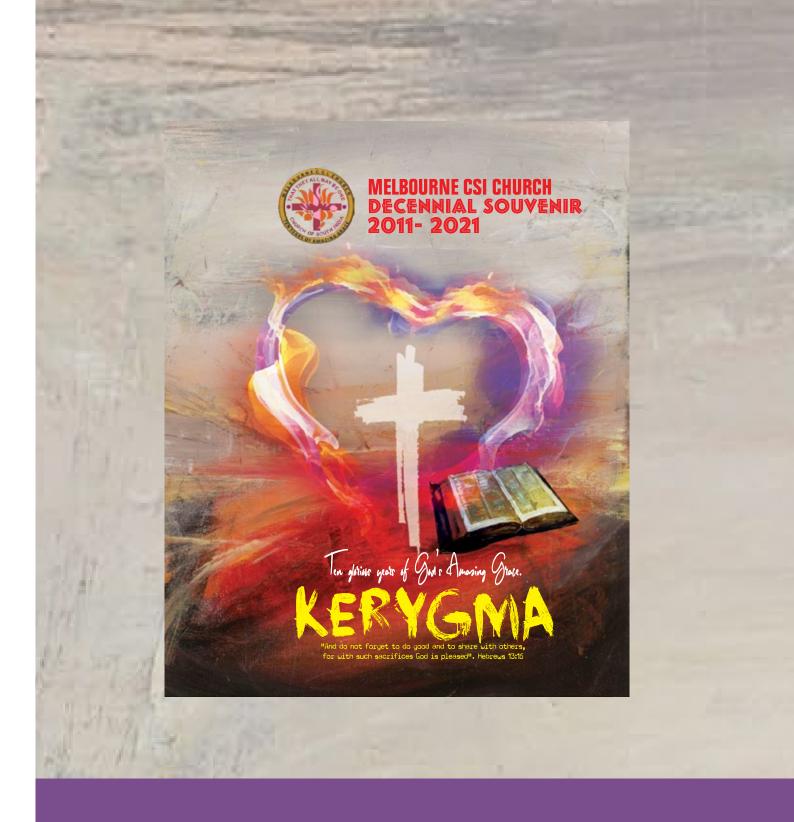


# MELBOURNE CSI CHURCH DECENNIAL SOUVENIR 2011- 2021



Ten glorious years of Gods Amozing Grace.

"And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased". Hebrews 13:16



### THE GOVER DESIGN

The Cover design idea by the Decennial Souvenir Committee

Cover Designed by Shijith Mathew, Crayons, Adimali

- •The Title 'Kerygma' Greek word meaning 'To proclaim or to preach' the Word of God'
- The Bible The Communication of God to his people and good news to the world.
- •The Cross The great Sacrifice of Jesus Christ that brought us Salvation, Justification and Reconciliation.
- •The Symbol of Heart with flames of fire The Aroma of God's redeeming presence and Love kindled by the Holy spirit.
- •The CSI Logo Surrounded with a Decennial ring The MCSI Congregation commemorates Ten glorious years of God's Amazing grace and faithfulness.
- The Bible Verse Hebrews 13:16 Churches' mission in response to God's Liberative act.



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All the articles included herewith are the personal views and thoughts of the respective authors and MCSI Souvenir is only a compilation of their writings.



school Student, ember of MCSI ghter of James Dhanya Rajesh.



The Most Reverend
Dharmaraj Rasalam

Moderator - Church of South India Bishop in CSI Diocese of South Kerala Dear ones at the Melbourne CSI Church,

Warm greetings from the Church of South India.

It is with great joy that I learn that the Melbourne CSI Church is celebrating its decennial anniversary this year. I join you in praising God for his marvellous guidance across the last ten years and pray for abundant blessings on the congregation in the days to come.

I especially recall the warm hospitality that was offered to us during the Episcopal visits to Melbourne and I am particularly impressed at the MOU that you have developed with the Anglican Church of Melbourne which could be a role model for several churches in the diaspora. The openness of the congregation in happily receiving Presbyters from different dioceses is a sign of a mature congregation who has learned to think beyond the confines of their dioceses.

Ephesians 2:19 calls the church the household of God and household is often defined as a web of relationships. The called-out community of saints with a newly defined citizenship affirms that together we are no longer strangers and aliens. The people in the diaspora would understand what it means to live as strangers and aliens in a foreign land much better than any people who live in their native lands. The urge to connect to the roots and the deep desire that the next generations do not lose hold of the cultural heritage that defines them are the guiding factors that justify the presence of the Church of South India in places like Australia and beyond. The model that you have worked out in Ashburton that includes the local communities, the people from multi-cultural contexts, and reaching out to the Malayalam speaking households has proved to be very relevant and meaningful and I place on record my appreciations to all who toiled to make the church what it is today.

The Pandemic has provided us an opportunity to understand one of the core essences of being the church and that is to be willing to reach out to the pain of the people where they are. In our traditional models of being the church, we expected the people to come to us and now despite the restrictions, we have understood the need to reach out to the people. This accompaniment in the struggles of the people is very important for a church in a diaspora context and I am glad that the MCSI is doing its best to achieve this goal.

I bring you greetings of my diocese and the Officers of the Church of South India Synod and on behalf of the larger families of your members who are in India.

May God richly bless your decennial celebrations and the life and witness of the MCSI in Australia.

Yours in Ministry Bishop Dharmaraj Rasalam

Dear members of the Melbourne CSI Congregation.

Greetings to you from the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. It gives me great joy to know that the MCSI is celebrating the tenth anniversary of its formation in Melbourne. I have had a very close relationship with this congregation over this decade. It has been my privilege to visit you several times to conduct confirmation services and take part in other important events, and I always enjoy your fellowship and the unique partnership with St. Matthew's Anglican Church of Ashburton.

An anniversary is a benchmark along the journey, a place to pause and to reflect, but not to stop. This is the essence of mission of God: To be sent, to move forward with the people where God is present as Creator, Saviour, and life Giver. As a united and uniting church, our joint witness in the land of Australia is a response to the call to live in reconciliation with God. It also upholds our desire for intergenerational ministry across our cultural diversity.

We are living in an era of the pandemic, uncertainties, growing unrest, profound contradictions, tensions, divisions, even conflicts and wars. Our identity as disciples of Christ should be a light and beacon of hope to the world. Let's uphold human dignity and human rights for all. On our shared pilgrimage, we not only seek to identify the problems of the world but to share a constructive involvement in the life of our people, our communities, our region, our nation, and the world at large. This is what it means to bring a prophetic message in these unprecedented times.

We mark this blessed anniversary by expressing our deep appreciation for the witness of the Melbourne CSI over the past 10 years. This is an important moment to pause, to see, to give thanks together to the Lord Almighty, renewing our call and finding the new direction forward. Let us strive together to accomplish God's mission entrusted to us.

Grace and peace in Christ Jesus

Yours sincerely

The Most Reverend Dr Philip Freier Archbishop of Melbourne



The Most Reverend Dr. Philip Freier

Archbishop Anglican Diocese of Melbourne



Adv. C. Fernandas Rathina Raja General Secretary

Church of South India

Greetings to you in the mighty name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

It is with immense joy and happiness to join The Melbourne CSI Church on the occasion of your 10th Anniversary which will be celebrated on 6th March 2022.

On behalf of the Officers of the Church of South India, we take this opportunity to congratulate the Pastors, organizers and the congregation members for their faithfulness and tireless efforts rendered towards the upliftment of your spirituality and development growth of the Church. To reach such a milestone reminds us of the Lord's goodness and mercy upon His People. May the Lord lead and guide your Church as you continue to undertake major charitable works in equipping and empowering the less fortunate.

We are more than delighted for the leadership rendered right from inception and the various roles your church has undertaken in organizing and leading the ecumenical and multicultural ministry and the support offered to the missionary families in West Bengal, India, the disbursement of Self-denial offering to different CSI Dioceses of Kerala. The supportive role rendered to the poor and needy during natural calamities and to name a few outstanding roles offered to our less fortune brethren like the Theological Educational Support, Poor Students Scholarship, Poor Girl's marriage assistance, helping the homeless, rural medical support and equipping village congregation is truly praiseworthy.

May our lives depict Christ and illuminate the lives of others to come into an enriching experiencing with the love of Christ. May the Lord bless and keep you and make His face shine upon you especially during these challenging times.

Be rest assured of our prayers and support.

God Bless!

Adv. C. Fernandas Rathina Raja General Secretary, CSI

Greetings to you in the blessed name of our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ!

I am very glad to know that the Melbourne CSI Church, is celebrating her Decennial and publishing a Souvenir as part of the celebration. On this auspicious occasion I greet everyone of the congregation in the name of the Jesus Christ who is the foundation of the Church. We all know that this church is the fulfillment of the great desire and hard work of the people in the Melbourne area as a faith community. I thank God for the enormous blessings you have received as a faith community for the last 10 years. Let this Parish be a source of fellowship, trust and love to all the members. Let us all strive together to make this Church a place of solace to all who come to worship.

I wish and pray that the Souvenir will bring a novel dimension in its vision and ministry to the Church and the society. I would like to appreciate the Rev. Kurian Peter, the Vicar and the members of the Pastorate Committee and all other persons involved in publishing the Souvenir.

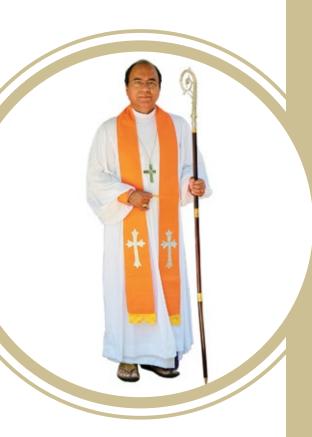
May the Lord pour His Holy Spirit on all members of the congregation involved in the extension of Gods kingdom with social commitment and the Lord strengthen every endeavor that the church is involved with.

With prayerful regards and best wishes, Yours in Christ,

The Rt. Rev. B. N. Fenn Bishop in CSI Diocese of Cochin



The Rt. Rev. B. N. Fenn Bishop in CSI Diocese of Cochin



The Rt. Rev. Dr. Royce M Victor Bishop in CSI Diocese of Malabar

As you celebrate the 10thAnniversary of the. Melbourne CSI Church, I wish to offer you my heartfelt greetings in the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am privileged to join you in giving praise and thanks to God for the graces and blessings that He has showered on the Melbourne Church during the past 10 years.

Lord looks on the heart. "May He grant you according to your heart's desire and fulfill all your purpose (Psalms 20:4). Yes, God heard the fervent prayers of His children and fulfilled their desire and purpose though they were a handful of individuals and families came from Kerala and settled in Melbourne. There is nothing in this world more important than loving God and dedicating ourselves to His cause. God chose the Melbourne Church to share Christ's love with others and to show the aspects of God to those around them. I am happy to learn about the charity works you are indulged in and the support you are extending to missionaries in your zeal for God, and I praise God for you. I would like to emphasize that nothing can be more relevant than the faithful preaching and witnessing for Jesus Christ. We have a mission to be salt and light, so that God may be glorified.

I thank God for the Clergy and the Laity who have served and contributed to the development of Melbourne CSI Church. God is faithful; He will grant a suitable worship place and a Parsonage according to your heart's desire.

I am happy to note that you are bringing out a Souvenir on the occasion of the Decennial Celebration. I rejoice with you on this happy occasion, and I ardently wish all the best and pray that His love be with you all at all times.

In the love of Jesus,

Rt. Rev. Dr Royce M. Victor, Ph.D. Bishop in CSI Diocese of Malabar

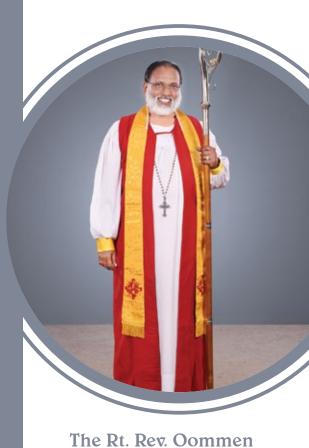
പ്രിയ കുര്യൻപീറ്റർ അച്ചനും കമ്മിറ്റി അംഗങ്ങൾക്കും ദൈവജനത്തിനും എന്റെ സ്നേഹവന്ദനം.

ആസ്ട്രേലിയയിലെ മെൽബൺ പട്ടണത്തിൽ ആഗ്ളിക്കൻ ചർച്ചിന്റെ തണലിൽ കഴിഞ്ഞ പത്തു വർഷക്കാലം ഒരു ഇടവക രൂപീകരിച്ച് അനേ കർക്ക് ദൈവസ്നേഹം പകർന്ന് കൊടുക്കുന്ന തിനും പ്രത്യേകിച്ച് കോവിഡ്-19 എന്ന മഹാമാരിയുടെ നടുവിൽ ജനത്തിന് ദൈവകൃപ പകരപ്പെടുവാനും സാധിച്ചതോർത്ത് ദൈവത്തിന് സ്തോത്രം ചെയ്യുന്നു. ആദ്യകാല പ്രവർത്തകരെ അനുമോദിക്കുന്നു. വിശേഷിച്ച് ശക്തമായ നേതൃത്വം നല്കുന്ന കുര്യൻപീറ്റർ അച്ചനെ അനുമോദിക്കുന്നതോടൊപ്പം മുൻ വികാരിമാരായ ഡോ. വിനോദ് വിക്ടർ, റവ. ജോബി ജോൺ എന്നിവരേയും ശുശ്രൂഷകൾക്ക് നേതൃത്വം നല്കിയ മറ്റു ആത്മായ ശുശ്രൂഷകരേയും ഓർത്ത് സ്തോത്രം ചെയ്യുന്നു. ദൈവം പ്രസ്തുത കോൺഗ്രിഗേഷനെ അനുഗ്രഹിക്കട്ടെ, വളർത്തട്ടെ എന്ന് ആത്മാർത്ഥമായി പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു, അനുഗ്രഹി ക്കുന്നു.

സ്നേഹത്തോടും പ്രാർത്ഥനയോടും

ബിഷപ്പ് ഡോ. ഉമ്മൻ ജോർജജ്

സി. എസ്സ്. ഐ. കൊല്ലം-കൊട്ടാരക്കര & പ്രസിഡന്റ് കേരള കൗൺസിൽ ഓഫ് ചർച്ചസ്. കൊല്ലം.



**George**Bishop in CSI Diocese of
Kollam-Kottarakkara

Kollam-Kottarakkara
President, Kerala Council of Churches



The Rt. Rev. V. S. Francis Bishop in CSI Diocese of East Kerala

ആശംസകൾ

കർത്താവിൽ പ്രീയരെ,

യേശുക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ നിസ്തുല്യനാമത്തിൽ സ്നേഹവന്ദനം.

Melbourne CSI Malayalam Congregation അതിന്റെ 10-ാം വാർഷികം ആഘോഷിക്കുന്നു എന്നതിലും, അതിനോടനുബന്ധിച്ച് ഒരു സുവനീർ പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിക്കുന്നു എന്ന് അറിയുന്നതിലും അതിയായി സന്തോഷിക്കുന്നു, ദൈവത്തിന് നന്ദി അർപ്പിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. മെൽബൺ നഗരത്തിലും പരിസരങ്ങളിലും താമസിച്ചു ജോലിചെയ്യുന്ന മലയാളികളായ സി. എസ്സ്. ഐ. സഭാമക്കൾക്ക് ഒരു ആരാധന ആരംഭിക്കുവാൻ 2011-ൽ ദൈവം സഹായിച്ചു.

ആരാധനയിലൂടെ കരുതലിന്റെയും കൂട്ടായ്മയുടെയും, വലങ്കെ MCSI അംഗങ്ങൾക്ക് മാത്രമല്ല അനേകർക്ക് വിവിധരീതിയിൽ നൽകുവാൻ:- മിഷനറി പ്രവർത്തനത്തിനുള്ള സഹായം, സാധുജനസഹായം-പ്രകൃതിക്ഷോഭ-ദൂരിതാശ്വസങ്ങളും, പള്ളി-പാഴ്സനേജ് നിർമ്മാണ സഹായങ്ങൾ, ഭക്ഷണ-വസ്ത്ര-ഭവന നിർമ്മാണ സഹായങ്ങൾ, വിവാഹ സഹായങ്ങൾ എന്നിങ്ങനെ ധാരാളം കാര്യങ്ങൾ ചെയ്യുവാൻ സഭയെ കഴിഞ്ഞ ദശകത്തിൽ ദൈവം പ്രാപ്തിപ്പെടുത്തി. ഇക്കാര്യങ്ങൾക്കായി സഭയ്ക്കും സഭയെ കാലാകാലങ്ങളിൽ നയിച്ച അച്ചന്മാർക്കും ഭരണസമിതി കൾക്കും ദൈവം നൽകിയ ദർശനത്തിനും, ഇച്ഛാശക്തി ക്കുമായി ദൈവത്തിന് സ്തോത്രം. കർത്താവ് വരുവോളം മെൽബൺ പട്ടണത്തിലും, ആസ്ട്രേലിയയിലെങ്ങും, ലോകത്തെവടേയും സഭയെ ദൈവത്തോട് ചേർത്തു നിർത്തുവാൻ MCSI കോൺഗ്രിഗേഷന് ഇടയാകട്ടെയെന്ന് പ്രാർത്ഥിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് ഈസ്റ്റ് കേരള മഹായിടവകയുടെ ആശംസകൾ ദൈവനാമത്തിൽ നേരുന്നു. ദൈവം നമ്മെ അനുഗ്രഹിക്കട്ടെ.

കർത്തൃശുശ്രൂഷയിൽ സ്നേഹത്തോടെ,

റൈറ്റ് റവ. വി. എസ്. ഫ്രാൻസിസ് ബിഷപ്പ്

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,

In the Bible, Faith is often analogized with building a house on a firm foundation. It is in a similar pretext that Jesus Christ while having a discourse with disciples, especially Peter, remarks about the foundation of the Church. It is with great amusement that the disciples hear that remark through Christ, in Matthew 16:8b "... on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." The rock is nothing else but the proclamation of faith in Christ- the Son of God, in simpler terms, the rock is Jesus and He is Love personified. It is with immense pleasure that I address the Melbourne CSI church which finds its existence on this very Rock, at its decennial celebrations. I pray that this event be the inception of many major milestones ahead in the mission which this church has upheld.

