

KARDS

GLOBAL

A CATHOLIC PATH TO WHOLENESS

FR JERRY VM SDB

ALSO ↓

**Marriage: A Sacred
Covenant of Love
and Surrender**

■ SANGEETHA JOSEPH

**My Steubenville
Dream**

■ ROSA ROSE
PALLAN





MARY, MY MOTHER



O Immaculate Mary Assumed into heaven, let our souls fly after you. Let them fly along your radiant path, transported by a hope that the world does not contain eternal beatitude. Comfort us from heaven, O merciful Mother, and guide us along your ways of purity and hope till the day of that blessed meeting with you and with your divine Son our Saviour, Jesus. Amen!

EDITOR'S ROOM

DR CHACKOCHAN J NJAVALLIL

X @readkairos



A PERSON WHO IS HEALED AND TRANSFORMED BY CHRIST BECOMES A POWERFUL WITNESS IN TODAY'S WORLD. MORE THAN WORDS, IT IS THE EXAMPLE OF A PEACEFUL AND JOY-FILLED LIFE THAT TOUCHES OTHERS.

Allow God to Heal You Every Day

More than forty years ago, I attended a Charismatic retreat for the first time. Nothing dramatic happened, but by the end of the retreat, I felt a deep peace and joy inside me – something I had never experienced before. Only later did I understand that this joy was the result of healing that had taken place within me.

In the follow-up sessions after the retreat, the speakers often spoke about ongoing repentance and inner healing. At that time, I didn't think much of it. I wrongly believed that it didn't apply to me.

I stayed active in youth ministry, taking on various leadership roles over the years. But somewhere along the way, I didn't realise that I was getting wounded, hurt, and even bitter. There were times when I struggled to forgive certain people or accept what had happened. Looking back now, I understand that if I had paid more attention to inner healing and continued repentance, I could have been more effective and joyful in my ministry.

In life, in our work, and especially in ministry, we face many situations where we are insulted, misunderstood, or even humiliated – sometimes for valid reasons, but often for no fault of our own. The only way to survive such moments with peace is by receiving the grace of healing.

The truth is, every person in this world is in need of healing – deep, spiritual healing. Many of us carry stress, pain, anger, and burdens from our past. And we often continue living with that pain, not knowing that healing is available through Christ. We may not even realise how badly we are affected until something breaks inside us.

Healing is the path to wholeness. It brings back peace, clarity, and strength. We know that the sacraments – especially the Eucharist and Confession – are powerful sources of healing. But often we take them for granted and don't make use of them as we should.

A person who is healed and transformed by Christ becomes a powerful witness in today's world. More than words, it is the example of a peaceful and joy-filled life that touches others.

I invite and encourage each of you to open your heart to the healing grace of Jesus. Do not wait until wounds grow deep and painful. Allow God to heal you every day. Let us become witnesses of His healing love through our lives.

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By his wounds we are healed
Isaiah 53:5

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ASK



FR. BITAJU

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➤ Why do Catholics call priests 'Father'?

The title 'Father' as applied to priests in the Catholic Church has both scriptural and theological foundations. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) provides insights into the nature of priesthood and the role of priests within the Church, which helps to understand the appropriateness of this title.

Scriptural Basis: The use of the term 'Father' for priests is rooted in Scripture. In the New Testament, St Paul refers to himself as a spiritual father to the communities he serves. For example, in 1 Corinthians 4:15, he writes, *For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.* This indicates a spiritual relationship where the priest acts as a guide and nurturer of faith.

Role of the Priest: The role of the priest is to act in the person of Christ (*in persona Christi*) and to serve the community as a shepherd. *The Catechism* explains that 'the priest is a mediator of grace' (CCC 1548). By calling priests 'Father,' the faithful acknowledge their role in guiding, teaching and caring for the spiritual well-being of the community. This title reflects the paternal care that priests are called to provide, mirroring the love and guidance of God the Father.

Theological Understanding of Fatherhood: In CCC 239, the *Catechism* states, 'God is the Father, the source of all fatherhood.' The title 'Father' for priests is an extension

of the understanding of God as the ultimate Father. Just as God the Father provides for and nurtures His children, priests are called to reflect that divine fatherhood in their pastoral ministry.

Tradition and Community: The use of 'Father' is also a part of the Church's tradition. It fosters a sense of community and respect within the Church. The title reinforces the relational aspect of the priesthood, emphasising the bond between the priest and the faithful. This relationship is meant to be one of love, guidance, and mutual support in the journey of faith.

Clarification of Misunderstandings: While some may raise concerns about the use of the title 'Father' in light of Jesus' teaching in Matthew 23:9, where He says, *Call no man your father on the earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven,* the Church understands this teaching in context. *The Catechism* clarifies that Jesus uses this language to caution against a false sense of authority or pride, not to prohibit the respectful use of familiar titles within the community of faith (CCC 2030).

In summary, Catholics call priests 'Father' as a recognition of their spiritual fatherhood, which is grounded in Scripture, the role of priest as a mediator of grace, and the theological understanding of fatherhood as it relates to God. This title reflects the pastoral care and guidance that priests provide to their communities.



YOUCAT 285

WHAT IS ETERNAL HAPPINESS?

Eternal happiness is seeing God and being taken up into God's happiness. [CCC 1720-1724, 1729]

In God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit there is unending life, joy, and communion. To be taken up into it will be an incomprehensible, infinite happiness for us men. This happiness is the pure gift of God's grace, for we men can neither bring it about ourselves nor comprehend it in its magnitude. God would like us to decide in favour of our happiness; we should choose God freely, love Him above all things, do good and avoid evil insofar as we are able.



Popetalk

DR. KOCHURANI JOSEPH



Prayer Intentions **August**

For Mutual Coexistence

Let us pray that societies, where coexistence seems more difficult, might not succumb to the temptation of confrontation for ethnic, political, religious, or ideological reasons.

The unity of the Church is nourished by forgiveness and mutual trust. If Jesus trusts us, then we too can trust one another, in His name. Throughout the world, there are Christians whom the Gospel makes generous and bold, even at the cost of their lives.

Priestly formation cannot be reduced to the acquisition of concepts but is a journey of familiarity with the Lord that engages the whole person, heart, intelligence, freedom, and transforms into the image of the Good Shepherd. Friendship with Jesus sustains us in times of trial and allows us to renew each day the 'yes' pronounced at the beginning of vocation. Becoming a friend of Christ means being formed in relationships, not just in abilities.

Synodality is a style, an attitude that helps us to be the Church, promoting authentic experiences of participation and communion.

For God, who is eternal life, bodily death is like sleep. The real death is the death of the soul and that is what we should truly fear.

Today, in particular, in a social and cultural context marked by conflict and narcissism, we need to learn to love and do so like Jesus. Embrace the sentiments of Christ, to grow in human maturity, especially affective and relational and to reject all masks and hypocrisy.

Every time we perform an act of faith addressed to Jesus, contact is established with Him, and immediately grace comes out from Him. Grace reaches us in a secret and real way, then slowly transforms life from within.

Jesus established the foundation of the mystery of faith, which we celebrate in the sacrament of the Eucharist. Just as hunger is a sign of our radical needs in this life, so breaking bread is a sign of God's gift of salvation.

Young people are the hope for the future. The well-being of society depends upon their being given the ability to develop their God-given gifts and capabilities. Our youth must be helped, and not hindered, in their journey toward maturity and true responsibility.

JESUS YOUTH



Dr Edward Edezhath, one of the pioneers of Jesus Youth, gives us a glimpse of the growth of the movement.

Mission Focus Defines Jesus Youth

→ I grew up hearing many fascinating stories about our legendary village school headmaster. 'I pity the family where the children are all obedient. Its future is so bleak,' he once told a high school class. The students were stunned by this unconventional observation. One confident kid broke the silence, 'But sir, if we don't obey our elders...' 'No,' he responded, 'Don't just obey, but do what you should do!'

What is the calling and responsibility of a Catholic? Before Vatican II, as someone humorously said, the duty of the ordinary Catholic was to 'pay, pray, and obey.' Then came the Council with a strong call for mission, and recent popes have emphasised this call: every baptised person is urged to be a missionary. The emphasis isn't on just following rules, but on being moved by the Lord's Spirit, who sends us out to fulfil our unique calling. That is precisely the JY focus. And that makes this movement radically different.

This missionary enthusiasm cannot be taught; it is planted and cultivated in a specific context and culture. Too much teaching can even stifle it, as Jeremiah seems to say, *This is the covenant I will make... I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon*

their hearts... No longer shall each man teach his neighbour, saying 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. (31:33, 34) No wonder, with the reception of the Holy Spirit a radical transformation happens. Disciples became 'those who turn the world upside down.' (Acts 17:6)

SEEING EVERYONE AS PRECIOUS AND UNIQUE

Many leaders tend to see others as immature, needing constant instruction and guidance. 'I am so glad that in Jesus Youth you teach youth to pray and grow in faith,' one sister enthusiastically told me. But I thought to myself, 'No, she missed the point.' What we do is help youth discover their unique importance and encourage them to follow their calling with confidence. In our gatherings, the focus is not on teaching but on discovery, celebration, and giving affirmation. And this is what leads to a life filled with enthusiasm and mission.

In a sense, the historic conference, Jesus Youth 85, was the culmination of nearly seven years of reflective learning and a synodal journey by a group of youth and elders. In the First Line group, there was a clear consensus that in modern times, when

young people gather, the culture and approach must differ from those in charismatic retreats and parish youth programmes. There, elders give, asking youth to receive. But young people tend to shy away when there is excessive preaching and lengthy prayer services. In our reflections, we found that the Holy Spirit can work in a radically different way.

In 1982, when we gathered leaders from all our groups, Fr Gino challenged us to embark on a new path: guiding youth toward radical self-discovery not through preaching, but through reflection and mutual conversation. Every person is precious and unique, and all we can do is create spaces where there is a culture of deep acceptance and encouragement, allowing us to realise that God has made each of us special. We also discovered that excessive talking and instruction from so-called experts can gradually undermine this culture, ultimately leading to a loss of focus on the mission.

'REINVENT THE WHEEL' EVERY TIME

Most of us want clear plans in things we do. That is good, but if we repeat the same plan and pattern without reflection, it can become a lifeless ritual. Of course, having a routine



makes it easier to get things done. At home, in school, at work, or in church, we focus on streamlining our activities. This helps us a lot, and we say, 'Don't reinvent the wheel!'

However, one major problem with this approach is that it can suppress a sense of initiative and mission. *New wine must be put into fresh wineskins* (Luke 5:38). Fr Abraham used to say in our group, 'Yesterday's solutions will not solve today's problems.' A missionary is born when a person recognises a challenge, turns to the Lord along with friends to find solutions, and goes out enthusiastically with a new approach. This, Pope Francis called a synodal process. In Jesus Youth, missionary enthusiasm grows not through formal teaching or mission training, but through this synodal search that continually leads to the discovery of new solutions. So, should we reinvent the wheel? Yes, this reinvention is what sparks joy and a sense of mission.

PROGRAMMES THAT FORM JOYFUL MISSIONARIES

In Jesus Youth, a programme might be very brief or long, for a small group or a large gathering, but a mission-stirring experience can happen in any setting. There we may discuss mission, but it is

Every person is precious and unique, and all we can do is create spaces where there is a culture of deep acceptance and encouragement, allowing us to realise that God has made each of us special. We also discovered that excessive talking and instruction from so-called experts can gradually undermine this culture, ultimately leading to a loss of focus on the mission.

not teaching or discussion that forms missionaries. What is that culture in Jesus Youth that promotes mission in people?

Personal attention: In gatherings, people can get lost, but when they are eagerly seen and heard as we gather, they come alive.

Freedom and joy: Freedom and joy are the work of the Holy Spirit, and in a JY setting, when people come alive through smiles, fun, and play, the best foundation for mission is laid.

Shifting focus from teachers and trainers: Speaking of mission, Pope St Paul VI discussed how the modern generation tends to turn away from teachers. One effective way we use is to encourage ordinary people to share their insights, which in turn touches others.

Be like Noah's Ark: A diverse gathering is more loving and formative, maybe because the real world is also that way.

Activity focus: Today's temptation is for big ideas and lofty thoughts, but even a simple activity and doing something together will motivate well.

Emphasis on community and outreach: Today, the world is becoming increasingly individualistic. But God can heal us and use us when we join hands, build community, and go out to be near others.

We need to take Pope Francis' words more seriously. 'I dream of a "missionary option," that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelisation of today's world rather than for her self-preservation.' (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 27) This 'missionary impulse' is surely in the DNA of JY. We should be vigilant not to lose this 'saltiness' and do all we can to maintain our simple Jesus Youth ways, which foster a missionary culture.

