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Magnificat



A NEWS-LETTER FROM CBCI COUNCIL FOR WOMEN

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Secretary, CBCI Council for Women



EDITORIAL

Press for Progress

The theme for the International Women's Day 2018, 'Press for Progress,' invites us to continue our efforts for the cause of gender parity more ardently and enthusiastically. It is a fact that there is a gradual progress in the attitude and mindset of people towards women and their role in the progress of society. Yet, gender inequalities remain deeply entrenched in every society. Women lack access to decent work and face occupational segregation and gender wage gaps. They are under-represented in political and economic decision-making processes. Sometimes it is an irony that women are equally responsible for all privation that a woman has to face. There are women who are a travesty to their own kind and do not let the other women come out from the stereotypes and taboos; so, an inclusive transformation in the way of our collective thinking is important. Through purposeful collaboration, each one of us can help women advance and unleash the limitless potential offered to the development of the society and nation.

St John Paul II wrote on the occasion of the Marian Year 1998, "the Church desires to give thanks to the Most Holy Trinity for the 'mystery of woman' and for every woman for that which constitutes the eternal measure of her feminine dignity,...in and through her that the greatest event in human history- the incarnation of God Himself-was accomplished".

Jesus chose a woman to be the person to whom he first appeared after

Resurrection. In the book of Esther, Mordecai appeals to Esther to use her power and influence to save her people. The role of Christian women, in times like these, is to use our power and influence as torch bearers, just as did Esther.

In light of our ongoing efforts to encourage women and girls in the Church and the world, we celebrate Women's Day and praise God for women like Esther, Judith, Mary Magdalene and others who made a great sacrifice and took a risk at a time when women were just treated as less fortunate in the society. God has mandated us to be helpers and given us all the tools that we need to make the world a better place. ❖



Wish you all a very vibrant celebration of International Women's Day!



"GOD RAISED THE LORD AND WILL ALSO RAISE US UP BY HIS POWER"
1ST CORINTHIAN 6:14

May you find the renewal of hope, health, love and the spirit of god!!!

A BLESSED EASTER TO EVERYONE!!

EASTER MESSAGE



"But Mary stayed outside of the tomb weeping... 'They have taken my Lord, and I don't know where they laid him'"

John 20:11-13

"I have seen the Lord"

John 20:18

"How beautiful to think that the first appearance of the

Risen Lord took place in such a personal way! That there is someone who knows us, who sees our suffering and delusion, who is moved by us, and who calls us by name" – Pope Francis.

Pope Francis declared St. Mary Magdalene the "Apostolotum Apostola" (Apostle of the Apostles). Her bond with Jesus is one of the most authentic bond which is not broken even by death and mirrors the fidelity of many women. Her love for the Lord is reflected in her heartfelt mourning in front of the tomb. Her sorrow turned into everlasting joy when she was blessed with the gift of being a witness to the Lord. As the privileged disciple with her unhindered love and devotion for God, St. Mary Magdalene becomes 'the Apostle of the new and greatest hope', a beacon of hope and joy for us, to renew our faith in God and believe in his undying love. Through her example it is portrayed that

our Lord sought each one of us personally. He recognises us, sees us and answers to our calls. It also beckons us to receive the joy of the resurrection by becoming life-witnesses of our Lord.

As we celebrate this Easter, may each one of us imitate and inherit the dedication and love of St. Mary Magdalene for God and let each of us receive our own answer from God, for He is loving, benevolent and merciful to His people.

Jacob Mar Barnabas

+ MOST REV JACOB MAR BARNABAS
BISHOP OF GURGAON,
CHAIRPERSON OF CBCI COUNCIL FOR WOMEN



Hallelujah! Christ is Risen

Furry bunnies and Easter eggs
Are for children to have fun,
But will they hear the story
Of God's holy resurrected Son?

Baskets and chocolate bunnies
May also enter the Easter scenes,

But let's make sure the children
Know what Easter really means.

Christ Jesus died for our sins,
But that's not the end of the story.
He arose from the dead and the grave
Before He soon went back to Glory.

The Easter season is a good time
To let Jesus' light shine through.
Tell others that He died for us,
And that He was resurrected o.

Yes, the Savior died for everyone.
This is what I have already said,
But praise God! And hallelujah!
He also rose up from the dead!

May God bless us all at Easter.
It is a happy time of the year,
When we celebrate the Resurrection
Of our precious Savior so dear. ❖



IN
HONOUR
OF WOMEN

-Stephen (Adademic Tips)

They smile when they want to scream.
They sing when they want to cry.
They cry when they are happy and laugh
when they are nervous.
They fight for what they believe in.
They stand up against injustice.
They don't take 'No' for an answer when
they believe there is a better solution.
They go without new shoes so their
children can have them.
They go to the doctor with a frightened
friend.
They love unconditionally.
They cry when their children excel and
cheer when their friends get awards.
They are happy when they hear about a
birth or a new marriage.
Their hearts break when a friend dies.

They have sorrow at the loss of a family
member, yet they are strong when they
think there is no strength left.
They know that a hug and a kiss can heal
a broken heart.
Women come in all sizes, in all colors
and shapes. They'll drive, fly, walk, run, or
e-mail you to show how much they care
about you.
The heart of a woman is what makes the
world spin!
Women do more than just give birth.
They bring joy and hope. They give
compassion and ideals.
They give moral support to their families
and friends.
Women have a lot to say and a lot to
give. ❖



CBCI COUNCIL FOR WOMEN PAYS HOMAGE TO OUR BELOVED SR. ANGELINA HM, FORMER REGIONAL SECRETARY OF ODISHA WOMEN COMMISSION

BORN ON 5/03/1943 AND RETURNED TO THE LORD ON 20/12/17

"Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is". - 1 John 3:2

Regional level activities. She has proved her leadership qualities many times when she held the position for two terms.

Sr. Angelina was a very good masterpiece of God. She was a committed, hardworking, punctual, obedient, active, energetic, enthusiastic and jovial missionary. She had mastery over the subjects she taught and gained the confidence of the teachers, parents and students in her teaching career. She was a person who had a good administrative hold and someone who always had a good rapport with everyone in the Secular and Religious Society.