It is the foundation which determines both the size and strength of any building. No one can build beyond which the foundation can handle. Same is true in case of a Church. Any church built on an inadequate or faulty foundation cannot grow as God intends it to grow and falls short of grace and topples down. As a Church, our fellowship needs to have a firm foundation in Christ. Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the believers in Roman church reinforces a similar thought of possessing "One attitude and One voice" (15:5–7). Paul asserts that this celebration of oneness is the mantra of Church built on the foundation Christ. We see the same attitude in the beginning stage of the church where it is recorded that, "All who believed came together and had all things in common..." (Acts 2:44). Church is a place where all differences disappear and all boundaries vanish into the Love of Christ.

It is very unfortunate that certain incidents relating the transparency and testimony of Church has been compromised and the image of Christ has been distorted. Atrocities within and from outside the church is not a new incident and has been prevalent since its inception. Paul in his first Epistle to the Church of Corinth argues hinting the emerging division in Church by firmly saying that, "... no one can lay any foundation than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ" (3:11). Church founded on Christ has always withstood challenges of its time with sheer faith and perseverance. Christianity is not a fallacy but a very practical reality in all its means. Let us celebrate our Oneness, our differences, our diversities and thank God for the spirit which is "not of timidity but of Unity and Love."

Let the values of compassion and Love dictate all the endeavours which Melbourne CSI Church in Australia has already undertaken and wish to undertake henceforth. God has called every church to be the torch bearers and run ahead in serving and demonstrating love in every way possible. Let this new phase be of innumerable possibilities and platforms with which our integrity is kindled more than before. I earnestly applaud the selfless and dedicated service and leadership of Rev. Kurian Peter the Vicar, the Church Committee members and all those who were a part of this mission since its inception. Let the Love of God guide us all.

In His Service,

Rt. Rev. Dr. Malayil Sabu Koshy Cherian Bishop in Madhya Kerala Diocese



The Rt. Rev. Dr. Malayil Sabu Koshy Cherian

Bishop in CSI Diocese of Madhya Kerala



Rt. Rev. Dr. Paul Barker Bishop, Jumbunna Episcopate Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

My warmest congratulations to the Melbourne CSI church on ten years of ministry in Melbourne. The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne is pleased to be in partnership with MCSI a St Matthew's Ashburton as we seek to make God's word fully known throughout Melbourne.

One of the joys of Melbourne is its multinational and multicultural diversity. The world has come to Melbourne in recent decades and Melbourne diocese is increasingly trying to reflect this rich diversity. One of the joys of being a Christian is that despite language and cultural differences, we belong together in Christ. Jesus' death for us breaks down every wall, so our predominant identity is no longer language, race or country, but an identity in Christ. So it is a joy to share in fellowship and ministry together.

The Book of Revelation has a wonderful picture of people, men, women, children, in fact a great multitude that no one could count, from even nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. Together they cried out, 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.' (Revelation 7:9-10). Our fellowship together in the diocese of Melbourne is a foretaste of this heavenly unity.

Wishing you joy in serving Christ in the decade ahead.

The Right Reverend Dr Paul Barker Bishop of Jumbunna, Melbourne

I am delighted that you are bringing out a Souvenir to mark the Tenth Anniversary of Melbourne CSI Church. It is indeed befitting to record the past history of the CSI Church in Melbourne and the formation of its worshipping community in 2011 and to express our deep gratitude to the erstwhile leaders of the very committed Christian families for the realization of the dream of the believers.

The motto of the Melbourne CSI Church, "That they all may be one", echoes the ecumenical and multicultural aspirations and the ministry of the community, which is being developed with the generous cooperation of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. On this occasion, I join you in recalling with gratitude to the pastoral leadership of Rev. Jobby John, Rev. Vinod Victor, and the present vicar Rev. Kurian Peter, and all who joined hands in fostering God's Mission for the past ten years.

What a wonderful evangelical witness the community gives by extending Gospel values among the peripheral communities with praxis-oriented mission and charity! How generous the community is by being instrumental in the formation and development of other CSI congregations in Australia!

I wish and pray that as the fruit of the Decennial Celebrations, the dream of the community to have a Church and other facilities of its own for the pastoral and catechetical mission become a reality in the nearest future. Let us take courage from the promise of the Lord: "I will build my Church and the Gates of Hades will not prevail against it", and go ahead, handing over our faith and Christian values and tradition to the young generation, who ware challenged by the prevailing secular and consumerist culture. I am confident that the community is coping well with the present negative impacts caused by COVID 19 Pandemic.

I take it as a great honor, your invitation to me, to be part of the MCSI Decennial Celebrations.

Yours in Jesus Christ Bosco Puthur



The Rt. Rev. Dr. Bosco Puthur
Bishop in Syro-Malabar
Catholic Church



**Cr Garry Thompson** Mayor, City of

Boroondara

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the Melbourne Church of South India on reaching their decennial anniversary in March 2022.

Boroondara is proud to be home to a multicultural population including different faith and church groups. Having places in our municipality where multicultural communities can come together supports the goal of the Boroondara Multicultural Action Plan 2019-23 'To create a welcoming community where cultural diversity is accepted, celebrated and promoted and where people of all cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds participate in all areas of life in Boroondara'. It also supports the vision in the Boroondara Community Plan 2017-27 'For a vibrant and inclusive city, meeting the needs and aspirations of its community'.

On behalf of the City of Boroondara, I wish your church and congregation well in your celebrations later this year.

Cr Garry Thompson, Mayor

Greetings to the people of the Church of South India! And congratulations of your 10th anniversary of the formation of CSI in our Diocese of Melbourne. I felt very honoured and blessed to be asked to give a greeting to a group of faithful Christians I have known since 2011.

As the Vicar of All Saints Mitcham, I was approached one day by the Rev Jobby John and was asked if it would be possible for the fledgling congregation to come together and use our worship and hospitality space, and so a relationship began.

How do I sum up the new relationship, what did I observe? Beautifully attired people, with brilliant silks and colours; faithful gathering and sincere worship; beautiful harmonious singing; wonderfully co-ordinated dance by the young people and delicious food!! All of this is underpinned by the deep and abiding faith of the members of the Church of South India. The deep generosity and commitment to tithing not only supported their own ministry and mission but supported those in their homeland – the poor and the needy, the mission of their church in Kerala Diocese, supporting theological students and so much more. It was a privilege to be asked from time to time to break open the word to this warm and welcoming congregation who were always eager to learn.

In 2013, I left All Saints All Saints Mitcham to take up a position as the Incumbent of St Stephen and St Mary Mount Waverley. And then discovered the CSI had taken up home at St Matthew's Ashburton, which was a part of the Waverley Deanery of which I was Area Dean. The clergy of the Deanery were warmly welcomed to the Vicarage by the Rev Vinod Victor and delighted on delicious Kerala cuisine. It is always a highlight for the deanery clergy to be invited to dine with the abundant hospitality of the Kerala clergy.

Now as Archdeacon, I so warmly greet the congregation of the Church of South India homed at St Matthew's Ashburton. I wish you every blessing and joy as you celebrate the milestone in the life of your congregation. I pray that your worship continues to be enlivened by the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ. May your faithfulness continue to be blessed and be renewed and strengthened for the years ahead. So, celebrate with joy, colour, and rich hospitality as you are held in the palm of our Lord's hand. Rich blessings be unto you.

Venerable Dianne Sharrock Archdeacon of Box Hill Vicar St Stephen and St Mary Mount Waverley.



Venerable
Dianne Sharrock
Archdeacon of Box Hill



Rev. Sujit David Vicar, CSI Church Sydney

members of the Pastorate Committee, my family join in greeting the Melbourne CSI Church on the occasion of its decennial celebrations. We thanks God for the glorious ten years of its formation, collaboration and growth. The usually the most difficult years. However, they are years that God for all His divine providence and blessings during the

The Melbourne CSI Church has been a model for the We also acknowledge the presence and participation of the

initiatives of the Melbourne CSI Church has fostered innovative ideas and activities which has resulted in the the world.

We pray for your decennial celebrations and we wish God's abundant blessings. May the Melbourne CSI Church

Rev. Sujit David

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden." (Matthew 5:14)

It is a matter of immense joy to know that the Melbourne CSI Church is in its decennial celebrations. I thank the Lord Almighty for His gracious love and faithfulness that have sustained this community of believers quite remarkably for the past ten years. It is great to see that the congregation is effectively witnessing to Christ in manifold ways. As we all know, the mission of the church is to continue the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The fundamentals of Jesus' ministry are preaching, teaching and healing. The world today is in great need of a ministry which encompasses these three elements. We are now facing an unprecedented scenario caused by a global pandemic. Church has a pivotal role to help people come out of this great crisis. Let all our endeavors culminate in the physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of the people around us.

The diverse initiatives of the Melbourne CSI Church for the extension of God's kingdom are noteworthy. God makes this congregation continue to grow in every way. I thank the Lord for all God's servants who have shepherded this congregation thus far. God has given them a magnificent vision to nurture this believing community. The ecumenical relations and endeavors of this congregation too are commendable. On this gleeful occasion of the 10th anniversary of this congregation, I wholeheartedly greet and appreciate Rev. Kurian Peter (the vicar), the pastorate committee and all the members of the church for all your wonderful thoughts and efforts in serving the Lord. As you publish a souvenir in connection with this, I, on behalf of the Holy Trinity CSI Church Brisbane, wish and pray that this would be a glorious memoir unfolding variegated ways and means of serving the Lord. May God bless you all.

Rev. Shibin Varghese (S/d) Holy Trinity CSI Church, Brisbane



**Rev. Shibin Varghese** Vicar, Holy Trinity CSI Church, Brisbane



Margaret Holt Secretary, St Matthew's Anglican Church, Ashburton

Decennial – a word unfamiliar to this writer, but given that words like decade and decimal relate to ten, it seemed likely that so also does decennial. A check of the Oxford English Dictionary confirmed that it was first recorded in English in the year 1656 and indeed means pertaining to a period of ten years. And so it is with great pleasure that members of St Matthew's Ashburton Anglican Church send greetings and congratulations to our brothers and sisters in Christ – members of the Church of South India – as you celebrate your Decennial Anniversary as a congregation in Melbourne, Australia.

The arrival of C S I ushered in a time of hope and adjustment at St Matthew's. The early years of the new century had been years of struggle for the parish, with no Vicar and the passing into God's nearer presence of several long-time stalwarts and great servants of God and St Matthew's – people like Roy and Camille Goldsworthy, Elaine and Frank Derwent, Wal and Mary de Araugo, to name but a few.

From 2005 services were conducted and spiritual guidance given by several Locum Vicars, who were welcomed warmly and who, when their time with us ended, were farewelled with affection. The threat of closure still hung heavily over St Matthew's, but a Postal Ballot of parishioners, in February 2009, voted against closure and the struggle continued.

The lowest ebb was reached in April that year when boundaries of surrounding parishes were changed to absorb St Matthew's area and St Matthew's lost Parish status. Parishioners felt almost a sense of defeat and several active members transferred to neighbouring churches. Those remaining sought strength from their faith in God and mutual support of each other.

All seemed lost when June 14, 2009 was set as the date for a Service of Deconsecration. There was much fervent prayer and that service DID NOT TAKE PLACE. Praise and grateful thanks were given to God.

Shortly thereafter, a letter from the late Bishop Barbara Darling informed us that a Church of South India congregation, which had been meeting and worshipping in Mitcham, was looking for a base closer to the city. She suggested that if they and their Vicar, the Rev. Jobby John, transferred to St Matthew's, Jobby John could be our Vicar, too. And so began a busy time of negotiation and preparation.

Leading negotiations for St Matthew's was our dearly loved and greatly missed Barry Parker. Of tremendous help during this time were P C George and his wife Grace, as they were not only St Matthew's parishioners, but also natives of Kerala, India and speakers of Malayalam. We miss Grace and George since their return to Sydney. With negotiations proceeding, renovation and refurbishment of the Vicarage became an urgent matter, involving the

overseeing of many tradesmen. After much time, effort and financial expense we had a fine Vicarage in which Jobby John, his wife Halish and their two daughters could make their home.

Welcoming a new congregation as well as a new vicar was cause for great celebration!

St Matthew's folk, during the years of service from Locum Vicars, had proved themselves to be very adaptable to and accepting of various styles of preaching and ministry and, while some adjustments were necessary for everyone, it must be said that, on the whole, the process sharing facilities with C S I has gone remarkably smoothly.

Following Jobby John's time with us we all benefitted from Rev.VinodVictor's ministry and applauded the establishment of a Sunday School and all-age choir by C S I. Older St Matthew's members can recall the days when our Sunday school was bursting at the seams and it is wonderful now to see so many C S I families with children in attendance each Sunday.

In 2019 we welcomed Rev. Kurian Peter as our new Vicar. It was a joy to get to know him, his wife Smitha and their son and daughter. At our St Matthew's Day dinner that year, Kurian entertained us with guitar and song. His fine singing voice is always appreciated at our services.

The dinner was a very happy occasion, with members of both congregations socialising and celebrating together God's great goodness to us. When a young C S I boy sang Blessed Assurance, those present could not help themselves but spontaneously join in. Sadly, 2020 brought with it the scourge of Covid 19, a global pandemic, which has affected all aspects of parish and personal life and greatly curtailed activities like dinners.

Co-operation is always evident at our monthly combined services, with meaningful worship and sharing of duties. These occasions are real highlights, as are the morning teas which follow. St Matthew's people have developed a taste for Indian food; we have discovered that Indian boys love party pies and everyone likes chocolate cake!

To CSI members, we thank you for the life and liveliness you have brought to our corner of the world. You have enriched us by your presence and constantly make us aware that Australia has gained so much by becoming a multi-cultural nation.

As you enter your next decade, we pray that God will bless your endeavours to grow your church and spread his word.

On behalf of all at St Matthew's, Margaret Holt

MCSI Decennial Souvenir KERYGMA



Fr. Jobby John Incumbent, St.Dunstan's Anglican Church, Camberwell (First Vicar of Melbourne CSI Church)

Beloved in Christ,

I am delighted to note that you are celebrating the 10th anniversary of the formation of the MCSI. From humble beginnings in 2011 with a handful of families and a resident vicar with family; we have withstood testing times and built a community under the shades of the Melbourne Anglican Diocese. It was worthwhile for me to be part of the mission, alongside you, as your first vicar. Best wishes as you continue in our Lord's mission.

Fr. Jobby John Incumbent, St. Dunstan's Anglican Church, Camberwell

Dear Members of CSI Church in Melbourne,

I am extremely happy that Melbourne CSI church is completing 10 years in its life and witness in this part of the globe. The church is a body of Christ. It is the believing and worshipping community that makes the church a reality in local level. The church is not an organisation or a building but a faith community: loving caring and a sharing community that proclaims and manifests her faith and life in Christ. It is a community that expresses the life of the kingdom of God

Ten years is a benchmark on the road, a place to pause and to reflect, but not to stop. The decennial year like this is an opportunity to remember with utmost gratitude what the Lord has done in our lives as individuals and as a community of Jesus Christ. It is also a time to move forward with confidence and renewed vision in the context of new challenges that is awaiting us in the future. May this be an occasion to reaffirm your dedication by re-evaluating what qualitative difference, the community of faithful has made in our society.

Let us rededicate ourselves for a more meaningful presence as a faith community in Melbourne. May God set apart this church for His mighty works and may souls be drawn to the kingdom of God through the marvellous manifestation of His faithfulness in the church and the life of every member. On behalf of the Melbourne Mar Thoma Parish, I felicitate the Melbourne CSI Parish on the occasion of their decennial celebrations and pray that we continue to partake in the Grace offered by Saviour Jesus Christ.

Sincerely

Rev. Abraham C Mathew Vicar, Melbourne Mar Thoma Church



Rev. Abraham C Mathew
Vicar, Melbourne
Mar Thoma Church



Rev. Fr. C A ISAC Vicar, St Mary's Indian Orthodox Cathedral

Greetings and wishes from Saint Mary's Indian Orthodox Cathedral, Melbourne in the name of Triune God, to all our beloved members of the Church of South India Congregation, Melbourne. It is with extreme happiness and prayers, we express our sincere congratulations on the occasion of its decennial anniversary.

We are delighted to join with you and glorify God on this auspicious occasion. It is not an easy task to establish a congregation and successfully run, with relatively new immigrants. It needs vision, dedication, support, and moreover the heavenly blessings to reach this tenure. I wish that this occasion be a strong fabric to re-evaluate and refresh the community to sprint towards the next milestones. May this occasion be a time of rejuvenation to the community in all areas of your mission.

As Christians, we are the pilgrims on earth, travelling towards the Kingdom of God. In this journey, it is our duty to hold everyone strongly together and guide them to their destination. As true Christian, we must extend the hands of compassion and favours to the needy. Be One in Christ as part of the body of Christ itself is a great witness. Along with that, we must also continue the fervour and passion of our forefather's mission, and that determination must be handed over to the next generation. We are deemed as the Apostles of Christ in this world. In fact, in this Far East Island, we are entrusted with greater mission responsibilities to fulfil. William Carey, a renowned missionary, known as the father of modern missions of India had a slogan in his journey – "Attempt great things for God and expect great things from God". May this vision be adopted by us as well. In this complex, most modern society, all are expecting great things from God but are not ready to attempt anything for God. Attempts for God is the Mission, Mission is the Life of the Church.

