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BECOMING  
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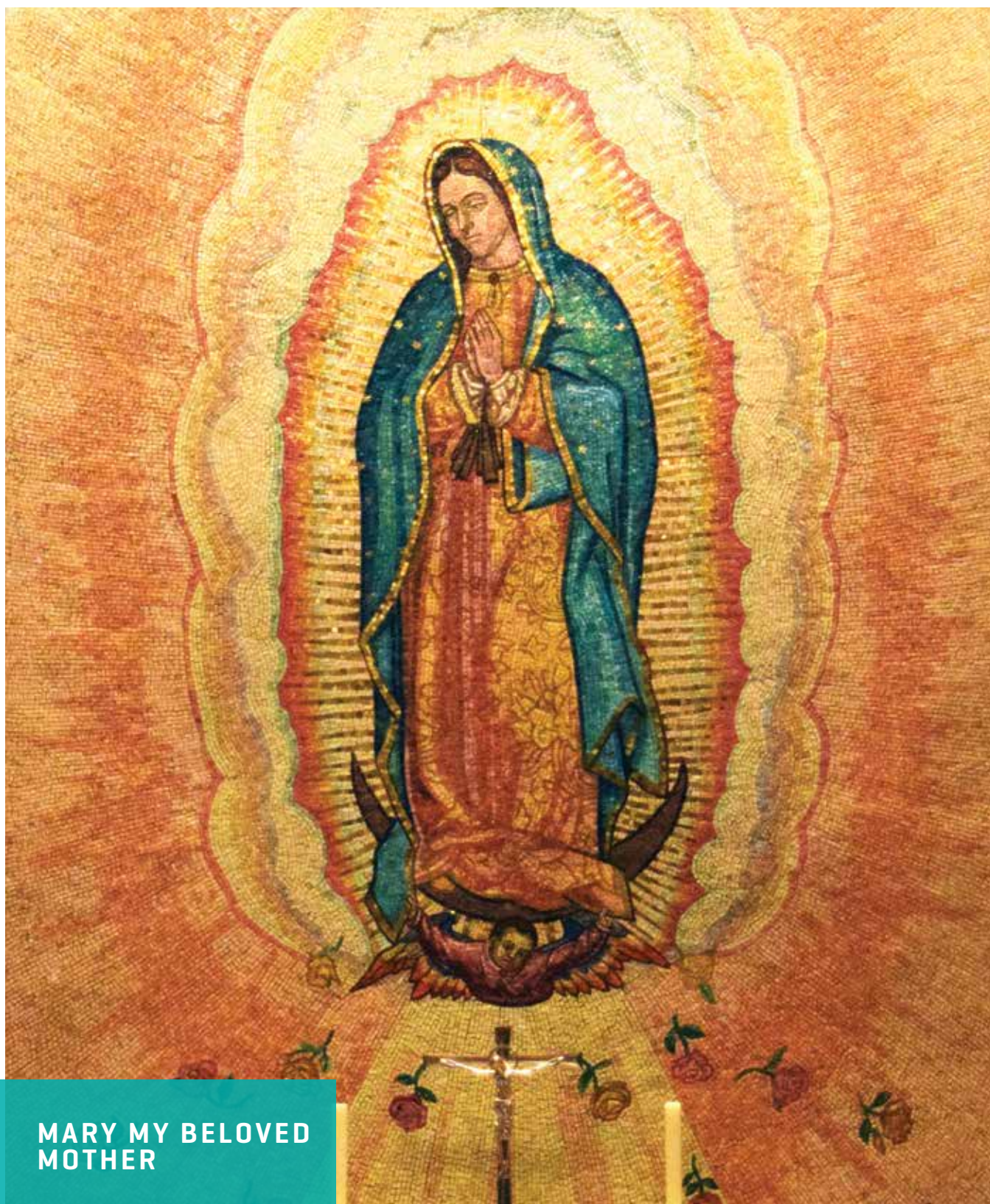
■ ALPHY THEVALAKARA

Family  
—The  
Domestic  
Church

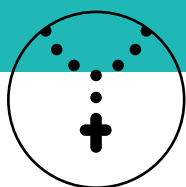
■ SABEENA RONCY

GROWING IN  
*Modesty*  
MARY JACOB





## MARY MY BELOVED MOTHER



O Morning Star, hope of Christians, intercede for your children that sustained by your powerful intercession, we may utilise the gift of this new year to bring forth Jesus' Kingdom in our lives and in the lives of all around us. Gate of Heaven, pray for us.



# EDITOR'S ROOM

DR. CHACKOCHAN J NJAVALLIL



**MODESTY  
INSPIRES A  
WAY OF LIFE  
WHICH MAKES  
IT POSSIBLE  
TO RESIST THE  
ALLUREMENTS  
OF FASHION AND  
THE PRESSURES  
OF PREVAILING  
IDEOLOGIES**

# M

## Modesty – A forgotten Virtue

"What a joy it is to meet a person with a happy smile and pure intention, whose modesty shines forth and acts like a window to reveal their personality and particular beauty," reads one of the posters on a wall.

The dictionary meaning of the word modesty states: 'the quality or state of being unassuming in the estimation of one's abilities' and some synonyms are; self-effacement, humility, lack of vanity, lack of pretension, unpretentiousness. I feel the dictionary meaning does not convey the Catholic understanding of the word.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church links modesty to the dignity of a person and says that it is decency (2522). The verses 2521 to 2523 speaks about modesty specifically. Verse 2523 differentiate between internal and external modesty. "Modesty inspires a way of life which makes it possible to resist the allurements of fashion and the pressures of prevailing ideologies." Today, the virtue of modesty is very much ignored especially with regard to the way we dress. However, reading through the teachings of saints, we realise the problem is not new.

In the fourth century, Saint John Chrysostom instructed women on the way they dress. "You carry your snare everywhere and spread your nets in all places. You allege that you never invited others to sin. You did not, indeed, by your words, but you have done so by your dress and your deportment. ... When you have made another sin in his heart, how can you be innocent? Tell me, whom does this world condemn? Whom do judges punish? Those who drink poison or those who prepare it and administer the fatal potion? You have prepared the abominable cup, you have given the death dealing drink, and you are more criminal than are those who poison the body; you murder not the body but the soul."

While in hospital, Jacinta, who witnessed several apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Fatima, was saddened by the worldliness of the visitors, the women dressed in fashionable clothes, often with low-cut dresses. "What is it all for?" she asked Mother Godinho (her guardian). "If only they knew what eternity is." "the sins which bring most souls to hell are the sins of the flesh. Certain fashions are going to be introduced which will offend Our Lord very much... the Church has no fashions; Our Lord is always the same..."

St. Francis de Sales, in the book Introduction to a Devout Life, exhorts, "Be neat, Philothea; let nothing be negligent about you. It is a kind of contempt of those with whom we converse, to frequent their company in uncomely apparel; but, at the same time, avoid all affectation, vanity, curiosity, or levity in your dress. Keep yourself always, as much as possible, on the side of plainness and modesty, which, without doubt, is the greatest ornament of beauty, and the best excuse for the want of it."

The time has come that we once again realize the significance of modesty and live upon and loudly speak about it.



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*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.*  
**1 Corinth 6:19-20**

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# ASK



**Fr. Bitaju Mathew, O.S.S.T.** belongs to the Order of the Most Holy Trinity and of the Captives (Trinitarians). He serves as the Secretary Vice Provincial of the Order in India and is currently the Chaplain of the Jesus Youth International Formation Team.

## FR. BITAJU

### Q. Why can't priests marry? Doesn't God want them to use their sexuality?

**Diana Sony**, Brisbane, Australia

Clerical celibacy is considered a discipline rather than a doctrine. In the Eastern Catholic Churches, it is common for married men to be ordained to Priesthood. There are a few priests who are married in the Latin rite too, those converted from other denominations like the Anglicans. In neither the Latin rite nor the Eastern rites do those in Holy Orders marry after they have been ordained, except in extraordinary circumstances.

There are both theological and canonical reasons for those in Holy Orders not marrying. Theologically, as priests serve in the place of Christ, their ministry specially configures them to Christ. Christ was not married to one particular woman because he came to 'marry' the whole human race – the Church, his eternal Bride. Ordained priests become a sacrament of Christ. They make the love of the heavenly Bridegroom efficaciously present to the Church, particularly in the sacrifice of the Eucharist. Acting in the person of Christ, priests also "marry" the Church. Their celibacy also reflects the eschatological state of our life as referred by Christ himself (Mt 22:23-30). According to St. Paul, remaining celibate allows one's attention to be undivided in serving the Lord (1 Cor. 7:32-35).

Canonically, priests can't marry for the following reasons: priests who belong to religious orders take the vow of celibacy, while diocesan priests do not make vows, they do make a promise of celibacy. Further, according to Canon 1087, one of the impediments to a valid marriage is when 'persons who are in holy orders invalidly attempt marriage'. This

impediment remains as long as the priest has not been dispensed from it by the Holy See.

**S**T. JOHN PAUL II offers us a refreshing perspective on the meaning of sexuality and celibacy in his series of general audiences known as the "theology of the body" (TOB). If sex were something unclean and unholy, offering it as a gift to God in celibacy would be an act of sacrilege. But, since sex is one of the most precious treasures God has given humanity, making a gift of it back to God is one of the most genuine expressions of thanksgiving (eucharistia) for such a great gift. The person is receiving it from God's hands and living it as the expression of the marital covenant.

The celibate vocation is not a rejection of sexuality; nor are consecrated celibates meant to condemn themselves to a life of isolation from the complementary sex. If some approach it this way, according to St. John Paul II, they are not living in accord with Christ's words (TOB, April 28, 1982).

Physical sex is just one of the beautiful ways of expressing intimacy. Affective sexuality or intimacy is not given up in the vow/promise of celibacy. Celibates are encouraged to develop non-physical ways of being intimate. Conversation, writing, sharing of aesthetic, spiritual and intellectual interests, sharing of ministerial involvements, etc., can be ways of being together, of sharing intimately, which can reach the depths of one another. Men and women such as Francis and Clare of Assisi, John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila, and Francis de Sales and Jane de Chantal all had healthy, holy, intimate, and celibate relationships with one another. Yes, it's truly possible. And what a witness to freedom these saints are!



**YOUCAT 258**

### WHY DOES THE CHURCH REQUIRE PRIESTS AND BISHOPS TO LIVE A CELIBATE LIFE?

**Jesus lived as a celibate and in this way intended to show his undivided love for God the Father. To follow Jesus' way of life and to live in unmarried chastity "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" [Mt 19:12] has been since Jesus' time a sign of love, of undivided devotion to the Lord, and of a complete willingness to serve. The Roman Catholic Church requires this way of life of its bishops and priests, while the Eastern Catholic Churches demand it only of their bishops. [1579-1580, 1599]**

Celibacy, says Pope Benedict, cannot mean "remaining empty in love, but rather must mean allowing oneself to be overcome by a passion for God". A PRIEST who lives as a celibate should be fruitful inasmuch as he represents the fatherly character of God and Jesus. The Pope goes on to say, "Christ needs priests who are mature and manly, capable of exercising a true spiritual fatherhood."





POPE

talk...

Dr. Kochurani Joseph

Animator, National Professional Ministry, India



## PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR JANUARY

### EVANGELIZATION

That young people,  
especially in Latin  
America, follow the  
example of Mary  
and respond to the  
call of the Lord to  
communicate the joy  
of the Gospel to  
the world.

### Life is a time for giving, not possessing

There is no culture that does not condemn theft and the misuse of our possessions. But it is worthwhile to reflect more deeply on the theme of ownership in light of "Christian wisdom."

Citing the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Pope says "the goods of creation are destined for the whole human race and this "universal destination of goods" remains primordial, even if the promotion of the common good requires respect for the right to private property and its exercise.

### Where there is a lie there is no love

Christians are called to be truthful not only in our words but in our entire way of acting towards others. Our ultimate model in this regard is Jesus himself. He is the truth in person who, at his trial before Pilate, revealed that he came into this world to testify to the truth. When a person is not communicating authentically, it is a serious matter because it inhibits relationships and therefore inhibits love.