Sr. Angelina enjoyed good health until she was diagnosed with diabetics, high blood pressure and cardiac problem. She succumbed to massive Cardiac Arrest on 20th December 2017.

We are grateful to God for His unique creation in the person of Sr. Angelina

who manifested His glory through her very life and mission. May her soul rest in God's Kingdom and enjoy the bliss in Heaven.

The CBCI Council for Women gratefully remembers her contributions to the upliftment of women in the Odisha region. She had been one of the strongest bridge connecting the Church and the women, who always strived to perform the best she could. We missed a great leader! ❖

*Dear Sr. Angelina,
May your heavenly presence enrich the women on earth, especially in Odisha.
You will be always alive in our memories!*



CBCI COUNCIL FOR WOMEN PAYS HOMAGE TO OUR BELOVED SR. JOEL PATHALIL SCSC, FORMER REGIONAL SECRETARY OF BIHAR WOMEN COMMISSION

BORN: 28.12.1951 | PROFESSION: 12.08.1976 | DIED: 10.01.2018

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." - 2 Timothy 4

women and children. Her presence etched a difference in their lives.

Sr. Joel performed her job excellently wherever she was assigned with a task. She was a woman of practical wisdom and systematic in her thinking and action. She has rendered her service as the Regional Secretary of the Bihar Women Commission for one year.

In November 2016 Sr. Joel was diagnosed with breast cancer. In spite of the best treatment and care given at Tripolia Hospital, Patna her health started deteriorating. On 10 January 2018 at 08.30 pm Sr. Joel bid farewell to

this earthly pilgrimage and reached her heavenly abode. ❖

*Dear Sr. Joel,
though your service may be short, CBCI Council for Women is thankful for your service and help towards the upliftment of women and its cause. We pray that you find eternal bliss and joy in God's Kingdom.*



LIST OF REGIONAL CHAIRPERSONS AND SECRETARIES

Sl. No.	Region	Chairperson & Diocese	Secretary
1	Agra	Most Rev Pius Thomas D'Souza, Bishop of Ajmer, Kaiserganj, Ajmer – 305001	Ms. Pancy Thomas 99, Sector II, Vaibhav Nagar, Agra - 282001
2	Andhra Pradesh	Most Rev Prakash Mallavarapu, Archbishop of Visakhapatnam, Maharani Peta P.O., Visakhapatnam – 530002	Sr. Nirmala Mathew SAS St. Ann's Convent, Arivola P.O., Visakhapatnam Dt, AP- 530043
3	Bihar	Most Rev William D'Souza SJ, Archbishop of Patna, Bankipur, Patna – 800004	Sr. Jane K, SCN Navjyoti Niketan, Sadaquat Ashram P.O. Patna, Bihar - 800010
4	Chhattisgarh	Most Rev Patras Minj SJ, Bishop of Ambikapur, P.O. Phunduldihari, Surguja Dt., Ambikapur – 497110	Sr. Emlina Xess SJL Bishop's House. P.O. Phunduldihari, Surguja Dt., Ambikapur – 497110
5	Jharkhand	Most Rev Binay Kandulna, Bishop of Khunti, Torpa Road, GirjaToli, P.O. & Dt. Khunti – 835210	-
6	Karnataka	Most Rev Geevarghese Mar Makarios, Bishop of Puttur, Shanthi Bhavan, Parlada, Puttur P.O. – 574201	Ms. Lovely Yeldose C/O Yeldose M.Kuriakose, South Indian Bank, Hampanakatta, Mangalore, Karnataka - 575001
7	Kerala	Most Rev Joseph Karikkassery, Bishop of Kottapuram, Kottapuram P.O, Kodungallur, - 680667	Ms. Delcy Luckachan Nambiaparambil House, Kaloore P.O., Muvattupuzha, Ernakulam Dt., Kerala - 686668
8	Madhya Pradesh	Most Rev Gerald Almeida, Bishop of Jabalpur, Snehsadan, 599, South Civil Lines, Jabalpur – 482001	Sr. Navya FCC Trinity Convent, Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh - 464001
9	North	Most Rev Jacob Mar Barnabas, Bishop of Gurgaon, Mar Ivanios Bhawan, J-61/62 Paryavaran Complex, IGNOU Road, New Delhi – 110068	-
10	North East	Most Rev Victor Lyngdoh, Bishop of Jowai, Jowai, Lumbihsyntu, Mihmyntdu, West Jaintia Hills Dist., Meghalaya – 793150	Sr. Deepika Kishakkemyalil N.E.D. Social Forum, Joypur Kharguli, Guwahati, Assam – 781004
11	Odisha	Most Rev Kishore Kumar Kujur, Bishop of Rourkela, Hamirpur, P.O. Rourkela, Dist. Sundargarh – 769003	Sr. Bibiana Barla HM Bp. H. Westerman Nivas, Ainthapali P.O., Dt. Sambalpur, Odisha - 768004
12	Tamil Nadu	Most Rev Antonysami Neethinathan, Bishop of Chingleput, Thimmavaram, Chingleput, Kancheepuram Dt. TN - 603101	Ms. Angela Raj 59.1 Cross, Gandhi Nagar, Crawford, Trichy, Tamil Nadu – 620012
13	West Bengal	Most Rev Cyprian Monis, Bishop of Asansol, Sacred Heart Presbytery, G.T. Road (West), Asansol – 713301	Ms. Sandhya Vincent 19-A Ripon Street, Kolkata, West Bengal – 700016
14	Western Region	Most Rev Ambrose Rebello, Bishop of Aurangabad, Aurangabad Cantt. - 431002	Sr. Lilly Francis SMMI SMMI Convent, Near Civil Court, Civil Lines, Nagpur, Maharashtra - 440001

OFFICE BEARERS OF CBCI COUNCIL FOR WOMEN

CHAIRPERSON



MOST REV. JACOB MAR BARNABAS

MEMBER BISHOPS



MOST REV. MATHEW ARACKAL



MOST REV. FRANCIS KALIST

SECRETARY



SR. TALISHA NADUKUDIYIL SD

83 HOMES AND COUNTING:

RETIRED TEACHER GIFTS THE HOMELESS WHAT THEY NEED MOST



57-year-old Dr Ms Sunil distinctly recalls the day she visited her student Asha's house. It was 2005, and the now-retired zoology teacher was then in-charge of National service scheme programme at Pathanamthitta Catholicate College.