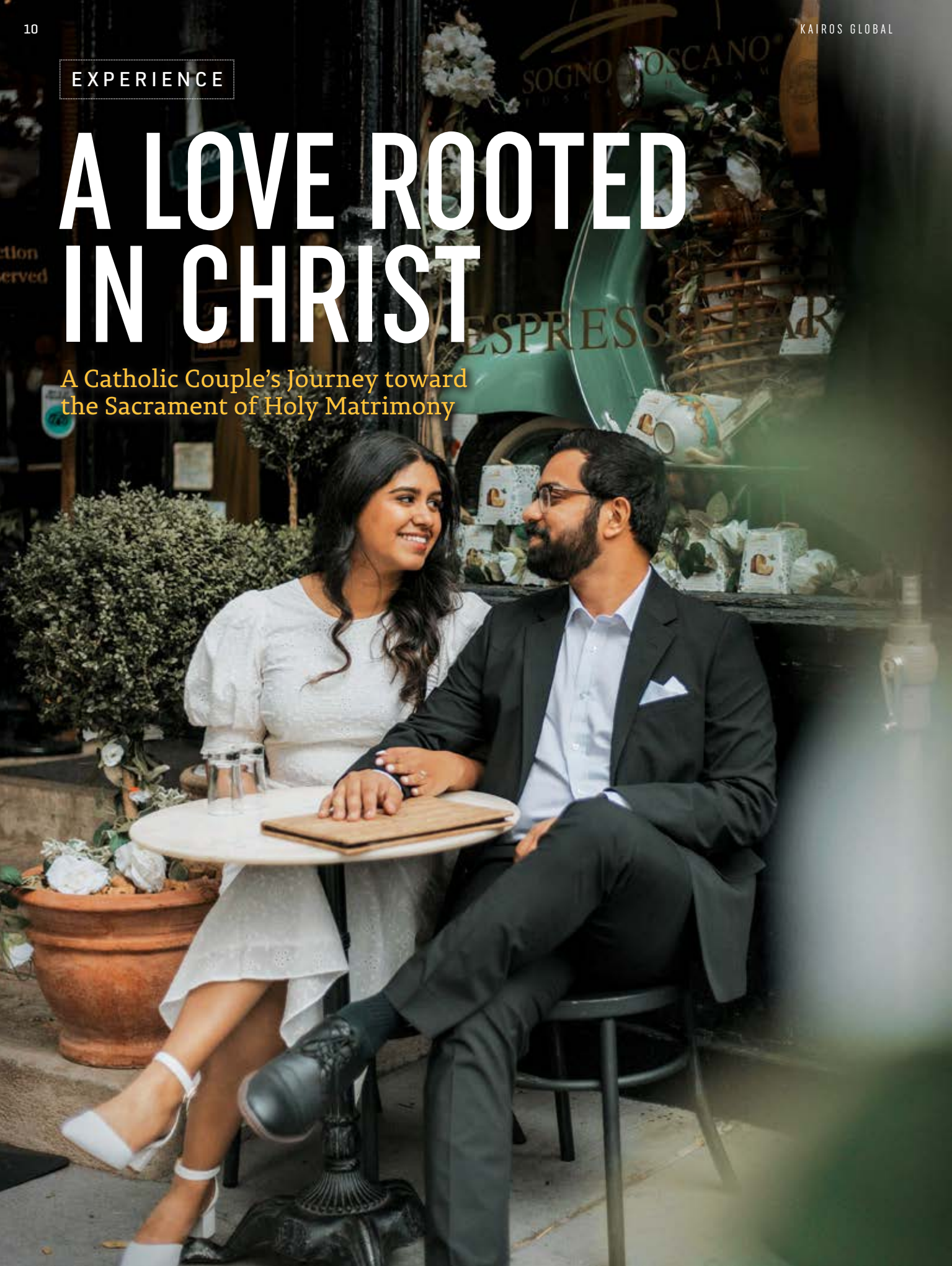
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One of the pioneers of the Jesus Youth movement, an international preacher and author, **Dr Edward Edezhath** is a retired professor from St Albert's College, Ernakulam. He is presently a researcher at Amoris Christi in Florida, USA.

EXPERIENCE

A LOVE ROOTED IN CHRIST

A Catholic Couple's Journey toward
the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony



From youth leaders in their respective parishes to now preparing for marriage, **Keerthy and Alex** talk to Silvy Santhosh about their love for the Eucharist.

We love because he first loved us (1 John 4:19). There's something powerful about a love story that begins at the foot of the altar. This August, our parish family will witness the union of Keerthy and Alex – two faith-filled youth leaders preparing to enter the sacred covenant of marriage as disciples journeying toward Heaven.

I've known Keerthy since she was in high school and have seen her grow into a strong Catholic woman whose life radiates Christ. Whether leading the choir, teaching Sunday school, or arranging concerts of 'little angels singing' each Christmas, she's helped shape the faith of many, including my children. Her strength and quiet leadership reflect the deep faith of her family. Her prayerful mother and devoted father have built a home that mirrors the Holy Family – a true domestic church.

Recently, I heard her singing during our Good Friday service and it was the best experience I ever had! Her voice is a blessing to our parish and the eparchy.

Keerthy is getting ready for married life with Alex, a passionate servant-leader who shares her devotion to the Eucharist and youth ministry. Together, they are lights to their generation. As St John Paul II said, 'The future of the world and of the Church passes through the family.'

As they begin their vocation together, I invited them to share their journey – one of faith, friendship, and Christ-centred love – with the hope that it will inspire other young Catholics discerning the same path.

Dear Keerthy and Alex, please tell us about your background/family/parish/profession.

Keerthy: My name is Keerthy Benny

and I am 26 years-old, the youngest of three daughters. I was born in India and lived in Saudi Arabia until I was 8, then moved to the US where I grew up in Dallas. My parish is St Alphonsa Syro-Malabar Catholic Church in Coppell, Texas, where I'm involved in ministry and have made many lifelong friends. I am an accountant by profession.

Alex: I am Alexander Padayatil, 28 years-old and from the great city of Philadelphia! I am a vaccine engineer working at a pharmaceutical company. My parish is the St Thomas Syro-Malabar Catholic Forane Church in Philadelphia. I live with my parents and my younger sister, Ashley.

What motivates you to lead a Eucharistic-centred life?

Alex: I have always been struck by the Second Vatican Council's teaching that the Mass is the 'source and summit of the Christian life'. There is quite literally nothing better you can do with your day than to attend Mass, and that motivates me to attend either every day or whenever possible. As the 'Manna that comes down from heaven', I know that the Eucharist centres me, provides me with spiritual nourishment, and is one of the tenets of our Catholic faith!

Can you please explain few of the roles you've played in your own parish and diocese in bringing others to the Eucharistic Jesus?

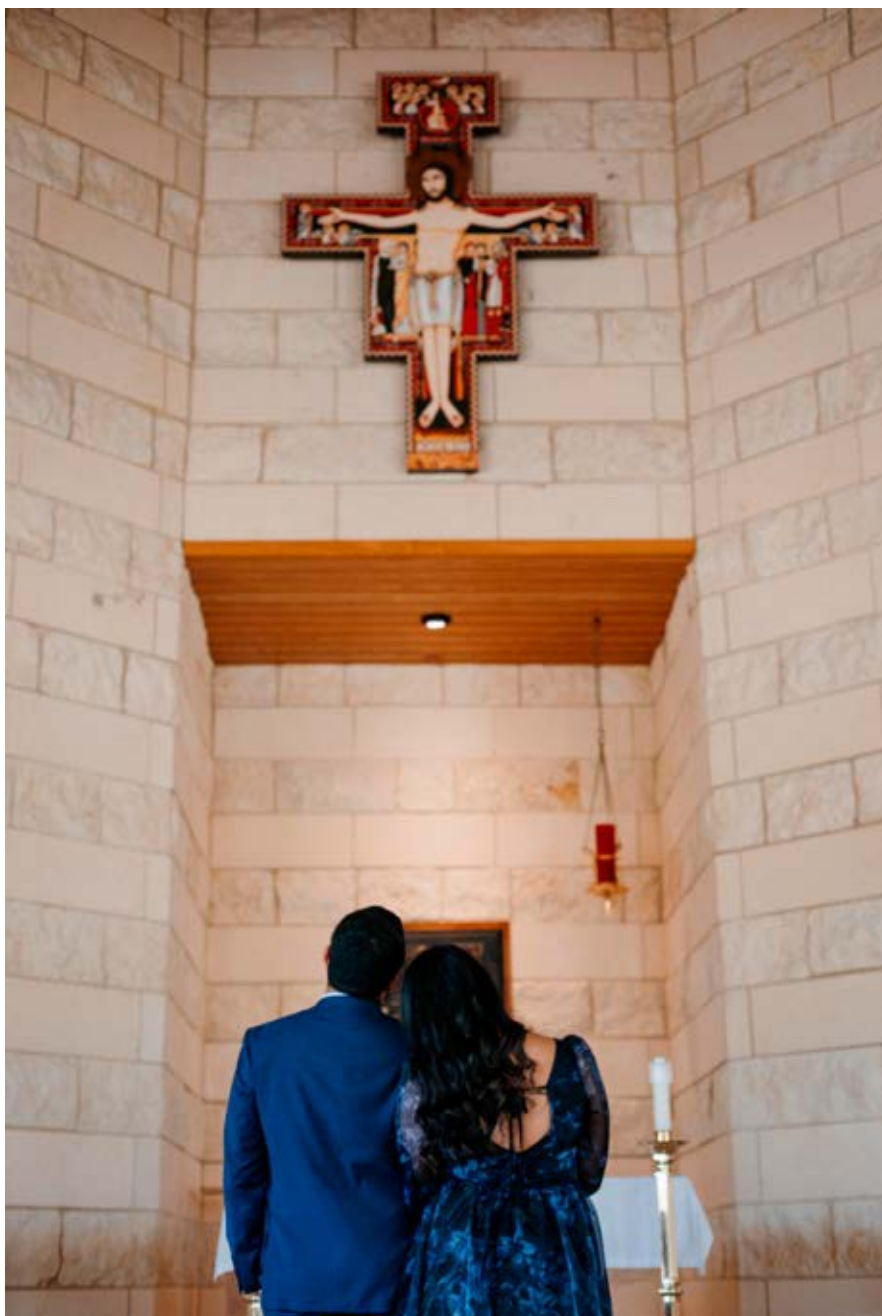
Keerthy: In my parish, I've had the privilege of being involved in various ministries. The choir was where I first found my place in the church ever since my 6th grade. There came a moment once I reached high school when I truly realised

the significance of the choir in the *Qurbana*. It was a shift in perspective for me – it's not just about singing, it's about helping the congregation experience and participate in the liturgy more deeply; I saw it as a way to encourage others to experience the peace and presence of Christ in the Eucharist whether it be through Mass or adoration. As I grew older and transitioned into a mentor role for the choir, I've always made it a point to emphasise the importance of the sacraments, especially Holy Mass. I have also had the honour of leading Eucharistic adoration in my time serving in the parish and for DYA (Diocesan Youth Apostolate) conferences.

Alex: In our Philadelphia parish, we have been doing youth-led adoration after the Friday evening Mass as an opportunity for young people to come together, and have special time set aside for them in adoration and prayer. Additionally, I have been on the DYA National Team for almost 4 years now, and one of the National Team's initiatives during the Eucharistic Revival has been hosting webinars online for anyone to attend, where people share their personal stories of encounter with the Eucharistic Lord.

Who was the influence in leading a Eucharistic-centred life?

Keerthy: I'm sure many can relate when I say my mother has been my greatest influence. I grew up watching her attend daily Mass, never missing family prayer regardless of how tired she was, and consistently exemplifying what it truly means to live as a Catholic woman. Her deep faith and devotion has shown



When you place the Eucharist at the heart of your relationship, you're not just sharing a bond with each other, but with the source of all love and grace. Let the Eucharistic Jesus be the foundation that strengthens and guides your relationship, helping you grow in patience, understanding, and selflessness.

me the importance of putting Christ at the centre of everything, and through her example, I've learned to approach the Eucharist with love and gratitude in good times and bad.

Alex: I was very involved in my university's Newman Catholic Center. So for me, the first time I truly felt a sense of peace and warmth in attending adoration was at Newman Center's annual fall retreat. Being with so many of my close friends, all in silence before the Lord, was such a powerful life changing moment for me. As a child, I always loathed sitting in adoration and felt that it was a waste of time. But as I matured, I've come to appreciate the silence and the opportunity adoration is to allow God to speak to me, instead of me always yapping to Him.

How did you both meet?

Keerthy & Alex: We met on the Diocesan Youth Apostolate (DYA) National Team, where we worked together to serve the youth of our diocese. Being on the team meant we travelled to different conferences and events, spending a lot of time together both virtually and in person. During those two years, we made so many lifelong friends, but somewhere along the way, we discerned that the two of us were meant to be more than just teammates.

What is the role of a Eucharistic life in Catholic dating? How did you motivate each other to lead a Eucharistic-centred life?

Keerthy & Alex: Our relationship has been long-distance the entire time we've been together. One of the hardest parts of being so far from each other is not being able to enjoy the simple things in life, such as getting coffee together, driving around together, but especially being unable to attend Mass together. Whenever we visit one another, we make an intentional effort to attend Mass each day, and if the timing doesn't work for that, to visit a perpetual adoration chapel together. This intentional time of praying together has certainly been one of the foundational values of our relationship and has blessed us to where we are today, only a couple months away from our wedding!

Even when we are not physically in the same place, we strive to hold each other accountable to attend daily Mass, or practice a more intentional prayer life. We also try to ground each other in case we get carried away by the demands of our career or even ministry, ensuring we are re-centring ourselves on what is most important – Christ in the Eucharist.

About your proposal and upcoming wedding, how do you see the hands of Jesus at each step?

Alex: I knew for both of us that our Catholic faith was the foundation of our relationship and that we both would want our proposal to somehow involve our faith. So it was pretty easy to (secretly) plan to propose to Keerthy at her local Latin-rite church's chapel, where we have prayed together before! She thought she was coming to the church to sing for a wedding, but as she walked toward the doors, I greeted her and proposed. It was everything we had ever dreamed of – an intimate proposal, surrounded by faith and love, perfectly reflecting the life we hope to build together with Christ at the centre.