### Beware of Gossip

Gossiping kills. It kills because the tongue kills like a knife. Be careful, gossip is a terrorist because he or she throws a bomb and leaves. Christians are not exceptional men and women; we are, however, children of our heavenly

Father, who is good and does not disappoint us, and places in our hearts the love for our brothers and sisters.

### God does not ask for anything before having given much more.

God invites us to obedience and to rescue us from the deceit of the idolatries that have so much power over us. In fact, to seek one's fulfilment in the idols of this world empties us and enslaves us, whereas what gives stature and consistency is the relationship with Him. This implies a process of blessing and liberation which is true, genuine rest. This "liberated life" becomes the acceptance of our personal story and reconciles us with what we have lived from childhood to the present, making us adults and capable of giving the right weight to the realities and persons of our life.

### Every Christian vocation is spousal.

In the priesthood one loves God's people with all the paternity, tenderness and strength of a husband and a father. The Church does not need aspirants to the role of priests, but men whose heart is touched by the Holy Spirit with unconditional love for the Bride of Christ".

### Entrepreneurship is needed in face of 'scandalous poverty'

If there is hunger on earth, it is not because food is missing! What is lacking is a free and far sighted entrepreneurship, which ensures adequate production, and a solidarity approach, which ensures fair distribution. The possession of goods is an opportunity to multiply them with creativity and use them with generosity, and thus grow in love and freedom.

### Pope Francis says...

- Life is a call to the beauty of fidelity, of generosity and of authenticity.
- Christ enriched us with his poverty
- The ownership of a good makes the one who owns it an 'administrator of Providence'
- Faithful married love, in which a husband loves his wife like Christ loves the Church, is "revolutionary"
- Truth is a marvellous revelation of God, of his Father's face, is his boundless love
- Serving others first requires listening to God in prayer, so that one can give the same 'yes' to God's will as Mary gave.
- "Look at the past with gratitude", "Live the present with passion" and "Embrace the future with hope".
- The Ten Commandments help us open our hearts to receive the mercy of God and to show compassion to others.

# MISSION

## TALK

*SHEJI VARGHESE*

**Sheji Varghese** and family went for a One Month Mission in Uganda which made a deep impact on their lives. Read about their African experiences.

**T**hanks to the mercy of God, we could go for One Month Mission (OMM) in Uganda, Africa. We got the inspiration for the OMM from one of the Mission Awareness Program conducted by the JY Mission Desk of Oman. The sharing of Santhosh chettan, a pioneer of African mission, challenged us. After a long period of prayer discernment, we took the decision to go ahead. But we were worried about our second daughter, Sarah, who was just one-and-a-half-years-old. There was a 100-days of spiritual preparation. A few days before the travel, we heard about the spreading of ZICCA VIRUS in African region. However, the Word of God strengthened us to go ahead. "Leave all your worries unto Him and he will take care of you."

The first few days we were in Fort Portal, helping with the retreat for full-timers in



Uganda. We experienced the love and care of Bishop Robert Muhirwa of Fort Portal diocese on these days. After the retreat, we went to our assigned mission area, Paidha parish of Nebbi diocese which is about 500 km from Fort portal. It was a night-long journey on a bus. The conductor of the bus gave us some safety instruction and asked for a common prayer prior to the journey and someone from the bus led a prayer in the name of Jesus.

We were warmly welcomed by the Parish priest, Fr. Richard. He asked us to visit the family prayer units of the Parish and share about Christian Marriage and the importance of sacraments. We received warm welcome from each village group and they were so patient to hear us. Though the parishioners are poor, their love and care was so amazing. They invited us to their home to pray and enjoy their local food which is made from dried tapioca. It was just like we are following Jesus with his disciples throughout our mission journey. We prayed for many missionaries to reach







Africa and bring many to our Lord Jesus Christ. "Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field'" (Matthew 9:37-38)

One day, we visited a family where both the couples were affected with AIDS. We prayed and ate food together. Moved, they said this was the first time someone from outside had visited their house. We were just doing everything according to the prompting of Holy Spirit. We did what Jesus would have done if He was there.

The celebration of the Holy Mass in an African language was a great experience, especially on Sundays. The parishioners bring their agricultural products and during the offertory bring them by a dancing procession.

**ONE DAY, WE VISITED A FAMILY WHERE BOTH THE COUPLES WERE AFFECTED WITH AIDS. WE PRAYED AND ATE FOOD TOGETHER. MOVED, THEY SAID THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME SOMEONE FROM OUTSIDE HAD VISITED THEIR HOUSE.**


It was beautiful. We could witness the richness of our Mother church in its splendid ways in Uganda.

We got an opportunity to share our experience in a local radio and were also invited to share the Word of God at a common Charismatic gathering at a Church premises. We could see the miraculous power of Jesus through the healing of the sick, deliverance etc. We thanked God for giving us this opportunity to be His missionaries and thus be closer to Him. We believed Jesus will surely stand with us - "I tell you, whoever publicly acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man will also acknowledge before the angels of God". (Luke 12:8).

Our children enjoyed those days in Uganda more than us. During those 30 days, we never went to any Hospital for any medical reasons for our children though we regularly had hospital visits back in Muscat. Children were playing with the Africans even though they don't understand their languages.

During this Year of Mercy, we could visit three Cathedrals of Uganda; Kampala, Nebbi, and Fort Portal. On the last day of our mission, we visited the Uganda Martyr's shrine at Namugongo which is the place where the early Christians were brutally martyred for Christ.

This OMM period was a great time of grace in our life. We got enough time to speak and share together which deepened our family relations. During those days, we were deeply meditating on the blessings which we had been enjoying in our life. The food we eat, the water we drink, the house we have, the dress we wear. People in the other side of the world are lacking many of their necessities and we are blessed with many and yet always complaining to God for unnecessary things. After our OMM, we took a decision to avoid unnecessary shopping, ensure zero wastage of food and always thank God for the blessings we enjoy.

We pray and encourage everyone to go for mission and share the Gospel of the Lord with others. Our church needs many missionaries to proclaim His message. 

.....

Sheji Varghese lives in Oman with his wife, Jincy, and three daughters. They are actively involved in the Jesus Youth movement.

# JESUS YOUTH



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

## The favourite saint of Jesus Youth



Someone wrote to me recently, 'Why we say that St Francis is the patron saint of Jesus Youth? What do we imply by that?' Quite a number of memories and thoughts were awakened by that question. One of them was an evening discussion we had a long time ago.

That evening, as an ice-breaker we were asked to share on a question, 'Who is your favourite saint and what do you like about him/her?'. This was in early 1980's and we had come together at Snehnilayam in Ernakulam for

the First Line Gathering. We were an assorted bunch of youth and married, men and women, but all actively involved in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and passionately dedicated to accompanying young people.

Francis of Assisi was a saint that I knew quite well and had so much of admiration for. While I was quite small, during the vacation time, my auntie used to gather the children together and read to us nice books. One of her favourites was the life of St Francis of Assisi. So many interesting anecdotes

from the life of this holy person stuck in my memory: his birth in a manger, his bringing up in the affluent home of a silk merchant, his transformation during his quest for worldly glory, his encounter with a leper, the call to build the church, embracing of utter poverty in life, how he build a band of dedicated poor friends, and so on. When the question about the favourite saint came I had no doubt about mine.

During our discussion I readily opted for St Francis. The senior most one among us was Miss Alicekutty and her birthday was on the 4th of October, the very feast day of St Francis. She too was much in love with him. That day one after the other most of us in the First Line Group declared their love for this humble yet fascinating holy man. Though there was no official declaration, from that day on we would say that St Francis of Assisi is our heavenly patron. I don't think we ever had his statue or picture placed in the midst of us or composed any special prayers or novenas invoking the intercession of St Francis, but we often mentioned his challenging qualities and cited him as the best model for us to follow the Lord.

In this way from the beginnings of Jesus Youth movement St Francis had a special place in it. As a song, a prayer and fuel for reflection – "Lord, make me a channel of your peace" has been on the lips of most Jesus Youth. Later







## IN JESUS YOUTH THIS JOY-FILLED MIRROR OF CHRIST IS A CONSTANT CHALLENGE TO LIVE A FERVENT AND RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP

when the beautiful film on Francis, "Brother Sun, Sister Moon" by Franco Zeffirelli was introduced that became inevitable ingredient of most of the training programs. The famous song by Donovan, "If you want your dream to be" turned out to be the best loved song in school and college groups. At the turn of the century Jesus Youth Prayers were collected into a book form, among the thirty one 'Saints' Prayers' two were from St Francis. It is obvious that a love for Francis has been steadily

growing in Jesus Youth movement ever since its inception.

### Why Jesus Youth love St Francis?

St Clare of Assisi the famous disciple of Francis had this to Say: "We become what we love and who we love shapes what we become". To get challenged by a saint like St Francis is indeed a transforming experience for any Jesus Youth. No wonder the movement takes special care to introduce him to the younger ones that come to be part of its fellowship. And what are some of the significant aspects of the person and life of Francis that the movement wishes to highlight?

Firstly, his radical following of Jesus, loving Him passionately as his friend and master. He dared to imitate Christ thoroughly and lived the Gospel with uncompromising courage.

He lived a life of the joy of the Lord in its fullness. The resulting joyful and creative life of the saint turned out to be the best example of the Good-News for the onlookers and became the foundation of a life in communion with God, with the men and women around and even with the ecosystem around.

He loved poverty and simplicity which helped him soar up from material bondages. For the sake of attaining the fullness of life in the Lord and following Jesus, Francis forsook everything and espoused 'beautiful poverty'.

He was so very creative: a wonderful poet, loved singing, had surprisingly novel ways of talking, acting and sharing the message of salvation. His creativity and radical

ways fascinated everyone, especially those young in spirit. He truly lived 'via pulchritudinis' or the path to reach God contemplating beauty.

Francis had a unique approach to the evangelistic mission. He was so good at reaching out to others and bringing them to an active life in Christ. "Preach the Gospel at all times; use words if necessary": these highly challenging words rightly or wrongly attributed to the saint speak abundantly of the Franciscan approach to sharing the message of Christ with others.

Francis was born around 1181 in a little town of Italy and died in 1226, but in all subsequent generations and in every nation, whoever has come across this radically poor and joyfully creative 'little humble man' has drawn out of his example, immense inspiration and ever-renewing creativity. In Jesus Youth this joy-filled Mirror of Christ is a constant challenge to live a fervent and radical discipleship. He is also a scarcely explored model for superb mission styles relevant for contemporary times. More than a pious devotion to the saint, the movement should strive to promote among the young a deeper understanding and continuous reflection on this radiant model of vibrant youthfulness. ■

.....

Dr. Edward Edezhath, one of the pioneers of Jesus Youth movement, is a retired professor from St. Albert's College, Ernakulam. He is one of the Animators of the International Council. He lives with his wife Audrey in Kochi, India.



Jesus Youth

ENGAGE

# THE HOLY MASS

THE EUCHARIST,  
AN INVITATION  
AND A  
RESPONSE  
TO THAT  
INVITATION –  
**CYRIL ABRAHAM**  
DELVES DEEP  
AND EXPLAINS.

**"If we really understood the Mass, we would die of joy."**

*-St. Jean Vianney*

**T**here is so much that can be written about the Eucharist. Many saints and learned men have already spoken and written much about it. I am sure we all have our versions of experiences to share. I am merely touching the shadow of the shadow of the shadow of such holy writings. I will mainly touch on just 2 aspects here, 'the Invitation' and 'the Response'. Let's get straight into it.





## THE INVITATION

An invitation to the Final Meal with Jesus – First and foremost, the Holy Mass is an invitation to become part of the final meal with Jesus, for all those who were not present at the Last Supper – which is basically you and me. What an honour it is to be present at a meal with the Creator of the world. To miss a meal like this or to choose another instead of this meal, is to choose to do what the prodigal son did out of sheer hunger – to eat the pig's food while his father set a banquet inside the house where even his servants had food to spare. What is better than to sit with Jesus and listen to his own words and eat off HIS own table!