May the almighty bless you abundantly to use this occasion to fulfill our commission in this World. May God's blessings be with you all. Yours in Christ,

Rev. Fr. C A ISAC

Vicar - St Mary's Indian Orthodox Cathedral,

118 – 122 Nicholson St, Coburg, Vic – 3058

Mob: +61 4 6646 0552

"God is Love!" proclaims 1 John Chapter 4. This profound, transformational truth was at the forefront of mind for Mr Josiah Spiers, a Children's Ministry Worker on holidays in Wales in 1867, as he watched children running, laughing and playing on the beach. Moved by God's Spirit, Spiers drew these words in the sand and called the children to come and collect shells, seaweed and sticks to decorate them with him. As they played together, he taught them about God's love and how they could live in, and enjoy that love.

This event marked the beginning of the movement now known as Scripture Union (SU), active in over 120 countries around the world, with a shared vision to "make God's Good News known to children, young people and families, and encourage people of all ages to meet with God daily through the Bible and prayer, so that they may come to personal faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, grow in Christian maturity and become both committed church members and servants of a world in need". Children encountering God and God's love in joyful, age-appropriate ways. God's Good News experienced as well as heard and read. Families enjoying restoration and joy; and people becoming servants of a world in need. These are some of the hallmarks of SU's ministry around the world.

SU in Australia has been active since the 1880's and currently places chaplains in nearly 1000 schools, partners with hundreds of churches and equips thousands of volunteers to love and serve in the way of Jesus. Short-term missional teams of volunteers form to run camps and missions during the Summer and throughout the year. Volunteers serve in their local schools as mentors, serve breakfasts and help young people discover their potential as agents of change and community transformation.

It has always been the mission of SU to partner with God's church in all we do. It is our pleasure to join with the Church of Southern India to celebrate God's goodness to and through you as you celebrate 10 years of presence in Australia. We give thanks for the ways that you have seen people coming to faith in Jesus and growing as disciples of Christ. And we look forward to future opportunities to partner with you, in making God's Good News known and serving a world in need. May God continue to bless you, keep you and help you shine as a light to the world.

Chris Helm Field Development Manager Victoria Eastern Region, Scripture Union Victoria



Chris Helm Scripture Union Victoria



Rev. Sajin Baby
Vicar, Immanuel Mar Thoma Church

Dearly Beloved In Christ,

I am delighted to note that the Melbourne CSI Parish is celebrating its Decennial Year of its witnessing and worshiping presence. We, the members of Melbourne Immanuel Mar Thoma Church appreciate the Parish in standing firm in its witness and mission throughout these last years. I whole heartedly congratulate the efforts of the Parish to publish a souvenir to commemorate the historical mile stone.

We live in a society where tremendous changes are taking place through accumulation of wealth, industrial and technological advancements. We benefit by the advancement of modern communication and information technologies. At the same time we face lot of challenges in various realms which are so difficult to cope up with. When we look into the Bible, we find beautiful symbols of perfect love and harmony. God created humans, he prepared an environment suitable for them called Eden. It was a place governed by absolute happiness. There was proper relationship between man, woman and rest of the creation. But later this relationship was lost because of the sin of humans who alienated themselves from God. Cross is a symbol of God's love for human. God reconciled himself with the world through the death of Jesus on the cross. The Church is giving so much importance to restoring our relationships in today's broken world. The real harmony in relationship is experienced only through our relationship with God and fellow beings.

May God in His grace transform us and equip us to be the servants who will fulfill His mission in this world.

Yours in His Service,

Rev. Sajin Baby

Immanuel Mar Thoma Church Melbourne INC. 67 Shrives Road, Narre warren South,Vic 3805

Ph: 03 5991 7203

Website: www.melbourneimmanuelmtc.org.au

Greetings to you all in the most precious name of our Triune God!

It gives me immense happiness to hear about the Decennial celebrations of the Melbourne CSI Church. From its humble beginnings, it is amazing to see how the church has brought together such a tightly knit faith community over the years.

As the scripture proclaims in Matthew 16:18 "..on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it "its is my utmost belief that the vicars, past and present along with all the parishioners have together been the rock that has kept this church growing in strength year after year.

I remember with gratitude the services of Rev Jobby John and Rev Vinod Victor who I understand have been strong advocates of the CSI church in Melbourne as well as great supporters of the St Gregorios Indian Orthodox Church visiting this parish at various occasions in our journey from a Chapel to an independent Parish. This friendship has continued through the current vicar Rev Kurian Peter and is a testimony of the brotherhood both the churches share in this land.

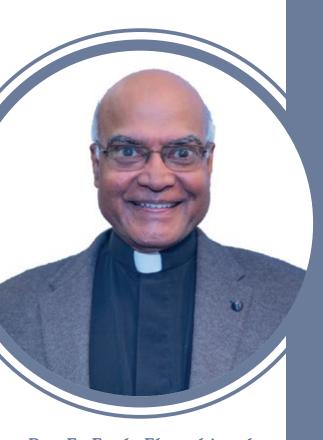
Hearty Congratulations to Melbourne CSI church on the journey so far. Prayerful wishes from all your brethren at St Gregorios Indian Orthodox Church!

Yours in Christ

Rev. Fr. Sam Baby Vicar St Gregorios Indian Orthodox Church



Rev. Fr. Sam Baby Vicar, St Gregorios Indian Orthodox Church



Rev. Fr. Fredy Eluvathingal Parish Priest, St Thomas Syro-Malabar Parish

Hearty congratulations to Melbourne CSI Church celebrating its 10th Anniversary (Decennial Celebrations) on 6th March 2022!

Melbourne CSI church community started at Ashburton in 2011, has come a long way off, inspiring other communities to form and grow as faith sharing communities/parishes in Australia.

I learn with joy that a Souvenir is being published marking the Decennial Celebrations.

It is heartening to observe that the CSI community is flourishing under the able guidance and direction of the present vicar Rev Kurian Peter. Inspired and empowered by the power of the Holy Spirit Saint Peter addressed the crowd, expounding the message of salvation brought by our Lord and master Jesus Christ (Acts 2.14-36). Overwhelming positive response of a massive 3000 members was only the beginning of the early Christian community. And now we have, here in the Diaspora, another Peter, vicar of Christ, to carry on the legacy of Saint Peter. The parish is marked by hospitality, pastoral care and expansion of the mission.

On behalf of the St Thomas' Syro-Malabar Parish Melbourne South East may I wish Rev Kurian Peter and parishioners God's choicest blessings! May the beacon of light brought to us by our ancestors lead us a long way towards realizing the dream prayer of our saviour and Lord Jesus, 'that they may all be one, as you Father are in me and I in you (John 17.21)'.

Praying blessings of the Holy Spirit,

Rev. Fr. Fredy Eluvathingal Parish Priest St Thomas Syro-Malabar Parish South East Melbourne

## CHURCH COMMITTEES

#### 2011-13

Mr. Anand Varghese
Mr. Ashok Varkey
Mr. Merson Korah
Mr. Manoj David
Mr. Anish John
Mr. Justin Israel
Ms. Tina Thaju
Mr. Varghese Abraham
Mr. Joseph Joseph

#### 2013-15

Rev. Jobby John
Mr. Anand Varghese
Mr. Manoj David
Ms. Suni Varghese
Mr. Justin Israel
Mr. Cicil Abraham
Mr. Thaju Mathew
Mr. Viji Joseph
Mr. John Chacko
Mr. Jose Chacko
Mr. Merson Korah
Mr. Jacob

#### 2015-17

Rev Vinod Victor Mr. Ashok Varkey Mr. Anand Varghese Mr. Manoj David Mr. Justin Selvaraj Ms. Jessymol Justin Mr. Renji Cherian Ms. Sajila Jose



### 2017-19

Back - from left to right Mr. James Rajesh, Mr. Justin Selvaraj,
Mr. Thaju Mathew, Mr. Manoj David,
Mr. Renji Cherian
Front - from left to right Mr. Anand Varghese, Rev. Vinod Victor,
Ms. Jessymol Justin, Ms. Megha Kuruvilla



## 2019-21

From left to right Ms. Smitha Thomas, Mr. Justin Israel,
Mr. James Rajesh, Ms. Rinju Abraham,
Rev. Kurian Peter, Mr. Robin Varghese,
Mr. Renji Cherian, Mr. Thaju Mathew,
Ms. Megha Kuruvilla



### 2021-23

Back - from left to right Mr. Manoj David, Mr. Sunish Varghese,
Mr. Jupin Cherian, Mr. Robin Varghese,
Ms. Rinju Abraham, Ms. Dhanya Rajesh
Front - from left to right Mr. Justin Israel, Rev. Kurian Peter,
Mr. Anand Varghese



#### FOREWORD

he Melbourne CSI has experienced a decade of God's amazing grace and faithfulness, making remarkable growth in the spiritual hub of the Australian continent. With awfulness and gratitude, we prostrate before the one who makes every impossible thing possible and who brings everything into existence out of nothingness. I am delighted to write a foreword to this Decennial Souvenir named "Kerygma" which means the 'proclamation' of the Gospel of Christ. I wish you all a blessed decennial year filled with peace and hope.

The Divine guidance we experienced was 'Kairotic', and the blessings we received were bountiful. The unusual and unique nature of this culturally and traditionally diverse congregation is its commitment to reflect the heart of Jesus' high priestly prayer and the motto of the Church of South India "that they all may be one." Having remained submissive to the will of Christ, the Melbourne CSI continues to uphold the torch of gospel truth, maintaining the unity of spirit and integrity of the church.

Looking back on this faith journey of the past ten glorious years is enriching, rewarding, and gratifying. We acknowledge the indomitable spirit of commitment and resilience of the pioneering pillars and founders of this wonderful congregation who spearheaded this movement and the vital role in sustaining this congregation through hurricanes of challenges and uncertainties, both spiritual and material.

All the church members, the kids, the young, and the old feel the warmth and belongingness to this vibrant church along with the inspiring interconnectedness with the Anglican community of St. Matthews Church Ashburton. I thank them all for the prayerful support and fellowship.

In a world that stagnated with the Pandemic, Postulating the second decade of MCSI is exciting and challenging. Despite all the constraints and uncertainties, we are vaccinated with the hope to confront any daunting situation with Jesus Christ, our Lord, who holds our future.

Through this Souvenir, we have earnestly attempted to amalgamate the past and present and capture a comprehensive view of the breadth and vitality of the ten years of MCSI life and witness. Being thankful for the hard work and toil of those great visionaries of this congregation, we commit to conserving the momentum of this kerygmatic community with new charisma of relevant, meaningful, and blessed witness.

I extend my sincere thanks to the leaders of the church, especially the Moderator of the Church of South India, Most Rev. Dharmaraj Rasalam, Arch Bishop of Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, Most Rev. Dr. Philip Freier, Rt. Rev. B. N. Fenn, CSI Diocese of Cochin, Rt. Rev.Dr. Paul Barker, Assistant bishop of Jumbunna Episcopate, The CSI Synod Office-bearers, and all the revered bishops and the clergy of the CSI.

Our thankfulness goes out to ministers of our sister churches and their congregations in Melbourne and the former vicars of MCSI for their blessings and greetings. Special thanks to the CSI All Australia & the Diaspora congregations worldwide for their ardent support of this venture.

I thank the consecutive Pastorate committees and the leaders of the church organisations for planning this Decennial project. I appreciate the Editorial team under the able leadership of Mr. James Rajesh, who has done a phenomenal job in accomplishing this Souvenir with exceptional quality and content. Thanks to all who contributed with inspiring articles, the sponsors, and well-wishers who contributed greetings and Advertisements. A big thanks to the designer for his effort behind the DTP and artwork. My sincere appreciation and thanks to J Retnarajan (father of James Rajesh) for helping with malayalam script.

With hearts overwhelmed with joy and thankfulness, we dedicate this Decennial Souvenir to the glory and honour of the Almighty and ever-living God.

The Rev. Kurian Peter Vicar



# FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

he life and ministry of the Melbourne CSI (MCSI) Church during the last ten years (2011 – 2021) is undoubtedly a testimony for establishing a diaspora community in Australia along with nurturing relationships with local churches. We all equally share the responsibility to preserve this ethos for future generations. The triumphs and setbacks of the past and present are indeed packed with cherished memoirs. The sacrifices rendered by our vicars, leaders, elders, and lay leaders are worthy of acclamation. Thank God Almighty for the abundance of grace bestowed on the church, its leaders, and members over the years.

A genuine effort is taken through the souvenir, recognising the exceptional contributions of all who journeyed with us and served us and those who continue to be with us and help us. The vibrancy of life at MCSI Church in all its variety and distinctness is pictured with absolute verisimilitude, not taking away any due charisma. History of the Church is portrayed to enable us to trace our growth and progression of development in all spheres of activities.

The souvenir becomes meaningful when shared memories, experiences, thoughts, imagination, and creative skills. Many of the writers of these articles are very familiar to us. Greeting messages by our Bishops, Priests, Government Representatives, and well-wishers have enhanced the referral value of the souvenir. The Memorial pages provide an opportunity for us to gratefully pay homage to their dear ones who have moved on to Glory. The Compliment pages offer the chance to support the fundraising initiative of the church to secure an investment property.

We thank our Vicar, Rev Kurian Peter, the Pastoral Committee and the Souvenir Committee for their leadership and guidance throughout the development of this souvenir. This decennial souvenir is indeed a peek of the past, mirror of the present, and a vision into the future of MCSI Church. We present the same to you to be cherished as a priced souvenir acknowledging with thanks the contributions of each person whose toil has made this souvenir possible.

All Glory and Honour be to God.

James Rajesh Chief Editor

MCSI Decennial Souvenir KERYGMA



### LETTER FROM THE CHURCH SECRETARY

I praise our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for our Parish, which has become a home away from home for all of us here.

The Parish of Ashburton consists of the Melbourne CSI Church and the St. Matthews Anglican Church, which worship together in unity. The Melbourne CSI Church was founded in 2011, as a result of the fervent prayers of the worshiping community who were settled in Australia. This was borne out of a desire to have a worship service in their native language, Malayalam. God heard the prayers of the people, and thus, a congregation was born.

In addition, the Parish is a testament to the ecumenical vision of the united Christian Church in the example it has set by committing to sharing worship space with the St. Matthews Anglican community. This agreement is also an avenue for cultural exchange in a diverse Diasporic setting in Australia, which holds close the traditional values and worship of the people, and the present socio-cultural and geographic context and realities they live in.

In the present world of fast-changing values, it is important to constantly remember our roots, to spread our wings, grow and thrive as a community in the different places we are planted. Of this, worship and communitarian life play a significant role and cannot be neglected. Our identity as believers of Christ and worship centered around the Holy Eucharist are important factors in forming our character as an individual and our worldview as a community.

As the Parish is celebrating its 10th anniversary, I hope and pray that this Parish continues to be a blessing to not only the Diasporic community living here but also to the native community of believers who have become part and parcel of us. May the Parish continue to guide and strengthen the people in both spiritual and temporal affairs, and may it become a beacon of light and life, as envisioned by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, when He said, "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid...In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." (St. Matthew 5:14-16).

Jupin Thomas Cherian

Church Secretary



Standing - from left to right - Ms Aparna Anna, Mr Ben Koshy, Mr Sunish Varghese, Mr Manoj David, Mr Robin Varghese

Sitting - from left to right - Mr Jupin Cherian, Rev Kurian Peter, Mr James Rajesh

# VICAR FAMILY



The Rev Kurian Peter, Ms. Smitha Kochamma, Miss. Krupa Elsa Kurian, Master. Kepha Kurian

"And in their prayers on your behalf, they long for you because of the extraordinary grace God has shown to you.

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!"

2 Corinthians 9:14-15

# THE FAMILY OF FAMILIES



"....and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." Mathew 16:18



SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND STUDENTS 2020-21

THE CHURCH CHOIR 2022





THE YOUTH FELLOWSHIP 2022

#### THE MEN'S FELLOWSHIP 2022

Due to COVID restrictions all members couldn't be included in the photo shoot. List of Men's Fellowship members are included here and we remember and thank them for their support and leadership.



#### Mens Fellowship Members -

Abraham Samuel Anand Kuttapuzha Aroosh Sam Ashish Thomas Mathew Ashok Varkey Ashwin Sen Padmasen Ben Koshy Bijil Paul Binu Paulose Bivin Das Britto Daniel David Jacob Chandy
Eapen K Eapen
Jacob George
Jacob Paul
James Rajesh
James Robin Abraham
Jobin Benjamin
John Chacko
John M John
Joshy P John
Jupin Thomas Cherian

Justin Israel
Justin Prince
Justin Selvaraj
Kamal Korattyile
Koshy Koshy
Manoj David
Neil Douglas
Pritam Ammanna
Reji Jayan
Renji Cherian
Rev Kurian Peter

Robin Koshy Sajeev V M Soni Sivanandamoorthy Sunish Mathew Thaju Mathew Thomson Varghese Toney Mathew Varghese Verghese Chandy

#### Due to COVID restrictions all members couldn't be included in the photo shoot. List of Women's Fellowship members are included here and we remember and

thank them for their support and care.