Keerthy & Alex: In terms of wedding planning, it is so important to allow Christ to guide us. It can be stressful and easily overwhelming, and it does at times create conflict between us. But by allowing Jesus to be at the centre of our preparation, we can very clearly see His presence and guidance at every step of the way. We want to ensure that we are also planning our *marriage* and the start of a new journey for our relationship. We decided to fast in our own ways (no carbonated drinks for Alex and no sweets for Keerthy) from the start of this year, until our wedding in August as a form of prayer and penance as we prepare to enter into the sacrament of marriage and to help us focus on our commitment to each other and to God.

What is your message to young people about keeping the Eucharist at the centre of a Catholic relationship?

Keerthy & Alex: Remember that a relationship centred around Christ is one rooted in love, trust, and purpose. It was a deal breaker for both of us that whoever we pursued in a relationship would

be Catholic and strive to uphold their Catholic faith and values.

Be intentional about keeping Jesus at the centre of your relationship by making time for Him! Through daily prayer, attending Mass together, or spending moments in Eucharistic adoration, the peace and fulfilment you feel in a relationship centred on Him is one that is worth waiting for. When you place the Eucharist at the heart of your relationship, you're not just sharing a bond with each other, but with the source of all love and grace. Let the Eucharistic Jesus be the foundation that strengthens and guides your relationship, helping you grow in patience, understanding, and



selflessness. Like our own relationship, it takes commitment on both sides for our relationship with God to work. We know Jesus is fully committed to us and will never leave our side, so it's up to us to give Him that same commitment.

Anything else do you want to add?

Keerthy & Alex: To those who may be struggling to find a partner who shares their devotion to the Eucharistic Jesus, remember that your relationship with Christ is the most important one you will ever have. God has a plan for you, and while it may feel challenging at times, trust that He is guiding you toward the right person in His perfect timing. In the meantime, focus on deepening your own faith and relationship with Jesus. The more you draw close to Him, the

more you will reflect His love and grace, and that in itself will attract the right partner – someone who shares your love for the Eucharist and your desire to build a Christ-centred relationship. Stay patient, stay faithful, and know that God is preparing both you and your future spouse for the beautiful journey ahead.

Conclusion: A Love That Leads to the Altar – and to Heaven

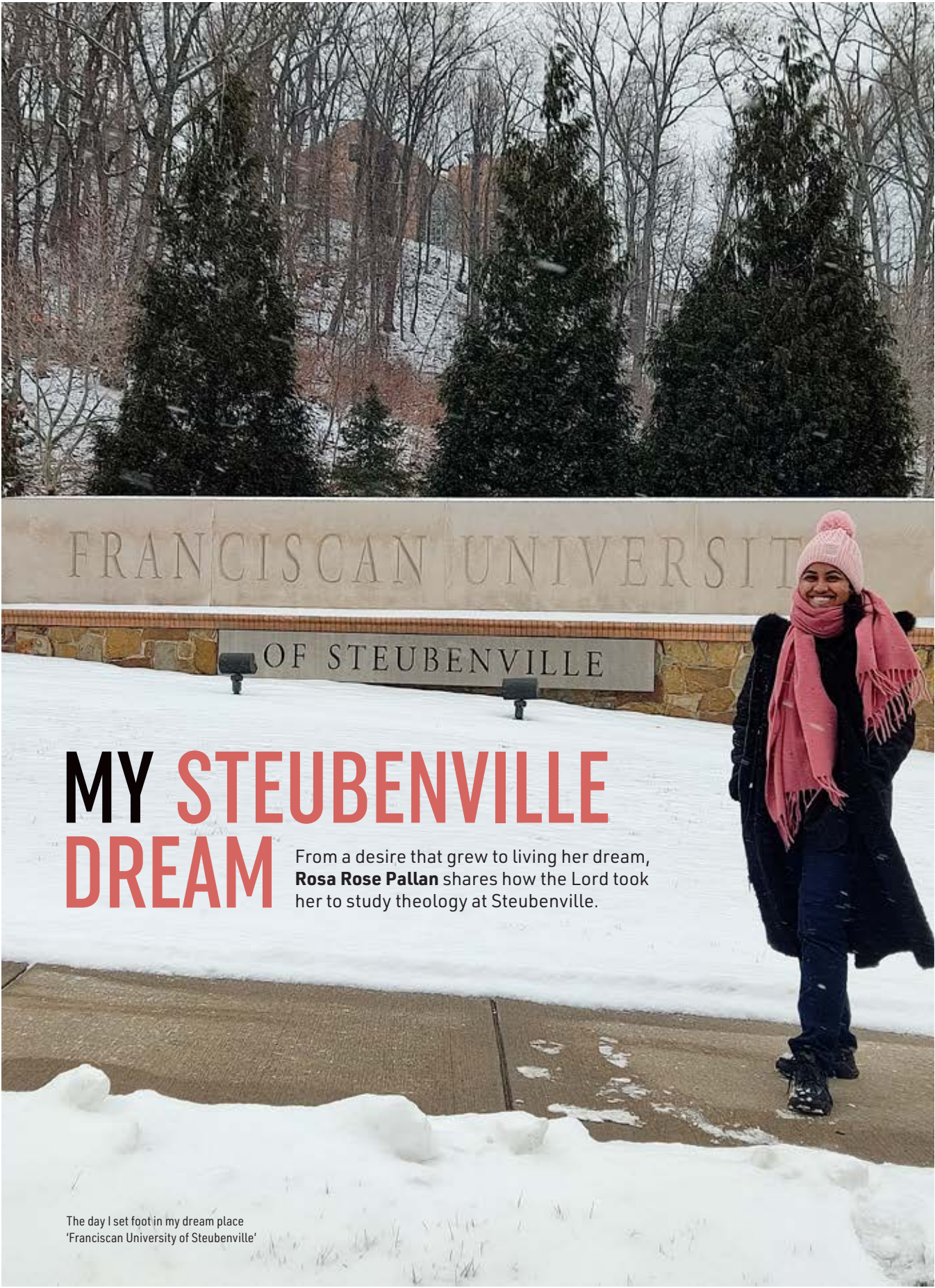
Keerthy and Alex's story is more than a wedding announcement, it's a testimony of two souls walking together toward holiness. In a world that often confuses love with emotion, their relationship stands as a witness to a love rooted in Christ, nourished by the Eucharist, and sustained by prayer.

Their journey reminds us that the greatest love stories are written not just in romance, but in sacrifice, virtue, and grace. For any young Catholic wondering if a Christ-centred relationship is possible – yes, it is. Keerthy and Alex show us that when Jesus is at the centre, everything else falls into place in God's perfect time.

So to every young heart: don't settle for less than a love that brings you closer to the Eucharist. Pray together. Serve together. Go to adoration. Let your relationship begin at the feet of Jesus – because a love built on the Eucharist leads not only to the altar, but all the way to Heaven.

Keerthy and Alex will be getting married on 9th August 2025 at the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church, Philadelphia. Please remember them in prayer. May their marriage be a living tabernacle of Christ's love, and may their witness inspire many to seek the kind of love that lasts forever – the love that begins in Jesus. ■■

Silvy Santhosh is married to Santhosh Kurian and a mom of three, Sophia, Sonia and Solomon. She is a parish member of St Alphonsa Syro-Malabar Catholic Church in Coppell, Texas, where she prepares children and adults for their First Holy Communion and Confirmation. She works as a Paediatric Nurse Practitioner, sharing the love of Christ with children and their families through healing ministry.

A woman with dark hair, wearing a pink knit beanie, a pink scarf, a dark coat, and dark pants, stands on a snow-covered path. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. Behind her is a large stone wall with the words "FRANCISCAN UNIVERSITY" and "OF STEUBENVILLE" carved into it. The background shows a snowy hillside with bare trees and evergreens.

MY STEUBENVILLE DREAM

From a desire that grew to living her dream, **Rosa Rose Pallan** shares how the Lord took her to study theology at Steubenville.

The day I set foot in my dream place
'Franciscan University of Steubenville'

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God. And that is what we are (1 John 3:1).

A Father who lavishes His love for me, for my dreams and desires that He gave me.

Studying theology came to me halfway through during my undergrad and I was just drawn towards diving deeper into my faith. It initially started with wanting to study *Theology of the Body* because of a study group that I was part of in JY Delhi, and which was one of the ways that I got introduced to this amazing place called Franciscan University of Steubenville! It was through the Steubenville Conference YouTube videos featuring speakers like Jason Evert, Jacky and Bobby, and others, whose talks were related to topics we were studying, that I became aware of the university. I remember the group of friends being super excited about Steubenville.

I had also been reading Scott Hahn's *Rome Sweet Home* during those years, and I would keep going back to it, finding myself challenged on how much I knew my Catholic faith and scriptures. Discovering that Scott Hahn was a professor in Steubenville and getting to know how amazingly Catholic the university was in building students as missionary disciples, forming them in a faith-based community led from an encounter experience, I knew I wanted to be there and so my dream for theology found a place in Steubenville.

But doubt started attacking the dream, with thoughts like, 'Do I even dare to dream of Steubenville?' As a lay woman would I be able to study theology, even understand it, because in India, theology was mostly pursued by priests and religious as part of their formation. And that is why I wanted to study in Franciscan – for its lay people environment. To have young people like me studying theology together, and somehow to take this back to India, an opening for lay people to explore something so beautiful as theology where 'faith seeks understanding.'

As I battled doubts and fear of whether I was good enough, my parents were pillars of support and encouragement, reminding me of my capability with their



Steubenville conference lead training for summer job

constant help. It was the prayers and support of my family and some friends that kept me going. Prayer made me realise that it was not to change God's mind to make this happen but to change me – to help me grow in my trust in Him, His plans for me.

My initial plan was to go forward with Steubenville only if I got a full scholarship, and so I started the scholarship process. That took a while. They finally got back with the news that the scholarship I'd received was 50%, which itself was a miracle as I got to know later that it was very uncommon to be granted a scholarship for a master's programme.

Though I had wanted to start on-campus classes in the August 2024 semester, the scholarship delay resulted in my attending online classes, unwillingly, for a semester. There were also two background courses I had to do before starting my masters' core courses, which pushed my plan for on-campus classes to January 2025.

The online classes turned out to be a boon, giving me a clearer picture on theology. It became fodder for great discussions at home with my bringing new insights from my classes to our family meals.

My preparations to go by January 2025 were happening simultaneously. Even with 50% scholarship, the rest of the expenses loomed large. But I was convinced that if this was what the Lord wanted, He would make a way where there seemed none.

My next hurdle was to show a large sum of money in the bank account, something that seemed quite impossible for me as my parents have been full-time missionaries with the Santvana Community of Disciples, a missionary movement canonically recognised in the Archdiocese of Delhi, for the past 24 years. As a family, we have embraced a way of life rooted in radical trust in God's providence. In line with our family's conviction, we do not keep any savings for the future nor incur debt, choosing instead to live in the freedom of daily dependence on God. And truly, God has been faithful all these years – providing for the mission, our family needs, our studies be it the college fees, and every unexpected expense – as we continue to seek first His Kingdom, trusting that everything else will be given to us as well.

And so miracles and unexpected people offered to help in various ways, arranging the funds needed to show in the bank. This was almost November '24, I



everything, going out of their way to help me, just like my own family, which makes me so grateful to be part of this worldwide family of Jesus Youth.

Franciscan University of Steubenville has far exceeded my expectations. Here I encountered a community of young people alive and beating, a place where the Holy Spirit is fully present, where the liturgy comes alive, where faith is nurtured, where Jesus is present all across the campus with 24x7 perpetual adoration going on, with students and professors, friars and sisters, staff and faculty – all together living the synodal communion, participation and mission being one in heart and mind.

Just a few of the beautiful things I've experienced so far are the amazing gatherings at the professors' homes that they have, – inviting students over to bond with them; the Easter liturgy – the whole triduum being just such a profound experience of being a Catholic; Kimberly Hahn's eight-week long Bible study; the eight-week long Life in the Spirit Seminar, and many more. The classes have been amazing as well, studying under legends, just experiencing the faith in such a beautifully meaningful way. The classes are both intellectually stimulating and spirituality enriching, it is a journey slowly unfolding with the Lord showing me what He's kept in store.

Just as all good things come from the Lord, so did this desire to study theology stem in my heart and in His good time, He did and continues to make all things work out for good. I am convinced of the fact that this calling that God has given me is for a greater purpose and for His greater glory. My vision is to take back what I get from here and make an opening for the young people in India so that they get to know God, to experience faith and to love and be loved within a community of believers.

I'm immensely blessed and grateful to the One who makes all things beautiful in His time. ■■



Clockwise from top: Fellowships with friends, finding like-minded friends in the faith journey; With Kimberly Hahn after the 8 week long Bible study on 'The life of Christ through the eyes of Mary'; With Sr Joan Paul, a TOR sister from the university out for sledding (Joyful witness of faith and fun combined vocations)

had to be there for my semester beginning in January – and I hadn't even applied for my visa.

December was when things speeded up – falling in place even faster than I realised. I applied for an urgent visa and got it on the 24th December as my Christmas gift.

The help and support I received during that time – with the stress of not knowing how things worked, the documentation, visa application, financial aspect – it was like God had sent angels to me. I remember with deep gratitude two of



them, who came at a time when I was at a low phase, debating whether all the struggle, the wait and the uncertainties were worth it all when I could have studied theology in India without any hassle. Encountering them both at those specific times made me realise how pursuing Steubenville was their own unfinished dream. I felt so blessed to be the one to carry those and more such dreams, along with mine, from India to Steubenville.