An invitation to mingle with the elite – As St. John Chrysostom puts it, “When Mass is being celebrated, the sanctuary is filled with countless angels who adore the Divine Victim immolated on the altar.” It's not just the angels but also the saints and our own Mother Mary who is present at the Holy Mass as she was right under the cross with Jesus during his passion. Where else would we rather be if not right under the nose of our Saviour while he is breathing HIS last!

An invitation to witness the passion and death of our Lord – If we ever get bored at Mass (irrespective of whether it is due to length, language, poor music or dated sermons), it is because we expect entertainment from it. Since when did a sacrifice or death ever become a source of entertainment? The Holy Mass is an invitation to be right under that cross on which hangs our salvation. Where do we find ourselves when HE hangs on the cross every day? Are we busy with what we think is important when the busiest of all persons is busy dying and providing new life for us! “The celebration of Holy Mass is as valuable as the death of Jesus on the cross”, says Thomas Aquinas

Every Holy Mass inspires and encourages us to die to ourselves and live for HIM. Indeed, every Eucharist is a reminder to die with HIM so we can live with HIM

An invitation to Communion – to be one with HIM - “Let the entire men be seized with fear; let the whole world tremble; let heaven exult when Christ, the Son of the Living God, is on the altar in the hands of the priest. O admirable height and stupendous condescension! O humble sublimity! O sublime humility! That the Lord of the universe, God and the Son of God, so humbles Himself that for our salvation He hides Himself under a morsel of bread” – St. Francis of Assisi. He invites us to abide in HIM and seeks to abide in us, so we may live life to the fullest (Jn 10:10b), so we may bear fruit in plenty (Jn 15:5).

## THE RESPONSE

To accept the invitation - “The Holy Mass would be of greater profit if people had it offered in their lifetime, rather than having it celebrated for the relief of their souls after death” – Pope Benedict XV. The least we could do when invited for such a feast is to say ‘YES’ and make time and space to take part in this utmost form of worship, since it is, as the church teaches us, “the source and summit of Christian life” (CCC 1324). This is where we find true rest (Mt 11:28). Where else would we rather be! What else would we rather do! If not be present at the feast set by the one who sets a feast on our table every day.

To surrender to the Holy Spirit – Once we are in, we must surrender to the host, the Holy Spirit. It is now HIS business to take care of us and lead us to the experience we can't achieve of our own (Rom 8:26-27). It is in dropping all our guards here and now, that we will taste victory that is being won by our Saviour on the cross. We must consciously detach ourselves from all worldly things in our life and attach ourselves to the bosom of our Master. We cannot have the best of both worlds, we must choose. Complete surrender is the mark of true humility and conversion.

To Eat and Drink of HIM – The crux of any invitation no matter what the event, is the food. If we are not prepared to eat and drink of HIM, we are basically setting ourselves up to be hungry and thirsty again (Jn 6:35) and refuse to accept life into ourselves (Jn 6:53). What profit is it to eat all the good food and drinks money can buy that only sustains us and not eat the food and drink that gives us life itself!

To die to self and live in HIM and for HIM – Every Holy Mass inspires and encourages us to die to ourselves and live for HIM (2 Cor 5:15). Indeed, every Eucharist is a reminder to die with HIM so we can live with HIM (Rom 6:8). Dying here is inevitable if eternal life is our target! Dying here is essential if discipleship is our lifestyle! Dying here is crucial to our life after death!

The invitation is open to all but not all respond. For those who respond in the positive, Jesus promises eternal life and for those who choose to ignore, reject or refuse, what else can I say!



Cyril Abraham encountered God during his University days and has since been an active member of Jesus Youth. He is a gifted preacher and currently lives with his wife, Raifiel in Canberra, Australia.

## ENCOUNTER

# BE A TRENDS

**JASMIN  
SANTHOSH**  
SHARES HER  
JOURNEY  
WITH CHRIST  
AND HOW HE  
TRANSFORMED  
HER INSECURE  
TEENAGE LIFE

I grew up in a catholic family – to parents who were regulars at our local prayer group. But I was born in a country where religious freedom was severely limited, a country which prohibits

the practice of any religion other than Islam. Usually, this is enough for most people to stray away from God. However, unlike others, my parents chose the narrow path. My mom snuck in a bible and a rosary on her first visit to this foreign country!

Our family were regulars at the 'secret' (as public worship was not allowed) prayer meetings, mass and catechism classes. Even though church was a huge part of my life growing up, I wasn't fully convinced. If someone had asked the little 8-year-old, if I believed in God, I probably

would have said 'Yes'. If they had asked me if God could love me, my answer would have been 'No'. Like most kids brought up in an Indian community, I viewed God as a big, old, angry man, watching our every single move, waiting for someone to sin so that he could punish us. I could not even fathom why people worshipped a man so scary.

A couple of years went by, circumstances had changed and my family moved to Australia. I was a few years older but not necessarily wiser. I was now a stubborn little teenager who still wasn't





# BETTER

convinced of my faith. Like most teenagers growing up in a country like Australia, I was filled with insecurities. I was quite happy living in the safe zone I had created for myself – my family, a few close friends, home and school. Around this time, a family friend invited me to a Jesus Youth Teens Retreat. Naturally, my answer was no. However, like all JY elders – they don't just invite you once, they ask multiple times. After a few house visits my parents were convinced. With quite the scepticism, I hesitantly decided to go to my first Jesus Youth Retreat. I hadn't even heard

of Jesus Youth before – what could they tell me that I hadn't heard of before?

However, from the get go, this retreat felt different. It was nothing like the many other retreats I had been to. Everything that was said, I could relate to. It was as if they were talking directly to me. All the struggles the speakers were talking about were my struggles too. After every session, after every adoration I felt myself getting closer and closer to the truth. Never had I felt such intense love. Finally, God made sense, everything made sense. I truly

believed God loved me! No longer was he a punishing God, but a Father who loved me unconditionally.

So at 13, just like that I had my first God experience. I want to say it was all smooth sailing from that point on. But it wasn't. There were many more retreats after that. I still had faith, but was quite happy to be just like that. I was a believer but never a doer – quite happy to just turn up to events. I never believed I could be more than a spectator.

In 2013, aged 17, I went to a national training program for young people – 'Trendsetters'. The whole theme for the event was to "Be a Trendsetter, Leave a Mark." Even when the elders first approached me to attend the program, I said no. It was just not my thing, way out of my league. How could I – a shy, insecure teenager be a trendsetter? But thankfully, the JY elders never gave up. So hesitantly (after weeks of persuasion), I decided to go. And I'm so glad I did.

To this day, Trendsetters is an experience I treasure. It made me realise that I wasn't just called to be a spectator

and that I had so much more to offer. Believing was no longer enough, it was time for action and it was time for me to do something for Jesus. It was time to let go of my fears and insecurities and let God mould me into the person he wants me to be. And it was scary but like Pope Benedict said, "The world promises you comfort, but you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness."

To the young people reading this, you don't have to start big. I didn't and that is ok – not everyone can go from being timid one day to a resource person the next. But we're all called to practice what we preach. Find something that interests you and do it with a sincere heart. For some it may be music, for others writing. Others might be excellent speakers or actors or dancers. Or like what I did – it might be inviting people to events. Whatever it is, "be doers of the word, and not merely hearers" (James 1:22).

And to the any elders reading this, please don't give up. Keep listening and engaging with your young people. Your presence in a young person's life might just be the extra push they need. Me being me, have always said no to everything that was put towards me (whether it be a retreat or a responsibility). But God being God, working through the elders, have always changed those No's into Yes's. ■



**Jasmin Santhosh** works as an Auditor and is currently pursuing her Graduate Diploma of Chartered Accounting. She lives with her family in Brisbane, Australia. She is currently a National Council Member of JY Australia and Brisbane Regional Council Member.

## IN FOCUS

# GROWING IN *Modesty*

**MARY JACOB** SHARES THAT MODESTY IS NOT JUST ABOUT HOW YOU DRESS. IT INVOLVES YOUR WHOLE BEING INCLUDING YOUR SENSES. SHE THROWS LIGHT ON THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE VIRTUE IN OUR LIFESTYLE



**D**uring the initial months of my Jesus encounter, I started to read the Word of God more often and I came across Mathew 18:6, “whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.” I started to ponder on this Word and came to the realisation that my way of dressing shouldn’t be a reason for anyone to stumble in their faith journey. I became cautious of my outfits; for me modesty was all about dressing.

Later on, I started to realise it’s not only about my dressing, my Lord looks at me as a whole being, including how I use each of my senses and thoughts. It was too hard for me to go with the convictions that I was getting to walk in His ways. I understood that to love Him more, I would have to give up certain things that keep me away from Him.

As we all are called to holiness, saints who walked before us, have considered modesty and purity as an important virtue. As Bernard (Doctor of Church) says, “how beautiful is modesty and what a gem among virtues it is.” Jesus calls us to become modest in our lifestyle.









## PHYSICAL MODESTY

As St Paul says in 1 Timothy 2:9, “women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire.” As women, when we dress ourselves to draw attention, the instant gratification we get by making ourselves the centre of attraction, generating curiosity in others by our behaviour, action, and outfits, we deviate ourselves from Jesus.

Living in a modern world, I am not saying fashion is a bad thing. We can be fashionable in a modest or a decent way. As a mother of three, I am cautious about what my kids wear and we have discussed certain limits like no deep necklines, enough length for t shirts and dresses, no shoulder less tops, no transparent tops and especially that we cannot dress up to go to church like we would go to a gym or a park. It should be clear that our body parts should not be exposed to show off or provoke others.

Sometimes we hear from others that they don't have any intention to show off, but

remember that we are judged by our physical outfit. None of us attend an interview in an attire that shows off our body.

The words we speak, bad back chats, gossips, flattering, boasting and even our body language reflects what's going through our mind and who we are. Jesus encourages us to be like as Phil 4:8 “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things.”

## SPIRITUAL MODESTY

Spiritual modesty should be formed from our relationship with God. It is basically giving God the most important place in our life and being conscious of witnessing Jesus to our brethren. I would like to cite a few examples as follows:

When we pray, as Jesus says in Luke 18, who do we resemble, the Pharisee or the sinner who did not dare to look up and pray.

In Mathew chapter 6 Jesus also

reminds us that when doing good deeds, we should not look for praises, instead wait for the reward from the Father who is aware of all the secrets.

Humility is another virtue that helps us to grow in modesty. It is important that we recognise our talents and attributes as gifts from God and always trust in Him even though we do small things and use it for His glory.

Practising self-control also helps us to grow in modesty. It is like building a fort against the enemy's attacks. Every time we control or take ourselves from sinful situations, we are protecting our soul. It includes controlling our emotions, thoughts and actions.

The important checklist that we should be aware is the motive behind all our actions. If we are tuned in to listen to the Holy Spirit, we can definitely hear the gentle voice or a prompt which will help us to walk in the path of light. As the Word says in Romans 12:2, “Do not be conformed to the world where you live, but rather be transformed through the renewal of your mind. You must discern the will of God- what is pleasing and what is perfect.”

## GROWING IN MODESTY

If we give the most important place for Jesus in our lives, we always ask for His will to be done in our lives. Even though he has given us the freedom of choice, we will be taking decisions where we put Him first. We will be reflecting Jesus through our actions and behaviours. As the Word says in Galatians 2:20 “I am crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” It is easy to stumble, but we can approach and receive the sacrament of Confession with confidence because His mercy is deeper than the darkest pitfall of our lives.

The biggest ever role model for modesty is Mother Mary as she has received Jesus in her mind, body, and soul. Let's ask our Heavenly Mother's help and intercession that we may be pure vessels that carry Jesus and to preserve us to be with Christ in His glory. ■

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**Mary Jacob** is a social worker. She lives in Canberra, Australia, with her husband, Jacob Jim Vattakkavil and three kids, George, Ann, and Joann.