#### THE WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP 2022



#### Women's Fellowship Members -

Smitha Kurian Christy Abraham Anita Anand Teenu Rose Chacko Merril Susan Mathew Rinju Mary John Neena Christudas Dargily Aparna Anna Raveendranath Smitha Sara Thomas Shiby Mathew

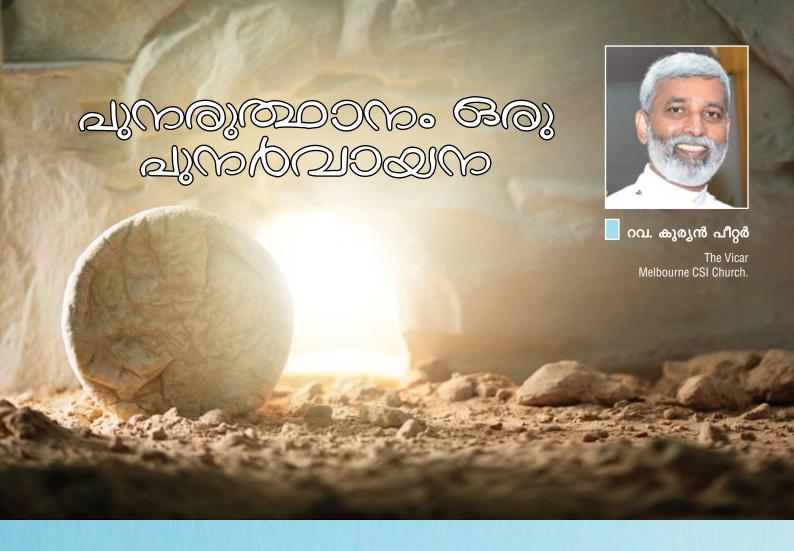
Anu John J.K Ammanna Prisha Leah David Chandy Lizzy Eapen Keerthi Sara Koshy Dhanya Rajesh Jinshy Samuel Jaya Jobin Mary John Jenny A John

Shillymole P Chacko Dr Anu George Jessymole Justin Anju Mary Thomas Graceline Justin Mini Korattyile Judith Merlin Onden Megha Kuruvilla Priya Ivy Saldanha Vineetha Reji

Suma Abraham Ancy Alex Roslin Shereena Deepa Rajan A Rajayyan Sanjana Jacob Tina Thaju Neethu Andrews Jelin Elsa Thomas Bina Chandy

We remember and thank the St. Matthew's Congregation for their support, care and fellowship extended to MCSI since 2013





വന്റെ പുതിയ സാദ്ധ്യതകളിലേക്ക് വാതാന അളെ തുറന്നിട്ട പ്രഭാതമാണ് ഉയർപ്പിന്റെ പ്രഭാതം. മരണ പാശങ്ങളെ പൊട്ടിച്ചെറിഞ്ഞ് ഉദ്ദിത നായ ക്രിസ്തു നമ്മുടെ ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ ഇടനാഴികളിൽ എന്നും നമ്മോടു കൂടെ. ക്രൂശിൽ സകലതും നിവൃത്തിയായി എന്ന യേശുവിന്റെ മൊഴിക്ക് മുദ്രയിടുന്ന പ്രഭാതമായിത്തീർന്നു ഈസ്റ്റർ. "ഞാൻ ജീവിക്കുന്നതുകൊണ്ട് നിങ്ങളും ജീവിക്കും"; എന്ന യേശുവിന്റെ വാക്കുകൾ നമുക്ക് ഇന്നും ജീവന്റെ സമൃദ്ധി നൽകുന്നു ; ധൈര്യവും പ്രത്യാശയും ശക്തിയും നൽകി നമ്മെ നയിക്കുന്നു. പണ്ടെങ്ങോ നടന്ന ഒരു അത്ഭുതമായി മാത്രം ഈ ചരിത്രാനുഭവം ചുരുങ്ങാതെ പുനരുത്ഥാനത്തെ നമ്മുടെ സമകാലിക യാഥാർത്ഥ്യമായി ഉൾക്കൊ

#### 1. Resurrection - The Climax of human resource development

ള്ളാനും ഏറ്റെടുക്കാനും നാം തയ്യാറാകേണം.

പുനരുത്ഥാനം : മാനവ വിഭവശേഷി വികസന ത്തിന്റെ പാരമ്യം

മനുഷ്യനിൽ അന്തർലീനമായിരിക്കുന്ന വ്യക്തി ത്വവും ശാരീരിക മാനസിക, ബൗദ്ധിക, ആത്മിക വിഭവശേഷിയും വളരെ വൈവിദ്ധ്യമാർന്നവയാണ്. ഈ കഴിവുകളെ തിരിച്ചറിയാനും, പൂർണ്ണ വികസന ത്തിലേക്ക് നയിക്കാനും സർഗ്ഗവാസനകളോടൊപ്പം പരിശീലനവും കാര്യക്ഷമതയും ഉറപ്പാക്കേണ്ടതുണ്ട്. മനുഷ്യന്റെ വിഭവശേഷി എന്നത് വ്യക്തികളുടേയും, സമൂഹങ്ങളുടെയും സമഗ്ര കഴിവുകൾ പരമാവധി സർദ്ധിപ്പിച്ച് സംഘാടനാ പരമായ ചുറ്റുപാടുകളിൽ പ്രയോജനകരമാക്കി തീർക്കുക എന്നുള്ളതാണ്. ക്രിയാത്മകവും, സൃഷ്ടിപരവുമായ വളർച്ചയും, വികസനവും ലക്ഷ്യമിട്ടിരിക്കുന്ന ഏതൊരു പ്രസ്ഥാനത്തിനും മാനവവിഭവശേഷിയുടെ പരമാവധി ഉപയുക്തതയും കാര്യവിചാരകത്വവു മാണ് ആവശ്യമായിരിക്കുന്നത്.

പരിശീലനവും, കാര്യക്ഷമതയും ഉയർന്ന ഉല്പാ ദനശേഷിയും (Training, Development & Productivity) മാനവ വിഭവ ശേഷി വികസന ത്തിന്റെ അടിസ്ഥാന ലക്ഷ്യങ്ങളാണ്. പുരാതന കാലം മുതൽ ഈ വ്യവസ്ഥിതി ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നുവെ ങ്കിലും പലപ്പോഴും ഒരു യജമാനനു വേണ്ടി അടിമ യുടെ സകല ശേഷിയും പരമാവധി ഉപയോഗപ്പെടു ത്തിയിരുന്ന ഒരു തരം സ്വയകേന്ദ്രീകൃതവും, സ്വാർത്ഥലാഭേച്ചയോടു കൂടിയതുമായ സമീപനമാ ണുണ്ടായിട്ടുള്ളത്. ഈ ഉത്തരാധുനിക യുഗത്തിൽ മാനവ വിഭവശേഷി വികസനം എന്നത് സംഘടനാ

പരമായ വളർച്ചയും (Organizational development) കാര്യപ്രാപ്തിയും, ഉയർന്ന ഉല്പാദനക്ഷമതയും ലക്ഷ്യമിട്ടിട്ടുള്ളതാണെങ്കിലും പൊതു പ്രയോജനത്തിനായി എത്രമാത്രം വിനിയോ ഗിക്കപ്പെടുന്നുവെന്നുള്ളതാണ് വിലയിരുത്തപ്പെടേണ്ടത്.

ഇന്ന് ഈ മാനവ വിഭവശേഷി വികസന രംഗത്ത് കാര്യമായ പഠനങ്ങളും, ഗവേഷണങ്ങളും, ചർച്ചക ളും, പ്രത്യേക തൊഴിൽ സാഹചര്യങ്ങളും വർദ്ധിച്ചി ട്ടുങ്കിലും ഒരു പുനരുത്ഥാന സമൂഹമെന്ന നി ലയിൽ ക്രൈസ്തവ സഭയ്ക്ക് മനുഷ്യനിലെ സൃഷ്ടിപരമായ ശക്തിയും, കഴിവുകളും സകലരു ടെയും നന്മക്കും നിലനിൽപ്പിനുംവേണ്ടി പ്രയോജന പ്പെടുത്താനുള്ള വെല്ലുവിളിയാണ് ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ പുനരുത്ഥാനം നൽകുന്നത്. ഒരു മനുഷ്യന്റെ വിഭവ ശേഷി പരമാവധി ലോകത്തിനു സമ്മാനിക്കുന്ന തിന്റെയും പൊതുനന്മക്കായി പരിണമിക്കപ്പെടുന്നതി ന്റെയും പാരമ്യമാണ് ക്രൂശിലും പുനരുദ്ധാന ത്തിലും നാം ദർശിക്കുന്നത്. 33 1/2 വയസ്സുള്ള ഒരു ചെറുപ്പക്കാരൻ തന്റെ സകലശക്തിയും, വിഭവശേ ഷിയും സമ്പൂർണ്ണമായി ലോകത്തിന്റെ നന്മക്കും രക്ഷയ്ക്കുമായി നൽകുന്ന മഹത്വകരമായ മാതൃക യാണ് യേശുവിന്റെ ക്രൂശിൽ നാം കാണുന്നത്. മരിച്ചടക്കപ്പെട്ടു മൂന്നാം നാൾ ഉയിർത്തെഴുന്നേറ്റ കർത്താവ്, തന്റെ മാനുഷികത പൂർണ്ണമായി വെടിഞ്ഞുവോ എന്നതാണ് പലരുടെയും സന്ദേഹം. എന്നാൽ ഉയിർപ്പിനു ശേഷം തന്റെ ശിഷ്യഗണ ങ്ങൾക്കും തന്നെ സ്നേഹിച്ചവർക്കും അവൻ പ്ര തൃക്ഷനായതും, അവരെ പഠിപ്പിക്കാൻ ശ്രമിച്ചതും (LK 24 : 17 ff) ; ദൈവിക സാദൃശ്യത്തിലേക്കുള്ള വികസനമാണ് യഥാർത്ഥ മാനവികതയുടെ പൂർണ്ണതയെന്നു തന്നെയാണ്. മനുഷ്യന്റെ അവ സാനം ശ്മശാനമല്ല. മരണശക്തികൾക്കുമപ്പുറം മനുഷ്യൻ ആക്കേന്ദതുപോലെ ആയിത്തീരാനുള്ള ശക്തിയാണ് പുനരുത്ഥാന മർമ്മം.

വർത്തമാന കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ ധാരാളം നശീകരണ ശക്തികൾ പ്രബലമായിക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന യാഥാർത്ഥ്യം നമുക്കറിയാം. സ്വേഛാധികാ ത്തിന്റെയും, അനീതിയുടെയും പീഢനത്തിന്റെയും, തിന്മയുടെയും മതാന്ധതയുടേയും അധമശക്തി കൾ നമുക്കു ചുറ്റും മരണ പാശങ്ങളുയർത്തു മ്പോൾ ഇതെല്ലാം മാനവ

തളച്ചിടുന്നു.

മനുഷ്യനിലെ നന്മയുടെ തിരിനാളങ്ങളെ കെടുത്തി ക്കളയുന്ന ഈ ഹിംസാത്മക പ്രവണതകളെ ജയി ക്കാനാണ് പുനരുദ്ധാനം നമ്മോടാഹ്വാനം ചെയ്യുന്ന ത്. "ഹേ മരണമേ നിന്റെ ജയമെവിടെ ? ഹേ മരണമേ നിന്റെ വിഷമുള്ള് എവിടെ? (1 കൊരി. 15 : 55). ഇത് ശാരീരിക മരണത്തെ മാത്രമല്ല മനുഷ്യന്റെ വ്യക്തിപരമായ വിഭവശേഷി യുടേയും, ആത്മീയതയുടേയും മരണത്തെയാണ് സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്നത്. ഈ അടുത്തകാലത്ത് ഭാരത ത്തിൽ നടമാടിക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന മ്ലേഛകരമായ അഴിമതികളും, അധികാര വടംവലിയും, രാഷ്ട്രീയ കൊലപാതകങ്ങളും, ലൈംഗിക അരാജകത്വങ്ങളും, സ്ത്രീകൾക്കും, കുട്ടികൾക്കുമെതിരെയുള്ള ചൂഷണ വും ആരാധനാലയങ്ങൾക്കു നേരെയുള്ള ആക്രമണ ങ്ങളും, ലഹരി മരുന്നുകളുടെ വ്യാപനവും മൂല്യച്യുതി സംഭവിച്ച മാധ്യമ സംസ്കാരവും, ദ്രവ്യാഗ്രഹവും, കാപട്യവുമെല്ലാം അപരിഹാര്യമായ സ്ഥിതി വിശേഷങ്ങളിലേക്കും, ഭയാശങ്കകളിലേക്കും നമ്മുടെ നാടിനെ വലിച്ചിഴക്കുമ്പോൾ, നമ്മുടെ സമൂഹത്തിന് പ്രതീക്ഷയുടെ പൊൻകതിരൊളി വീശേണ്ടത് പുനരുത്ഥാന സമൂഹമാകുന്ന സഭയാ ണ്. എല്ലാം തകർന്നുവെന്നു തോന്നിയ ശിഷ്യഗണ ത്തിന് പുത്തൻ പ്രതീക്ഷകളുണർത്തി ലോകത്തെ കീഴ്മേൽ മറിക്കുന്നവരാക്കി തീർക്കാൻ അവർക്ക് സമർപ്പണത്തിന്റെയും ധീരതയുടെയും സ്നേഹത്തി ന്റെയും സഹനത്തിന്റെയും ആർജ്ജവത്തെയാണ് പുനരുത്ഥാനം ചെയ്ത ക്രിസ്തു പകർന്നു നൽകിയ ത്. കർത്താവിന്റെ ഈ വിഭവശേഷി തന്നിൽ വിശ്വ സിക്കുന്ന സമൂഹത്തിലൂടെ ലോകത്തിനും പകർന്നു നൽക്കേന്ദതാകുന്നു. ലോകത്തിലെ ഹിംസാത്മകശ ക്തികൾക്ക് വെല്ലുവിളിയായിരിക്കണം ക്രൈസ്ത വർ. മനുഷ്യത്വത്തിന്റെ പൂർണ്ണ വികസനം എന്നത് സകല മാനവരാശിയുടെയും, മുഴുപ്രപഞ്ചത്തി ന്റെയും പുരോഗമനത്തിലേക്കും സമാധാനത്തി ലേക്കും നയിക്കുന്ന സ്നേഹത്തിന്റെ പകർച്ചയാണ്. ഇങ്ങനെ മനുഷ്യന്റെ സകല ക്രിയാത്മകതയും, സർവ്വശക്തിയും വികസിച്ച് സമൂഹങ്ങളെ പരി വർത്തനം ചെയ്യുന്നതിനും പൊതു നന്മക്കായി പ്ര യോജനപ്പെടുത്തുന്നതിനും പ്രയത്നിക്കുന്ന ഏതൊരു നന്മപ്രവൃത്തിയ്ക്കും സഭ ഐക്യദാർഡ്യം നല്ല രാഷ്ട്രീയ പ്രഖ്യാപിക്കണം. സഭയിൽ നേതാക്കന്മാർ

നിന്നും

രാഷ്ട്രത്തിനുണ്ടാകേണം, വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ സമ്പന്നരും വിഭവശേഷിയുള്ളവരും തങ്ങളുടെ കഴിവുകൾ സഭയ്ക്കും സമൂഹത്തിനും സമർപ്പിക്കണം. ആരാ ധനയും സേവനവും സഭയുടെ മുഖമുദ്രയായിത്തീര ണം. മാനവ വിഭവശേഷി വികസന രംഗത്ത് സഭ സജീവസാന്നിദ്ധ്യമാകണം. 'ആകയാൽ നിങ്ങൾ ക്രിസ്തുവിനോടു കൂടെ ഉയർത്തെഴുന്നേറ്റിരിക്കുന്നു എങ്കിൽ... ഉയരത്തിലുള്ളത് അന്വേഷിപ്പിൻ (കൊലൊ . 3 : 1)

#### Ressurection - A new Paradigm for leadership

പുനരുത്ഥാനം : നേതൃത്വത്തിന്റെ പുതിയ

നേതാവ് നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ട ഒരു കൂട്ടം ശിഷ്യഗണത്തിന്റെ പിൻമാറ്റവും ശോഷണവുമാണ് ആദ്യ പുനരുത്ഥാന ദിനത്തിൽ നാം കാണുന്നത്. യേശുവിന്റെ ക്രൂശീക രണം ഉറപ്പായപ്പോൾ തന്നെ പല ശിഷ്യരും രംഗത്തു വരാതെയായി. ചിലരൊക്കെ കൂറുമാറി. പത്രോസ് ന ടുമുറ്റത്ത് ഒരു തീക്കനലിനരികിലിരുന്ന് തീകായുന്ന തിനിടയിൽ (മർക്കോസ്14 :67) ഒരു ബാല്യക്കാരി യുടെ ചോദ്യത്തിനുമുമ്പിൽ വിഭ്രമിച്ച്, തന്നെ വിളിച്ച ഗുരുവിനെ തള്ളിപ്പറഞ്ഞ സംഭവം നാമോർക്കുന്നു ണ്ടാവും. തന്നെ മറുത്തുപറഞ്ഞപ്പോഴും, സുരക്ഷിത ത്തിന്റെ മാളങ്ങലിലേക്ക് വലിഞ്ഞപ്പോഴും താൻ പിൻ പറ്റിയ മാർഗ്ഗം ശോഭനമല്ലെന്നു കരുതി പഴയ ജീവസന്ധാരണ മാർഗ്ഗങ്ങളിലേക്ക് തിരിഞ്ഞപ്പോഴും (യോഹ 21) പുനരുദ്ധാനം ചെയ്ത ക്രിസ്തു അവരെ തേടിയെത്തുന്നു. പിന്നെയും മീൻ പിടിക്കാൻ പോയി രാത്രി മുഴുവൻ അദ്ധാനിച്ചിട്ടും വെറും കയ്യോടെ മടങ്ങേണ്ടിവന്ന ശിഷ്യരോട് "പടകിന്റെ വലതുഭാഗത്ത് (Right Direction) വീശുവിൻ എന്നാൽ നിങ്ങൾക്ക് കിട്ടും" എന്നു പറഞ്ഞ നല്ല പ രിശീലകനും, നായകനുമായ കർത്താവിന്റെ വാക്കു കൾ കേട്ടനുസരിച്ചപ്പോൾ, മറഞ്ഞിരുന്ന മത്സ്യ സമ്പത്തുലഭിച്ച് വിഭവ സമൃദ്ധിയുണ്ടായി.