Reaching Steubenville was nothing short of a miracle, a testimony to how God worked when I did my part and trusted Him for what I couldn't. The JY families here in the US welcomed me with open hearts and homes, being such a great support for me from the moment I landed to taking me around, dropping me to my university and being there for

Rosa Rose Pallan is pursuing her MA in Theology and Christian Ministry from Franciscan University of Steubenville, US. Hailing from India, and growing up as part of a missionary family in the Santvana Community, she is passionate about spreading the love of Jesus.

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IN FOCUS

A Catholic Path to Wholeness

The Healing of Body,
Soul, and Mind



Fr Jerry VM SDB writes of the 'profound pathways to spiritual and emotional healing' that the Church offers'.

Each of us longs for the healing touch of the Lord, not just for the body but for the soul and mind. As Catholics, we believe we are a unity of body, soul, and mind, created in God's image (Genesis 1:27). Sin, suffering, and life's wounds can fracture this unity, leaving us restless and yearning for wholeness. Yet, through Christ's grace, the Church offers profound pathways to spiritual and emotional healing through the sacraments of the Eucharist and reconciliation, prayer, community, and the Blessed Virgin Mary's intercession. Rooted in Scripture, Church teaching, and the saints' lives, this path restores harmony within the whole person, guiding us to God's peace.

The Unity of Body, Soul, and Mind

Catholic teaching views the human person as a holistic unity. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC 364) affirms that the body shares the soul's dignity, forming a single nature with the mind – our thoughts, emotions, and will. When one part suffers, all are affected. Psalm 38:3 laments, *There is no soundness in my flesh because of my sin*. Sin wounds the soul, clouds the mind with guilt or anxiety, and can even manifest physically.

Healing, then, restores this harmony. Jesus' ministry reflects this holistic approach. In Mark 2:1-12, He heals a paralytic's body and soul, saying, 'Your sins are forgiven,' before commanding him to walk. This reveals God's desire to make us whole, aligning body, soul, and mind with His love. The Church, as Christ's Body, continues this mission through sacramental and spiritual practices that are both accessible and transformative.

The Eucharist: Medicine of Immortality

The Eucharist lies at the heart of Catholic life. St Ignatius of Antioch called it the 'medicine of immortality' (*Epistle to the Ephesians*, 20). Instituted by Christ at the Last Supper (Luke 22:19-20), the Eucharist is His real presence – Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity – offering profound spiritual healing. It nourishes the soul and strengthens the mind against despair.

The Eucharist heals by uniting us to Christ's sacrifice. *The Catechism* (CCC 1393) teaches that 'Holy Communion separates us from sin.' Worthy reception cleanses venial sins and fortifies against mortal sin, restoring communion with God and mending the soul's wounds. St John Paul II wrote that the Eucharist 'strengthens the soul' and fosters peace (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 2003). St Therese of Lisieux, despite spiritual dryness and physical suffering, found refuge in the Eucharist, writing, 'In the Eucharist, I find my strength' (*Story of a Soul*). Her example shows that frequent Eucharistic reception, with a heart open to grace, heals restlessness and renews hope.

To receive this healing, Catholics must approach the Eucharist reverently, examining their conscience and seeking reconciliation if in mortal sin (1 Corinthians 11:27-29). Eucharistic adoration also offers healing. Time before the Blessed Sacrament allows Christ's presence to soothe emotional wounds and quiet anxious minds, fostering inner peace.

Reconciliation: Restoring the Soul's Peace

The Sacrament of Reconciliation, or confession, is a divine gift for healing the soul and mind. Instituted when Christ told His apostles, 'Whose sins

you forgive are forgiven them' (John 20:23), Confession is an encounter with God's mercy. *The Catechism* (CCC 1468) describes it as a 'liberation' that restores 'the joy of salvation' (Psalm 51:12).

Sin ruptures our relationship with God, burdening us with guilt, shame, or fear. Confession heals by allowing us to lay our sins before Christ, who absolves through the priest. *The Catechism* (CCC 1469) notes that reconciliation restores communion with God, the Church, and ourselves, bringing peace that transforms the mind. St John Vianney, patron of priests, spent hours in the confessional, guiding souls to mercy. He said, 'The good Lord does not require extraordinary things, but only that we come with a contrite heart.' His ministry shows confession's transformative power.

To receive healing, one must approach confession with sincerity, contrition, and resolve to amend their life. Confessing to a priest, though humbling, is liberating, bringing wounds into God's merciful light. Regular confession, even for venial sins, fosters spiritual growth and mental clarity, freeing us to live as God's children (Romans 8:21).

Prayer: Aligning with God's Will

Prayer is a vital pathway to healing. The Rosary, a cherished devotion, aligns the mind with God's will. St Padre Pio called it a 'weapon' against spiritual and emotional turmoil. Meditating on Scripture, such as the Psalms or Gospels, brings comfort. Psalm 119:105 declares, *Your word is a lamp to my feet*, guiding the mind through darkness. *Lectio Divina*, a prayerful reading of Scripture, invites God's truth to heal wounds and renew hope.

Daily prayer, even for a few minutes, grounds the soul. The Psalms, like Psalm 23, remind us of God's steadfast love:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. Such prayer reorients the mind, replacing anxiety with trust in God's care.

Spiritual Direction and the Anointing of the Sick

Spiritual direction helps discern God's will and address inner wounds. St Teresa of Avila, in *The Interior Castle*, emphasised self-knowledge through guidance, which brings clarity and peace. A spiritual director offers perspective, helping navigate struggles and fostering healing.

The Anointing of the Sick, often associated with physical healing, also strengthens the soul and mind. *The Catechism* (CCC 1520) notes it provides 'a particular gift of the Holy Spirit' to face trials with courage. St John Paul II, who relied on this sacrament, showed its power to sustain faith amid suffering (*Salvifici Doloris*, 1984).

Fasting and Almsgiving: Disciplines of Healing

Fasting and almsgiving, core Catholic practices, contribute to healing. Fasting disciplines body and mind, fostering self-control and detachment from worldly anxieties (Matthew 6:16-18). Almsgiving, rooted in Christ's call to love

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the poor (Matthew 25:40), heals pride and cultivates compassion. St Francis of Assisi, embracing radical poverty, showed how these acts align the soul with God's love, bringing wholeness.

The Role of Community

Healing is not solitary. The Church, as Christ's Body (1 Corinthians 12:12-27), provides community support. Parish groups, prayer circles, or retreats offer spaces to share burdens and find encouragement. St Augustine called the Church 'the mother of all Christians' (*Confessions*), highlighting its nurturing

role. Connecting with others in faith fosters resilience and hope, reminding us we are not alone.

Mary's Intercession: A Mother's Care

The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, is a powerful intercessor. Her fiat – *Let it be done to me according to your word* (Luke 1:38) – models surrender to God's will, bringing peace. Praying the Rosary or seeking her intercession, as St Louis de Montfort advocated in *True Devotion to Mary*, draws us to Christ, the Divine Physician. St Bernadette of Lourdes found healing through Mary's guidance, a

testament to her maternal care.

Practical Steps to Healing

To embrace God's healing, Catholics can take these steps:

Frequent the Sacraments: Attend Mass regularly and receive the Eucharist with a prepared heart. Aim for monthly confession to experience mercy. St John Bosco said, 'Frequent Communion and confession are the two wings that carry the soul to God.'

Cultivate Prayer: Dedicate daily time to the Rosary or *Lectio Divina*. Scripture grounds the mind in truth (Psalm 119:105).

Seek Community: Join a parish group or find a spiritual director. Hebrews 10:24-25 urges us to 'stir one another to love and good deeds.'

Practise Discipline: Incorporate fasting and almsgiving, especially during Lent or Advent, to grow in charity.

Turn to Mary: Pray the Rosary or a Hail Mary daily, seeking her intercession. Her trust in God heals anxious minds.

Conclusion

Complete healing is a lifelong journey toward God. Jesus promises, *Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest* (Matthew 11:28). Through the Eucharist, reconciliation, prayer, community, and Mary's intercession, Catholics find peace that surpasses understanding (Philippians 4:7). St Catherine of Siena wrote, 'All the way to heaven is heaven, because Jesus said, "I am the way"' (*Dialogue*). Healing begins now, in each sacramental encounter and act of love, restoring harmony of body, soul, and mind in Christ.





Rising from Despair:

Embracing God's Mercy

'The Church teaches that God's mercy is infinite, always ready to restore those who turn to Him with sincere repentance,' writes Fr Jerry VM SDB.

The struggle with sin and the ensuing battle against despair are central to the human experience. The devil tempts us not only to fall into sin but to remain trapped in discouragement, convinced that our failures place us beyond God's reach. Yet, the Church teaches that God's mercy is infinite, always ready to restore those who turn to Him with sincere repentance. Let us explore how the devil's tactics lead to despair through guilt and shame, how God's boundless mercy offers healing, and how we can rise quickly after a fall, reclaiming our identity as beloved children of God.

The Devil's Trap: From Sin to Despair

Catholic teaching recognises the devil as a real adversary who seeks to separate us from God. As 1 Peter 5:8 warns, *Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.* Temptation is his initial lure, exploiting human weaknesses to draw us into sin. However, the devil's strategy extends beyond the act of sin; his ultimate goal is to ensnare us in despair, convincing us that our failures make us unworthy of God's love.

This dynamic is evident in the story of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:8). After succumbing to temptation, they hid from

God, overwhelmed by guilt and shame. Their instinct to hide reflects a universal human response: sin often leads to feelings of unworthiness that distance us from God. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC 397) explains that this guilt and shame stem from the loss of original holiness, leaving humanity vulnerable to the devil's lies. He amplifies these emotions into despair, whispering that we are too broken to seek forgiveness, thus perpetuating a cycle of isolation and further sin.

Psychologically, this aligns with the distinction between guilt, shame, and repentance. Repentance, rooted in sorrow for sin and a desire to return to God, prompts us to seek reconciliation, while guilt and shame together convince us that we are inherently flawed and unworthy of forgiveness. This combination can lead to what psychologists call a 'negative feedback loop,' where feelings of unworthiness weaken resolve, making further failures more likely. The devil exploits this vulnerability, aiming to keep us from the sacraments, prayer, and community – sources of God's grace that break this cycle.

God's Infinite Mercy: A Path to Restoration

There is a powerful antidote to despair: God's mercy, which is limitless and always available to the repentant heart. Jesus illustrates this in Matthew 18:22, instructing Peter to forgive 'seventy-seven times,' reflecting the boundless nature of divine forgiveness. Lamentations 3:22-23 further assures us: *The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning.*

The parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) beautifully captures this mercy. The son, burdened by guilt and shame after squandering his inheritance, returns home intending to beg for a servant's place. Yet, before he can finish his plea, his father embraces him, restoring his dignity with a robe, ring, and sandals. This act mirrors the Catholic understanding of God's mercy, as taught in the CCC (1422): 'Those who approach the sacrament of penance obtain pardon from God's mercy for the offense committed against him, and are, at the same time, reconciled with the Church.' The father's response demonstrates that no sin can erase our

identity as God's children.

Psychologically, this mercy aligns with the principles of self-compassion and secure attachment. Accepting God's forgiveness helps us reframe our failures, moving from self-condemnation to healing. The Church's sacramental life, particularly confession, facilitates this process, offering a tangible encounter with God's mercy that restores our sense of worth and belonging.

Rising Quickly: The Call to Holiness

Holiness, in the Christian understanding, is not about achieving perfection but about striving for virtue and returning to God after a fall. St John Paul II emphasised that holiness involves 'trying not to fall and getting up immediately when we do.' This echoes Proverbs 24:16: *For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again.* Our path to holiness is marked by perseverance, trusting in God's mercy to lift us up.

This aligns with psychological resilience, the ability to recover from setbacks. After a sin, the temptation to linger in guilt and shame is strong, as we may feel unworthy to pray or approach the sacraments. Yet, the Church encourages us to act despite these feelings. The CCC (1452) teaches that true contrition, rooted in love for God, leads to forgiveness and renewal. By turning to God quickly – through prayer, confession, or a simple act of trust – we disrupt the devil's plan to keep us in despair.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is particularly powerful in this regard. St John Chrysostom urged, 'Do not be ashamed to enter again into the Church. Be ashamed when you sin, but not when you repent.' Confession not only absolves sin but also heals the emotional wounds of guilt and shame, restoring our connection to God and the Church community. James 5:16 reinforces this: *Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.*

Breaking the Cycle of Despair

The moments after a fall are critical. Linger in discouragement, as Micah 7:8 warns, leaves us vulnerable to further temptation. Psychologically, unresolved guilt and shame can lead to rumination, a repetitive focus on negative thoughts that fuels despair.

We should approach the sacrament of confession to experience God's mercy directly. However, when confession is not immediately possible, we need to make a sincere act of contrition and reconcile with God, promising Him that we would make a good confession at the nearest opportunity. This act counters the isolating effects of guilt and shame and restores communion with God and the Church. These align with psychological strategies for breaking negative thought patterns, such as cognitive reframing and behavioural activation. By acting in faith, we reclaim agency and disrupt the cycle of despair.