# LIVING LIFE IN Modesty

Recently, a certain bible verse caught my attention, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own?" [1 Cor 6:19]. After these words repeated in my head throughout the week, I started to ponder on the real meaning behind them. Before long, a question arose in my mind. Do I really know that my body is a dwelling place for the Spirit of God? All this time, my attention and efforts were focused towards the outward appearance, and what is important was forgotten. It's easy for us to let the world get the upper hand, since it constantly sways us to adorn ourselves to impress others. This is where we need the virtue of modesty. Modesty gives glory to God who is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. If so, what does it require of us? Let's think beyond simply dressing properly, to St. John's saying, "He must increase, but I must decrease" [John 3:30]. God's Spirit dwells in us! Let this thought inspire us to live with modesty every day.

**SHILPA SHAURYA MICHAEL /**  
BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

Modesty sounds like an out dated word in the modern world, where the majority of men and women are keen in putting their best appearance, in a "look at me" style. There are times when I was ridiculed for not being modern and was asked "why can't you wear 'those' kind of dresses", and "it will look nice on you". Often times we make justifications that everyone does it, so why can't I do it? The answer is simple; "Is this what our creator wants from us?" I have told people when I have encountered such questions, "I find myself uncomfortable unveiling what is supposed to be veiled, (CCC 2521) in front of others who don't need to see it". I chuckled when my 6-year-old told his teenage sister "Sister, you can't wear that dress, it is 'showing'". I hope and pray that our children understand the value of their bodies, and be convinced that their beauty is not merely their appearance, but their whole self and people should be able to look at their eyes to see the love of God and their confidence, rather than looking at their body parts.

**SUJATHA JOSEPH /**DALLAS, USA



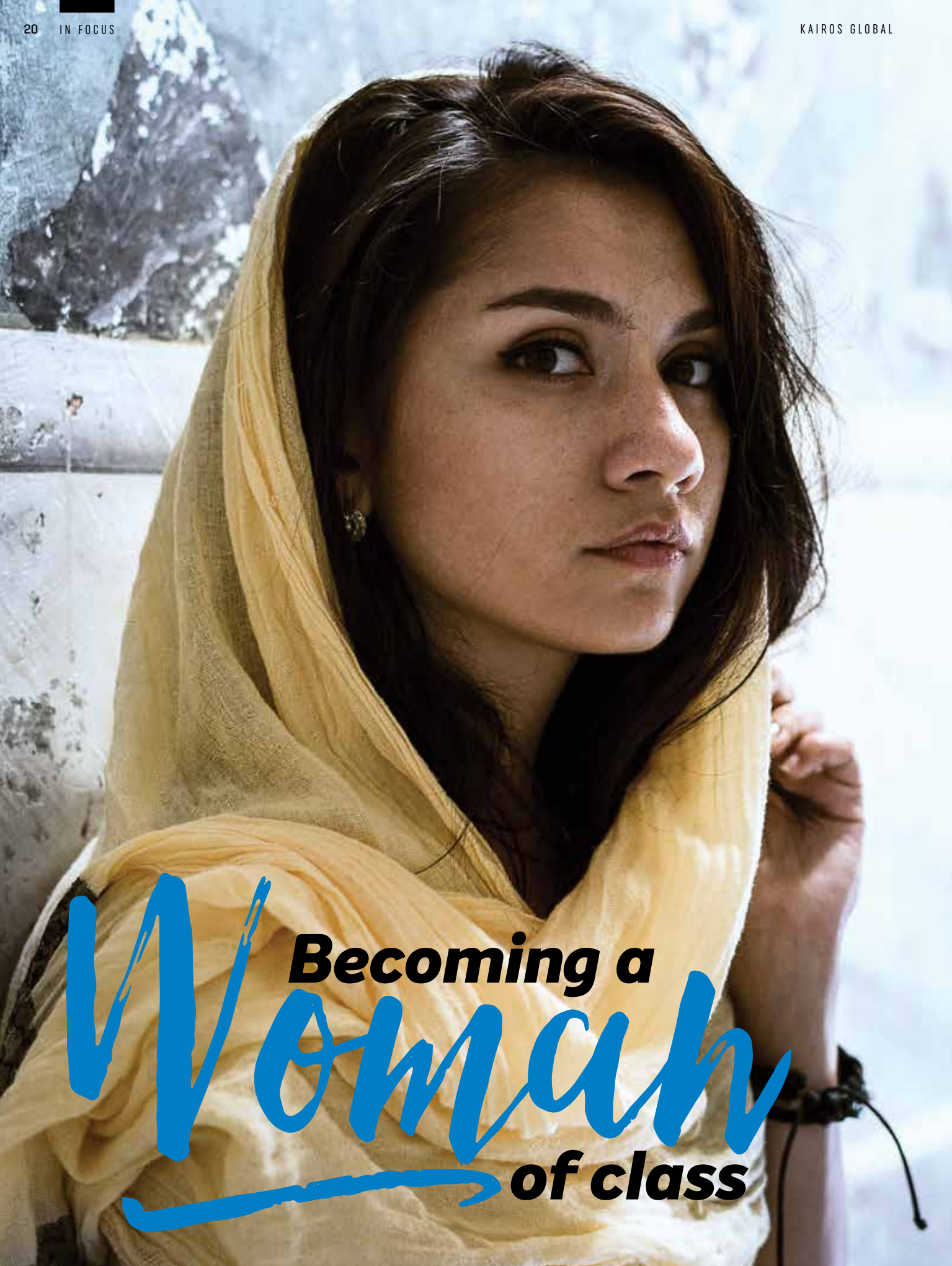
I have found that 'modesty' often comes across as daunting. We as young people struggle to understand its relevance in today's culture because the world constantly tells us that modesty is outdated or even unnecessary. As a woman, I find that I am most in control of my choices when I am at peace with who I am. Since I began focusing on my identity as an incredibly loved daughter of God, I have found myself becoming more comfortable in my own skin. Consequently it really doesn't matter anymore if I have the newest shoes or the smartest phones. I realised that stocking up on all of these was essentially just a façade to hide my insecurities and pretend that I had it all good! I love shopping and dressing well, but now it is much less about what others consider latest trends and more about whether I am presenting myself the way God intended me to be. Modesty is not about covering yourself from head to toe but about portraying yourself in a manner that respects the dignity of yourself and the people around you.

**TANYA JOJO /**BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA



If you hear the word "Modesty" and you are uncomfortable, then its most likely because you've come to believe that modesty dictates what one should wear and shouldn't wear. But for me, modesty is knowing my self-worth, it's about the realisation that I am an intricately and beautifully crafted child of a loving God and so conducting myself in that manner. I am much more than the body I carry and the clothes I wear, I am an individual who has been created for a purpose. It's about understanding that I deserve to be honoured, that I respect myself and seek for others to respect me. But most importantly, for me, modesty is loving myself, and I am able to do so when I realise that I do not need the attention or approval of others to feel validated. Because I, in the wholeness that God created me to be, am enough.

**JUDY JAMES /**BIRMINGHAM, UK



**Becoming a**  
**Woman**  
**of class**



*Who doesn't love to dress trendy? Alphy Thevalakara shares that as children of God we must look good. Read her tips on dressing in style without compromising on modesty*

**L** always enjoyed the new trends in fashion and I liked wearing fashionable and attractive clothes. It was in college that I first started paying attention to the word, Modesty.

The word modesty used to make me very uncomfortable. It made me feel that I was being judged based on the way I dress. Growing up, I attended quite a few retreats and talks where they would talk about covering up our bodies. They presented it to me in such a way that, the way I dress will lead men into lustful thoughts and impurities, and so I should cover up my body. I thought this point was important but not valid enough to convince a woman to dress modestly. Why would a young woman do anything for men? Personally, for me, I was thinking that I would dress up modest enough so as to not lead any men to sin. Wearing skinny jeans or a nice fitted top did not make me feel immodest. Wearing a sleeveless top or a short skirt right above my knee did not make me feel like I was not covering up my body. So then, what really is modesty?

Modesty is a part of chastity. Chastity is a virtue that applies to our sexuality for people of all states of life that orders your sexual desires according to the demands of real love. And part of doing that is modesty. It is a proper attitude towards our body. Our body has a sexual and personal value, but the personal value is more important than the sexual one. Modesty puts it together in the proper order; it safeguards the personal value.

I realised that, most often, when I wore something, I was trying to

impress others; fit into my friends circle or to keep up with the latest trends. Unknowingly, I was doing this to get attention. Even though I was not wearing anything provocative or immodest, I was trying to keep up with the worldly demands of sexualizing my body to make myself feel good and wanted in the society.

St John Paul II says, "when we acquire the virtue of purity we come to an ever-greater awareness of the gratuitous beauty of the male and female body." This beauty becomes light to our action. Purity is not about no longer seeing the human form and covering up from head to toe, it's learning how to properly see the body as a revelation of God. My body is good and my body is not the problem. This was truly something new for me, that the function of modesty is not to cover up your bodies because it is bad but to remind the world that there is so much for you to offer than just your body.

With lots of prayer and reading on modesty, I came to the realisation that the number one reason why I should cover up my body or dress modestly is because I am a woman of inherent dignity and worth. It is because I am a child of God and He made me in His own image and likeness. My body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and it is a sacred place. When I became aware of this fact, I started to see my body differently. When I went shopping or when I chose my clothes, it became easier to ask myself the question, does this outfit reflect outwardly that I am a woman of class, dignity and self-respect?

Does this mean that I need to

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wear turtle necks and long skirts all the time? No! I can be modern, classy and dazzling at the same time and reflect outwardly that my body is holy and God dwells within me. When I do this, I am indirectly helping my brothers in Christ from falling into temptations and sin while also living out the dignity that Christ has created me with.

Like I mentioned earlier, I loved dressing in fashionable clothes and looking good. I think as children of God we must look good. But I changed the word fashionable into class. I wanted to be a woman of class. When I think of a woman with class, I think of Kate Middleton. She carries herself with incredible class and she shows the world that she is a woman of great dignity, great value, and incredible worth.

Two years ago, I had an inspiration to change my wardrobe all together (I know!!). As crazy as it sounds, it was something beautiful the Lord was guiding me into. My normal outfits used to be a combination of jeans and tops, and sometimes skirts and very rarely a dress. I wanted to get rid of all my jeans and pants, and switch entirely into skirts and dresses. It took me a year to slowly go through this transformation since I had to collect enough skirts and dresses to be able to wear every day. Obviously, I did not go spend money like Kate Middleton, but I went through thrift stores and clearance sections to find the right outfits for me. This does not mean that wearing jeans is immodest.

Modesty sufficiently conceals the sexual values of our body so that it does not eclipse the value of the person. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in this journey and the intercession of our dear Lady who is the epitome of Modesty. ■



Alphy Thevalakara is a stay-at-home-mom, who home school her three kids. Married to Sony Thevalakara, they are expecting their fourth baby. They live in Chicago and is actively involved with the movement.



# UNDERSTAND **YOUR INHERENT WORTH**

Hazel Mathias tells us that our beauty comes from being a daughter of the King, which nothing can add to, or take away. And, you don't need anyone's validation for it



I still remember the tussle my teenage-self had with my mom every time we were getting ready for Mass. She insisted so unwaveringly on me wearing clothes that were long and loose enough - just because I have to 'dress properly' for Mass - it drove me up the wall! I was angry that I couldn't 'dress to impress'. This was my introduction to modesty.

As I grew and my body became more feminine, I became aware that I wasn't as evenly proportioned as I wished to be. And dressing 'modestly' was my way of being protected from the unwanted gazes of the opposite sex, especially in public places. Hence modest dressing for me was actually a cover up for the shame and guilt I felt about my body being the size and shape that it was, and it was fuelled by fear.

Yet, there was also this urge to dress attractively, especially when boys my age were around; to look beautiful and be desirable. This to me translated as showing skin where possible, and following current dressing trends because that determined how much people liked me and thought of me as a 'cool' person. So there, I was stuck in the turmoil of wanting to be thought of as beautiful and desirable, yet not wanting unsolicited male attention.

All of this started to change and heal after I surrendered my life to Jesus and experienced God as my personal Saviour. I was 19. I began to understand my inherent worth. I realised that my beauty comes from being a daughter of the King, which nothing can add to, or take away. Nor do I need anyone's validation for it! I realised that my body is made in the image

and likeness of God, and so is sacred and holy, not to be on display for mass consumption, but to be loved and to love with, exclusively.