In the middle of a piece of land, common to all, stood a makeshift plastic shed that Asha called home. After she lost her parents, her grandmother struggled to raise Asha and make ends meet.

"The first thing I noticed about the shed was there was no door. An old and thin dupatta hung from the top to cover the entrance. I was moved to tears," says Dr Sunil.

It was at the time she decided to build Asha a home. While the Panchayat agreed to give Dr Sunil three cents of land, she actively started raising funds through family, friends, teachers and students. At the time the house cost her Rs one lakh.

"Today Asha is working as a teacher. She married an army man. She bought a car that she drives to school every day and her daughter is studying in Kendriya Vidyalaya," says Dr Sunil. One turn of events not only changed Asha's life but also Dr Sunil's.

There was no going back after 2005.

Till date, she has successfully constructed and handed over 83 houses to people living in deplorable conditions.

"The most effective selection process is personal visits and enquiry. Usually, we give preference to widows living with girl children in plastic sheds. These are women who have no protection or help from the government or organizations. We also give preference to families of persons suffering from terminal illnesses, physical and mental disabilities," she says.

With no formal organization, Dr Sunil has been working with Jayalal, a social worker who helps her with the housing projects. Even though the Dr MS Sunil Foundation was registered in December 2016, it is solely for accounting and sponsorship and is yet to become a full-fledged organization, a dream Sunil harbours and aims to fulfill in the next two years.

While the expenditure of constructing a home in 2005 was one lakh, today the construction of each home costs a minimum of Rs 2.5 lakh.

Dr Sunil also conducts other activities like providing food and clothes to tribals, arranging medical camps, building tribal huts etc. Till date, she has constructed



Dr Ms Sunil

28 tribal huts, donated over 100 digital hearing aids and 278 wheelchairs to marginalized persons personally through visits, donated free spectacles to senior citizens, school stationery to over a thousand students.

"I wish to serve the most-needy and downtrodden people in our country. But I need support from well-wishers. Today we are struggling with transport facilities for materials, and we don't have our own vehicle or office space. But what I know for sure is, we have made it this far, and we are not going back. I will continue my work and strive to become the voice of the voiceless". ❖

(Courtesy – The Better India)





TRIPLE TALAQ:

FROM SUPREME COURT'S LANDMARK JUDGMENT TO PARLIAMENT'S PUSH TO CRIMINALISE THE PRACTICE

The court acted on a plea filed by six petitioners which included Shayara Bano, Ishrat Jahan, Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan, Gulshan Parween, Aafreen Rehman, and Atiya Sabri. After multiple hearings, the practice was declared void by the top court last year.

Here is what happened so far:

Supreme Court

In October 2015, a Supreme Court bench dealing with a case related to the Hindu Succession Act requested the Chief Justice of India to set up a separate bench to examine if Muslim women face gender discrimination in cases of divorce. Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi was asked to assist the court in pleas challenging the validity of Triple Talaq and polygamy. The government had vehemently opposed the practice in the court.

A five-judge Constitution bench was set up to hear the plea in May 2017. The court initially consulted with the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) whether it was possible to introduce the option for women to say 'no' to Triple Talaq.

The Court made it very clear in its proceedings that "we will only look at Triple Talaq and whether it is constitutional and not go into issues such as polygamy." Amid opposition from the AIMPLB, which said that the practice was 1,400 years old, the court declared the practice illegal in August 2017.

NDA Government

In his first remarks after the Lok Sabha passed the Bill, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that Muslim women finally

have a way out of years of suffering. The government has been of the view that the practice of talaq-e-bidaat denied Muslim women the fundamental rights guaranteed by the constitution. In the Supreme Court, AG Mukul Rohatgi said that the practice should not be allowed as women have equal rights as men and the practice was in violation of those rights. The government said it was ready to bring in a new law to regulate the practice of divorce among Muslims.

When the Court declared the practice of instant talaq illegal, the government hailed the decision by calling it a red letter day for women rights in India. The Bill was tabled in Lok Sabha during the winter session and was passed without much opposition as the government enjoys a comfortable majority. However, this could change in Rajya Sabha as Opposition parties have expressed their reservations over the Bill.

Opposition parties

When the Bill was introduced in the Lower House, Opposition parties like the RJD, AIMIM, BJD, IUML and AIADMK objected but failed to rally together when it was taken up for voting. The Congress did not even give notice to oppose introduction of the Bill and the Trinamool Congress did not participate in the discussion.

AIMIM's Asaduddin Owaisi, who

alleged "vested interests" behind the legislation, said it was an attempt to demonize Muslim men. The Bill, he maintained, violated fundamental rights. Owaisi said while the Bill talks only about Muslim women being abandoned, the government should also worry about "20 lakh abandoned women of all religions, including our bhabhi in Gujarat".

All Indian Muslim Personal Law Board

The All Indian Muslim Personal Law Board has been against with the government's decision to bring in a law to criminalize the practice of instant talaq. In the Supreme Court, the AIMPLB said that the matter fell outside the realm of the judiciary. However, the board issued a "code of conduct" and warned Muslim men against giving divorce without following the norms of Sharia law. The board also said that issues of constitutional morality and equity cannot arise when a matter of faith is concerned.