Living as God's Beloved

The devil seeks to define us by our sins, but God calls us His beloved children. The CCC (1996) teaches that grace 'initiates and sustains' our relationship with God, affirming our identity as His sons and daughters. Each time we rise from a fall, we reject the devil's lies and embrace this truth. Psalm 103:8 sings, *The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.*

Catholic spirituality encourages us to live this identity through a life of prayer, sacraments, and charity. The Eucharist, as the source and summit of Christian life (CCC 1324), strengthens us to persevere, while regular confession keeps us rooted in God's mercy. By trusting in His love, we grow in holiness, not through perfection but through persistent return to the Father's embrace.

Conclusion

Christian faith offers a profound response to the devil's strategy of temptation and despair. While sin is the initial hook, the devil's true aim is to trap us in discouragement through guilt and shame, distancing us from God's grace. Yet, the Church proclaims a God whose mercy is infinite, always ready to restore those who seek Him. By rising quickly through prayer, confession, and trust in God's love, we break the cycle of despair and reclaim our identity as His beloved. As Isaiah 30:18 declares, *The Lord waits to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show mercy to you.* Let us run to His open arms, confident that His mercy is greater than our failures, and walk forward in the joy of His love



When You Can't Jump Alone

CHRIST, THE TRUE HEALER IN JONAH'S SURRENDER

Taking the story of Jonah, **Fr Jerry VM SDB** explains how we can find healing by surrendering to God.

The Book of Jonah presents a reluctant prophet who flees from God's call, only to face a divine storm that engulfs his ship. Jonah recognises this as no mere coincidence, declaring, *Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will quiet down for you* (Jonah 1:12). This moment of surrender is profound – not only because Jonah yields to God's will, but because he cannot act alone. He needs the sailors to help him take the plunge, unveiling a deep truth: we often cannot surrender to God by our own strength. Guided by Christ, the True Healer, others play a vital role in our healing, as Jesus orchestrates our restoration with divine love and precision.

The miracle – the calming of the storm and the provision of the great fish – occurs only after Jonah fully lets go. This story serves as a roadmap for those seeking healing from addictions

or deep struggles, emphasising surrender, community, and trust in Christ's initiative. Jesus, the Divine Physician, is not passive; He takes the first step, arranging circumstances to lead us to wholeness. As He says, *Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners* (Mark 2:17). Jonah's journey reveals Christ as the Healer who moves first, desiring our restoration more than we do ourselves.

Recognising Our Inability to Act Alone

Jonah confesses, *I know it is because of me that this great storm has come upon you* (Jonah 1:12). Yet, despite this awareness, he cannot leap into the sea alone. This mirrors our spiritual reality: we often recognise our faults – addictions, fear, or sin – but lack the strength to act independently. Jesus reminds us, *Apart from me you can do nothing* (John 15:5). Healing begins with humility, admitting our weakness and trusting that Christ has already initiated our restoration. He assures us, *My grace is sufficient for you,*

for my power is made perfect in weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9). Acknowledging our need for help is the first step toward surrendering to the Healer.

Asking for Help under Christ's Guidance

Jonah's vulnerability in asking the sailors for help models a critical step in our journey. When paralysed by addiction or emotional wounds, Christ sends others to aid us. A priest, friend, spiritual director, or recovery group become the 'sailors' through whom Jesus works. *The Catechism* teaches, 'The Holy Spirit builds, animates, and sanctifies the Church' (CCC 1108), emphasising that Christ heals through His Body, the Church. Jesus promises, *For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them* (Matthew 18:20). He places these helpers in our path, initiating healing before we even ask, whether through a support group or a trusted mentor.

Not Resisting Christ's Healing Hands

Asking for help is only the start; we must

cooperate with Christ's work. Jonah could have clung to the ship, resisting the sailors. Instead, he allows himself to be thrown into the sea, embodying true surrender. St Paul urges, *Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God* (Romans 12:1). This means releasing resistance to the Healer's touch, even when it involves discomfort. Jesus invites, *Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest* (Matthew 11:28). For those in recovery, this might mean embracing therapy or accountability, trusting Christ's healing through these acts.

Releasing Our Supports to Trust the Healer

Jonah's surrender is marked by his complete release of the ship. Unlike someone who might clutch the railings in fear, Jonah does not resist as the sailors act (Jonah 1:12-15). This signifies his full surrender to God's will, despite the sea's dangers. We, too, cling to 'ropes' – comfort zones, pride, or addictive behaviours – that feel safe but hinder healing. These false securities anchor us



Surrender that costs little reveals little love. When we give up what is precious – causing pain or grief – we show we value Christ above all. Saying, ‘Jesus, I give this to You,’ declares, ‘You are worth this.’ The woman who anointed Jesus with costly ointment (Mark 14:3–9) was praised: *She has done a beautiful thing to me* (Mark 14:6). Our costly surrender, like relinquishing addiction, testifies to our love for the Healer who first loved us (1 John 4:19).

in fear, preventing restoration.

Jesus calls us to release these attachments: *If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me* (Matthew 16:24). This self-denial is about freedom to trust Christ’s plan. His initiative shines in the story of the paralytic at Bethesda, where Jesus asks, *Do you want to be healed?* (John 5:6). The man hadn’t sought help, yet Jesus acts first, showing He is more eager for our wholeness than we are. He arranges circumstances, like Jonah’s storm, to lead us to surrender and healing.

Accepting the Cost of Christ’s Healing

Jonah knew the sea was perilous, expecting death when he asked to be thrown overboard. Unaware of God’s plan – the great fish (Jonah 1:17) – he accepted the consequences. Christ’s healing often requires facing troubling realities, like making amends or breaking addictive habits. These steps are not punishments but pathways to wholeness. The Psalmist

declares, *A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise* (Psalm 51:17). Jesus, who healed the blind man (John 9:6–7) and the woman with the issue of blood (Mark 5:25–34), reaches out first, ensuring every surrender leads to restoration. His compassion guides us through the unknown, as God’s plan sustained Jonah.

Staying Committed to Christ’s Healing Path

When the storm calms, Jonah does not return to the ship. This teaches us to remain steadfast, even when life feels manageable. Retreating to old habits undermines Christ’s healing. Jesus warns, *No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God* (Luke 9:62). His relentless pursuit is seen in the Gerasene demoniac, restored to wholeness (Mark 5:1–20). In recovery, staying committed means continuing therapy or support groups, trusting Christ’s ongoing work.

Receiving Christ’s Provision after Full Surrender

Only after Jonah’s surrender does God provide the great fish. Likewise, Christ’s provision comes when we let go. St Francis de Sales wrote, ‘God takes pleasure to see you take your little steps; and like a good father who holds His child by the hand, He will accommodate His steps to yours’ (*Letters of Spiritual Direction*, 1615). Jesus, who healed the leper (Matthew 8:3), waits for our surrender to pour out grace. His initiative is clear: *I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly* (John 10:10). This provision might be strength, relationships, or spiritual renewal in recovery.

Valuing Christ through Costly Surrender

Surrender that costs little reveals little love. When we give up what is precious – causing pain or grief – we show we value Christ above all. Saying, ‘Jesus, I give this to You,’ declares, ‘You are worth this.’ The woman who anointed Jesus with costly ointment (Mark 14:3–9) was praised: *She has done a beautiful thing to me* (Mark 14:6). Our costly surrender, like relinquishing addiction, testifies to our love for the Healer who first loved us (1 John 4:19).

Conclusion

If you hesitate at the edge of your ‘boat,’ trust God, the True Healer, who is working to bring you wholeness. Jonah’s story shows that when we cannot surrender alone, we must seek help from elders or spiritual directors, as the sailors guided Jonah. Let go of fear and surrender fully to God, who is more eager to heal your deepest struggles than you are. Jesus, moved by compassion, promises, *The God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you* (1 Peter 5:10). Take the plunge – He is waiting to heal you. ■

Marriage:

*A Sacred Covenant of
Love and Surrender*



Sangeetha Joseph writes of the danger of entering marriage with an unhealed heart, for one runs the risk of failing to embrace the joy Christ desires to be shared in marriage.

In life, we look forward to the big days – those special milestones that shape our journey. Birthdays, graduations, First Holy Communion, first day at a new job, marriage – the list is endless. For me, my biggest day was my wedding day. I still remember the excitement that filled my heart 22 years ago, as I prepared to begin a new chapter with the one I love, ready to share the dreams I had carried for so long. Many of you reading this have already stepped into the sacred bond of marriage with joy and anticipation, while others are eagerly awaiting that blessed day. We all dream of a life filled with love – of sharing everything, praying together, raising children, travelling side by side, and growing old with our partner. These dreams are beautiful and deeply personal, and we long to see them come to life. Yet, as many of us have discovered, the love we cherish so deeply can sometimes be difficult to fully express in the realities of married life. Challenges arise, and the path we envisioned may not always be easy. Despite our best intentions, we may struggle to practice the boundless love and care we had hoped to give each other.

Entering Marriage with Unhealed Wounds

One of the greatest obstacles to loving unconditionally in marriage is that many of us unknowingly walk into the sacred covenant of marriage with a heart that is still wounded – scarred by the past, burdened by unforgiveness, or chained by emotional and spiritual bondages. Many of us are not aware that when our wounds are not fully healed we inevitably hurt one another, where we are called to reflect God's unconditional love. We unconsciously hope that our spouse will 'fix' the broken parts of us, fill every emotional gap, or finally prove we are

lovable. But no human being – no matter how loving – can take the place of **inner healing that comes from God. And until we allow Christ** to touch those places in us, we risk living not in freedom, but in quiet bondage.

Letting Go is not a Weakness – it's the Strongest Act of Faith.

Many times, we don't fully allow Christ to heal our wounds. We nurse old hurts and cling to pain that should have been surrendered at the foot of the cross. Strangely, there's a false sense of strength we draw from holding on to our past wounds and victimising – as if it grants us power or control.

I remember an experience from elementary school. A nun at my convent school lashed out at me over a minor classroom incident – one I wasn't even directly involved in. That moment left a deep emotional scar. I was hurt, confused, and too young to make sense of what had happened. Ever since that incident, I struggled to come to terms with any of the nuns at the convent school I attended. After many years, I realised I was wounded and needed healing, so I asked Jesus. His grace touched places I had buried for years. Yet even as healing began, my pride and ego resisted full surrender. Subtly – but intentionally – I carried an attitude toward any nun I met. The truth is, wounds often linger not because Jesus is unwilling to heal us, but because we don't completely surrender our pain. We hold onto it, knowingly or unknowingly, and keep Him at a distance. When we carry this unforgiving spirit into marriage, it becomes a silent destroyer. We are unable to fully love our spouse because our hearts are still guarded, shaped by unresolved hurt. We become overly sensitive, easily offended, and

incapable of embracing the joy Christ desires for us to share in marriage. An unhealed heart cannot give itself freely.

Listen to the Voice that Heals

As Fr Jacques Philippe wisely says, 'Not all thoughts that enter your mind are your own'. The moment we are wounded, the enemy rushes in, eager to exploit our pain by bringing in all sorts of lies. We begin to process hurt with our minds alone – replaying it, analysing it, and unknowingly allowing bitterness, fear, or pride to take root instead of surrendering it to the Lord. Satan is the father of lies. His greatest weapon is deception – twisting falsehood just enough to sound like truth. Many of the voices that stir hatred, rejection, fear, or condemnation from our wounds do not come from God – such thoughts are to be replaced with the promises of the Word of God!

But the truth is as 1 Peter 2:9 says:

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

And again, in Isaiah 43:1–3:

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.

Yet, countless people suffer silently, burdened by inner voices that were never from God. I know this first-hand. For nearly ten years, I carried anger and bitterness toward that nun, Ten years of shutting myself off from countless blessings – especially the blessing of inner freedom. All because Satan convinced me that the best way to protect my heart from being misunderstood again was to shut people out, especially those who reminded me of past wounds. I thought that distancing myself was strength. In truth, it was silent bondage. But in His mercy, God waited patiently for me for my

As Fr Jacques Philippe wisely says, 'Not all thoughts that enter your mind are your own'. The moment we are wounded, the enemy rushes in, eager to exploit our pain by bringing in all sorts of lies. We begin to process hurt with our minds alone – replaying it, analysing it, and unknowingly allowing bitterness, fear, or pride to take root instead of surrendering it to the Lord.



willingness to surrender and gave me the grace to totally forgive that nun and He restored what I had lost – not just peace with others, but peace within myself.

'Entering into the sacrament of marriage with a healed heart and a clear mind – knowing that no matter what, you are the beloved son or daughter of your Abba Father, and His unwavering love and mercy follows wherever you go – lays the foundation for lasting joy and unshakable peace in married life.'

Jesus is bigger than the pain

A couple of weeks ago, during a trip with my 13 year-old son, he randomly asked me a question that caught me off guard: 'How do you manage to forgive?' Curious, I turned the question back to him: 'What made you ask that?' He said, 'I've watched you let go – when we make you angry or when you're going through something hurtful.' I didn't know how to respond. So I asked him, 'Why do you think I'm able to forgive?' He thought for a moment and said, 'Maybe you have more of the Holy Spirit.' That made me smile – my boy has some wisdom. But after a short pause, he added, 'I think you love Jesus more, so you can forgive.'

That hit me deep – it was a true eye-opener. When he said, 'You love Jesus more,' he may not have used theological language, but he spoke a profound truth.

If I truly love Jesus more than anything else, then nothing the world throws at me – pain, persecution, rejection, or judgment – can shake me. Why? Because **my relationship with Christ is the source of my soul's nourishment.**

That's where I receive abundant peace, sustaining grace, and unshakable hope. Compared to that, what the world offers – or takes away – simply doesn't matter.