And so I could finally start being at peace with myself when I was out and about, and I didn't feel the need to impress or the fear that I was being judged or gawked at, because I already felt I was deeply loved, with perfect Love, which was so satisfying. I could just be in the present moment.

In interactions with the opposite sex, I also began to care more about the fact that men are more affected by what they see, compared to women who are affected by how they are treated. Hence it became a comfortable choice for me to choose clothing that suits my body shape without drawing attention to just parts of me. Jesus makes it very clear that he meant business when it came to stumbling blocks, and I could take it to heart (Mt 18:6).

In practice, this meant my clothes were not as tight or short as they used to be. Makeup was not as loud, but subtle. Was it easy to find

the right kind of outfits that suited me? Unfortunately no! I often spent a lot of time hunting for clothes that were modest, yet looked good and made sense to wear in the culture that I lived in. But do we give up because something is hard to do? Absolutely not! Asking for help from Mama Mary, my guardian Angel and the saints would mean that I would find something nice to buy/wear eventually!

My understanding of how men usually function went to a whole new level after getting married to my wonderful husband. Soon I became a mother of two lovely boys within two years. This meant hectic days and often sleep-deprived nights. I really didn't bother about what I wore, as long as it was modest. However, when I went for special occasions, I would try to put in some effort to look aptly dressed for the occasion. When I reflected on my actions, and dwelt into the richness of our faith to find support, I found certain gems that further refined my understanding of modesty.

\* Modesty is not just what I shouldn't do to be a stumbling block to others, but what I should do in order to be able to reflect Christ, even in my dressing sense, without being carried away by it.

\* Modesty is not just about external appearance, but rather it is an interior attribute. It is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22-23), which awakens in us respect for the dignity of my own, and every other human person (CCC 2521). It translates into the way I carry myself, what I speak, how I behave with the opposite sex - even my very thoughts. I am able to authentically love the other when I am being modest.

\* Modesty is not just for women. It's applicable to men too. Men dressing without the intention of objectifying themselves, and rather being able to respect themselves and the people around them is what modest men are about.

In the Jesus youth movement, I also came across so many women, who are so beautiful! It was not the clothes they wore or the way they did their hair, it was the way their faces glowed and the way they smiled genuinely, as they went about caring for and enjoying the presence of those around them. This, I believe truly comes from the Holy Spirit at work in their lives.

Therefore, let's persevere on this meandering road towards modesty, and learn to reflect its beauty to a world that is searching for love, real liberation, and happiness. May the Holy Spirit prune us to bear more of this fruit.

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Hazel Mathias is a Physiotherapist by profession. She lives in Mumbai with her husband and two preschooler sons.

FAMILY IN FOCUS

# FAMILY





# LY THE DOMESTIC CHURCH

*GEORGE AND VIMALA PHILIP SHARES THAT A DAILY FAMILY TIME WHERE CHILDREN ARE HEARD, COMFORTED, AND STRENGTHENED IS IMPORTANT FOR FAMILIES*



**G**eorge and Vimala Philip, more commonly known as Kochumon and Kochumol, are settled in Tampa, Florida. They migrated to the US in the late 1980s. As a married couple, they have always been active within the Syro-Malabar Catholic community in Tampa. Currently, both Kochumon and Kochumol work in the mailing industry. Kochumol works as a clerk for the United States Postal Service (USPS) and Kochumon is a franchise owner of United Parcel Services (UPS). They are blessed with three children; Fr. Rajeev (son 27 years), Rhea (daughter 23 years), and Rayna (daughter 15 years).

**Could you give us a peek into how your family atmosphere helped nurture the faith and Catholic values and traditions in your children?**

Our daily family prayer was the key. We never skipped our family prayer. From the first day of our married life, we had a regular family prayer structure which included Angelus, the Rosary and the peace prayer of St. Francis Assisi. We always had a regular time of prayer at night. Sometimes the kids would be tired after a long day, but we still made sure that they participated in praying the Angelus and at least one decade of the Rosary before going to sleep. We also tried to

make our prayer time lively by singing various devotional songs.

We always tried to live a life that was orientated towards serving the Church. This commitment played an important role in our family life and consequently, in our children's faith formation. Daddy was very zealous in organizing retreats and prayer gatherings for the Catholic Malayalee community in Tampa. Before the inception of St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Catholic Diocese of Chicago, there was no Syro-Malabar parish in Tampa. Hence, our spiritual lives revolved around the life of the local parish. However, there was a periodic Malayalam Qurbana in Tampa.

The regular retreats and prayer gatherings also helped us to grow as a community like the early Christian community and allowed us to be constantly renewed in our faith. We used to host many visiting priests and retreat preachers when they visited Tampa. Their presence at our home contributed much to our children's spiritual growth. Currently, we have a vibrant Syro-Malabar parish community here and this has allowed us to practice our faith in a more ardent and traditional way.

Constant communication was another helpful element. Each day after family prayer, we had some dedicated time where we discussed and shared the day's challenges and accomplishments. We also talked about future things and made some form of 'to-do' lists. This helped us

## FROM THE FIRST DAY OF OUR MARRIED LIFE, WE HAD A REGULAR FAMILY PRAYER STRUCTURE WHICH INCLUDED ANGELUS, THE ROSARY AND THE PEACE PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS ASSISI

to be on track and kept us informed of what is going on with each family member. Obviously life in the US is very fast paced, especially if both parents are working. In the pre-cell phone era, this family time helped us to stay informed and organized. Even now, with the help of technology we stay connected. Fr. Rajeev is in Houston and our older daughter, Rhea is in college, and we stay connected through our family chat group to support and strengthen each other.

Education was an important focus in our family. We wanted to give our kids the best education possible, without compromising our faith values. Fr. Rajeev studied in a Catholic school from pre-school to 12th Grade. A Catholic School education was very expensive and neither of us





were very highly paid. However, we chose to send him to a Catholic school and his constant involvement with the school, church activities and constant contact with priests helped him to receive the faith values and reverence to consecrated life.

We also decided to say "No" to the Malayalee American party culture. This helped us to keep our family values and morals. Being surrounded by our relatives and friends weekend parties and gatherings were frequent. It was very hard to say "No" to the parties, but we consciously made an effort to avoid that, especially if alcohol was being served. We never used to allow any alcohol at our home.

### What are some of the faith practices, habits, and traditions in your family?

- Daily family prayer in the morning and at night
- Strict observation of Lent
- Scheduling regular family time
- Pray and making the Sign of the Cross before leaving the house
- During vacations to India, we made it a point to go and visit seminaries, churches, and priests
- Living the Sacramental life
- Being obedient to the precepts of the church, especially in supporting church activities physically and financially.

### Your son Rajeev is a priest with the Syro-Malabar church in the US. Could you tell us a bit about how his call to priesthood was identified and preserved?

Rajeev went to the local Catholic school, Bishop McLaughlin Catholic High school. There, he interacted closely with the priests of the diocese, school teachers and also became involved with church activities. He had a year-long confirmation preparation. It was a requirement for confirmation candidates to listen to the Sunday

Gospel and prepare a reflection based on the readings and homily. This eventually became a family activity where everyone at home was involved in the discussion and reflection of the Sunday Gospel and homily for a whole year and his presentation was well appreciated by the teachers and parents. This was a motivating factor for all of us!

Simultaneously, during high school years Rajeev started attending Jesus Youth prayer gatherings. Their mentoring and accompaniment helped him to grow in his desire for holiness and to hear God's call for him to become a priest. During his college studies at the University of South Florida, he had some good Jesus Youth elders and friends and was involved in their regular prayer meetings. The vocation promoter from St. Petersburg Diocese, Fr. Len Plazewski was in constant touch with Rajeev, helping him discern his vocation. For almost one year he spent time in constant adoration and prayer, to discern God's call. He also had a priest spiritual director to help him make the decision.

Eventually, when Bishop Lynch of the St. Petersburg Diocese asked him if he is interested in joining the seminary, he said "YES". That was a big "YES". However, his involvement with Jesus Youth helped him to interact with Jesus Youth National leaders and also with Fr. Vinod Madathiparambil, the former vocation promotor of St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Catholic Diocese of Chicago. Discerning his call and desire to become a priest, Bishop Mar Jacob Angadiath reached out to him. Though Rajeev was more inclined to become a priest for the Latin diocese, a native Syro-Malabar priest seemed to be the need of the time. He felt a need for the younger generation of the Syro-Malabar community of Chicago Diocese, to come of age, and so he took the decision to join the seminary for the Syro-Malabar rite.

### What is your advice to the young families in this country on parenting, nurturing vocation and in leading a true witnessing life for Christ?

We would say family prayer is the most important factor in instilling faith in children. This time of family prayer should be made "kid friendly". Family time is very important where children are heard, comforted and strengthened to get through their day to day struggles. A prayerful witnessing in the family will impart morals and values, cultivate faith habits, promote a genuine love towards the Church, and respect towards priesthood and consecrated life. The grace that flows to that family will reach the children and help them to seek the will of God and to live out a desire to lead a life glorifying God.

A life centered around Christ, in the Church and with the community will nurture trust in God. Our children should be protected from today's culture. Avoid excess media time, party culture and consumerism. Be a good role model for kids! Encourage them to participate in the sacramental life of the Church. Parents, especially fathers need to spend more time with children as they have a long-lasting effect in children's faith formation. The convictions and strong faith they receive from fathers produce long-lasting fruits. This loving atmosphere is very important. We should never expect to win them with anger. As parents, we should bend down and listen to them and correct them lovingly. ■



Sabeena Roncy is a proud Catholic and a Jesus Youth, living in Houston, USA, with her husband and three children.

## FAMILIA



*Anoob Joseph on  
what is entailed in the  
vocation of a Catholic  
Family and suggestions  
on how to go about it*

# CHRIST CENTRED HOME

## *"The family*

is fundamental because it is the place where there germinates in the human soul the first perception of the meaning of life. This perception grows in the relationship with the mother and with the father, who are not the owners of the life of the children but, the first collaborators with God in the transmission of life and the faith" (Pope Benedict XVI).

The Catholic Faith, rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, believes in and strives to put into practice the love revealed in Christ. The love of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit – one God in Three Persons – is the model for every "communion of persons", especially the Family. In a healthy and vibrant family each person contributes to the well-being of the other, each in his/her own unique way. A 'mother' or 'father' or 'child' can never be replaced. Each



one is an irreplaceable and inestimable good which contributes the very life of the family. Thus, the Family, by its very nature, becomes a “school of love” where the virtues necessary for the building of a just and peaceful society are taught, developed, and put into practice in the concrete reality of daily life. It is for this reason that the Church has recognized in the family the fundamental building block of Society as a whole.

### CHRIST-CENTRED HOME

Every Christian family, like every Christian individual, is a poem written by God (Ephesians 2:10) and every poem is unique. But there are some common features we can expect to find in every genuinely Christ-centred home.

**Joy is characteristic of a truly Christian home** – Having said this, it's important to understand that joy and happiness are not necessarily the same thing. Happiness is a result of what happens to us. Joy has deeper roots. Every marriage and every family will experience trials and hardships of various kinds, but there is no circumstance that can rob us of our joy if we know that the key to our present welfare and future destiny lies in Christ alone.

**A Christian home is orderly-** As the apostle Paul says, “God is not the author of confusion but of peace” (1 Corinthians 14:33). The members of the household regularly review everything that's allowed in. Should it stay? Does it build up the family? Does it encourage people to value one another over things?

**A Christ-centred home should be marked by grace** – It should be a safe place to mess up. Family members need the ointment of grace applied to the wounds of their hearts. They need to remember that love, not perfection, is the goal. There's enough hostility, judgment, sarcasm, biting humour, and antagonism out in the world. Home should be a retreat where every hurt can find comfort, rest and healing.

**A Christian home is a place of service-** Its atmosphere is tempered and flavoured with acts of kindness, respect, humility, and love. This is where husbands and wives discover that serving each other in Christ is primary; that service to others in

the outside world is built upon an attitude of selflessness at home; and that all of life, including the mundane duties of laundry, housekeeping, and lawn-mowing, can be sacred.