എന്നാൽ അവർ കരക്കടുത്തപ്പോൾ തീക്കനലും അതിന്മേൽ മീൻ വെച്ചിരിക്കുന്നതും കണ്ടു. യേശു അവരുമായി പ്രാതൽ പങ്കിടുന്നു. മുൻപൊരിക്കൽ ഈ കനലിന്റെ അരികിൽ നാഥനെ തള്ളിപ്പറഞ്ഞ പ ത്രൊസ് അതെ കനലിനരികെ അവന്റെ നേതാവിനെ തിരിച്ചറിയുന്നു. ഇപ്പോൾ ആ തീക്കനൽ യേശു വിനെ നിഷേധിച്ച സമൂഹത്തിൽ നിന്നും യേശു വിനെ സ്നേഹിക്കുന്ന അവനുമായി കൂട്ടായ്മ ആചരിക്കുന്ന, സാക്ഷിക്കുന്ന സമൂഹമായി മാറ്റപ്പെ ടുന്നു. യേശു പിന്നെയും അവരുടെ ഹൃദയത്തിൽ നായകനായിത്തീർത്തു. (Leadership is the transformation of communities. Transformation from a community of denial to a community of determination & dedication )- തള്ളിപ്പറഞ്ഞ സമൂഹത്തിൽ നിന്നും നിശ്ചയ ദാർഡ്യവും, സമർപ്പ ണവുമുള്ള സമൂഹമാക്കി രൂപാന്തരപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു.

നേതൃത്വത്തിലേക്കു വരുന്നവരുടെ പാമര പ്രധാന ലക്ഷ്യം തന്നാൽ നയിക്കപ്പെടുന്നവരുടെ സമഗ്രവിക സനമായിരിക്കണം (Facilitating Holistic Development of the followers) നേതൃത്വം ഒരു പ ദവി മാത്രമല്ല. വലിയൊരു ഉത്തരവാദിത്വവും ഇന്നത നിയോഗവുമാണ്. വലിയൊരു ശിഷ്യസമ്പത്ത് നി ലനിർത്തുക മാത്രമല്ല ശിഷ്യരെ നായകന്മാരായി ഉയർത്തുന്നതാണ് ഉദ്ദാനം ചെയ്ത ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ പ്രവർത്തന ശൈലി. "പിന്നെ അവൻ അവരോട് നിങ്ങൾ ഭൂലോകത്തിലൊക്കെയും പോയി സകലസൃഷ്ടികളോടും സവിശേഷം പ്രസം ഗിക്കുവിൻ"(മർക്കോസ് 16 :15) എന്നരുളി ചെയ്തു. പിന്നീട് ഒരു ശിഷ്യൻപോലും സുവിശേഷത്തെക്കു റിച്ച് ലജ്ജിച്ചിട്ടില്ല. ആദിമ നൂറ്റാണ്ടിലെ ക്രിസ്തുവി ശ്വാസികൾ ജീവൻ വെടിയേണ്ടി വന്നിട്ടും സഭയെ ന യിച്ച നല്ല നേതാക്കന്മാരായിത്തീർന്നു. നല്ല ഒരു സമൂഹത്തെ വാർത്തെടുക്കുന്നതിന് നല്ല നായകത്വ മേകാൻ ഉദ്ദിതനായ ക്രിസ്തു സഭയെ സജ്ജമാ ക്കട്ടെ.



### A journey through the mission work of Melbourne CSI Church

#### Justin Israel

A founding member of MCSI, Secretary of the Sunday School and a Church Warden of the Pastorate.





s we celebrate Ten years of our church, let us thank Almighty and congratulate each other for these special moments. Let us remember the paths which we walked through.

Mark 16:15 says, And Jesus said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news" to the whole creation.

When the church grew around the world, missionaries had a crucial role to spread the Gospel. They left their country, homes, family and sacrificed their comfort zones because of their passion for spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Many of them spent their savings, money, talents, time and whatever they had to ensure that the Gospel be heard far and wide. The mission work has influenced our lives since the early church. Just like them, we are also taking part in mission work with all the projects we support.

Mathew 5:16 says, "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Over the past decade, God commissioned us to support and take on many projects.

#### Borewell in CMS high school Pallom

Our church came to know that the CMS boys' high school Pallom, Kerala needed a drinking water source. We supported them financially for a borewell construction. Anand Varghese and his family represented our church and inaugurated the borewell in 2016. Since then, this has been an active drinking source for the boys in the school.





#### Mangalya

For the last six years, we have been supporting 'Mangalya'. Mangalya is a mission initiated by South Kerala Women's fellowship to conduct marriages for those who cannot afford their marriage expenses. Many of them who are now married are parents who also support this mission in their possible way.

#### Kerala Flood relief

Kerala went through one of the worst floods in 2018. Many of our church members back home lost almost everything. Our church supported all Diocese during this period by contributing whatever was possible from our end.

Hebrews 13:16 says, "And do not forget to do good and share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased".

#### CSI Churches in Australia

Four cities have CSI Malayalam worship services in Australia – Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney. We supported Adelaide and Sydney to start the CSI worship, and Melbourne CSI priests supported their communion services until they could bring priests from Kerala.

#### Nepal Mission





For two years, we supported a Missionary in Kathmandu with the help of the Nepal Christian council of churches. As part of this mission work, our church members Anand Varghese, Renji Cherian and Justin Israel visited Nepal under the leadership of Rev. Vinod Victor.

#### Jeevan Ka Mukut

For the past two years, we have been supporting Jeevan Ka Mukut, an organization working among the villagers in North India, specifically Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. We are supporting two Missionaries and their families. Through our church, we were able to build a worship centre at Tharai village in Uttar Pradesh.

We thank Rev Kurian Peter and Bro. Sajan Paul for the leadership and guidance in supporting this mission project.

#### Decennial Charity

Decennial Charity Assistance include educational support for ten children from poor families; scholarships for twenty students; provided assistance to twelve mentally challenged children of CSI Karunalayam, Aluva; and medical assistance for kidney patient and a paralytic child.

#### **Eclectic Mission Support**

Hebrew 6:10 says, "God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them".

God gave our church opportunities to support many Theological students who could not meet their educational fees. We also provided financial



help for building churches, Parsonage, and individual house buildings.

Galatians 6:2 says, "Carry each other's burdens,

and in this way, you will fulfil the law of Christ."

Our church also provided support for many requests for surgery, dialysis, chemotherapy, and other medical bills.

Even though we have our financial commitments, our church members have also been generous to support any urgent request that we have received over the past ten years. I pray that we will keep up the excellent work and God-given spirit to continue the charity and mission work.

Gospel of Mathew 25:35-40 reminds us that as followers of Christ, we are called to live a life of compassion, love and mercy. Christ reminds us in this passage not to forget our brothers and sisters in need.

Luke17:10 says, "So you also, when you have done everything, you were told to do should say, We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty."



The mission journey that we took on ten years ago continues. Not a step back but two steps forward, holding God's hand.



# THE HEART OF OUR CHURCH

#### Anju Anna Anand

Sunday School Faculty, Choir Member and the Coordinator of Christian Education programs of the MCSI.



aking a walk down memory lane to the firstever MCSI Sunday School gathering, there were but a few of us. Clueless about where to start or what the assembly of our parents meant; we knew only that something good was brewing. Nevertheless, with expectant hearts, we began the first steps towards what our Sunday School is today.

Our first ever Sunday School gathering started with singing and a devotion led by Thaju uncle. The children loved learning and listening; they had so much patience and grace. Their eyes were expectant and hearts full of excitement to be amongst friends. The children would gather after church, chittering and chattering about the school, sports, and our new church. Everyone worked hard to play their part. The children were kind to one another and heeded every instruction of the leaders. They eagerly helped with setting up for service and tidying up afterwards; and their enthusiasm was second to none.







We even held several enjoyable road trips as a Sunday School and many church camps that always fuelled and rejuvenated us for the next few months. One serene Melbournian springtime camp jogs the memory. We had a fantastic session where we went out into nature and found little treasures and tokens that reminded us of the beauty of nature. Each child brought something beautiful that showed the handiwork of our creator. The handpicked treasures included flowers, stones, leaves of every kind, twigs, and some brave kids even brought in some insects!

I think the kids would agree with me that their favourite time of the year is Christmas time. The Sunday School kids always take their presentations, nativity plays, and carol singing very seriously and display their very best every year. Each year they eagerly wait to see who would be dressed up as a shepherd or who would be the angel; some even looked forward to being the cattle in the nativity show! The tender reminder of our Saviour's birth will always remain so dear to them.

The second most awaited time of year is the harvest festival, where each child would run to their parents and plead for as many coupons as they could hold. The festival illuminates the memories of each of our children with jubilant feelings and recollections of

face paintings, cotton candies, jumping castles and more!









I think what's most admirable about our children is the gentleness and kindness they embody while playing with their younger peers and the respect and gratitude they exemplify when interacting with the teachers or adults. We can learn so much from them; it almost melts away the extra layers of complexity we pick up along the way. The glisten of love, innocence and joy in their eyes have the power to brighten even our dullest days. Every child is our treasure, and they teach us daily how to be better people. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to impact the lives of many of our tiny tots before they grow older and become burdened with academic performance, employment, and the worries of public life.

For many of the kids, our church is all they have known, our church has been a home, a family. I recall holding many of them in my arms as babies and toddlers, and it brings delight to see how they have grown. And as the years have gone by, while many things have changed, our Sunday School has been constant. What keeps us going is the perseverance, enthusiasm, and efforts of our children.

The children are the pride, joy, and future of our church.

# With Best compliments, Wishes & Prayers

# MCSI Wowen Cellows you God really really loves you God loves you God really really loves you

Then we your people, the sheep of your pasture, will praise you forever; from generation to generation we will proclaim your praise.

Psalms 79:13

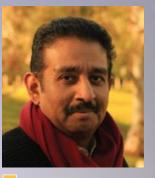


For St Matthew's people, the end of one era and beginning of the next as they farewelled Rev. Len Greenhall and welcomed Rev. Jobby John.

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12:2

## My Ashburton Days



**Rev. Vinod Victor** 

Previous Vicar of Melbourne CSI Church and currently the Chaplain for the Anglican Church in Freiburgin, Germany. He is also the Chairperson of AsiaCMS Board of Trustees.

t is a joy to note that the Melbourne CSI Church is celebrating ten years of God's abundant grace. It was indeed a privilege to be part of the journey of this wonderful congregation as the Priest for four years and I cherish very good memories of the people, the place, and the ministry.

It was Rev. Joby John who invited me first to Melbourne for a Parish Convention in April 2013. Little did I know then that one day I would return as the minister of the congregation. In my first visit to Melbourne, I had four important takeaways.

First was the joys and pains of the diaspora communities. Having to stay away from home and from dear ones and having to adjust to a new cultural context their inner struggles are tremendous. Ministry to the diaspora, I realised, should be understood as a specialised ministry and the need of the people for pastoral care had to be creatively addressed.

Second, the faith community for the diaspora was a fulcrum of connectedness. This was also true for the elderly St. Matthews community. They found the church as the meeting space of their aspirations and the core of their existence.

Thirdly, it was imperative that the Church was a Welcoming and Inviting Space, a Healing and Comforting Space, A Reaching Out and Sending Space.

Fourthly, the diaspora saw the church as the point of linkage to the roots for their next generations.

#### The Invitation to St. Matthews-The Identity Debates

The wise decision of a diaspora congregation of the CSI to invite pastors from all the dioceses of the Church of South India in turns meant that South Kerala Diocese could nominate a Vicar. The Bishop A. Dharmaraj Rasalam after consultations with the parish representatives suggested my name to the then CSI Moderator Most Rev. G. Dyvasirvadham who was happy to forward the

Home communions and Eucharists at Age Care facilities were an integral part of the life at Ashburton.

name for appointment. Initial hurdles that existed were addressed by Bishop Philip Huggins who was the bishop in charge then. He explained to me that the Archbishop Philip Freier had the idea of inviting us to be Priest in Charge of the Anglican Church of Ashburton and would want to develop that into a Parish that hosts two congregations with one Vicar and a site sharing agreement.

There were initial debates of the identity of the congregation, and it was soon resolved, and we were happily received and commissioned at Ashburton. The English congregation was a sweet bunch of people who loved the Lord and loved each other intimately and the Malayalam congregation had the church as the central point of their identity in a faraway land and hence were so intrinsically connected to each other.

It was a dream parish any pastor could ever think of.

#### The Journey to be a Parish Again

Ashburton has had a patchy journey. A glorious past, a time of dwindling of numbers and the discussion of closing the Parish. But the

Melbourne Diocesan leadership was clear that Ashburton had a bright future and the process of reaching a Memorandum of Understanding to restore the Parish status with MCSI, St. Matthews and the Melbourne Anglican Diocese found fruit due to the hard work of several people. The idea of the two congregations co-existing worked well. The restoration of the Parish status of Ashburton, the several combined events of joy and the prime geographical locale of the congregation made it a unique place of worship and ministry.

#### The Ecumenical Landscape of Ashburton

The Ecumenical space that Ashburton provided was tremendous. With three halls, a spacious office, a pretty good vicarage, and a sprawling campus Ashburton could host several events. But more than that the ecumenical opportunity of connectedness included among several others the following

- a. The St. Thomas Ecumenical Fellowship of Melbourne was a platform for the Malayalam speaking churches in the city for fellowship. I especially enjoyed the time with the STEFM clergy and youth along with all other activities
- b. The Ashy Ministers Fellowship was a monthly gathering of the ministers of all the churches in the locality
- c. The Melbourne Anglican Diocese offered several opportunities of mutual learning including the monthly Deanery Meetings, the Diocesan Multi Cultural Gatherings, the Equipping Priests in Charge (EPIC) trainings, Diocesan youth gatherings
- d. The Melbourne Multi Faith Community that met occasionally to foster peace and harmony among religions
- e. The space that the United Church in Australia gave including us in their life and witness was also special

#### The Extended Ministry to Age Care Facilities

With age, several of the parishioners were either restricted at home or were moving to Age Care facilities. Home communions and Eucharists at Age Care facilities were an integral part of the life at Ashburton. The Grand Cedar, the Aveo



Freedom, the Regis, Samarinda, Monash Age Care and several other places received us with love and warmth, and we just enjoyed being with the elderly.

#### The Ministry to a Continent and Beyond

One of the memories we cherish is the ministry beyond the confines of Ashburton that the congregation so generously supported. We had CSI congregations in Sydney and Adelaide where I enjoyed being at least once a month and oft times more. It was a joy to see full time CSI vicars coming to Sydney, Adelaide, and Brisbane when we finished our term. The Mar Thoma Church invited us for events, camps, and conventions not only in Melbourne but also in Sydney, Canberra, Perth, Brisbane, Adelaide and even to Auckland in New Zealand. We were invited by His Grace Joseph Mar Thoma to Maramon Convention in 2018. The Korind invited me to a tour of Korea with the newly consecrated bishops of the CSI. Being part of the Australia Family Conference of the Orthodox and Jacobite Churches and their seminars were a great joy for us. The secular gatherings including the Alumni meetings of KTTF and NTTF were occasions of meeting with more of the diaspora people. I made several mission trips to different parts of the world during this time with the active support and prayers of the people. I must mention Michelle

Trebilcok my colleague who stood at the gap and Korah achan who was of great help when he was in town.

#### Liturgical Challenges

The CSI Liturgy and the Melbourne Anglican liturgy had lots of similarities, but the lectionaries were entirely different. This was a challenge. The six dioceses of the CSI in Kerala had different translations of the liturgy and even the hymns were translated differently. This was another creative challenge to address. The fact that we held all these tensions and nuances together without a conflict was a joyful accomplishment. We had to ensure that no one was liturgically excluded while allowing only the permissible flexibility to liturgical possibilities. The power points for each service were trysts with creativity and Priya was a great support in this. The Christmas Carols and Easter recitals were occasions of unprecedented celebrations and fellowship. I specially remember the Vicarage Carols that concluded the carol rounds and the public performances of the choir in various events. The Ashburton Singers joined us at church occasionally and the Ashburton Festival drew us to the streets to sing. We had a church signage in Malayalam and ensured our cultural presence in the city the best we could liturgically.

#### The Episcopal Care

The Archbishop Philip Freier was a unique example of episcopal care. Despite being the Primate of Australia, he made time to visit us on several occasions and hosted us in his house for several events. When we first went to Australia it was Bishop Barbara Darling, during our appointment process it was Bishop Philip Huggins, then we had Bishop Paul White and during the last part Bishop Paul Barker. Each of them had a special interest in fostering multicultural ministry. Mention must be made of Bishop Genevie Blackwell and Bishop Brad Billings too for their support in ministry. The welcoming face of Archbishop Joeff Driver of Adelaide and Bishop Tim Harris need to be specially remembered.

The CSI Bishops Rt. Rev. A Dharmaraj Rasalam, Bishop Royce Manoj, Bishop B N Fenn, Bishop K G Daniel, Bishop Dyvasirvadam and the CSI General Secretary Dr. Rathnakar Sadananda visited us.

His grace the Mar Thoma Metropolitan Joseph Mar Thoma visited our vicarage twice during his visits. Metropolitans of the Mar Thomas Church Bishop Abraham Mar Paulose, Bishop Issac Mar Philexinos and Bishop Joseph Mar Barnabas graced us with their presence. Mathews Mar Aprem Thirumeni, HG Yacoob Mar Irenios Thirumeni and KG Kuriakose Mar Theophilos Thirumeni blessed us with their visits to the vicarage. We also had the privilege to host Bishop Dhilo Canagasabai from Colombo, Bishop P K Samantaroy from Amristar, Dr. Kang San Tan and Loun, Dr. Nam Chen Chan from CMS, Mrs. Gladys Staines and an array of other dignitaries.

#### The Mission Mandate

One of the best memories of the congregation was the heart to mission. They were willing to help any genuine mission engagement. I was a member of the Board of AsiaCMS when I was appointed there. Not only did the congregation allow me to continue and engage in travels but also hosted a board meeting in Melbourne. The Men's Fellowship had a mission trip to Nepal and supported a missionary. The Mangalya project was regularly helped by the women apart from



several assistance interventions. The Youth went to Monado and London and gave leaderships to events in Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane and also for the Anglican Youth camps and ecumenical VBSs. The Harvest Festivals were not only fundraising events but resource pooling for meaningful ministry.