Recently, I listened to a talk that offered a striking insight: when Jesus hung on the cross, His enemies gathered beneath Him, mocking, accusing, and condemning. But Jesus did not fix His gaze on their cruelty. He didn't anchor His heart to injustice or hatred. Instead, **He fixed His eyes on His loving Abba Father.** He looked beyond the pain, beyond the offense, and cried out with divine mercy, '**Father, forgive them.**'

That is the power of loving Jesus more. It lifts us above the noise, above the wounds, and into the healing presence of the One who gave everything for us. What a powerful example. Jesus focused on something bigger than the wounds – He focused on the will and love of the Father.

Love your Enemies, Heal your Heart

As followers of Christ, let us fix our gaze not on our wounds but on the **abundant mercies and graces** that our loving God continually pours out upon us. Let us set

our hearts on His love, and step out of the small, cringing spaces where we nurse our pain and live in victimhood. Let us rise – because **by His stripes, we are already healed (Isaiah 53:5).** Each day, let us have the courage to surrender our pain at the foot of the Cross, rather than trying to manage it with our limited understanding. As 2 Chronicles 20:15 reminds us: **Do not be afraid or dismayed at this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's.** So let us not waste our energy fighting those who have hurt us. Instead, let us walk in obedience to Christ's radical call in Matthew 5:44: **But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.**

This is where inner healing begins – not in retaliation, but in **radical surrender, mercy, and love.** This is the way of Christ. And in Him, there is freedom, restoration, and peace. ■

Sangeetha Joseph is a devoted Catholic wife and mother of four beloved children. She strives to live out her Catholic faith every moment of life and is committed to teaching her children to do the same. A social worker by profession, she served as a Crisis Counselor for six years with the National Suicide Prevention Hotline, USA. In addition to home-schooling her children, Sangeetha enjoys spending time outdoors, listening to music and travelling with her family.

THE GIVER AND THE GIFT

Chrystle Maria Bose invites us to reflect on the Eucharist, and the One who makes it present for us.

There was a girl who was deeply in love with the Eucharist. Here, she encountered a living God – someone who loved her more than anyone else ever could. In the Eucharist, she found healing, peace, and friendship. It became her favourite place, where she met a listener, a helper, and a healer.

She longed to receive the Eucharist every day. Despite her job and the demands of life, she did all she could to stay close to Him. She was preparing to live her life united with Jesus.

Knowing her vocation was to family life, she prayed for someone who would journey with her – someone who would receive the Eucharist with her, pray with her, and share life together in Christ.

Then came a good proposal of marriage through her family. But it was from a place where there was no Holy Mass and no access to the Eucharist. Her heart sank. She asked Jesus, 'Why would you allow this? I've loved you in the Eucharist – I can't imagine life without it.'

But He gently asked her, 'Do you truly love me? What if there is no Eucharist – would you still love me? Would you still give me your time, your space, your energy – your heart?'

She was taken aback. The Eucharist is His body. Isn't that everything?

Yet He seemed to say, 'Love Me above all. Love the Giver more than the gift.'

She was surprised. But she understood – He was inviting her to a deeper love. She once believed that receiving the Eucharist – His very Body – was the highest way to love Him. But He showed her that beyond the Body is the Person. That the greatest love is not only for the gift, but for the Giver Himself!

An Assistant Professor, **Chrystle Maria Bose** is passionate about creatively expressing faith through words and music as a content writer, music composer and vocalist. She lives with her family in Kanjirapally, India.

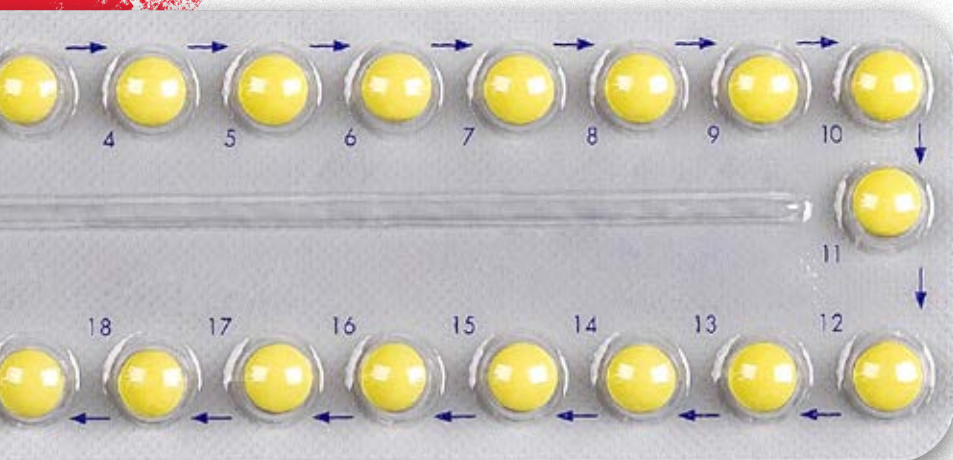
CULTURE OF LIFE

The Big No

in Catholic Marriage

Part II

Continuing from Issue 87 where he writes to a young friend preparing for marriage, **Patrick Sibly** explains against a contraceptive, anti-childbirth culture.



Thus says the LORD: Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his arm, whose heart turns away from the LORD. He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come... (Jeremiah 17:5-6).

Fecundity is the word used by the Church to describe the fruitfulness intended in marriage union. The dictionary definition is limited to the 'ability to produce an abundance of offspring or new growth; fertility.' The Church maintains that, consistent with their vocation to marriage, a couple is blessed by God with the grace of fecundity both physical and spiritual, such that an infertile couple too can fulfil this calling.

You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44).

In the Scriptures King Herod presents a stark reminder of the selfish and deadly attitude that some can have toward the arrival of a newborn child... sometimes, without being fully conscious of it. Herod,

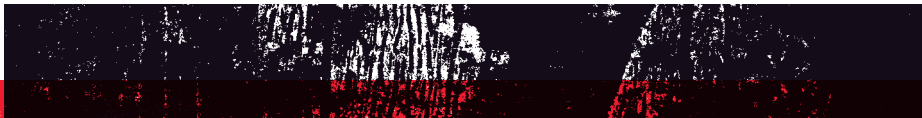
pretending to welcome the newborn baby Jesus, slyly asks the wise men to return and tell him the whereabouts of this new king so that he can find and kill Jesus. (Matthew 2:8). Many ancient scholars and more recently, Bishop Robert Barron articulated the narrative that Herod lived in deep fear that this baby was going to threaten his kingship and that we too can exhibit the exact same fear that the arrival of a child is going to spoil our kingdom – our comfortable lifestyle. Sometimes one or both spouses come up with the most subtle excuses and stories just like Herod. All the while the woman's body clock is ticking away, or the man is feeling painfully rejected. When Jesus escaped alive, Herod went into blood-letting rage (Matthew 2:16); abortion is a similar response. We always remember that child is true riches and God always provides as he did when testing Abraham (Genesis 22:7-8).

Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God say, "You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?"' (Genesis 3:1).

One author wrote about the 'never-ending sophistries and fallacies' of the spiritual enemy. For example, the argument that sometimes doctors prescribe contraception to treat Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS). The doctor is prescribing oestrogen and progestin, which is what is contained in Combined Oral Contraceptive Pill (COCP). Yet, it is a contraceptive only if someone is engaging in the marital act, while they are knowingly using their 'medication' as a contraceptive, for which there is absolutely no moral justification.

The Combined Oral Contraceptive Pill (COCP) is not a good option to treat PCOS anyway. Here what a fertility expert has to say:

'The COCP is used to treat endometriosis, osteopenia, PCOS, PMDD, etc., however it is not a good treatment. It masks the symptoms whilst exposing the women to further risks (thromboembolism, insulin resistance, infertility, depression, abortifacient etc.) Furthermore there are treatment options available which address the root cause and make the woman healthier



'The COCP is used to treat endometriosis, osteopenia, PCOS, PMDD, etc., however it is not a good treatment. It masks the symptoms whilst exposing the women to further risks (thromboembolism, insulin resistance, infertility, depression, abortifacient etc.) Furthermore there are treatment options available which address the root cause and make the woman healthier overall without exposing her to the above mentioned risks.'

overall without exposing her to the above mentioned risks.'

In other words, the contraceptive pill is a cheap and nasty, second-rate, mass-production pharmaceutical solution to treat Polycystic Ovary Syndrome.

... so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. (Ephesians 4:14).

STERILISATION

Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap (Galatians 6:7).

A final consideration is the necessity for great vigilance when dealing with an aggressively paternalistic medical profession around pregnancy and childbearing. If the enemy of man has failed to 'steal' and 'kill' through contraception and abortion, there remains a third avenue – 'destruction' (John 10:10). The official teaching of the Church names any form of sterilisation (of the male or female) as a grave offence against the dignity of the person. How persistent and seductive are some pernicious health care professionals who believe it is their moral responsibility to tell women and couples how many children they should have. How radically opportunistic they are in their subtle manipulative attempts to convince a woman or couple of the convenience of a tubal ligation (sterilisation) following her pending caesarean section.

As fatigued parents, under stress in

the garden of family life, you must remain vigilant and 'pray that you are not led into temptation' by *the thief [who] comes only to steal and kill and destroy* (John 10:10).

I am sorry if this account upsets some relationships; I suspect it will. But better sooner than later; things will get very ugly when deception is at play. We can recall Jesus' expression of His mission: *I have not come to bring peace but a sword* – to put to death the lies and deception that destroy relationships. *You will know the truth and the truth will set you free* (John 8:32). These matters are best dealt with in the preparation for marriage.

CANONICAL MATTERS

Strategically planned and premeditated intention to not conceive children is considerable grounds for a marriage invalidation – a marriage annulment. Being firstly free, and secondly faithful at the time of marriage, are the first two of three criteria for a valid Catholic marriage. Totality of the gift of self, is the third criteria for validity, including the total gift and reception of one's fertility. Can it also happen that one spouse wants out of the marriage, claiming they weren't forewarned that the other was going to be open to children right from the beginning and not obstruct the arrival of children to accommodate the preference of the other to 'wait' until a more convenient time?

Yes, it can be said that we have autonomy over our bodies – but again that argument is further deception since, our original autonomy was never in question,



but rather our ability to utilise this autonomy for our good according to God's good plan. God does not want couples to spoil their love by micro-managing the gift of their fertility. Our bodies have a meaning and a purpose, *I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect*

(Romans 12:1-2).

ANTHROPOLOGY

Finally, we can consider contraception in the light of a study of the human person – anthropology.

In his 1994 *Letter to Families*, Pope St John Paul II said this: 'A society imbued with a consumerist and anti-childbirth mentality is not and never can be a culture of love.'

In his *Theology of the Body* series, Pope John Paul II teaches about the nature of love and specifically 'married

love' – this 'other-centred-love,' is the same communion of love that is the Holy Trinity, that the spouses too are called imitate.

Marriage is a vocation to make an unreserved 'spousal-gift-of-self' to the other in the marriage. The spouses enter into this way of love by following the example of Jesus who laid down his life for his friends, in total self-gift. Contraception is a contradiction of the totality for this gift. Mary gave her yes to God even when she didn't know how it could work. Alternatively, a 'consumerist and anti-childbirth mentality' is preoccupied with knowing and attempting to control how and when, and with calculating from where the provisions will come – all to the detriment of generous, self-sacrificial love modelled in Jesus. Marriage is one of the two sacraments of service, and removed from service, the love will die.

Part of the contamination that emanates from such an anti-childbirth society – like a chemical pollutant drifting upon the surface of a fresh stream of water – is the phenomena of contraception-based premarital sexual unions. During the time of my studies, the Australian Bureau of Statistics reported in the year 2001, a seventy percent (70%) failure rate for marriages that began with such unions. Thirty percent are very successful, yet it's high risk and for many, what begins in convenient compromise, ends in a destructive and endless nightmare.

Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8). Submitting oneself and one's marriage to consumerism and the contraceptive mentality is one such way to be devoured. ■



Patrick Sibly grew up on a dairy farm in Victoria, Australia. He lives in Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia, and works as a religious educator at a Catholic secondary school. He completed a masters in Bioethics at the Pope John Paul II Institute for Marriage and the Family in 2008. Following this, he taught Health Care Ethics at the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine, Australian Catholic University (Melbourne) from 2012-2014.



Jubilees for People of All Walks of Life and an Unforgettable Eucharistic Procession



The first week of June started with the **Jubilee of Movements, Associations and New Communities** which saw over 8,000 pilgrims gathered in Rome. It was wonderful: the coming together of the diversity of ministries in the Church, including Jesus Youth. On 7 June, the Pope led the Pentecost vigil with them. Pope Leo spoke of the importance of synodality rooted in communion and said that

where the Spirit is, 'there is movement, a journey to be made.' Again, on the Sunday morning of 8 June, the Pope went on to say that the Holy Spirit 'overcomes fear, shatters the inner chains, heals the wounds, and anoints the apostles.'

One thing that captivated me during this Jubilee year was that people from all walks of life and profession are remembered and honoured. The Pope

celebrated the **Jubilee Year for the Officials of the Roman Curia** on 9 June, making the procession through the Holy Door at St Peter's with them. While celebrating the **Jubilee of Sport**, the Pope connected the dynamism of sport with that of Holy Trinity – a dynamism of love: a movement of the self towards the other, certainly external, but also and above all internal.