The board recently urged the Central government to withhold and withdraw its Bill to outlaw instant Triple Talaq, stating that it was against the principles of Shariah and amounts to interference in the Muslim personal law. ❧

(Courtesy – Indian Express)



HOW TO FACE WIDOWHOOD

Part - II

Mother Mary is another resort you can turn to, pray to her daily to help you preserve the purity of your soul and body. After you prepare yourself to move ahead through prayer, make sure you understand your responsibilities. If your kids are married or are employed it will be comparatively easier to go forward in life. The path forward will be a bit tougher if your kids are either studying or are infants. Make sure you have a source of income. Make a stern decision that you yourself will find a way to meet your children's educational and daily needs. You can also seek help from your or your husband's family. But there's a limit to what they can do. Money is usually the key factor that tears family relations apart. You should try to avoid such situations as much as possible. When you are employed, the benefits are not just financial. When you sit idly, sorrowful memories creep back into your mind whereas if you keep yourself occupied at all times there won't be enough time to worry about your sorrows. Try to be in the company of other people as much as you can. Help your kids with their studies make sure you spend time with your kids every day. Listen to what they have to say patiently and fulfill their needs if they are deemed fair. You must always keep in mind that you have to give them the love and care of father and mother, that means the mother's responsibility has doubled now. Do not see this as a burden but take it up happily. Even if

their father is not there with them make the kids feel his presence always. Train them to talk to their father in their mind before they do anything. Teach them to pray for their father every day. After the family prayer while wishing peace to each other make it a habit for them to wish peace to their father's portrait. You have to give them courage and supports to overcome any hardships without letting them feel the absence of their father. Make sure they don't feel like they are pushed back or avoided anywhere just because they don't have their father with them. Don't let them be an introverted under any circumstances; also don't let them grow under the sympathy of others. The hardships and sorrows of the mother should not put down the child. They should see a mom who can take on all the situations with a smile on her face. They only need to know about all the hardships and sadness once they grow up but it shouldn't look like it was a burden for you or you're expecting something of them now. They shall be made aware of all the financial problems and other problems that started after their father passed away you have to make sure that they grow up in deep rooted faith and also love for the family.

Pray to God every day to forgive the shortcomings that your husband had while he was alive. You can pray for him by contributing to charity, conducting masses and other holy sacraments. You should also pray for all the other souls in

the purgatory. Believe that he is always there alongside with you to reduce your pain in his absence. In your mind ask him for his opinion on anything you're about to do. Have an idea of what he expects you to do. You have to love your husband's parents and siblings and also cooperate with them to move forward. Interact with your in-laws in a way that they don't feel the sorrow and emptiness of losing their child. When you fulfill the duties your husband had towards his parents and siblings his soul will be happy. Understand that his soul is always praying for you and your children to God.

Now coming to remarriage, it is something which you have to give a lot of thought about. To a young widow who doesn't have any kids it shouldn't be too hard a decision. There isn't much that they have to consider, they can make a decision based on the situation. But for widows with children have to think seriously before coming to a decision. One must seriously consider the mental state of the children. For children who can think for themselves it will be hard to love or accept someone else as their father. It will be hard for them to accept their mother's love being shared to another person. You have to give your children the confidence that you will stay by their side no matter what happens. Try to find happiness in the satisfaction of your kids. Even if you are going to a new married life you should be able to give your kids all the love, care and confidence they deserve.

We can overcome all the hardships and negative situations with courage and deep rooted faith in God. Face everyone with a smiling face. If we express the sadness inside us on our face it will badly affect not only us but also the people who cooperate with us. Therefore submit all your sadness to God and by spreading peace and happiness to all around us we can lead a holy life. We can pray for the blessing to have a life which can inspire many others. ❧



DELHI'S CHHAVI GUPTA CRACKS CAT WITH 100 PERCENTILE, HAD CLEARED IIT-JEE IN FIRST ATTEMPT

Chhavi Gupta was one of the two female candidates to be placed in the 100th percentile of CAT (Common Admission Test) 2017.

"If boys are studying, and I have seen this amongst some of my distant relatives, they will not disturb them. But a girl would still be asked to help out with household chores. Two, the priorities for many parents is to get the daughter married off after her graduation and so not many women really attempt the post graduate level entrance exams... Thankfully, I had a family that supported me 100%," said Chhavi, the oldest of three siblings.

With a full time job as a business analyst in a technology and analytics firm, Chhavi found little to no time to

prepare for the entrance exam during the week, and studied mainly on weekends, when she attended coaching classes too. Despite the time crunch, strategizing her study schedule, concentrating on logical applications of formulae and practicing mock tests is what helped her crack the competitive exams.

Academic excellence is not new for the Paharganj resident. According to her mother, Anju Gupta, she sets a "strict routine" for her children and Chhavi has been participating in competitive exams since her fourth grade and even cracked her IIT-JEE in her first attempt.

Though she claims she was not stressed for the most part, there were times like when she was placed first All India during a mock test conducted by her coaching



CHHAVI GUPTA

centre, that she felt the pressure. At such times, she either turned to her favourite author, Jeffery Archer's books, or turned to her personal support system to cope.

"I talked to my sister, brother, or my mother. My family really helped calm me down," she said. ❖

(Courtesy – Hindustan Times)

UNDERSTANDING GRIEF

Although many of us are able to speak frankly about death, we still have a lot to learn about dealing wisely with its aftermath: grief, the natural reaction to loss of a loved one.

Relatively few of us know what to say or do that can be truly helpful to a relative, friend or acquaintance who is grieving. In fact, relatively few who have suffered a painful loss know how to be most helpful to themselves.

Two new books by psychotherapists who have worked extensively in the field of loss and grief are replete with stories and guidance that can help both those in mourning and the people they encounter avoid many of the common pitfalls and misunderstandings associated with grief. Both books attempt to correct false assumptions about how and how long grief might be experienced.

One book, "It's OK That You're Not OK," by Megan Devine of Portland,



Ore., has the telling subtitle "Meeting Grief and Loss in a Culture That Doesn't Understand." It grew out of the tragic loss of her beloved partner, who drowned at age 39 while the couple was on vacation. The other book, especially illuminating in its coverage of how people cope with different kinds of losses, is "Grief Works: Stories of Life, Death and Surviving," by Julia Samuel, who works with bereaved families both in private practice and at England's National Health Service, at St. Mary's hospital, Paddington.