#### Bambino Café and Life around

One of the integral parts of life in Ashburton was the Bambino Café and Ali's HSB. The late night music and the creative ways of using power and water from the church was always interesting. The Salvos in front of the church, the Sri Lankan retail chain of MKS, the Chinese and Thai eateries around, the Ashy Café, the Woolworths that was 24 hours open, the Pharmacist who prescribed, the 903 bus, the tram and train journeys, the Ashwood High and Ashburton Primary where the girls went were all part of the images etched in our minds of the good days there. Watching an occasional match at the MCG, being part of the Australian Open, encounters with the kangaroos, the exotic places chosen for retreats and camps, the long drives through M1, the frequent visits to Chadstone shopping, the four season weather, the eating outside once a while, Dr. Reena our dentist who never charged whatever be the treatment she had to give and always gave special gifts whenever we visited them, ... we can keep going on

Meeting with Mohanlal, Benyamin, KG Markose, and other celebrities, was special.

#### The Church is All About People

However, the Church is all about its people. Each home was epitomes of hospitality, and we just wanted a reason to experience it be it a birthday, a wedding anniversary or at least a mandatory pastoral visit!! Church services were marked

also by good food that followed the service. The vicarage was a symbol of hospitality always open and mostly full. The best was to host 30 people who came as a Choir from India led by SP Thomas many in the vicarage and others in homes who did not hesitate to welcome strangers and offer the vehicles for them to commute. Several students who came to Melbourne found their second home with us and we just enjoyed having them. The meetings of the Friendship Group, Mothers Union, the visit to exotic places like Tambourine Mountains and Gold Coast to conduct weddings and house warmings, being part of the Melbourne Anglican Synod, going out cherry picking and strawberry picking, doing episodes of Stories for Power Vision TV with Rajesh and Joash, the working on the preparation of services with Joyce, being with the family of Justin and Jessy, having good friends (if I name them I might miss some and some would feel offended and so not taking any names- each one and each family was precious). When we heard of the homegoing of Barry Parker, Joy Brookman, Peter Cartridge and Irene Lillywhite we recall how important each one of them for the life of the parish. We still keep in touch with many.

#### Conclusion

MCSI has a great future ahead. It could be the model as to how a diaspora church should conduct itself in relation to the CSI, to the Anglican Diocese and to the larger ecumenical world.

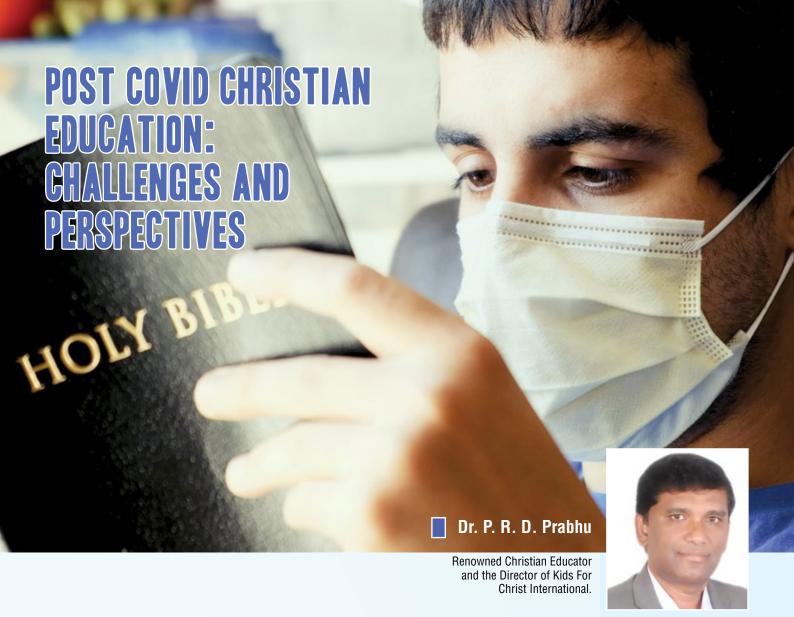
The first ten years would be the foundation on which the future can be built and I am sure CSI has a good foundation to build on. I thank each person for their love and solidarity that made our life in Australian a beautiful dream to cherish.

"A person's steps are made secure by the Lord when they delight in his way. Though they trip up, they won't be thrown down, because the Lord holds their hand." — Psalm 37:23-24



വിധ്യമാർന്ന കായിക മത്സരങ്ങൾ മനുഷ്യ 6)6)( 🗓 മനസ്സിനെ ത്രസിപ്പിക്കുന്ന ഈ കാലഘ ടത്തിൽ അതിലെ ആത്മീയ തലത്തിലേയ്ക്കുള്ള ഒരു എത്തിനോട്ടമാണ് ഈ ലഘുലേഖനം. വിവിധ കായിക മത്സരങ്ങളുടെ പല മൂർത്ഥന്യ ഘട്ടങ്ങളിലും കായിക താരങ്ങൾ തങ്ങളുടെ കഴിവിനേക്കാളുപരി ദൈവത്തിൽ ആശ്രയിക്കുന്നതിന് എത്രയോ ആവർത്തി നമ്മൾ സാക്ഷികളായിരിക്കുന്നു. കായിക മത്സരങ്ങളിലെ പല നിർണ്ണായക നാഴിക കല്ലുകൾ പിന്നിടുമ്പോഴും ചരിത്രങ്ങൾ തിരുത്തി പുതിയവ രചിക്കുമ്പോഴും പല മൂൻനിര കായിക താരങ്ങളും അവർ വിശ്വസി ക്കുന്ന ദൈവത്തിന് പരസ്യമായി നോക്കുകൊണ്ടും, വാക്കുകൊണ്ടും, പ്രവർത്തികൊണ്ടും മഹത്വം കൊടു ക്കുന്നത് നമ്മൾ കണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. ആ നിമിഷ ത്തിന് നേരിട്ടും മറ്റു ദൃശ്യ മാധ്യമങ്ങൾ വഴിയും സാക്ഷികളായിരിക്കുന്ന കാഴ്ചക്കാരിലേയ്ക്കും സത്യ ത്തിൽ ദൈവത്തിന്റെ മഹത്വത്തിന്റെ സന്ദേശമല്ലേ എത്തുന്നത്. ദൈവകാരുണ്യമില്ലാതെ മനുഷ്യന്റെ കഴിവുകൾ നിസാരമാണെന്ന വലിയ ആശയമല്ലേ അത് നല്കുന്നത്. ഒരു കപടതയും ഇല്ലാതെ മനോഹരമായ ആ നിമിഷം സമ്മാനിച്ച ഈശ്വരന് നന്ദി പ്രകാശിപ്പിക്കുന്നത് മനുഷ്യന്റെ കഴിവുകൾ ദൈവദാനമാണ് എന്ന പ്രസ്താവനയാണ്. തോൽവിയും വിജയവും മത്സരങ്ങളിൽ അനിവാര്യമാണെങ്കിലും സ്വന്തം സംഘം ജയിക്കുവാനായ് ഈശ്വരന് പ്രാർത്ഥനകളും നേർച്ചകളും വഴിപാടുകളും നടത്തുന്നതും നമ്മൾ ക്ക് അറിവുള്ളതാണ്. ലക്ഷ്യം വിജയമാണെങ്കിലും തന്മൂലം ദൈവാരാധനയല്ലേ സത്യത്തിൽ വെളിവാ ക്കുന്നത്. കാരുണ്യ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾക്കായ് നടത്തപ്പെ

ടൂന്ന കായിക മത്സരങ്ങളും അതിന് ആദിത്യം വഹി ക്കുന്നതും ആത്മീകതയോട് കൂട്ടിവായിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്. കാരണം കാരുണ്യം ദൈവീകമാണ് അത് മനുഷ്യന്റെ പ്രവർത്തികളിലൂടെ വെളിപ്പെടുമ്പോൾ ദൈവീക മഹത്വമാണ് പ്രതിഫലിക്കുന്നത്. അതുലുപരിയായി സഹജീവികളോടും സഹോദരങ്ങളോടുമുള്ള സ്നേ ഹവും കരുതലുമാണ് അത് അന്വർത്ഥമാ ക്കുന്നത്. സൗഹൃദമത്സരങ്ങളും രാജ്യാന്തര മത്സരങ്ങളും എല്ലാം ഒരർത്ഥത്തിൽ ജാതി മത വർണ്ണ വിശ്വാസ ഭേദമന്യേ മനുഷ്യരെ കൂട്ടിയിണക്കുന്ന സന്ദർഭങ്ങളാണ്. തന്മൂലം നിങ്ങൾ പരസ്പരം സ്നേഹിപ്പിൻ എന്ന ദൈവസന്ദേശമാണ് വെളിപ്പെടുന്നത്. പോരാട്ട മത്സരങ്ങൾക്ക് മുൻപെ ഈശ്വര പ്രാർത്ഥന നടത്തുന്ന തും, വൈരികളെ പോലെ പോരാടിയ ശേഷം പരസ്പരം ഹസ്തദാനം ചെയ്യുന്നതും, സ്നേഹവും ബഹുമാനവും നിലനിർത്തുന്നതുമെല്ലാം ദൈവീക കാഴ്ചപ്പാടുകൾക്കനുരൂപമാണ്. സ്നേഹം, സഹനം, ബഹുമാനം, സാഹോദര്യം ഇത്യാദി സൽഗുണങ്ങൾ മനുഷ്യ മനസ്സിൽ വളരാൻ കയിക മത്സരങ്ങൾ ക്കുള്ള പങ്ക് ചെറുതല്ല. ജയപരാജയങ്ങൾ മത്സരങ്ങളിൽ അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുമ്പോൾ തോൽവിയിൽ തളരാതെ അടുത്ത മത്സരത്തിൽ പോരാടുവാനുള്ള മാനസീക ധൈര്യം കൈവരിക്കാൻ പ്രാർത്ഥനയും ദൈവഭക്തിയും അനിവാര്യമാണ്. കൂട്ടികളെ ചെറുപ്രായത്തിൽ തന്നെ കായിക മത്സരങ്ങളിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കുവാനുള്ള പ്രചോദനം മാതാപിതാക്കൾ കൊടുക്കേണ്ടതാണ്. തന്മൂലം അവർക്ക് കായികമായി മാത്രമല്ല മാനസീകമായും ആത്മീകമായും അഭിവൃത്തി ഉണ്ടാകും എന്ന കാര്യത്തിൽ ഈ ലേഖന ത്തിലെ സാരാംശത്തിൽ നിന്ന് വ്യക്തമാണ്.



#### Biblical mandate of teaching

The teaching ministry of the church as declared by the Lord Jesus Christ is, "go therefore make disciples, of all nations baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the son and of the Holy spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you". These words of Lord Jesus Christ, give us the clear ideas of Christian teaching. Teaching has always had a predominant role in God's redemptive plan.

This topic deals with the principles and plan of Christian teaching; in many ways Christian teaching is different from any other kind of teaching. Christian education is always God centered.

#### Does the bible talk about teaching and learning?

This is a very primary question and important factor in the process of Christian teaching about God, so teaching has been a chief means of

bringing out the truth to man. In the beginning, God, himself was the communicator, He Himself made everything, with his own word power. In the early days, God himself was the instructor. (Teacher)

Secondly, God instructed human beings to reveal His mind. God instructed Moses, "that I will teach what you shall do" (Ex.4:15). Also, he instructed Moses to teach His law to the people of Israel. God also commanded Moses to gather the people to hear His words, that they may teach their children (Deut 4:10). Furthermore, He commanded His people to teach them diligently to their children (Deut 6:7) and to have His words and acts in their hearts and minds so that it would be fully impressed upon their children. God gave three instructions for the Israelite parents:

(a) Teach the law

- Talk about the commands (b)
- (c) Train them in their lives.

Teaching involves "Instruction" which means transition of ideas, sharing with each other.

Talking is not teaching, but it is more giving and input and information.

Thirdly teaching is making them involved in the courses of learning through participation, experiences, exposure, and edification.

God has commanded these threefold methods to teach young generations. God used patriarchs and leaders as a medium or channel to communicate His mind.

Later even through symbols, festivals, celebrations, and incidents. Overall, teaching was God's breathing and during the later period of the Old Testament God began to use his servants as prophets, who could communicate the truth to the people and among them were a few kings who did His mind during their period.

In the process of teaching, it is questionable making the learners as strong knowledge holders. In the digital teaching it becomes more performance based and imitating the offline classes in online.

In the New Testament God revealed his mind through His Son Lord Jesus Christ. While He was on earth he spoke in parables, illustrations, and discourses, he communicated His father's will to the people in all his actions. He was called "Rabbi". He was the master of all.

In Mark 4:33 Jesus taught people with many parables, the word and with their learning and understanding.

Later The Church took the responsibility of teaching, the plan of salvation and committing the teaching ministry with believers and laymen. The church is dedicated not only to the worship of God and the hearing of His word but also on education. We can clearly state that the teaching hand of the Lord has fallen into the church today, so we as members and body of the church should carry out these responsibilities.

#### Why do we need to teach?

Our teaching has a purpose, aim and goal. For what we should teach? Our teaching should be result oriented. This is what our lord declared in Mathew 28:19&20. Making disciples is the aim and purpose of our teaching.

#### "To make disciples"

Disciple is the one who follows the Lord Jesus and one who make another disciple. The ultimate aim in teaching is to make disciples. The common question in our mind is how we are going to achieve this? This requires more than the services of the professionally qualified trained Christian educators. It takes a countless army of lay workers to accomplish this task. Jesus Christ himself used laymen and women, fishermen, tax collectors, tent makers and so on. Likewise, the modern Christian education is organized as lay people's movement. The Sunday school movement out of which it arose was founded by businessman, Robert Raikes. Through the years, Sunday school teachers and leaders have been lay people.

Today the situation is such that the laypeople are not fulfilling their function and purpose biblically. So, we need to use a most sensible way in carrying out the task of involving lay people. Lay people must

be trained with the ability to teach. Teaching is a gift from God. It is the gift that is not

given to every Christian but only to some.

Christian education in the post covid world.

As we see the history of Christian education, we acknowledge that God is the author and

creator of Christian education. These recent days of Christian Education going through a time of covered and masked face of a church. Following are the areas we need to think and pray that the lord will take us through this situation.

#### Passion to performances

Education and training are a God given passion, which turns into "performances" these days. It seems educational values and focuses are neglected and turned to be a performance. The reasons for the twist may be because of copying and imitating of social media and other reality shows that makes the educators as performers in both online and offline presentations. Still as Christian Educators we need to believe that our God uses new wine skins for His purpose to be fulfilled "God beyond Policies".

#### People to Play

Second aspect of today's Christian education is all about people. People are basic unit and instrument of God to edify someone and to empower them with Gospel. People potential and personality is considered as more of skill and efficiency on the recent days of Christian Education.

But God uses ordinary people by giving them a special skills and extraordinary potentials. Having said that Christian Education mode has become a fun way of learning and entertainment using the God given talents.

This is again a performance and portraying the "self". God concept is signified in the teacher's area. As learners people look for fun and play more than concrete learning.

Even then our God is beyond the concepts and principles, so He still uses every mode to reveal Himself in this era.

#### Patterns and Performances

Christian Education have a pattern and methodology to follow. The Pedagogy of today is more of feeding the knowledge and making learners as "information bag" but understanding and application is not given much importance, the micro level programs and activities in churches and units is more with knowledge-based activities, such as quiz programs, tests, and examinations. This in turn to increase the knowledge of the learner and making them as intellectuals not influential in the society to fulfill the plan of God. But Jesus commissioned us the going into the world and making everyone as DISCIPLE. In the process of teaching, it is questionable making the learners as strong knowledge holders. In the digital teaching it becomes more performance based and imitating the offline classes in online. It often helps to survive in the midst troubled and transitional period.

#### Plans and Platforms

Today's Christian Education plans are all about finding the source of communication and searching the appropriate digital tools and mode of delivery. This makes both teacher and leaner to "ignore" God and what God communicates to us. The content of communication is neglected and given importance to more on delivery system and its mode. There are many digital tools and platforms are available in a good way to make learners to come closer to GOD and His message.

#### Conclusion:

Our God is beyond the principles and polices. So, in these troubled times of pandemic, we pray that the lord may take us through right direction to impart faith in the hearts of young believers.

"I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well." - Psalm 139:14 -

#### Youth Fellowship

All entrepreneurs are welcome here;
To try and test their talents.
We're not just an old church in Ashburton mere;
We love one another other in gallons.
No matter your accent, or language or colour;
You are but only one-of-a-kind.
So hop on along to the MCSI;
We're part of one body the church of our Christ.
Anu Anand

Ecclesiastes 12:1 Remember your
Creator in the days of your
youth, before the days of
trouble come and the years
approach when you will say, "I
find no pleasure in them"—

I feel that our church is a place where our culture is embraced and where we are encouraged to take part in the community as a whole, where both the young and the old form firm ties with each other and learn about our faith as CSI people.

CSI Melbourne Church has always been a home away from home and it helps me to grow in faith and love. Geo Peter

Tania Mathew

The church and its community are like a second home and family for me. It is one of the many places i feel safe at.

Daniel Cherian

The friendship and fellowship I have experienced at MCSI has made it a home away from home for me.

#### Aparna Anna

The CSI church has been a home; a family. Fulled each Sunday with eagerness to see each face and hear each voice as the laughter and joy of children fills the church. It has been nothing short of a blessing to be part of the CSI Church.

Anju Anand

CSI Melbourne Church is a place of worship that seeks to make fully devoted followers of Christ and are committed to helping every person who believes in Jesus.

Sara Alexander

Being a member of
Melbourne CSI Church has
transformed me as a
person and helped me to
face different struggles
and continue to praise
and worship our Lord
Jesus Christ.

Leon Thomas Eapen

Church - a place of belonging.
Ben Koshy

Our church is the representation of a safe and welcoming community that is bonded in unity. Krupa Elsa Kurian

As I've grown older, I've realised church is more than just a building. It is place of refuge, peace, love and fellowship Priya Justin

Church for me is a place where I can become spiritually nourished and seek God with those eager to seek God like me. Sherlin Kalarikkal

I thank God for the fellowship I experience in this church and to attend the services in Malayalam feels like home.