Another much awaited news was announced: about the canonisation of the two young saints, Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati and Blessed Carlo Acutis. It is to be held together on 7 September 2025, postponed by the passing away of Pope Francis. On 26 July, as part of the Jubilee of Youth, the coffin with the remains of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati will be transferred from the Cathedral of St John the Baptist, in Turin, to the Basilica of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome.

Pope Leo met all the priests, deacons and seminarians of the Diocese of Rome, as part of the Jubilee and told them, 'You are all precious in the eyes of God and in the realisation of His plan.' Members of Italy's local and national governments were the main participants in events for the **Jubilee of Government Leaders** from 21-22 June. The Pope paid special attention to the threat of AI saying that AI should serve human beings, not replace them.

The Jubilee of Seminarians, Bishops and Priests was held from 23-27 June. It was a great event where seminarians were welcomed at a special event on 23 June. A community Rosary and a concert by Rome's diocesan choir and the 'Fideles et Amati' orchestra, conducted by Monsignor Marco Frisina, were also held. On 25 June, the Jubilee dedicated to Bishops was celebrated, with prelates from over 50 countries taking part. They were given a stole, a chasuble and a mitre for the Holy Year. Pope Leo offered a special catechesis to the prelates, concluding with a joint profession of faith above the tomb of the Apostle Peter. This event concluded with the Jubilee of Priests on 27 June, the feast of the Sacred Heart where Pope Leo ordained 31 new priests, emphasising that priest be shaped by God's love.



Above all, the major attraction was the Feast of Corpus Christi, where Pope Leo presided at Mass in Rome's Cathedral Basilica of Saint John Lateran on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, followed by the traditional Eucharistic procession to Saint Mary Major. Due to the late Pope Francis' poor health, Rome hadn't seen this procession for some time. Pope Leo carried the monstrance with the consecrated host under a golden canopy held by eight members of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. He declared, 'Christ is God's answer to our human hunger, because His body is the bread of eternal life: Take this and eat of it, all of you!' The most amazing thing was that the huge crowd that followed ran along and stood on the pavements and at any gap available just to witness this. The

crowd itself was a marvellous sight and witness; it was a different feeling.

As the Jubilee goes ahead on full steam, the heat remains unrelentingly around 35 degrees. Attending Masses at St Peter's, the Angelus, and with pilgrimages requiring a lot of walking, pilgrims are reeling under the scorching heat. Europe is bracing for a very hot summer indeed! ■■

Fr Justin Panachickal MSFS is currently doing his licentiate in social communications at the Pontifical University of Santa Croce, and will share with us throughout the Jubilee year ground reports from Rome.

SPECIAL

Felicitations for Kairos Global's 2025 CMA Awards



It gives me immense joy to extend my heartfelt felicitations to Kairos Global on being honoured once again at the 2025 Catholic Media Association Awards, especially being named First Place in the category 'Magazine of the Year – Prayer and Spiritual Magazine.' This well-deserved recognition is a testimony to the dedication, creativity, and missionary zeal with which the Jesus Youth movement continues to inspire young people and families across the globe through faith-filled media. I pray that Kairos Global may continue to be a vibrant instrument of evangelisation, touching hearts and drawing many closer to the love of Christ and His Church.

RAPHAEL THATTIL
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church &
Ecclesiastical Advisor of Jesus Youth International



Dear Kairos Family,

I am truly delighted to extend my warm congratulations to Kairos Global on being recognised at the 2025 Catholic Media Association Awards, especially for winning First Place in the 'Magazine of the Year - Prayer and Spiritual Magazine' category.

This international honour reflects not only your editorial excellence but also your deep commitment to sharing the Gospel with creativity, clarity, and spiritual depth. In today's world, such authentic and hope-filled communication is both rare and much needed.

As a vibrant expression of the Jesus Youth movement, Kairos continues to build a meaningful bridge between the Church and young people - offering content that inspires faith and discipleship.

I have been personally blessed to contribute reflections and interviews to Kairos over the years. Each time I have held a copy in my hands and seen my sharing featured in such a Spirit-filled and beautifully designed magazine, I have felt both humbled and proud. It is a publication that truly carries grace with both form and content that speak to the heart.

I still carry with me a moment from the recent Synod called by Pope Francis where he referred to the media as 'the sixth continent' – a place where people live, search and long for meaning.

When I heard that, I couldn't help but think of all of you at Kairos and Jesus Youth. If anyone is called to step into that space with joy, authenticity and conviction - it's you. You know how to speak the language of this generation. You carry a message that the world is waiting for.

So go - bring Jesus to this 'sixth continent.' Do it as you always have: with faith, creativity, and the fire of the Spirit. May the Lord bless each of you abundantly and continue to guide your mission forward.

ALEX VADAKUMTHALA
Bishop of Kannur
Ecclesiastical Advisor of Jesus Youth India



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Items 1 - 7 of 7



Dear Team Kairos,
Heartfelt congratulations on your remarkable achievement at the 2025 Catholic Media Association Awards! Securing seven accolades, including First Place for 'Magazine of the Year – Prayer and Spiritual Magazine', is a powerful testimony to your creativity, commitment, and deep-rooted passion for the mission of evangelisation through media.

For the past 25 to 30 years, Kairos has been a vibrant and consistent presence in the Catholic media landscape, inspiring youth, teens, and families with content that is both spiritually enriching and culturally relevant. As you move forward, continuing this mission through your publications in the coming years, we are confident that Kairos will remain a prophetic voice for this generation – challenging, inspiring, and forming hearts for Christ.

DR MIDHUN PAUL
Coordinator – Jesus Youth International

Chandeliers

✧ *St Scholastica*



St Benedict is among one of the most well-known saints in Church history – the great reformer whose monastic order shepherded Christianity through

post-Roman discord. But did you know that he had a female counterpart who equally influenced the course of Catholic monastic history?

Conceived and nurtured together from the womb, this twin sister and brother walked hand in hand to eternity, opening to the world, a welcoming path of fraternal spiritual legacy. Born around 480 AD in Italy's Nursia, they lost their mother immediately after birth. According to reports, both were sent to Rome at the age of 12.

Benedict soon retired to a hermitage, and though her spirit desired a cloistered life, Scholastica remained heir to the family. But since she had consecrated herself to God at an early age the desire for total consecration could not be contained much longer, so she requested her father for permission to dedicate herself to religious life. She entered a monastery near Nursia and later moved to Piumarola, seven kilometres from Benedict's Abbey of Montecassino. They followed the Rule of St Benedict, giving rise to the first female branch of the Benedictine Order.

In the post-Roman debacle, Benedict's new rules brought order into a world in chaos. But as good as he was at administration, his passion for discipline often overshadowed the equally needed element of love. There is the well-known story of a group of disgruntled monks trying to poison him due to his frustrating lack of flexibility. Scholastica, in this sense, was the perfect balance for his rigidity. Knowing him as far back as the company in the womb, she knew how to convince Benedict that discipline without love would be a disaster far from the

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divine design. And God's assistance was never lacking in this pursuit of hers. There is a beautiful incident from their life that illustrates this.

Once a year, they would meet and spend a day together. They would ardently speak about the one topic that excited them most of all – God! One year, absorbed in conversation, they were too late to realise that dusk had fallen. Scholastica begged her brother to stay so that they might continue their discussion through the night but Benedict, ever so caught up on the rules, refused outright. Scholastica, saddened by his refusal to spend some more time with her, closed her eyes and prayerful tears started slowly flowing.

Few minutes in, a terrible storm raged in on the house they were in. Benedict became angry, and remarked: 'Almighty God forgive you, sister. What have you done?' Scholastica calmly answered: 'I asked you a favour, and you refused it. I

asked it of God, and God has granted it. Go off now, leave me and return to your monastery, if you can.'

Three days later, Scholastica peacefully passed away in her monastery, and it is believed that the twin brother, kilometres apart, was informed of his sister's death by a divine sign: he saw his sister's soul ascend to Heaven in the form of a white dove. She was buried in his monastery, in the same tomb where, years later, he would also be laid to rest. ■

Maria Teres is a social worker by education, and writer by passion and profession. In her spare time, you may find her curled up on a couch crocheting, reading, or sketching.



Reclaiming Wholeness

Sharing his personal journey, **Anil Israel** reflects with Scripture on this issue's theme of inner healing.

Whenver a child gets injured, he immediately calls, 'Mama!' and seeks consolation in a bandage. The child sought healing because he acknowledged his wounds and the need to be healed. *Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick* (Mark 2:17). Only when we acknowledge that we are sick do we consider consulting a doctor.

Sickness or woundedness at the physical level is obvious. However, one can also be unwell interiorly – emotionally, mentally, spiritually. When our body is fractured, we rush to the orthopaedic for treatment. When our soul is fractured, what do we do about it? We might either ignore the damage and hush it aside assuming it will recover over time or brood over it and magnify the wound.

In 2 Kings Chapter 5, we see Naaman,

a Syrian army commander who suffered from leprosy. Because of his desire to be healed, he travelled to Israel seeking healing from Prophet Elisha. Eventually he followed Elisha's simple instructions and washed himself seven times in the River Jordan and was miraculously healed. Just acknowledging that we are in need to be healed is insufficient, we also ought to do something about it. An action is required on our part. Approaching the source of healing and being open to be healed is equally essential.

Sometimes, it is an act of faith on the part of others that brings about the healing. Some men carried a paralysed man on a mat and lowered him through the roof of a house. Jesus forgives the man's sins and then heals him physically. Spiritual restoration preceded physical restoration. Certain physical illnesses can be linked to a spiritual problem. Unforgiveness can be attributed a hindrance to physical healing in certain instances.

Jesus even raised the dead back to life. Be it the daughter of a synagogue leader – Jairus (Mark 5:21-43), the son of a widow in the town of Nain (Luke 7:11-17), or Lazarus of Bethany after he had been in the tomb for four days (John 11:38-44). Though there was no action on the part of the dead before they were raised back to life, they however responded to the call to restoration. *Little girl, I'm telling you to get up!* (Mark 5:41). *Young man, I say to you, get up!* (Luke 7:14). *Lazarus, come out!* (John 11:43).

The above miracles portray the mighty power of God at work. Truly God is the *author of life* (Acts 3:15). Only He can fix our brokenness. *I am the Lord who heals you* (Exodus 15:26). *By his wounds we are healed* (Isaiah 53:5). *I will restore you to health and heal your wounds* (Jeremiah 30:17). Jesus is our Divine Healer – our Divine Physician. *He forgives all my sins and heals my diseases* (Psalm 103:3).

The fountain of healing is there at our disposal. Why don't we approach the incredible power of the resurrection? Because we think we are well and not in need of being healed. Because we are spiritually blind to our inner illness.

Before coming to the renewal, I recall being engulfed in the cloud of spiritual darkness. I couldn't understand why people thronged to counsellors. To me, then, it appeared as a sign of weakness – not being able to handle one's life on their own. It was an element of pride; just because things went well for a major part of my life, I failed to see the hand of God carrying me through the troubled waters of life. It was only during my initial encounter during an inner healing prayer that I acknowledged the higher divine power that truly heals and restores.

The process had only begun. There was only a recognition of an invisible God who is capable of anything beyond human comprehension. What was lacking in me was the recognition that there were still areas where I needed inner healing. Over the years, I'd often get angry and yield to the not-so-pleasant version of myself. But I failed to realise that I was fractured somewhere deep inside and still needed repair.

But God didn't give up on me. He brought me to the Living Waters training programme which has been another turning point in my life. I went to Living Waters with the simple prayer, 'Lord I don't want to return empty-handed.' This open-mindedness helped me realise certain truths. God is relationship and we are modelled on the prototype of that relationship. Therefore, in the battle of relationship versus rational thinking, relationship ought not to suffer. I was led in prayer to let the golden calf of rational thinking crumble into pieces. This was a moment of immense relief and freedom.

The Evil One had cunningly convinced certain lies as truths. We were encouraged

I AM THE LORD WHO HEALS YOU › EXODUS 15:26



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to dump the dumb deception of the deceiver. In courageously proclaiming our vulnerability, lies the key to unburden our incompleteness – our brokenness. On pondering over my *brokenness*, it dawned that as long as I am unable to love as God loves – I'm truly broken. I need to be made whole again. He's still working on me, to make me what I ought to be. We are all work in progress.

What is my attitude towards well-being? A woman who had suffered from severe bleeding for twelve years came up behind Jesus and touched the edge of his cloak (Matthew 9:20). Do I yearn to touch the fringe of His garment to seek His healing

grace? May we learn to recognise ourselves as the man waiting for thirty-eight years at the pool of Bethesda and hear Jesus' call to wholeness, *Do you want to get well?* (John 5:6). Let us reclaim spiritual wellness, by embracing the prayer of the unclean leper, *Lord, if you are willing, you can heal me* (Matthew 8:2). Let us surrender our inner brokenness and receive the grace to be made whole again.

Anil Israel lives in Mannheim, Germany, with his wife Sunita and their 6 children.