The books share a most telling message: As Ms. Samuel put it, "There is no right or wrong in grief; we need to accept whatever form it takes, both in ourselves and in others." Recognizing loss as a universal experience, Ms. Devine hopes that "if we can start to understand the true nature of grief, we can have a more helpful, loving, supportive culture."

Both authors emphasize that grief is not a problem to be solved or resolved. Rather, it's a process to be tended and lived through in whatever form and

however long it may take. "The process cannot be hurried by friends and family," however well meaning their desire to relieve the griever's anguish, Ms. Samuel wrote. "Recovery and adjustment can take much longer than most people realize. We need to accept whatever form it takes, both in ourselves and in others."

We can all benefit from learning how to respond to grief in ways that don't prolong, intensify or dismiss the pain. Likewise, those trying to help need to know that grief cannot be fit into a preordained time frame or form of expression. Too often people who experience a loss are disparaged because their mourning persists longer than others think reasonable or because they remain self-contained and seem not to mourn at all.

I imagine, for example, that some adults thought my stoical response to my mother's premature death when I was 16 was "unnatural." In truth, after tending to her for a year as she suffered through an unstoppable cancer, her death was a relief. It took a year for me to shed my armour and openly mourn the incalculable loss. But 60 years later, I still treasure her most important legacy: To live each day as if it could be my last but with an eye on the future in case it's not.

The books share a most telling message: As Ms. Samuel put it, "There is no right or wrong in grief; we need to accept whatever form it takes, both in ourselves and in others." Recognizing loss as a universal experience, Ms. Devine hopes that "if we can start to understand the true nature of grief, we can have a more helpful, loving, supportive culture."

Likewise, I was relieved when my husband's suffering ended six weeks after diagnosis of an incurable cancer. Though I missed him terribly, I seemed to go on with my life as if little had changed. Few outside of the immediate family knew

that I was honoring his dying wish that I continue to live fully for my own sake and that of our children and grandchildren.

Just as we all love others in our own

As a bereaved mother told Ms. Samuel, "You never 'get over it,' you 'get on with it,' and you never 'move on,' but you 'move forward' ". Ms. Devine agrees that being "encouraged to 'get over it' is one of the biggest causes of suffering inside grief."

unique ways, so do we mourn their loss in ways that cannot be fit into a single mould or even a dozen different moulds. Last month, James G. Robinson, director of global analytics for The New York Times, described a 37-day, 6,150-mile therapeutic road trip he took with his family following the death of his 5-year-old son, collecting commemorative objects along the way and giving each member of the family a chance to express anger and sadness about the untimely loss.

Ms. Devine maintains that most grief support offered by professionals and others takes the wrong approach by encouraging mourners to move through the pain. While family and friends naturally want you to feel better, "pain that is not allowed to be spoken or expressed turns in on itself, and creates more



problems," she wrote. "Unacknowledged and unheard pain doesn't go away. The way to survive grief is by allowing pain to exist, not in trying to cover it up or rush through it."

As a bereaved mother told Ms. Samuel, "You never 'get over it,' you 'get on with it,' and you never 'move on,' but you 'move forward' ". Ms. Devine agrees that being "encouraged to 'get over it' is one of the biggest causes of suffering inside grief." Rather than trying to "cure" pain, the goal should be to minimize suffering, which she said "comes when we feel dismissed or unsupported in our pain, with being told there is something wrong with what you feel."

She explains that pain cannot be "fixed," that companionship, not correction, is the best way to deal with grief. She encourages those who want to be helpful to "bear witness," to offer friendship without probing questions or unsolicited advice, help if it is needed and wanted, and a listening ear no matter how often mourners wish to tell their story.

To those who grieve, she suggests finding a non destructive way to express it. "If you can't tell your story to another human, find another way: journal, paint, make your grief into a graphic novel with a very dark story line. Or go out to the woods and tell the trees. It is an immense relief to be able to tell your story without someone trying to fix it." ❖

(Courtesy – Jane E. Brody, The New York Times)



A call to renew Women Power Part - II

Although there are struggles lurking in every corner of the society, there were women who faced difficulties and yet not succumbed. St. Mother Teresa, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Medha Patkar and all Good Mothers are outstanding examples. It is said that "if you want to protect a generation plant trees but if you want to protect thousand generations educate women." It is very true, if the man is the head of the family, woman is the heart of the family; and we know the important role of the heart. Therefore, invariably there is a woman behind every man's success. From the womb to the grave... the mother is the starting point of one's arrival. In Indian terms, woman is synonymously identified as shakti and power. They inherit such grace that every woman is a symbol of endurance, peace, gentleness, love and patience.

No wonder why mother/woman is considered as God/divine personified in human form. Every woman therefore, is intrinsically a divine extension. Why then do we talk about empowerment, emancipation or liberation of women, when they are empowerment by their very nature? In this context, feminism is not a movement fighting for the rights rather is the source of power and vision. This source must not be an agitation but is an inspiration that would bring out heroic models of women leaders in the society.

Women are known as Aadi Shakthi; meaning they are power emanating from the divine. Therefore, they are like the lotus in the pond that blooms even in muddy water. The mud and dirt do not diminish the essence of the lotus. For, the lotus penetrates the mud and blooms. Likewise, women are immensely blessed with such charisma, potentiality and determination. As a result every good man is the fruit of every good woman who nurtured the child to man. These courageous women contribute much to the nation building. For an instance, Mother Teresa the saint of the poor contributed to the least of the nation from rags to the riches. Mrs. Indira Gandhi changed the political

scenario of the nation with such power and progress. Medha Patkar committed her life to become the voice of the voiceless as an NGO and a Journalist. Therefore, when we educate a woman we actually educate a generation and more. No doubt, women have an extraordinary power and responsibility in bringing up the family and the society at large.