### A Christ-centred home is a place where the spiritual disciplines are practiced-

It provides an environment where every member of the family learns how to live by sacraments, praying, meditating on God's Word, and spending time alone in the presence of the Lord.

### A Christian home is based on God's purposes for every member of the household-

It's a place where the family's goals are founded upon His values and where the corporate vision of the future is consistent with His plan. Developing a family “Mission Statement” can be a wonderful place to start crafting a genuinely Christ-centred home. The guiding principles embodied in this document should be flexible but consistent. From beginning to end, they should reflect your eternal focus and express your deep hope of seeing Jesus face to face one day.

### BUILDING UP CHURCH.

Just as the early Christian families were an example to others around them, Catholic families today can build up their own domestic churches and strive to be “islands of Christian life in an unbelieving world”.

“Every home is called to become a ‘domestic church’ in which family life is completely centred on the lordship of Christ, and the love of husband and wife mirrors the mystery of Christ's love for the Church, his bride”, Pope Benedict XVI said in his February 7, 2007 general audience remarks.

**A domestic church begins with the Sacrament of Matrimony** — man and woman become husband and wife. Pope John Paul II spoke of a Catholic couple's call to holiness within that sacrament when he said, “Marriage is an act of will that signifies and involves a mutual gift, which unites the spouses and binds them to their eventual souls, with whom they make up a sole family — a domestic church.” He also explained the husband and wife's responsibility to recognize and to act upon their role as “givers of





life” in his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (“The Gospel of Life”): “As the domestic church, the family is summoned to proclaim, celebrate, and serve the Gospel of life. This is a responsibility which first concerns married couples, called to be givers of life, on the basis of an ever-greater awareness of the meaning of procreation as a unique event which clearly reveals that human life is a gift received in order then to be given as a gift. In giving origin to a new life, parents recognize that the child ‘as the fruit of their mutual gift of love, is in turn, a gift for both of them, a gift flowing from them’” (No. 92).

As babies are born and families grow, the parents, considered the first and foremost educators by the Church, are called to pass on the Catholic faith to their children. Blessed Mother Teresa explained this experience in the domestic church very simply when she said, “The best and surest way to learn the love of Jesus is through the family.”

## Catholic families today can build up their own domestic churches and strive to be “islands of Christian life in an unbelieving world”

### WAYS TO NURTURE YOUR CHILD'S FAITH

Parents are responsible for the material well-being of their children. Yet we know our children are spiritual beings as well. Here are five gifts you can give to nurture the spiritual life of your child.

#### 1. Explain to your child why you gave him or her the name you did:

In the Bible, names carry a lot of meaning. Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter (Greek for “rock”), which indicated Peter's vocation as the leader of the future Christian community. By telling your child why you chose his or her name, you can highlight the spiritual hopes you have

for your child and emphasize his or her connection to the larger community.

#### 2. Tell stories about your ancestors:

Explain, for example, how their grandparents or great-great grandparents came to this country, if they are of immigrant heritage. Such stories — of the strength, perseverance and faith of their forbearers — will help them know that they are part of a larger, grander story than just their own.

#### 3. Share with your child who your favourite saint is and why:

Describe how you receive inspiration from the example or teaching of this saint (or saintly person, whether canonized or not). Explain to your child the reason you are devoted to this saint and talk about other people whom you admire.

#### 4. Offer a story about how your faith helped you in a difficult time in your life:

Think back to a time when you made an important decision, and if you are comfortable, share how your faith shaped the decision. Set aside time to also talk about how your faith helps you on a daily basis.

#### 5. Give your child your time and attention; listen to their hopes and dreams:

The care and concern you express for your child provide a foundation upon which your child can accept God's love and the love of others. Every day you help to shape the attitude your child brings to prayer and worship. The loving attention you share with your child prepares him or her to encounter Jesus in the heart, in the Eucharist, and in other people.

Amidst a cultural tide that in many ways undermines family life, it can be difficult for families to faithfully persevere in their vocation and mission without the support of others. Sharing life's joys and challenges with families and friends who share the same vision and commitment to Christian family life is very important.



**Anoo Joseph** is the former Coordinator of Jesus Youth Australia. A nurse by profession, he lives in Melbourne, Australia with his wife, Lisha and five children.



# IS IT TIME FOR A SOUL BREAK?



Jesus Youth

Are you seeking a break from the everyday bustle to take stock of God's call in your life? Are you at the crossroads, wondering which road God wants you to take? Are you on the lookout for elders to accompany you in your journey with God? Or do you just need a space to pray, breathe and reflect?

*WELCOME TO THE VINEYARD.*

Jesus Youth Families at the Vineyard in Kochi are now welcoming young men who wish to take spiritual breaks of durations ranging from one week to one month - at their Community Villa. They will be closely accompanied by Jesus Youth families in their faith journey - and guided through scripture, prayer and reflections during their stay at the Vineyard.

Email us at [jysoulbreaks@gmail.com](mailto:jysoulbreaks@gmail.com) or call  
7356791450 for further details.



## SOUL BREAKS AT THE VINEYARD

A time of personal discovery  
guided by Jesus Youth families



## CULTURE OF LIFE



*As* a medical professional, I knew about 'spontaneous abortion', or in layman terms, miscarriage.

However, knowing the condition medically did not exactly prepare me to face it and go through it.

Since I didn't have anyone in my close circles go through it, as I was growing up, I was oblivious to the prevalence of miscarriages. Since my miscarriage, I have learned that 15-20% of all pregnancies end in miscarriage and 80% of those miscarriages happen during the first trimester of pregnancy. I was surprisingly shocked by the prevalence.

As a mother to a lost baby, it was easy to feel guilty and responsible for the loss of life that was entrusted to me. While taking the steps to get medical evaluation and prevent future miscarriages, during prayer and in the consolations of my husband, I felt peaceful in accepting this too as a gift from the Lord. This scripture verse especially spoke to my heart: "As you do not know how the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything" (Eccles 11:5). Children are truly a gift from the

SHERIN ALEXANDER  
SHARES ABOUT THE  
PAINFUL MEMORY OF  
HER MISCARRIAGE  
AND THE COMFORT  
AND BOND SHE FELT  
AMONG WOMEN WITH  
SIMILAR EXPERIENCE

# Hidden Parent





Lord. Parents are called to be good and responsible stewards of the lives given to them. We felt privileged and humbled to be gifted with that responsibility even if it was short-term.

As I started to open up about my experience to other faithful women, I was surprised by their own similar experiences and openness in sharing that with me. There was a special feminine bonding and consolation in the prayers and company of such mothers, mothers to angels! It was especially moving to pray the Magnificat with these women: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour for he has looked with favour on his lowly servant..." I also found a special closeness towards St. Gianna Molla who was a medical doctor who also experienced two miscarriages. "Praised be the God of all consolation. He comforts us in all our afflictions and thus enables us to comfort those who are in trouble, with the same consolation we have received from him. As we have shared much in the suffering of Christ, so through Christ do we share abundantly in his consolation" (2 Corin 1:3-5).

In the medical field, there is a tendency to view miscarriages as merely the loss of nonviable tissue and thus deny the couple the dignity of the pain of the loss of parenthood. Catholic understanding and defence of new life starting at conception helps the couple to accept the reality of their hidden parenthood. This acceptance is especially helpful and healing for the parents when the baby is lost during late first trimester and they were able to identify their baby's body distinctively. This helps them to offer proper prayers for the baby and acknowledge their baby as a deceased family member.

While it is painful to think that we didn't get to hold our baby, it is a consolation to know that our baby is in the presence of the Lord. We look forward to a full family reunion in heaven. ■

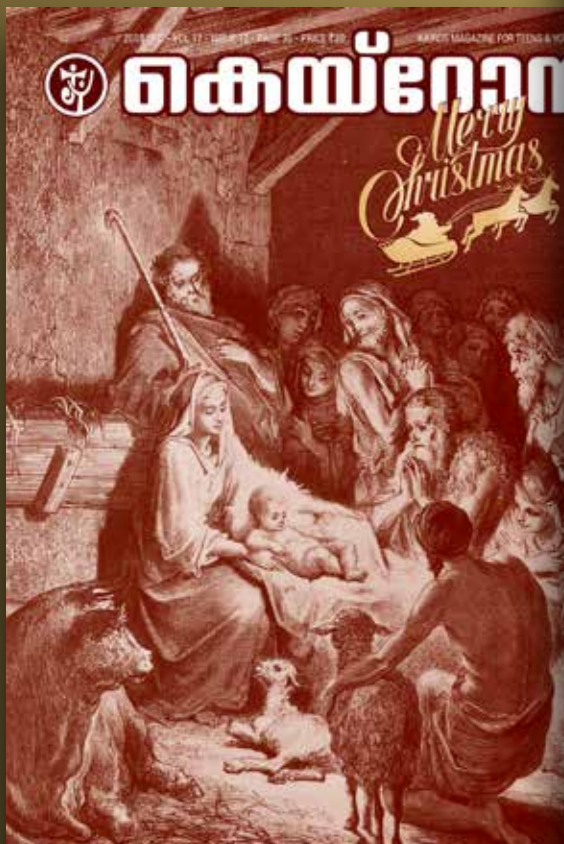


**Sherin Alexander**, a Jesus Youth, a Physician Assistant at a family practice, and a certified Marquette Model Natural Family Planning instructor lives with her husband in Florida, USA.

# hood

*In our 22nd year of publication*

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# FEEDBACK



I personally found Kairos a very interesting magazine, and it play a good role in my life...as I read so many life testimonies, which also help me to provoke n help me to attain a good bond with Jesus would like to suggest you all my dear ones to read Kairos..and experience God's love..

**Anna Paul-** Berlin Germany

"It is very informative, helps to develop positivity and spirituality. The pages also gorgeous and easy to read. Magazine really helps the youth to develop the holiness inside them. I really wish the parents to get the copy of Kairos magazine to their kids..Keep it up the good work."

**Rinu Siju Madackal-** Texas, USA

I personally found Kairos a very interesting magazines, and it play a good role in my life.. as I read so many life testimonies, which also help me to provoke n help me to attain a good bond with Jesus .. would like to suggest you all my dear ones to read Kairos..and experience God's love..

**Shilu Thomas-** Germany

The word 'Fiat' greatest 'yes' of our Mother Mary persuades each and every woman to say 'yes' to their womanhood. Most women feel distressed and disappointed before the question "What is the dignity of womanhood and what her vocation is". In the article "The Feminine Genius", Sherin Alexander gives a beautiful reflection of a woman through Mulleris Dignitatem by John Paul II. Thank you Sherin for revealing God given gift of this great treasure which is 'Womanhood'

**Jincy Vimal-** Muscat

I enjoyed reading the latest edition of Kairos. Most of the articles were encouraging and challenging as it included the personal experiences of authors, and practical tips to thrive in our day-to-day spiritual life. I truly appreciate the whole team working behind Kairos and pray that it continues to bless many lives.

**Jaya Sunil-** London, UK

You know that feeling you have at a JY conference? You meet new people, hear inspiring sharings and experience a deep fellowship. I experienced a very similar feeling after reading the kairos global magazine. Not only did I walk away inspired, surprisingly I also felt connected with the authors of the article and felt a sense of fellowship which I sense is the Holy Spirit uniting our hearts and minds. I pray that this magazine be a powerful instrument to spread the good news and unite all nations just like St Maximilian Kolbe used his publication 'Knight of the Immaculate' to spread the good news and unite Poland during the war.

**Dr. Jija Manuel-** Dallas, USA

I loved the insightful article "The Vineyards of God" by Sujatha Joseph on sanctification of self through pruning and seeing it as an act of merciful love of our Father in Heaven. A gentle reminder for all of us to see how our day to day

interactions at work a means of pruning and sanctification.

**Millon Jose-** Dallas, USA

I like Kairos because it's interesting for youth. There are different things like Missions, Testimonies, and Soundreply, which I especially like. Soundreply is my favorite because it's movie reviews, which I know most kids will like as well. The Lukas and Ray comics are fun too. The design is really nice and the magazine is well organized. I would recommend parents get this for their kids because a lot of things about the Church and Her teachings are explained well in a way that youth can relate to.