SOUNDREPLY



STORIES OF HEALING ON THE SILVER SCREEN

Every human is scarred, physically, mentally, spiritually or emotionally. True inner healing comes about when we address these wounds, leading to personal growth and a more fulfilling life. Various inner healing methods have been suggested by psychologists and experts, including meditation, reading, journaling, exercising, challenging negative thoughts, setting boundaries, and improving sleep. While prayer is the most effective strategy, consuming certain types of media content can also become a catalyst for inner healing. The Greek concept of 'catharsis' is detailed in Aristotle's *Poetics* as the purging or purification of the emotions of pity and fear in one's self through its portrayal in art. Catharsis can also lead to inner healing and is obtained

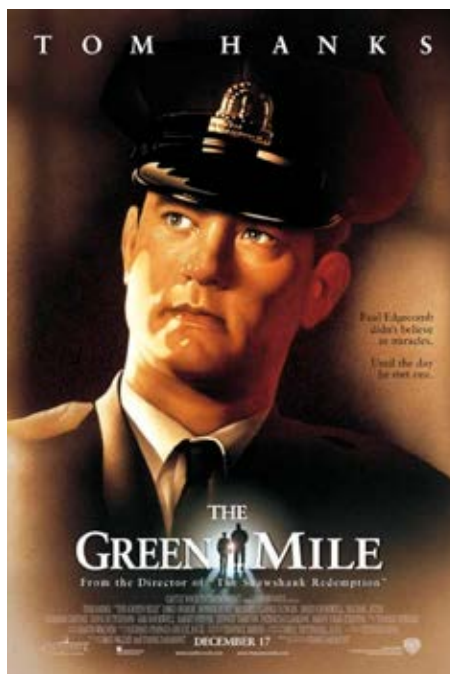
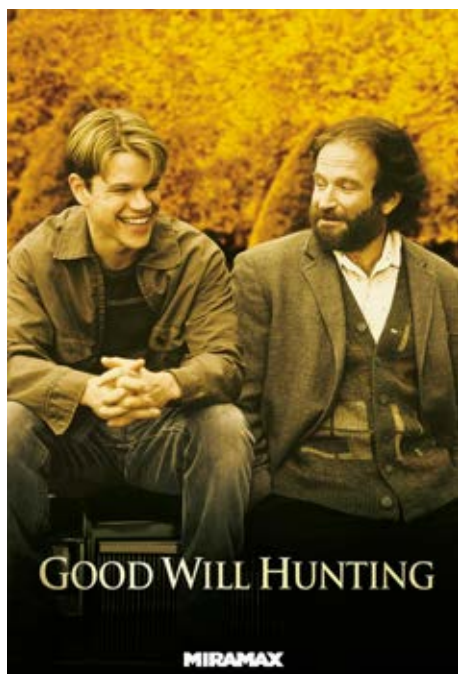
in this era through movies and TV shows. Here is a list of some of the best movies that portray inner healing.

Good Will Hunting

Perhaps the best movie out there that deals with trauma and inner healing, this 1997 classic starring Matt Damon, Ben Affleck and Robin Williams is considered one of the most important films ever. Will Hunting is a troubled yet genius janitor at MIT whose talent in maths gets spotted by a professor. Stubborn and arrogant, Will refuses to confront his scars of childhood abuse and severe attachment issues and is put under the care of Sean Maguire (Williams), who helps him trust again. It compels introspection and leads the viewers to a realisation that 'no man can live as an island'.

The Green Mile

A movie that takes on the theme of healing in a supernatural fashion, *The Green Mile* is a classic that stars Tom Hanks, Michael Duncan and so on. It features three death row convicts, one of whom is John Coffey, an African-American man falsely convicted of rape; he takes on a messianic role, wherein he absorbs all the physical, mental and emotional wounds of those around him. How he transforms the minds of his inmates and captors, not only through his healing powers but also through sheer love and compassion, remains the crux of the film. It really is a masterclass on empathy, self-reflection and forgiveness, thus leading to a better appreciation of oneself and the surroundings that one lives in.





The Lion King

No movie explores themes of grief, healing and acceptance quite like the animated masterpiece, *The Lion King*. Simba, the young prince, blames himself for the death of his father, the powerful King Mufasa, and flees his kingdom. Making great friends along the way in Timon and Pumba, with help from his father's old friend and advisor, Rafiki the mandrill, he finds his footing and realises his true strength. He returns home to Pride Rock to defeat the dictator Scar, who had killed his father, and secures his place as the rightful heir of the kingdom. It allows the viewers to deal with grief and low self-esteem, reinforcing in them the idea that anything can be done once true potential and true healing are realised.

The Pursuit of Happyness

This Will-Jaden Smith movie is based on a true story of a man overcoming homelessness to build a successful life for himself and his son. The lengths Christopher Gardner goes to keep his son's spirits high and to make ends meet, all while battling his internal dilemmas, become an

inspiration to many, offering a stark realisation that none of the struggles one goes through are impossible to come out of. We can overcome the scars we bear due to our surroundings through strength, resilience, and acceptance.

Manchester by the Sea

This Casey Affleck film blatantly deals with grief in many different facets. How different individuals react and deal with grief is masterfully explored here. It provokes deep questions and soul-searching. Lee Chandler has to single-handedly deal with a tonne of problems as his family is hit by untimely and unexpected tragedy. He struggles to piece his and his family's lives back together. The film's backdrop of coastal New England adds to the drab, depressing storyline, furthering the cathartic experience.

Silver Linings Playbook

Starring Bradley Cooper and Jennifer Lawrence, this movie is a poignant tale of two broken souls who find solace in each other's imperfections. Pat is a man struggling with bipolar disorder, while Tiffany battles



depression. When their paths collide, what ensues is not a mere love story but a passionate symphony of resilience and rediscovery, dealing also with personal mental issues and scars. It highlights the importance of therapy and love in the process of self-discovery and inner healing.

REVIEW BY Benita Elissa Benny

Benita lives in Ernakulam, India with her parents, sister and brother.

NewsWatch

Chartres Pilgrimage Sees Unprecedented Surge of Participants Again

This year, over 19,000 young Catholics from around the globe gathered in France for the annual Chartres pilgrimage, a powerful display of traditional faith in an increasingly secular Europe. Pilgrims, grouped by regions and countries and bearing flags and banners, journeyed on foot for three days from Paris to Chartres Cathedral. Their days were filled with prayer, Mass, chants, and songs, while nights were spent camping at designated stops along the way. The pilgrimage, organised by Notre-Dame de Chrétienté since 1983, took place from 7-9 June this year and saw its largest turnout yet. Registration, which opened with 19,000 available spots – up from 18,000 in 2024 – filled within five days. The average age of attendees was just 20, underscoring the event's growing appeal among younger generations. Many are drawn by the Latin Mass, which remains central to the pilgrimage.

For some attendees, the pilgrimage is a direct response to the secularism and ideological pressures facing modern

youth. They described the event as a sign of spiritual renewal in Europe, centred on tradition and reverence.

A French priest who first joined the pilgrimage in 2018 as a seminarian returned this year in his priestly role. He described his experience as spiritually rich, filled with confessions, conversations, and a deep sense of purpose. What keeps him coming back is the pilgrims' love for tradition, reverence for the Eucharist, and the presence of Christ throughout the journey.

This year's theme, *That He May Reign, on Earth as in Heaven*, marked the 100th anniversary of Pope Pius XI's encyclical *Quas Primas*. Bishop Athanasius Schneider, who celebrated the Pentecost Mass, emphasised Christ's reign over all human affairs – not by force, but through love.

While most pilgrims were French,



15% came from abroad, reflecting a continent-wide longing for Christian revival. A seminarian from England called the event a true pilgrimage – a spiritual journey filled with prayer and transformation. He said the experience reaffirmed his belief in a living Church and a generation striving for holiness. The founder of Sweden's first Chartres pilgrimage chapter noted how tradition offers an antidote to modern secularism. For him and other Swedish pilgrims, the Latin Mass and pilgrimage symbolise a Church that transforms hearts rather than conforming to the world. The pilgrimage concluded not just with tired feet, but renewed spirits. For many, it reignited hope for a spiritual resurgence in Europe.

Pakistani Catholic Acquitted after 23 Years



Pakistan's Supreme Court has acquitted Anwar Kenneth, a mentally ill Catholic man who spent 23 years on death row for alleged blasphemy. On 25 June, a three-judge panel overturned his conviction after medical evaluations confirmed his mental illness, ruling that mentally ill individuals cannot be held criminally accountable. Kenneth, now 72, was arrested in 2001 for allegedly writing letters about Prophet Muhammad and the

Quran. In 2002, he was sentenced to death and fined five million Rupees by a court in Lahore. Despite confirmed medical reports, the Lahore High Court upheld the sentence in 2014. His lawyer, Rana Abdul Hameed, said Kenneth is expected to be released soon but faces serious threats from extremists who believe in punishing blasphemy with violence. Kenneth's mental state complicated his trial, as he continued to confess and demand

By Sam Biju

execution. Hameed revealed he has also received threats for advocating reform of the blasphemy law. He now has police protection.

In Pakistan, blasphemy remains a volatile issue, often leading to mob violence and vigilante attacks, even without evidence. Christians and other minorities are particularly vulnerable. In 2023, Christian churches and homes were destroyed by mobs in Jaranwala over blasphemy allegations. Kenneth's release follows the acquittal of another mentally ill Christian, Farhan Masih, earlier in June. Human rights groups, including Jubilee Campaign Netherlands, welcomed Kenneth's acquittal, calling it a sign of hope and a spotlight on Pakistan's flawed legal system. Advocacy officer Joseph Janssen criticised the blasphemy laws as vague and easily misused to persecute minorities or settle personal disputes. Human Rights Watch has also condemned the law, noting a surge in cases – many driven by social media rumours – and called for its repeal due to widespread abuse for personal gain.

CATHOLIC LEADERS FROM ASIA, AFRICA, LATIN AMERICA DEMAND CLIMATE JUSTICE

The Catholic bishops in the Global South have issued a groundbreaking joint statement addressing the urgent crisis of climate change. This unprecedented communique calls for the immediate end to fossil fuel use and warns against deceptive 'green' initiatives that continue to exploit natural resources, ecosystems, and vulnerable populations. The declaration, jointly released by Catholic bishops' conferences from Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, and Africa, highlights the need not only to cut emissions but also to acknowledge and repair the ecological and moral debts owed to the Global South and communities harmed by pollution, resource extraction, and climate disruption. This 34-page letter represents a historic collaboration among the Church leaders of three continents, who collectively represent 821 million Catholics. It sets forth a comprehensive Catholic vision ahead of the upcoming United Nations climate summit, COP30, scheduled for November in Belém, Brazil. The bishops urge governments to take transformative actions rooted in respect for

human dignity, solidarity, social justice, and care for the most vulnerable, including the planet itself. They frame COP30 as a crucial moment for the Church to affirm its prophetic role in advocating for justice and truth. The Church pledges to continue raising its voice in partnership with scientific experts, civil society, and affected communities until climate justice is achieved. The statement arrives months before COP30, where nations are expected to update their climate commitments – a process that has fallen behind the targets needed to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, the goal of the Paris Agreement. Global temperatures surpassed this threshold for the first time in 2024, making urgent emission reductions essential. Ultimately, the bishops call for a fundamental shift away from profit-driven models toward an integral ecology based on justice, solidarity, and care for creation. They commit to educating the faithful and fostering ecological conversion, advocating for a global coalition to promote dialogue and democratic solutions that serve both humanity and the planet.

ADULT BAPTISMS RISING IN AUSTRALIA

Archbishop Anthony Fisher, AOP, of Sydney, Australia, has observed a steady rise in adult conversions and returns to the Catholic Church over the past five years, marking what he calls a 'second spring' of faith in the country. Addressing the Sydney Catholic Business Network on 30 May, he reported a 26% annual increase in adult converts within the Archdiocese of Sydney, noting that many are not former Catholics but individuals from varied backgrounds encountering

Catholicism for the first time.

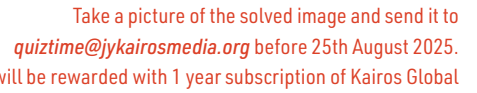
Fisher attributed this trend to a deep spiritual longing in today's fragmented world, where people are increasingly seeking meaning and stability – something they're finding in the Catholic faith. Bishop Richard Umbers, Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney, offered his perspective, suggesting that the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and current economic difficulties have prompted many to question their beliefs and explore faith

more openly.

Alongside more baptisms, Umbers pointed to higher church attendance, increased enrolment in Catholic schools, and supportive remarks from public officials about religion as signs of renewed religious interest. He emphasised the appeal of authentic faith communities grounded in prayer and tradition. This



spiritual revival isn't limited to Australia – record numbers of adult baptisms have also been reported in England and France this Easter.

The logo for Time Out magazine, featuring the word "time" in a dark blue serif font and "out" in a large, bold, brown sans-serif font. A light blue circular graphic element is partially visible behind the word "out".

A vibrant, cartoon-style illustration of a large group of Corgi dogs and puppies. The dogs are depicted in various poses, some eating from a bowl, others playing with toys like a bone and a ball. The background is a warm, textured orange-brown color.



LUKAS
and



RAY

Scripture
Pictures

@scripturepictures316

This plant is basically in a war zone. No shade, no moisture. Hostile environment, zero chance of survival.

Good morning to you too.

It's textbook unsustainable. Photosynthesis can't fix this.

Did you just insult a plant with science? A new low for you, Lukas.

Boom

Is that a new shoot?

Hope doesn't care if conditions are ideal.

But

Your data forgot one variable.

Stubborn, unreasonable, wildly unrealistic...
HOPE

That was annoyingly profound.

Third Year Running!

Kairos Global won acclaim in seven categories at the 2025 Catholic Media Association Awards!

Soli Deo Gloria!

**1st
PLACE**

Magazine of the Year –
Prayer and Spiritual magazine

Best Cover – Large:

Second Place

Best Explanation of Marriage:

Third Place

Best Original Poetry:

Third Place

Best Essay:

Honourable Mention

Best Feature Article:

Honourable Mention

Best Review:

Honourable Mention