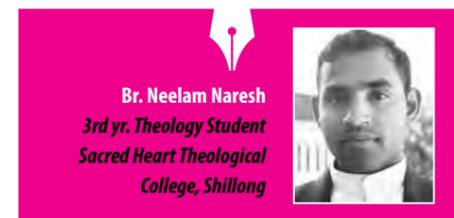
Today India is moving on a high pace for bullet trains, tele-communication and for Nuclear Energy. To be frank this is not



goes to their mothers, who nurtured them from cries of the cradle to the crown of glory. India had the first woman Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the first woman President Mrs. Pratibha Patil and today P.V. Sindhu, Saina Nehwal, Mitali Raj and Deepika are new source and force of inspiration for Indian.

It is said "where women are respected God's make their dwelling." In India the Earth is worshipped as mother, water as life and interestingly many rivers in India bear feminine names. Women were treated always high in Vedic and Golden Age. Unfortunately, this attitude declined during the Colonial and Mughals invasion. Thus, the need to protect women arose and today it is an urgent need like that of the freedom fight. But we must admit the fact that there are women who swam against the current and set an example for change and difference. The task of Media is to bring up such success stories of women who changed the status quo in sports, education, administration and service sectors. I am glad about the Bollywood movies of Queen, Mary Kom and MOM with a female leading role against the stereotyped stories. I wish we will have more of such courageous women stories soon. We must bring out the unsung women heroes to the front line in this male dominated territory. The truth of our nations' economy is much contributed by the house hold savings of women in terms of wealth, gold and jewellery. Hence, it is not a surprise if we say that the Development is intrinsically linked to the empowerment and education of women. Because, they are true game changers of family, society and the nation building as power, shakti.

Let us remember the words of the St Teresa of Kolkata, "Though you think that the work that you do is just a drop in a vast ocean then remember that the ocean will be incomplete without that particular drop". Blessed are those women who make ripple effect in Indian sub-continent. ❖



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the need of the hour. Instead, India must start a social revolution of respect for all. This I believe is real education, culture and civilization. However, women are the real nation builders, subtle yet profound. Yes, a woman is the heart of the nation, perhaps why our freedom fighters called our country Mother India. In India family is the best social system where a woman plays a significant role. Today India is witnessing the soft changes as women contribute in science, technology, medicine, politics, religion, education and administration. If India had such leaders like M. Gandhi, B.R Ambedkar, Tagore and A.P.J Kalam, I believe, the credit certainly

INTER-RITUAL CATHOLIC WOMEN'S MEET - DELHI NCR

The CBCI Council for Women and the three Dioceses of Delhi-NCR jointly organized an **Inter-Ritual Catholic Women's Meet** on 11th of November, 2017, at Convent of Jesus and Mary School, New Delhi. The program was graced by His Excellency Theodore Mascarenhas, CBCI Secretary General, His Excellency Jacob Mar Barnabas, Bishop of Gurgaon & Chairperson of CBCI Council for Women, His Grace Anil Couto, Archbishop of Delhi, and His Grace Kuriakose Bharanikulangara, Bishop of Faridabad. The meeting was attended by a total number of 130 women representatives of the Archdiocese of Delhi, Diocese of Faridabad and Gurgaon.



Sr. Rushila Rebello, DHM, Sr. Rani, HCM, and Dr. Pearl Drego were the main resource speakers for the program with the topics Domestic Violence, Various

Labour Schemes and Elimination of violence against women respectively. The Secretaries of the Dioceses presented the report of the Diocesan Women Commission Activities during the

meeting. Sr. Sneha Gill was felicitated during the meeting on her appointment as the Member of the Delhi Minority Commission. ❖

NORTH EAST REGIONAL MEETING

The Regional Meeting of the North East Women Commission was held on 16th & 17th December 2017 in Guwahati. The theme of the meet was "And in Christ you have been brought to fullness" Col.2.10. Rev Sr. Talisha Nadukudiyil SD, the National Secretary, Rt. Rev. Victor Lyngdoh, the Regional Chairperson, Rev Fr. Varghese, Director of North East Diocesan Social Service Society, Rev. Sr. Deepika Kizhakkemyalil SND, Regional Secretary along with executive members from 12 Dioceses of the region participated in the meeting.



Sr. Deepika, presented the review of the implementation of Gender policy in the Dioceses bringing awareness to the participants the growth in areas like education, health and Social awareness.

Introducing the 'CBCI Guidelines to deal with Sexual Harassment at Workplace', Sr. Talisha strongly recommended making concrete plans to ensure implementation of these Guidelines in the Dioceses.

Sr. Margret Sekhose MSMHC, the Director of CDI, Guwahati and Social Worker, enlightened the group on the minimum wages fixed by the State Governments in the region and to help



its implementation in order to prevent exploitation of children in the guise of education.

A special event of felicitation was conducted, felicitating Mrs. Gloria Marak

of Tura Diocese, Meghalaya, who won the Best Leader Award of CBCI Council for Women in the region and Ms. Teresa Rothangpuii of Aizawl Diocese, Mizoram, who was a nominee. ❖



GENDER POLICY AWARENESS PROGRAM FOR NOVICES OF SMMI



“RESPECT THE WOMEN; SAVE THE HUMANITY”: A total of 35 Novices from different states like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur and Gujarat had great thought provoking sessions on women empowerment highlighting Gender Policy, animated by Sr. Lilly Francis SMMI, the former Secretary of

CBCI Commission for Women from 1st to 5th January, 2018 at SMMI Provincial House, Bangalore. The attendees were made aware of the real meaning of Gender, which implies power relationship between men and women. It is a practical implementation mechanism rooted and grounded in local realities. Certainly these sessions were to impart a great zeal and enthusiasm to

stand for justice, to raise one’s head with pride for the entire Catholic Church. The participants felt the need to set apart a goal for the future mission to give hope and create a vision for life, considering all children born, in the image and likeness of God, as the symbol of power and strength for whole humanity. ❖