**Ann Regy-** 7th grade student in Houston, USA

Love to read Kairos Global mainly because of the quality it maintains. I think the layout design & pictures has created an infatuation in minds of readers, forces us to read. Clearly understands the efforts & pain behind. A big salute to editorial board.

**Aldrin Joseph-** Cochin, India

"As a 'Jesus Youth', I was actually very proud to present Kairos Global [our english magazine], to my close friends & colleagues. As professional photographers & working in media, web designers, they are exposed to best secular magazines like National Geographic etc. Thanks to mustard seed for quality in design, layout & photographs, great first impression created among my friends. expectations are high, waiting for more.....!!!!"

**John Joseph-** Angamally, India



# Friends of KAIROS



**KAIROS MEDIA**, the mass media initiative of Jesus Youth, reaches out to young people around the world using modern means of communication.

.....  
It is the love and support of so many "Friends of Kairos" that financially sustain the mission of Kairos Media. With a grateful heart, we lovingly remember and offer continuous prayers for our many friends who support Kairos every month through regular monetary contributions. If the Holy Spirit inspires you, dear Kairos reader, we invite you to join and support this evangelisation initiative by becoming a Friend of Kairos with your prayers and support. May God bless you!



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## YOUTH RETREAT



LED BY FR. KURIAN MATTOM

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FRIDAY 5PM TO SUNDAY 4PM

My soul thirsts for  
God, for the living God.  
When shall I come and  
behold the face of God?

PSALMS 42:2



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Kaduthuruthy, Kerala  
686604

FOR DETAILS CONTACT RAJAN PETER +91 8086685404, RAJESH JAMES +91 9847837474

# Newswatch

## Jesus Youth India National Training 2018

The Jesus Youth National Training 2018 was organised at St. Joseph Vaz Spiritual Renewal Centre, Goa, India. A total of 60 participants attended the various Training programs, including the Leaders training in English and Hindi, as well as the Animators Training. The 10-day training had the aim of enriching the horizons of the participants, with an emphasis on a life of holiness, missionary enthusiasm and personal effectiveness. The various sessions related to a broad range of topics such as integrity, paradigm shift,

biblical leadership, stewardship, using of charisms, vision and working style of the movement, planting and building youth ministry, public speaking and so on. The training had participation from across India, including Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telugu Region, Maharashtra, Goa, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Delhi, West Bengal and Meghalaya. The training concluded with the commissioning ceremony where each participant was anointed to continue the Lord's mission with a rejuvenated spirit.







# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

## SRILANKA

The National Assembly of JY Sri Lanka was held during 17th & 18th November at John Paul II Retreat Centre, Ja Ela, Sri Lanka. 32 Jesus Youth leaders attended the Assembly which was blessed by the presence of Rev. Fr. Daya Dharshana and Rev. Fr. Gihan Gunathilaka. During the Assembly, the reconstitution of the Jesus Youth National Team was conducted. Shoy Thomas, the Jesus Youth International Coordinator facilitated the process which elected Meuru Muthuthanthri as the new National Coordinator. Newly elected leaders took their commitment during the concluding Holy mass.

## BAHRAIN

The National Assembly of JY Bahrain took place on 30th November 2018, at Sacred Heart Church, Manama. During the Assembly, after a time of Prayer and discernment, the New National Team was reconstituted with Bijin Mathew as the Coordinator and Arun Paul as the Assistant Coordinator. In the blessed presence of Fr. Saji Thomas, Chaplain, Shoy Thomas, JY International Coordinator and the Jesus Youth National assembly, the New Team members took their commitment before the Lord.



# Chandeliers

## FAMILY SAINTS

### ✧ Saints Edwin of Northumbria and Ethelburga of Kent

By Joseph Santhosh & Bijie Santhosh

**W**hen Edwin was an infant, his father, the pagan king of Deira in northern England, was defeated by

Ethelric of Bernicia. For the next thirty years, Edwin lived in exile, always in danger of being killed by agents of Ethelric. After Ethelric's son Ethelfrith was killed in battle, Edwin was invited to ascend his father's throne thus uniting Deira and Bernicia in the kingdom of Northumbria.

Upon the death of his wife Cwenburth, Edwin sought a union with the Christian princess of Kent, Ethelburga. Ethelburga was the daughter of St. Aethelbert, the first Christian King of Kent and founder of the See of Canterbury, and his wife, St. Bertha. He won her family over by promising full freedom to Ethelburga and her entourage to observe their own religion, Christianity. Ethelburga got married in AD 625 and came to Northumbria along with the Bishop Paulinus, who was sent to strengthen their faith. An attempt on his life convinced Edwin of the necessity of meditating on eternal things. Finally won over by the arguments of Paulinus, the testimony of his wise men and no doubt the constant witness of his wife, he accepted baptism in AD 627. Edwin ruled as a Christian king. Saint Bede the Venerable wrote that in Edwin's time, "a woman might travel through the island with a babe at her breast without fear of insult". King Edwin's example was followed by thousands of people of all ages and conditions. When Edwin was killed in a war, Ethelburga sought her brother's patronage, built the first nunnery in England (near Canterbury) and took the veil along with her sister, St. Edburga. She lived out of her days in prayer and pious works at the monastery she had founded at Lymington, and died in AD 647.

While discerning our vocation, I am sure we wonder if our future spouse has the

*Marriage is a supernatural calling where Jesus invades the spouses' souls and invites them to transform their married life into a divine journey on earth.*

same fervor for evangelizing or whether the person has even heard of Christ! This saint is one example of how through the witness of a spouse, the family is saved. There are numerous examples in our communities and prayer groups that mirror this saint's life as well.

Marriage is a supernatural calling where Jesus invades the spouses' souls and invites them to transform their married life into a divine journey on earth. We are called to sanctify our married life through forgiving love and charity, practiced daily.

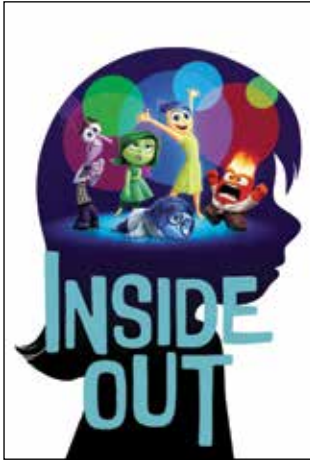
When we look at our lives, we are convinced that it is a journey of striving to do better and getting closer to Jesus who empowers us to be witnesses to his love. Going for Mass together and creating a saintly home with your spouse and children, thereby building His domestic church.

Saint Edwin and Ethelburga, pray for our families.





# SOUNDREPLY



## MOVIE

### INSIDE OUT (2015)

The pursuit of happiness – from Black Friday's to Cyber Monday's and Boxing Day's; from the latest iPhones to PS4's and Nike; from successful and fulfilling careers

to cars and luxurious homes – humanity's insatiable pursuit of happiness rolls on unabated. All of us want and seek happiness – and for most of us, it plays hide and seek; one moment we have it and the next moment it's gone. Goods, gadgets and comfort we have galore, but the more we try to possess joy, the more it eludes us, until like in the book of Ecclesiastes, we too concede, "vanity of vanity, all is vanity".

Inside Out is a 2015 3D animation movie from Pixar, written and directed by Peter Docter. Over the years, Pixar has produced some scintillating animation movies and 'Inside Out' would definitely rank as one among their best, both in terms of its script as well as the breath-taking animation on offer.

Inside Out tells the story inside the head – aptly called the 'Head Quarters' (HQ), of Riley Anderson, born into a loving and caring family in Minnesota. As the movie begins and as Riley is born into this world, the first to be at the HQ is 'Joy', who is responsible for the feeling of joy and happiness in Riley. Soon though, Joy is joined by 'Sadness', 'Fear', 'Disgust', and 'Anger', personifications of the basic emotions with which Riley growing up, experiences and comes to understand the world

around her. Joy acts as the de-facto leader of the group, always positive and bringing positive thoughts emotions and feelings to Riley, thereby creating one happy memory after another. At the end of each day, these memories are then stored as long-term memories. There are five 'core memories' of Riley, which form the foundation of her personality and Joy has taken a lot of effort to make sure that all these core memories are joyful and happy ones. As far as Joy is concerned, the only memories worth making and preserving are the happy ones. And Joy usually finds her way to tackle and keep in check the other negative emotions but Sadness, neither she nor the others know why she is there at HQ, making life difficult for Riley and the other emotions at HQ.

With this prologue, the story starts rolling as Riley turns 11 and the family moves from Minnesota to San Francisco, necessitated by Riley's dad starting up a new business venture. New place, new house, new surroundings, new school – and things start to go wrong one after the other. The new house is cramped, unclean and in the middle of the city; Riley has no

The film drives home the great truth about human life – that Sorrow is as important in life as Happiness or Joy.

friends and the moving truck with the family's entire stuff is misdirected to another state. And to make matters worse, in a moment of madness at the HQ, Joy and Sadness are accidentally evicted out of the HQ. The rest of the movie deals with how Riley (devoid of Joy and Sadness) grapples with the negative emotions in her 'head', while Joy (along with Sadness) attempts to find a way to get back into the HQ, learning an invaluable lesson as part of her journey.

The film drives home the great truth about human life – that Sorrow is as important in life as Happiness or Joy. All of us who seriously ponder the meaning of life realizes this sooner or later. Buddha defined Dukkha (Sorrow) as the first of his four noble truths. Rabbi Abraham Heschel says, "The man who has not suffered, what can he possibly know, anyway?". And for us Christians, the foundation of our faith is the God who suffered and died on the Cross. The Christian life is different primarily in its response to this universal truth of Dukkha – for we have a God who says to the weary, "Come to me, and I will give you rest, for my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

The amount of detail that the movie makers has put into the HQ is truly remarkable. Inside Out is a wonderful movie that is a thoroughly enriching watch for all age groups, not just kids. ■



#### REVIEW BY

**Joseph Anthraper**

lives in Southampton, UK with his wife Mahima and kids Anna-Claire and John-Paul, and loves reading, movies and apologetics. He is part of the Kairos Global Editorial Council.



# BLOOMING KIDS

## Get your New Year resolutions ready

WHEN IT COMES TO RESOLUTIONS, YOU CAN'T JUST DEPEND ON YOURSELF! YOU NEED TO ASK GOD FOR HELP, SHARES **JULIA RONCY**

**N**ew Year is here! And we have a whole new set of adventures, plans, worry, and other stuff lined up for us. But how many of us really know what the New Year actually means for us? Personally, I think the New Year is about new mistakes, new lessons, new friends, and a new me. That doesn't mean you have to change everything about you but you can make certain changes to become your best self. For example, if you wanted to improve your singing skills you could start taking vocal lessons or singing more. But it doesn't have to be just hobbies, you can work on your virtues too. It could be obeying your parents or getting your work done on time and not being lazy.

Everybody says that they want to stick to their New Year resolution but most of us, including me, drop out by February. But in order to stick to your resolution, you can't just depend on yourself! You need to ask God for help. God will help you persevere and stick to whatever you

want to improve on. So make sure that whenever you feel like you can't keep your resolution, say a little prayer to God asking for help. Make sure to encourage your friends to make resolutions so that they can improve too!

Some people may think that they don't need a resolution or that they can't do it, but we have to remember that there is always something we can improve on, in our life. Maybe you need to work on your math skills, or you want to be more patient. If you don't know what to do, ask God for guidance or maybe even ask your parents and siblings on what they think!

To help you get an idea of an example of a new year resolution, here's a short story: It was Christmas break and Maria was thinking about her grades from school and all of them were pretty good except for one subject - Math. She couldn't stand math and she felt like she would never get better at it. Suddenly, her mom called her from the living room and asked her to come there. After Maria sat down, her mom told her that now that Christmas was over Maria has to start thinking about her New Year's resolutions. She immediately thought about her Math grades and told her mom that she wanted to start working more on her Math in the New Year. Her mom said that was a really good one and to do that, she would need to ask God for help every day. So, when the new year started Maria prayed everyday to God to help her with her Math and to not give up and by the end of the school year, she got her Math score up to an A!