Akhil Mohan

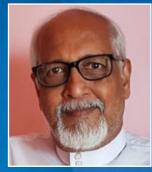
What a privilege it has been to be a part of the MCSI Youth Group. I'm so glad God has brought such beautiful people into my life and I can't wait to do more for God's kingdom.

Ansu Anand

Church is a place for myself and people around me to grow in faith.

Joash Rajesh





Rev. Thomas P. Korah

Retired Clergy of the CSI Diocese of Malabar and he ministered to MCSI during Nov 2012 to April 2013 & September 2014 to August 2015.

#### Cayluna Kantulas woslmmem.

സ്തു യേശുവിന്റെ നാമം മഹത്വപ്പെടു മാറാകട്ടെ. എനിക്കും പ്രിയപ്പെട്ട സഭയുടെ കൂട്ടായ്മയിലും, ആരാധനക ളിലും പങ്കാളിയാകുവാൻ ഇടയായതിൽ ദൈവത്തെ സ്തുതിക്കുന്നു.

മെൽബൺ സി.എസ്.ഐ മലയാളം സഭയുടെ പത്താം വാർഷികം ആഘോഷിക്കുമ്പോൾ അതിൽ പങ്കാളി യാവാൻ എനിക്ക് ഒരവസരം നൽകിയ കുര്യൻ പീറ്റർ അച്ചനോടുള്ള നന്ദിയും സ്നേഹവും അറിയിക്കുന്നു. എന്റെ ആദ്യ സന്ദർശനത്തിൽ ആറുമാസവും രണ്ടാമത്തെ സന്ദർശനത്തിൽ ഒരു വർഷവും അവിടെ ചിലവഴിപ്പാനും കൂട്ടായ്മ ആചരിപ്പാനും സാധിച്ചു എന്നുള്ളതു വളരെ സന്തോഷത്തിന് വക നൽകുന്നതാണ്.

പത്താം വാർഷികം ആഘോഷിക്കുമ്പോൾ എന്റെ ചിന്തയിൽക്കൂടെ കടന്നുപോകുന്നത് എഫേസ്യ ലേഖനമാണ്. എഫേസ്യലേഖനം എഫേസ്യസഭയെ മാത്രം ഉദ്ദേശിച്ചെഴുതിയതല്ല. പ്രത്യുത ലവോദിക്കയും ആസ്യയിലുള്ള സഭകൾക്കും കൂടി എഴുതിയതാണ്. അതായത് ക്രിസ്തുവിൽ വിശ്വാസികളായ എല്ലാവർ ക്കും വേണ്ടി എഴുതിയതാണ് എന്നർത്ഥം. എഫേ 1:1. എഫസോസ് സഭയിൽ ഒരു പ്രശ്നമുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. യഹൂദ ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികൾ, പുറജാതി ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികൾ, യഹൂദ ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികൾക്കു പുറജാതി ക്രിസ്ത്യാനി കളെ അംഗീകരിക്കാൻ പ്രയാസമുണ്ടായിരുന്നു.

എന്നാൽ പുറജാതി ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികൾ സ്വന്തം ഭവന ത്തേയും, സ്വന്തക്കാരേയും, എല്ലാം വിട്ട് ധനപരമായും സാമൂഹ്യപരമായും മറ്റ് എല്ലാവരാലും വെറുക്കപ്പെട്ട വരായിരുന്നു. യഹൂദ ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികളും പുറജാതി ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികളെ അംഗീകരിക്കാൻ തയ്യാറായില്ല. പൗലോസ് അപ്പോസ്തോലൻ അതുകൊണ്ട് വളരെ മനഃശാസ്ത്രപരമായി ഇവരെ തമ്മിൽ ഐക്യപ്പെടു ത്തി രമ്യമായി ജീവിക്കുവാൻ സഭയെ ഉപദേശിക്കു ന്നു.

അതിനാൽ ഇതിലെ പ്രധാന ഉപദേശങ്ങൾ ഓരോ വാക്കിൽ സംഗ്രഹിക്കാം.

- (1) ദൈവത്തിന്റെ ആദി മുതലുള്ള ആലോചനയുടെ നിവൃത്തി ക്രൈസ്തവ സഭ ശരീരമാണ് ക്രിസ്തു അതിന്റെ തലയാണ്. 1:2, 2:6, 3:6, 4:13, 4:16 ശ്രദ്ധയോടെ വായിക്കുക.
- (2) ക്രിസ്തു നിർവ്വഹിച്ച പ്രായശ്ചിത്തം ഇഹലോക ത്തിൽ മാത്രമല്ല പരലോകത്തിലും പ്രാധാന്യം വഹിക്കുന്നു. 1:10, 14:2:7:3:10
- (3) പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവിന്റെ ശുശ്രൂഷ വിശദമാക്കിയിരി ക്കുന്നു 1:13, 17:2:18, 8:16, 4:3, 30:5:9
- (4) ഐക്യതയേക്കുറിച്ച് ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികൾക്ക് നൽകു ന്ന ആലോചന 4:1-7, 15, 25-32; 5:2

- (5) ക്രൈസ്തവ ഗൃഹാശ്രമം 5:22-26;29
- (6) ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ ഭടൻ എങ്ങനെയുള്ളവൻ 6:10-8 ഇവയാണ് പൗലോസ് അപ്പോസ്തോലന്റെ പ്രധാന ഉപദേശങ്ങൾ
- മുട്ടെ പ്രത്യേകതകൾ വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നു.
- ഓരോ ക്രിസ്ത്യാനിയും ദൈവത്താൽ തെരഞ്ഞെ ടുക്കപ്പെട്ടവരാണ്.
- 2) ഓരോ ക്രിസ്ത്യാനിയും ദൈവകൃപയുടെ സമൃദ്ധി അനുഭവിക്കുന്നവൻ ആകുന്നു.
- 3) നമ്മെ ക്രിസ്ത്യാനിയായി തെരഞ്ഞെടുത്തതിന്റെ ഉദ്ദേശം വിശുദ്ധരും, നിഷ്കളങ്കരും ആകേണ്ടതിന് വിശുദ്ധർ എന്നതിന്റെ അർത്ഥമെന്താണ്? വേർതിരി ക്കപ്പെട്ടവരാണ് എങ്ങനെ വേർതിരിക്കപ്പെടണം. ലോകത്തിൽ നിന്നും, ദൈവത്തിനു വേണ്ടിയും, നാം ആയിരിക്കുന്ന ജോലിസ്ഥലത്തും ഭവനത്തിലും വിശുദ്ധരാകണം. ഇതിനായിട്ട് നമ്മെ തെരഞ്ഞെടുത്തു, ദത്തെടുത്തു, മുന്നീയമിച്ചു, വീണ്ടെടുത്തു.
- III. സഭാംഗങ്ങളുടെ യോഗ്യതകൾ എന്താണ്? 4:7-10
- (1) പഴയ നീയമത്തിലെ ദൈവം ജയിച്ചുവരുമ്പോൾ സമ്മാനങ്ങൾ വാങ്ങും, അതു യാഗങ്ങളായിട്ടും, ദൈവ

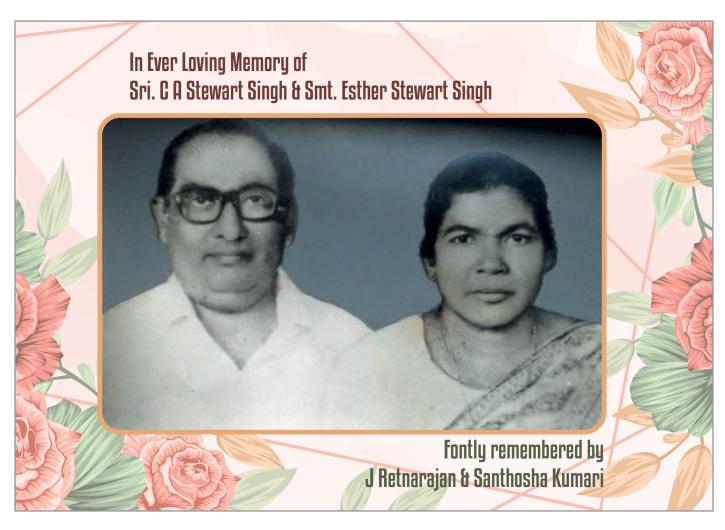
- ത്തിനു ദാനങ്ങളായിട്ടും എന്നാൽ പുതിയ നിയമത്തി ലെ ദൈവം ദാനങ്ങൾ നമുക്കു നൽകുന്നു.
- (2) പഴയ നിയമത്തിലെ ദൈവം ആവശ്യങ്ങൾ ചോദി ച്ചുവാങ്ങുന്നു. പുതിയ നിയമത്തിലെ ദൈവം ധാരാളം നൽകുന്നു.
- (3) പഴയ നിയമത്തിലെ ദൈവം തീക്ഷ്ണതയുള്ള ദൈവമാണ്. എന്നാൽ പുതിയ നിയമത്തിലെ ദൈവം സ്നേഹിക്കുന്ന, കരുതുന്ന ദൈവമാണ്.
- (4) പഴയ നിയമത്തിലെ ദൈവം മുകളിലേക്കു കയറി
- പുതിയ നിയമത്തിലെ ദൈവം സ്വർഗ്ഗത്തിൽ നിന്നു താണിറങ്ങിയ ദൈവം

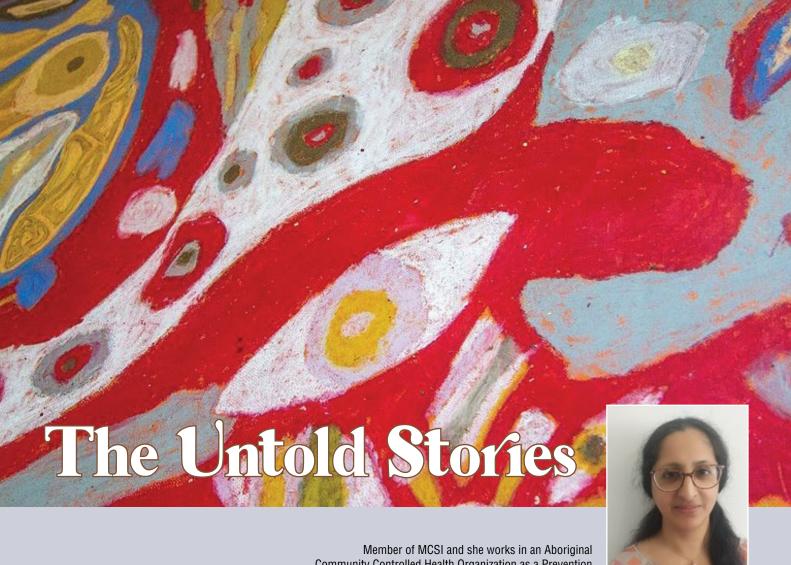
പൗലോസ് അപ്പോസ്തോലൻ ഈ വ്യക്തമായ പഠിപ്പി ക്കലിലൂടെ എഫേസ്യ സഭയെ ആത്മീകരായി വളർ ത്തി...ഇന്നത്തെ സഭ എങ്ങനെ? വളരാതെയും തളരാ തെയുമുള്ള ശീതോഷ്ണ സഭകളല്ലേ. നാം വളർന്നാലേ സഭ വളരുകയുള്ളൂ. അടുത്ത 10 വർഷം കഴിയുമ്പോൾ മെൽബൺ സഭ ഉന്നതിയിലേക്കു വളരട്ടെ എന്നു പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു.

നാം തീക്ഷ്ണതയുള്ളവരും, സമർപ്പിക്കപ്പെട്ടവരും, സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നവരും, ദൈവശുശ്രൂഷയിൽ ജാഗ്രതയു ള്ളവരും ആകണം. 10-ാം വർഷം നാം ആഘോഷിക്കു മ്പോൾ എഫേസ്യലേഖനം ഒരു വെല്ലുവിളിയായി ഏറ്റെടുക്കുക. ദൈവം ഏവരേയും അനുഗ്രഹിക്കട്ടെ.









Member of MCSI and she works in an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organization as a Prevention and early intervention coordinator striving to make a difference in the health of the First Nations community.

Jenny John

n a cold, frosty morning on the first Monday of July, I witnessed two flags being raised, the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander flags. It was to mark the beginning of NAIDOC, a week set apart every year to celebrate the culture, history, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or First Nation Australians. As I saw them flying high, I was inspired to write this reflection on the life of the First Nations people of Australia and their many untold stories.

#### Pride and strength

Cathy Freeman is a famous sprinter and the first Aboriginal Australian who won an individual gold medal in the Sydney Olympics in 2000. In 1994, when she won the 200 meters sprint in the Commonwealth Games, with a defiant spirit she carried the Aboriginal flag along with the Australian flag in her lap of honour. As the Aboriginal flag was not a recognized flag, it created a controversy. Interestingly, a year later, it was recognized, and was a different story when she did the same in the Sydney Olympics in 2000. The victory lap with

both the flags in the Olympics became a symbol of reconciliation and pride in her Australian Aboriginal heritage.

I was struck by what Cathy had to say later "Somewhere deep inside I had absorbed all the pain and suffering that my people had endured and turned it into a source of strength".

#### The black history of white Australia

This is the story of a lot of First Nations people: pain and suffering due to racism experienced even today and the aftereffects of trauma experienced for generations since Colonization. The Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander or First Nations people call themselves as the Blackfellas regardless of their skin colour and take great pride in their culture, families, and connection to the land. They love their families, carry their burdens for each other and very often live with extended families whether they live in the cities or in remote areas. They are known to be great sportsmen and women, artists, creative and have a fantastic sense of humour. It is a story of resilience

despite the circumstances for the world's oldest living civilization which is estimated to be around 65,000 years. There were over 250 languages or dialects spoken by different community groups with their own culture & customs. However, very few languages are still alive & spoken. As the First Nations history was never taught in schools, not surprisingly, very few people actually know much about them.

A more recent story of racism that was in the national news just a few years ago is of Adam Goodes, the famous Sydney Swans AFL player. He was booed consistently and faced racist comments from his opposition fans over a period of time despite a long career as an AFL player. It finally forced him into retirement in 2015. This sparked many conversations about racism and ultimately led to the club apologizing to Goodes in 2019. If somebody with fame, achievements & influence had to endure that, what is the plight of an ordinary First Nations person?

#### The scars on body and mind

Intergenerational trauma impacts generations of the First Nations people that translates into physical and mental health issues, leading to a life expectancy

Sadly, even today due to various reasons including the continuing impacts of the stolen generation, the First Nations children are almost 11 times more likely to be removed from their families than the rest of the population.

of 10 years less than non-indigenous people. Poor living conditions and socio-economic conditions also contribute to their ill health. Mental health issues and suicide among youth is much higher than the rest of the population. Prior to colonization, the First Nations people were hunter gatherers and lived healthy lives. Their lifestyle changed when they received payments for their work from the white man as sugar, flour, tobacco, and alcohol. They turned away from their traditional ways and foods, embracing some of the root causes of many health problems, thus impacting their lives to date.

Many First Nations people prefer to stay unidentified due to fear of racism & prejudice. The government is not trusted with very justifiable reasons too. Would you and I trust anyone who has removed our children from us? The pain and distrust that comes from that is unimaginable.

#### The generation of stolen children

Between 1910 and 1970, children were forcibly removed from their parents by state and federal governments, including church missions and welfare institutions, with the policy of assimilation. This created a stolen generation as they are called. Even though the theory was that it would improve the lives of the children, when they became part of the white society, they were often only chosen to serve and be unpaid domestic help to the white man. Many were institutionalized and had a hard life. It is sad to think that the church was also part of this, and many turned against the church and faith. I personally have heard of many stories of people who, in the later years of life, were able to track down at least some of their family members. Others never had a fortune to know their kith and kin. Sadly, even today due to various reasons including the continuing impacts of the stolen generation, the First Nations children are almost 11 times more likely to be removed from their families than the rest of the population.

In Australia, children as young as 10yrs are imprisoned for petty crimes thus making it very difficult for them to break free from the vicious cycle of the justice system. Very often, First Nations people are assumed guilty before proven, due to racist presumptions. It is no wonder that we saw the "Black Lives Matter" protests in 2020 in Australia, resonating with the one in the United States of America and other parts of the world.

#### An Apology from a Prime Minister

After years of continuing injustice, in 2008, the Government finally attempted to apologize for their mistakes led by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd on 13th February in the parliament. This gesture was appreciated by the First Nations people and considered as a turning point. As you read below, his words will sum up a lot of the history and injustice done to the First Nations people of Australia.

"That today we honour the Indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

We reflect on their past mistreatment.

We reflect in

particular on the mistreatment of those who were Stolen Generations—this blemished chapter in our nation's history.

The time has now come for the nation to turn a new page in Australia's history by righting the wrongs of the past and so moving forward with confidence to the future.

We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians.

We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

For the pain, suffering, and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry.

To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and

communities, we say sorry.

And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry.

We the Parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation.

For the future we take heart; resolving that this new page in the history of our great continent can now be written.

We today take this first step by acknowledging the past and laying claim to a future that embraces all Australians.

A future where this Parliament resolves that the injustices of the past must never, never happen again.

A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to

close the gap that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement, and economic opportunity.

A future where we embrace the possibility of new solutions to enduring problems where old approaches have failed.

A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility.

A future where all Australians, whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities and with an equal stake in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia.

—Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister of Australia, 13 February 2008, at a sitting of the Parliament of Australia.

#### The journey of reconciliation and equality

In 2008, this further led to the creation of a strategy

by the Government, making a commitment to "Closing the Gap" between indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. This included life expectancy, health, education, and employment. However, very few goals have been achieved in

Closing the Gap in

the last 13 years.

The journey continues with the Government making small signs, gestures and recognition of the First Nations people who were almost invisible for a long time. In the recent Tokyo Olympics 2020, Patty Mills, the basketball player, proudly carried the Australian flag in the opening March. He was given this honour as the first man from the First Nations people. He played a significant role in the Australian basketball team and the Boomers won a bronze medal for the first time in history making every Australian proud. These are small signs of acceptance but there is a long road to reconciliation and equality for the First Nations people.