JABALPUR WOMEN COMMISSION MEETING ON 7TH JANUARY 2018



BHOPAL WOMEN COMMISSION



Members of the Mata Maria Samiti of the Archdiocese of Bhopal had its annual gathering Coordinated by Sr. Catherine CHF and Sr. Matilda SJS, on 14th January 2018 at St. Joseph Co-ed School, Bhopal. 500 women from 3 deaneries of the Archdiocese participated. Family of Nazereth: Model of Families was the theme for the year 2017-18. Mr. Paul M. D and Mrs. Julie Thomas enlightened the group on Word Oriented Family Life and



Family and Faith. Most Rev. Leo Cornelio, the Archbishop of Bhopal & Rev. Dr. Fr. Mathew V.C, Vicar General were present for the entire program. Rev. Sr. Navya FCC, M.P Regional Women Commission Secretary and Mrs. Margaret Jacob, one of the Joint Secretaries for M.P Region were honoured at the meeting. ❖

TREATING ANXIETY IN CHILDREN



What does the child who can’t say goodbye to a parent without breaking down have in common with the child who is cripplingly terrified of dogs and the one who gets a bad stomach ache reliably on Monday morning?

Anxieties and worries of all kinds are common in children, necessarily part of healthy development, but also, when they interfere with the child’s functioning, the most common pediatric mental health problems. From separation anxiety to social anxiety to school avoidance to phobias to generalized anxiety disorder, many children’s lives are at some point touched by anxiety that gets out of hand.

“I often tell parents, anxiety and fears are totally a normal and healthy part of growing up,” said Dr. Sabrina Fernandez, an assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of California, San Francisco, who has written about strategies for primary care doctors to use in dealing with anxiety disorders. “I worry that it’s becoming something more when it interferes with the child’s ability to do their two jobs: to learn in school and to make friends.”

Children whose lives are being seriously derailed by their anxieties often get psychotherapy or medication,

or both. And a meta-analysis published in November in JAMA looked at the two best-studied treatments for anxiety disorders, cognitive behavioural therapy and psychotropic medication. The technique of a meta-analysis allows scientists to pull in a whole range of different studies, weight the results according to the size and rigor of the research, and then consider the wider array of data gleaned from multiple investigations.

“We included panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, specific phobias, generalized anxiety disorder and

Dr. Stephen P.H. Whiteside, the director of the Pediatric Anxiety Disorders Clinic at the Mayo Clinic, who was one of the authors of the meta analysis, said, “if your child has difficulties with anxiety, first of all, it’s treatable. There are a variety of interventions that can be helpful.”

separation anxiety,” said the lead author, Zhen Wang, an associate professor of health services research at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science (they did not include children with post-traumatic stress disorder or obsessive-compulsive disorder). The study looked at the effectiveness of treatments in reducing the symptoms of anxiety, and at ending the anxiety disorder state. And they also looked at any reports of adverse events associated with the treatments, from sleep disturbances to suicide.

The authors examined 115 different studies, for a total of 7,719 patients, and concluded that certain kinds of antidepressant medications — especially the selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, or S.S.R.I.s — were effective in reducing anxiety symptoms in children; the mean age of the children in the study was 9.2 years, with a range of 5 to 16.

There were only a few studies that directly compared them, but they suggest that cognitive behavioural therapy may be even more effective at reducing symptoms and at resolving the anxiety disorders, and that the combination of medication and C.B.T. may be better than either was alone. The drugs were associated with a variety of



adverse events, though they did not find the association with suicide attempts that has led to a black box warning on S.S.R.I.s. Still, they have not ruled out those dangers: "The difference may be due to underreporting and monitoring of suicide attempts in clinical trials," Dr. Wang said.

Dr. Stephen P.H. Whiteside, the director of the Pediatric Anxiety Disorders Clinic at the Mayo Clinic, who was one of the authors of the meta analysis, said, "if your child has difficulties with anxiety, first of all, it's treatable. There are a variety of interventions that can be helpful."

So which of those children — the parent-clinger, the dog-fearer, the school-avoider — needs psychotherapy or psychopharmacology? "Anxiety happens in kids," said Dr. Christopher K. Varley, a professor in the department of psychiatry at the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle. "It does not always need treatment." And it does not always look exactly like what adults think of as anxiety, he said. Kids can have physical symptoms, or become disruptive; headaches and stomachaches and tantrums can all mean that a child is anxious.

"The important questions to me are, is this a problem, is it getting in the way of functioning, is it creating stress for the child and the family, is it causing pain and suffering?" he said. "A big thing for families is that sometimes anxiety can lead to avoidance behaviour in social settings and in school," Dr. Fernandez

said. But staying away from school is only going to make the problem worse, she said. "As a parent, all you want to do is make your child feel safe and feel comfortable, and if they're saying, I only feel safe and comfortable home with my door shut, that can only exacerbate the problem."

The most helpful form of therapy, Dr. Whiteside said, according to the evidence, is exposure-based cognitive behavioural therapy, which involves helping kids face their fears in a supportive environment. "If they're afraid of dogs, they have to practice petting dogs; if they're afraid of talking to people, practice talking to people." That seems to be of greater value for children with these problems than, for example, therapies based on changing thought patterns, or distractions, or even therapy aimed at deeper insight into the fears.

The message of exposure therapy, Dr. Whiteside said, is that the situations the child is avoiding are not as dangerous as the child's anxiety would suggest, and that the child can cope with the anxiety. "It's an uncomfortable feeling that you can handle," he said, and the more the child handles it, the more proficient the child will become. But this takes skill and experience on the therapist's part, and an investment of time and resources by the family. "We found that C.B.T. reports the most consistent outcomes compared to placebo, but it's time-consuming and sometimes in rural areas it's not available," Dr. Wang said.

The question of medication may arise for children with moderate to severe anxiety, and perhaps ideally for a child who is already getting psychotherapy. But of course, not everyone has access to the experts, or to the recommended forms of therapy. Psychotropic medications are often prescribed by primary care doctors, pediatricians or family physicians, doing their best to help their patients, sometimes getting guidance from a psychiatrist by phone.