We should all try to change something about ourselves this new year. All God want is, for us to become the best versions of our self and in order to do that we need God's help. So, make sure to make a New Year's resolution and don't give up because in the end, it will take you one step closer to God and it's worth taking that step. Have a Blessed New Year to all friends of Kairos.



**Julia Roncy** is a 14-year old High Schooler, and a proud Catholic, with versatile interests. She enjoys her JY fellowship, reading, cooking, and spending time with little kids, and her favourite hobby is art.



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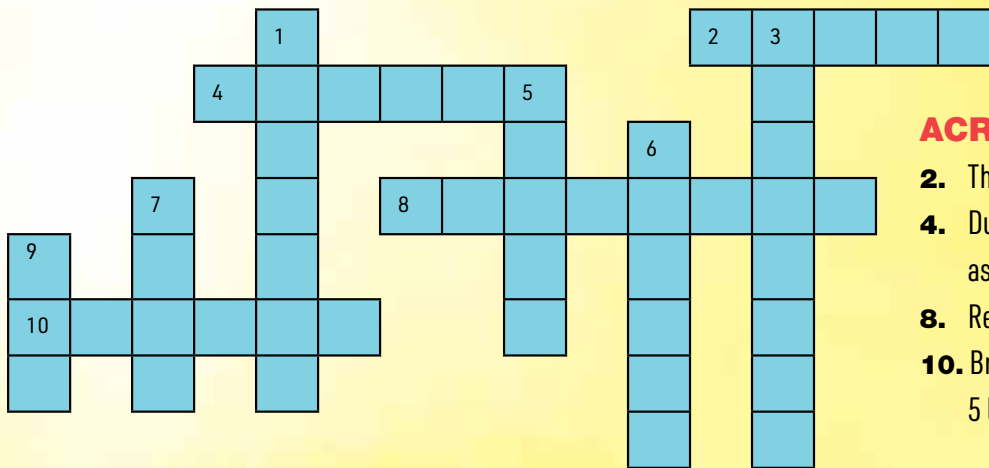
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## I DISCIPLES OF JESUS

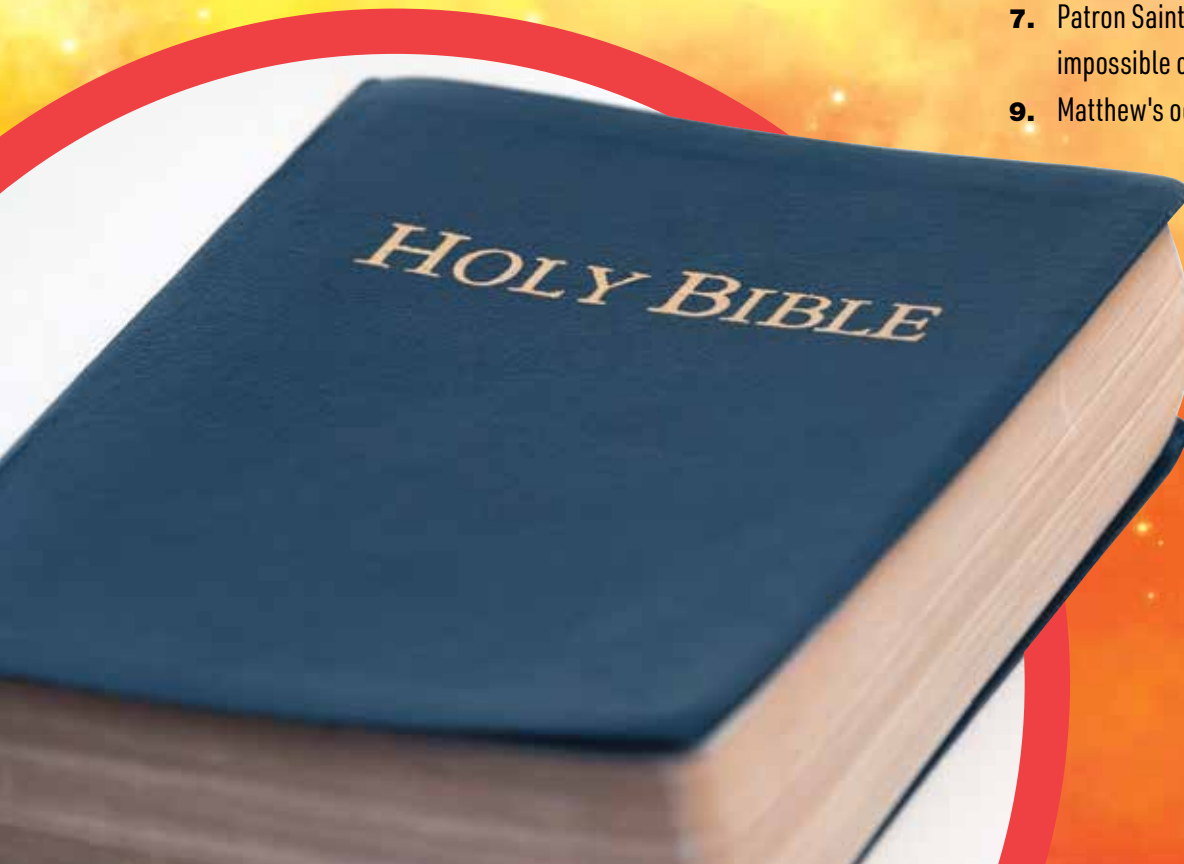


### ACROSS

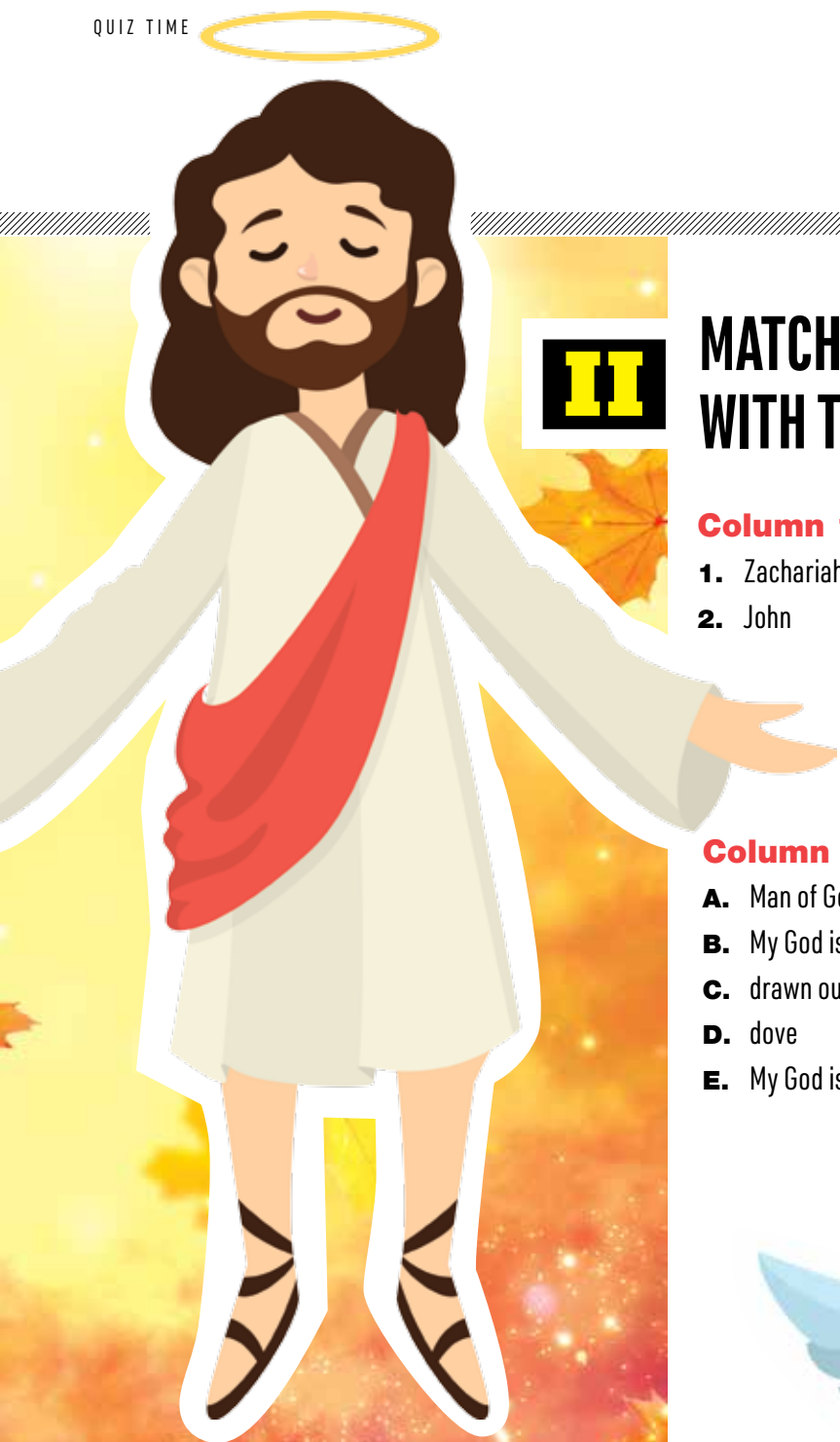
2. The Cananean
4. During the Last Supper, asks Jesus to show them the Father
8. Replacement of Judas
10. Brought the boy with 5 loaves and 2 fishes

### DOWN

1. Boanerges
3. Responsible for overseeing the money in Jesus' ministry
5. Mother in law healed from fever
6. My Lord, and My God
7. Patron Saint of Hope and impossible causes
9. Matthew's occupation







## II

# MATCH THESE BIBLICAL NAMES WITH THEIR MEANINGS.

### Column 1

1. Zachariah
2. John

3. Elizabeth

4. Gabriel

5. Elisha

6. Abraham

7. Issac

8. Manasseh

9. Moses

10. Jonah

### Column 2

- A. Man of God
- B. My God is salvation
- C. drawn out of the water
- D. dove
- E. My God is an oath

F. Jehovah has remembered

G. God hath made me forget

H. Father of a multitude

I. He laughs

J. Jehovah has been gracious



Mail your answers to [quiztime@kairos.global](mailto:quiztime@kairos.global) before **31st January** The winner will be rewarded with 1 year subscription of **Kairos Global**.

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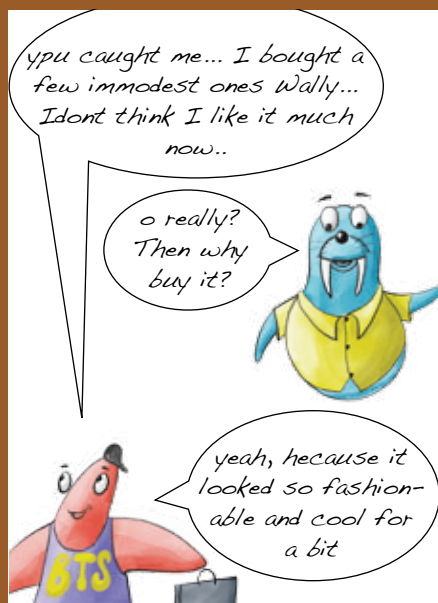
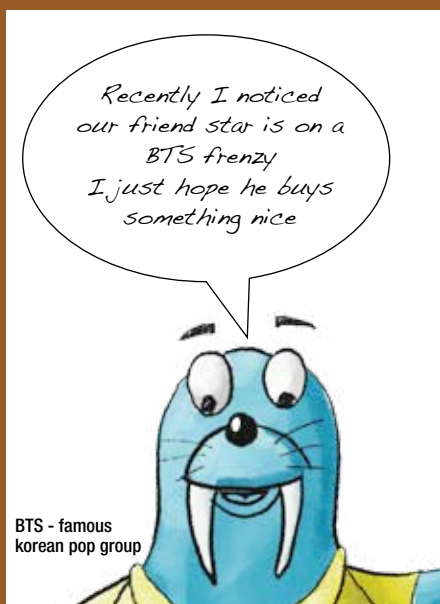
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BY ELIZABETH PHILIP



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