the publications! Kudos to you!! It really required close monitoring as it was not easy to get work out from a few.*

*Your very presence threw vibes of positivity, a lot of fun and laughter. The best thing I enjoyed among others was that we could sit together and enjoy light moments, even amid tensions.*

*Your very external presentation is a sign of the integrity and inner freedom that you enjoy. And I admired it always.*

*THANKS to you for the unforgettable moments of work with you. These are once in Life. And Eternal!*

*Hope to see you once the lockdown is lifted.*

Dr. Fr. John PJ  
Principal  
The Bhopal School Of Social Sciences (BSSS College)



S. Archana Kanakunnel

Province of Nagpur

# A Mega City in a Desert



UAE is a fast-developing Nation, particularly Dubai which aspires to be number ONE in the world in every field, first among them being the National Agenda on "Education." About 80% of the population consists of expatriates. The Government recognizes the essential role of education in building a knowledge-driven economy for the post-oil era. The Ministry of Education developed, 'Education 2020 strategy,' to develop a first-rate education system. UAE has a literacy rate of 93%. The most important sports/games of Dubai are: Soccer, Cricket, Tennis, Basketball, Golf, Horse Racing, Camel Racing and Falconry.

The National Agenda also focuses on Sustainable Environment and Infrastructure, to improve the quality of air, preserve water resources, increase the supply of clean energy and implementing green growth Plans.

Tourism is one of the most important industries of Dubai. The magnificent attractions of Dubai are worth visiting, some of which are Burj Khalifa (tallest building in the world), Dubai Museum depicting history of UAE, Walk through History in Al Fahidi Quarter, Miracle Garden, Dubai Mall along with its fabulous Aquarium, Desert Safari, Traditional Architecture at Sheikh Saeed Al Maktoum House, Maritime Heritage at Dubai Creek and Jumeira Mosque. The staple food items of the Emirati Cuisine are meat, fish and rice. Lamb

and mutton are more favoured meats than goat, beef and camel meat. Usually, Dates are consumed with meals. Popular beverages are coffee and tea.

Tolerance is the value practiced by every citizen, from the President down to the last citizen. Therefore, "the whole world is in the UAE." People of all Religions, Colour and Creed are present in this Mega City. UAE is a land of Tolerance and has set an example for the World to follow in promoting National Tolerance. Various programmes are conducted to enhance the practice of this value. Even anti-discrimination and anti-hate laws are set up. "To treat every person, no matter what his/her creed or race, as a special soul, is a mark of Islam" - said the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

Every November 16, the County observes National day of Tolerance. Various programmes and events are organized on this day. The Tolerance Minister of UAE is Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan.

Few examples of UAE's Religious Tolerance: the Country is home to over 200 nationalities; more than 40 Churches of different Christian denominations, a Sikh temple and a several Hindu temples can be found here. The Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Mosque in Abu Dhabi was renamed "Masjid Maryam Umm Eisa/ Mary, the Mother of Jesus Mosque." Another recent example is that the Country invited Pope

Francis, the Head of the Catholic World and Ruler of Vatican, to visit UAE. The Classy State Welcome and Hospitality shown to our Supreme Pontiff set a world record. The year of Tolerance was celebrated in 2019.

UAE National Day is celebrated on December 2 each year, and marks the Unification of the Emirates into a Federation. UAE consists of 7 Emirates - Abu Dhabi, (Capital) Dubai (World's attraction), Sharjah, Ras'-Al -Khaimah, Ajman, Umm-al Quwain and Fujairah. The National fruit of UAE is Dates, the Falcon is the National bird, the Arabian Oryx is the National animal, the National Flower is Tribulus and the National Tree is Jand.

There are many reasons why people the world over love to live in Dubai. From beautiful beaches to record-breaking buildings, Dubai has so much to offer that it's difficult not to fall in love with the city. People from across the globe who visit Dubai marvel at some of the best architecture and attractions, from the tallest building in the world to the largest dancing fountain. Dubai is one of the safest places in the world. The best shopping Malls are in Dubai.

So my dear friends, after having lived almost 6 years in this Mega city, I desired to share some of my personal experiences. If you are tempted to visit this Mega City in the Desert, go only after the period of Pandemic!!



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