"Even though it's a common problem and there are treatments that work, there are still profound problems in the United States with access to psychotherapists who are versed in psychotherapy techniques that have been demonstrated to help," Dr. Varley said. "And there clearly is a paucity of child psychiatrists." In an editorial accompanying the recent meta-analysis, researchers hailed the large numbers of children included, but warned that many children don't respond fully to treatment, and that children who suffer from one form of anxiety disorder are often at high risk to develop another.

"The good news is I've had lots of patients who've had much better experiences and were able to deal with those ups and downs of life, who went to therapy and learned tools to deal, or needed a little help with medication," said Dr. Fernandez ❖

(Courtesy – Perri Klass, M.D., The New York Times)

बिहार की आशा खेमका, जिसे अंग्रेजी न आई वो ब्रिटेन में प्रिंसिपल कहलाई



एक लड़की, जिसे अंग्रेजी नहीं आती थी आज वह ब्रिटेन की सबसे मशहूर शिक्षाविदों में शामिल हैं। बिहार के एक छोटे से शहर सीतामढ़ी की आशा खेमका को अपने जीवन के 25 वर्षों तक अंग्रेजी का ज्ञान तक नहीं था, लेकिन आज उन्होंने आज हजारों अंग्रेज छात्रों की जिंदगियों को बदल दिया। वर्तमान में आशा खेमका ब्रिटेन के प्रख्यात कॉलेज वेस्ट नाटिंघमशायर कॉलेज की मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी (सी ई ओ) और प्रिंसिपल हैं। उन्हें 'एशियन बिजनेस वूमन ऑफ द ईयर' के सम्मान से नवाजा गया है।

आशा खेमका ने यह बात साबित की है कि अगर मन में चाह है तो कोई भी बाधा मनुष्य को रोक नहीं सकती है। वह कहती हैं, 'शिक्षा को लेकर अपने जुनून को मैं शब्दों में बयां नहीं कर सकती और यह जुनून हर दिन बढ़ता जा रहा है। मैं इस शानदार क्षेत्र का हिस्सा बन कर बहुत गौरवान्वित महसूस करती हूँ।'

HOW TO LISTEN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT— EVEN AT THE SPA

Here's a true story for a marriage minister to contemplate. What would you say if this happened to you?

It was my good fortune to win a "deluxe" pedi/manicure at a local spa in my area. When I arrived, a woman met me at the door. She was young, inviting and ready to get started. As we sat on either sides of the narrow table, she began asking me questions. I gave the basics before asking her about herself. The story of her life flowed out of her with ease.



She was single, but had been living with a man for several years. He had already been married and was a father of a young child who stayed with them every other weekend. She described her partner as an empathetic, hard working man and talked about his gentle nature and how it radiated when he was with his child. She went on to recall how they had shared interests and ideas about life.

Changing course, I asked her about the salon business. Again, she was happy to chat away about her training and her plans to co-own or open her own place in the future. By the time my nails were done, she had convinced me that she had given considerable thought to her career path.

We moved to the foot bath station for the pedi portion of the experience. When I was settled in, she asked me about my work. I shared a bit about the work of a director for a Catholic diocese interested in marriage and family life.

She picked up on the family reference and enthusiastically described her upbringing; the great joy of being part of a family; the love shared between her Mom and Dad, the fun she had with her siblings.

Reflecting, she shared her sadness that her partner's child was shuffled back and forth between two homes where discipline wasn't consistent. This concerned her and she stated that a nuclear family was what she wanted for her kids.

I felt a prompt to ask her why she wasn't married to the man she lived with. Was she single because her man had been so wounded by his first marriage that he didn't want to go round for a second try?

Was she single because marriage was not valued? Did it have something to do with wanting a spouse who didn't have kids already?

It took several minutes to formulate the right question about marriage in my mind. Finally, I asked, "It sounds like you come from a great family and that your parents gave you a wonderful witness of marriage. I'm wondering, why aren't you married?". "I haven't accomplished my life goals yet," she said in a matter of fact tone. "He wants to get married but I'm afraid that if I marry, I won't get to do what I want to do. Plus, I don't know what the future holds."

She worked away on my toes, totally oblivious to how outlandish that sounded to me. She had told me that she loved this guy and had painted him as a really good man and father. She enjoyed being with him. She wanted kids and desired to raise them in a traditional home. She also wanted a career. Yet, she wasn't going to commit to anything because she couldn't gaze into a crystal ball and see the future.

Would you have the fortitude to speak up? Do you have the confidence to respond in a way that would help her rethink her current relationship? Would you know how to guide her towards God's beautiful plan for marriage? There are multitudes of ways that one could respond to this woman. Let me provide a few possible approaches.

Affirm her basic desires—her heart is leading her in the right direction. This woman's heart has been stirred by the

beauty of God's plan for husband and wife. It is something she wants affirmed.

Help her see that marriage is not about getting what you want. It is about receiving what God wants to give the couple.

Introduce marriage as a mystery from God rather than a black and white reality. It is meant to unfold little by little to the amazement of the spouses. Remind her that a happy marriage is not meant to be perfect; it is designed to perfect the spouses.

With a discussion about James Patterson mysteries! This young woman devours them because she loves the twists and turns, the unknown, and the element of surprise.

With God's help, it was relatively easy to ask the question, "Would you ever read a mystery if you already knew the ending?" to which she answered, "of course not." Next question, "So help me understand. You don't want to know the end of a written mystery but you want to know the end of your life's story?"

Her jaw literally dropped open when the light bulb in her brain ignited. The rest of the spa experience was bathed in genuine conversation about the mystery of God and how we need him in all of our relationships.

Marriage is not black and white; it is a mystery from God that unfolds slowly and wondrously. ❖

(Courtesy – Alice Heinzren @ CatholicMatch Institute)





**CBCI COUNCIL FOR WOMEN
PAYS HOMAGE TO MOST
REV. GEEVARGHESE MAR
DIVANNASIOS, FORMER
REGIONAL CHAIRPERSON
OF KARNATAKA WOMEN
COMMISSION.**



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