#### The greatest commandment

I have often wondered where the church stands with accepting our First Nations brothers and sisters. I often see signs that say "Refugees are welcome" hung in front of churches but do we welcome First Nations people in the same way? As Jesus taught us, it is our Christian duty to reach out with God's love to all vulnerable people. Christians know that Christ is the hope for every heart that is heavy laden, he is the God of the marginalized and downtrodden. A people hurting from years of trauma can surely be given hope.

As Mathew 22:37–39 says "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind and all your soul and the second is to love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these". I hope this small glimpse into the First Nations stories will help you understand them better and reach out to them as a neighbour with God's love.

#### The final appeal

Not everyone has the opportunity to interact with

the First Nations people. However, when you do or even hear about them, in whatever situation, I would implore you to not pass judgement. I pray God moves in your heart and you feel challenged to reach out, understand more and take opportunities to encourage or show love & kindness. I praise God that he gave me an opportunity to hear the stories and work among the First Nations people of Shepparton in their journey towards improving their health and "Closing the Gap".

I am thankful to Rev Kurian Peter for giving me this opportunity to share their stories with you. May the Lord help you to share the true love of God that brings hope, healing, reconciliation and a better future to our First Nations brothers and sisters making them a visible part of the fabric of Australia.

Jenny John works in an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organization as a Prevention and early intervention coordinator striving to make a difference in the health of the First Nations community.

#### Best compliments and prayers from St. Thomas Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church, Craigieburn, Melbourne



78 Whites lane, Crigieburn **Evening Service for Sunday School children:** Saturday 6:30 PM- 7:30 PM Holy mass Sunday 3:00 PM

Cont. Vicar Rev. Fr. Dr. Jacob Joseph 0426 774 494

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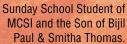




# FIFTY THINGS TO DO

Fifty things to do without electronics during leisure time

- 1 Study Bible
- 2 Build Lego models
- 3 Cycling
- 4 Gardening
- 5 Spend time with your pets
- 6 Learn new skills
- 7 Reading
- 8 Playing a sport
- 9 Helping with chores
- 10 Art and Craft
- 11 Visiting people
- 12 Visiting places
- 13 Outdoor exercises
- 14 Yoga
- 15 **DIY**
- 16 Hobbies
- 17 Quiz
- 18 Write an autobiography
- 19 Mindfulness activities
- 20 Write a story
- 21 Make a journal
- 22 Try new recipes
- 23 Debates
- 24 Go through photographs
- 25 Organise room
- 26 Picnic





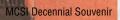
Jonathan Paul

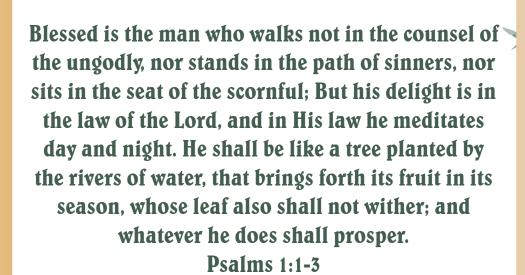
- 27 Indoor planting
- 28 Doing science experiments
- 29 Shopping
- 30 Fly a drone
- 31 Scavenger Hunt
- 32 Fly a kite
  - Doing some physical challenges
- 34 Star gazing
- Write a letter to loved ones
- Basic car maintenance
- Do some magic tricks
- 38 Scrapbooking
- 39 Dictionary games
- o\ Puppetry
- Indoor exercises
  - Dumb charades
  - Learn new songs
- 4 Pottery
- Play card games/board games
- 6 Fishing
- 47 Social interactions
- 48 Camping
- 49 Shopping list preparation
- 50 Visit the elderly











with best compliments

MCSI Men's Fellowship



In the loving memory of

Mili R. Kalampala



Your memory is a treasure I hold in my heart.
You taught me to be strong and courageous.
You taught me to fight for what is right.
You taught me to put my faith in God and not people.
All that I am and all that I hope to be, I owe to you, my mother.



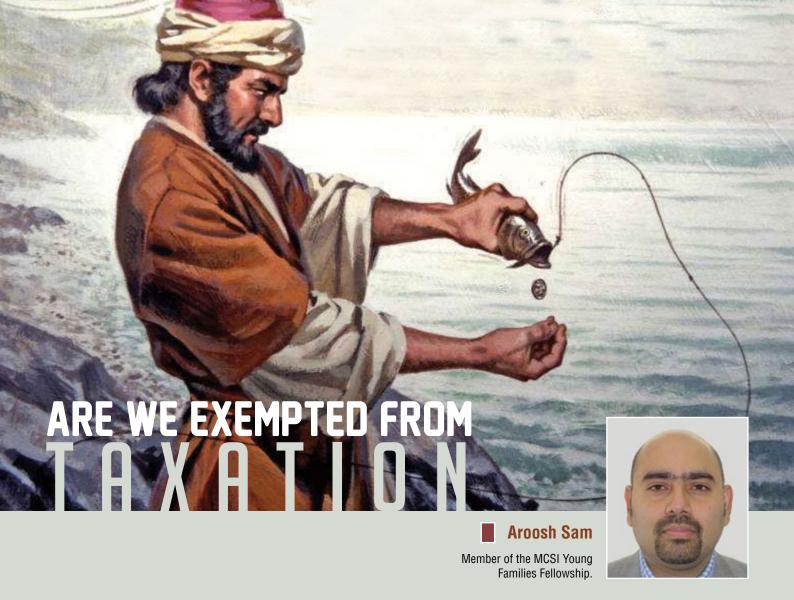
JOHN 3:16
"FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE
HIS ONE AND ONLY SON, THAT WHOEVER
BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE
ETERNAL LIFE."

In Ever Loving Memory of Dr. Sam George Dass

Fondly remembered by Aroosh Sam & family







Paying taxes is one of the fundamental obligations we as citizens or residents undertake for the services we enjoy in any civilized society. These services, to mention a few, include police for our security, paramedics, healthcare services, infrastructure and education.

What would be our reaction if we were told that we are exempt from paying tax? Obviously, we will be delighted as we will get to keep all our hard-earned money.

The Bible illustrates, on various occasions, what Jesus' stand was concerning tax payments. For instance, in Matthew 22:21, he says to pay the emperor what belongs to the emperor and pay God what belongs to God.

It's been well documented that all Jews throughout the Roman Empire were required to pay the Jewish temple tax to fund the maintenance of the temple in Jerusalem.

Although Julius Caesar ordered this, the amount

commanded by God for the temple tax was initially instituted to 'pay' for the individual's sins and was half a shekel of silver (Exodus 30:11-16).

By the time Jesus came on the scene, half a shekel was equivalent to two silver Roman denarii or two silver Greek drachmas, which was about two days' wages. The money was needed because it was the duty of every male Jew who came to the temple to worship, to pay half a shekel for the temple's upkeep. This was

called 'Temple Tax.' A half a shekel was equal to a third, or a fourth of a Denarius, or a penny and could only be paid in the temple.

In Matthew 17:24-27, when the collectors of the temple tax ask



Peter whether Jesus pays that tax, Jesus, knowing of this conversation, asks Peter, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tribute? From their children or from others?" Peter answers, "From others." Jesus responds, "Then the children are free. However, so that we do not offend them, go to the sea, and cast a hook; take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a coin; take that and give it to them for you and me."

Jesus asked Peter a question, and the answer was simple; the king's sons are free from paying the taxes, but the king's subjects must pay. Jesus is making the point that since He was the Son of God, He is greater than the temple, and as the Son, He was exempt from paying the tax to the temple. But still, He paid the tax, giving away His right as the Son of God so that He does not offend anybody.

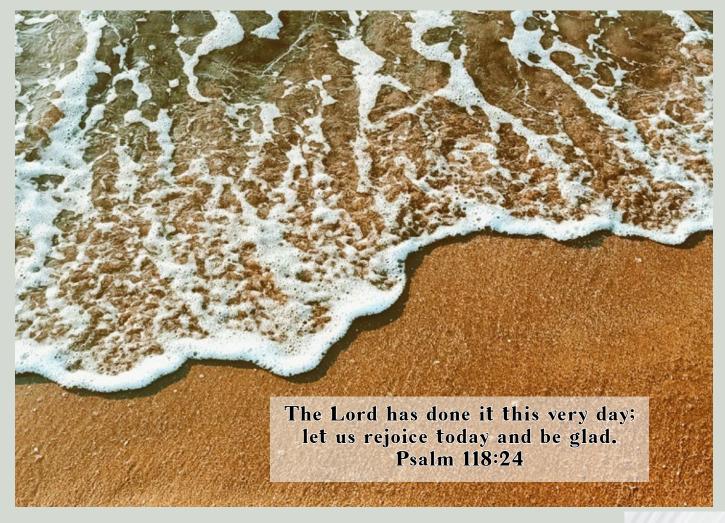
#### Now to the essence:

Are we eligible for tax exemption???? Does it matter????

What should matter more to us as children of God is whether we are ready to willingly give away our rights (any rights and not just tax exemption) for the sake of love and compassion. Are we prepared to be humble enough so that we don't offend anyone?

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 "Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone".

Winning the battle does not necessarily mean we have won the war.





powerful that verse was. It honestly took me almost a year of waiting to get where I am today. The wait was hard; there were some days when I just wanted to pack my bags and go back home, but a voice in my head constantly told me to stay. The struggle was real- trying to pay rent, finding a balance between work and studies, trying to blend in with the new culture and environment. There was also a period in Melbourne where I lost hope and questioned myself. But my parents

"The church helped me fill the void of living away from home".

always reminded me of one thing- God has a plan for you, and we need to continue to put our faith in Him.

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." - Jeremiah 29:11.

I held on strong to this verse and understood its precise meaning. I began to believe that God has a plan for everyone, and all the struggles are just a test from Him. I continued to visit many churches in Melbourne, and during that time, I came across Melbourne CSI. I'm glad I had visited the church as I received a warm welcome and interacted with many church members. Today I have a wonderful church, a fantastic set of friends, a great job and a wonderful home. The church helped me fill the void of living away from home. The

church members used to approach me and give me a sense of confidence to pursue my dreams. I had the opportunity to blend in with a group of enthusiastic youth members aiming at the same goal as me- worshipping and praising our Lord Jesus Christ.

My master's degree has been a whole journey in itself, but through it all, the most important lesson I learnt was to be obedient and faithful to God's ways, and no matter what you go through, He will bring that ACCELERATION in your life! And I genuinely stand as a testimony to His love and faithfulness.

I can't thank my parents and sister enough for their numerous sacrifices, love, unconditional support and pushing me to stay in faith with God. My amazing family from different parts of the world are constantly supporting and showering their love. My amazing church friends here in Melbourne have helped me not forget that I have a family here. To my fantastic bunch of friends from back home and here and finally to all my well-wishers, thanks a lot for your support through the struggles of living in Melbourne and for helping me to get where I am.

Today, I can very well say that the gifts I have received are because I am truly blessed and gifted to have some of the best people in my life. I am here today because of Jesus, and all the Glory and honour goes to Him alone.



" Demember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith." Hebrew 13:7



IN EVER LIVING MEMORIES OF

### **K.J.PETER**

( 02 nd April 1928 - 29th May 2021)

### **ALEYAMMA PETER**

( 05th December 1931- 08th January 2014)

KOCHUPARAMBIL

Santhosh Cottage







# Love of Christ in Families and Communities

from the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians in chapter 13. During the celebration of marriage, the priest reads out these beautiful verses from the Bible. These verses are powerful enough to nourish and strengthen the love within a family, and these verses remain a solid testament to the successful lives of many families around us. The word LOVE is sometimes used instead of romance (eros) or affinity (liking). Love, romance, and affinity are intertwined and difficult to recognise and decipher. To understand the expanse of Christian love, we need to know how to differentiate between these words.

Newborn will express their likes and dislikes based on the environment they are brought up in. However, their psychological state would determine or develop their character or affinity towards some things or people. For example, our kids have a strong liking or affinity to chocolates and ice-creams and mobile phones or tablets in the modern world. Since these affinities can become excessive and affect their physical or mental health, parents try to discourage them. The kids feel delighted when they get ice cream or iPhones.

Similarly, when a person likes someone, they feel happy and comfortable in their presence. Science says that when a person feels romantic towards someone, their heartbeat increases naturally. When a person feels the emotion of romance, a specific region in the human brain called the insula signals the body to produce a particular hormone. Interestingly, when a person hates someone, this same insula triggers the production of a specific hormone in our body. So, the actions of a

romantic person can be desirable at one stage and can become unattractive in later stages. Romance can generate emotions that overrun the sanity of a person. Romance and affinity are too personal; however, love is different to both, especially Christian love.

Jesus said in John 13:34b: "As I have loved you, so you must love one another." Let us examine how Jesus loves us human beings. Jesus Christ died on the cross for us sinners, and he became the first sacrifice for sinners. It encompasses the huge sacrifice of giving His own life for us. However, in today's world, people show the nature of acquiring rather than of sacrifice this nature of acquiring become voracious and eventually creates many gaps in society. There increases the gap between established people and people who are struggling for their daily lives. When a businessperson targets just the profit, they forget the ethics and discipline in the field. It eventually grows into a conquering tendency. In John 2:14-15, we can see that Jesus uses a whip to drive the people doing unethical business out of the temple courts. We can see Jesus' reaction to the voracious nature. The East India Company came for business in the pre-independent India and eventually tried to keep the whole country. Even now, we can see similar conflicts and their aftermath around the world.

True LOVE encompasses sharing and sacrificing for others. Jesus showed the expanse of Christian love by hating sin and loving sinners. This love doesn't include romance or affinity but inculcates the coexistence and unity of all living creatures, especially human beings. The vision of Christian love is to work for the benefit of the people we don't love. The first epistle of John 3:11b reminds us: "We should love one another." To be a Christian, we need to do specific things – prayer, help people in need, oppose injustice,

etc. However, are these the priorities for a Christian? Jesus tells us that a simple word - 'LOVE' - encompasses all the laws and prophets. By practising love, we change to people with Christ. And everything else comes across to us. In John's gospel 13:35, Jesus says, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another." People identify Christ within us by seeing the fruits of love emanating from us. The first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians in chapter 13 clearly explains to us the fruits of love. Therefore, we need to become people with Christian love.

In today's world, the main rivalry is between neighbours – between households, districts, states, and nations. When we say, 'love your neighbour as

Jesus showed the expanse of Christian love by hating sin and loving sinners. This love doesn't include romance or affinity but inculcates the coexistence and unity of all living creatures, especially human beings.

you love yourself, we must be willing to sacrifice for our neighbours even if we don't like their actions. If we can encompass this vision and move forward, every Christian will transform into a missionary. We prepare to share the Good News to the ends of the earth and share the Christian love. Our forefathers received Christian love through missionaries who sacrificed themselves for us. Through the small fellowship we enjoy, we need to become the champions to practice the LOVE described in 1 Corinthians 13 within our families and share the Christian love with the communities around us. Along with this, we also need to be partners in the wider fellowship to emanate the Christian vision of human liberation from sin.

Surely God is my help; the Lord is the one who sustains me. Psalm 54:4



We are called to be part takers of the mission of God. The gospel mandate is to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." Mark 16:15a.



The General Secretary of 'Jeevan Ka Mukut' missionary Organisation. He is involved in missions among the villagers in North India.



KERYGMA

78

Telcome to the Bengal Missions.

At the centre of the Indian freedom movement was the state of Bengal, and in the forefront of art, culture, and intellectualism. It shares its borders with Indian states Sikkim, Assam, Odisha, Jharkhand and Bihar, and Nepal and Bangladesh. It is situated at the edge of the Bay of Bengal. This land is known for its people, predominantly speaking Bengali. After the Indian freedom struggle, this state was partitioned into two - the Muslim majority area became East Pakistan and later, Bangladesh and the Indian state of West Bengal. This state happens to be the base of William Carey, in India, where the missionary work began. Kolkata, the capital of West Bengal, became the centre of Mother Teressa's charitable work, whereby it became the mercy home to the homeless and the orphans who lived in the streets.

#### Assistance to Missions.

All the missions in West Bengal are carried out by the prayerful assistance of believers and wellwishers who shoulder the Lord's work. The primary area of Jeevan ka Mukut's missionary activities happens to be in Kolkata. We are thankful for our missionaries, Tapasmal and Sushil Chandra Sardar and their families. They carry out the gospel work and evangelise the villages of Purulia and Bankura, respectively, with the sincere support and prayers of the members of the Melbourne CSI church. We remember with gratitude the support extended.

#### The Socio-Economic Challenges.

The Communist Party of India has ruled this state for the last 34 years. During this period, no major developmental activities occurred in Bengal. Most houses didn't have electricity. The villagers were allowed to tap electricity free of cost during special occasions by throwing wire at the electric lines. Education-wise, Bengal was very backward. The teachers appointed by the government hardly went to any of these villages and opposed our missionaries who tried to provide basic education in these villages. With the curtain falling on the communist regime and after the rise of the current government, economic development at the village level was given priority. This has brought about visible changes and laudable results.

#### The Political Challenges

The Communist Party's rule was marked by the villagers' oppression at the hands of the landlords. In most villages, the poorest people were treated as slaves. When the suffering at the hands of the landlords could not be endured any further, the economically disadvantaged people opposed it violently. This situation led to the rise of Maoists and Naxalites in Bengal. Their activities concentrated within the districts of Purulia, Bankura, and Medinipur, the same areas we chose

to begin our missionary work. These groups strictly monitored our activities. They never opposed Christian missionary work when they realised that the teachings and our activities were not directed against them but provided much relief to the villages. Not only that, but many of the Maoists were also attracted to the gospel of Christ Jesus.

#### The Demography

According to the 2011 Indian Census, 7.55% (9,13,47,736) of India's population lived in Bengal. Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and Buddhists formed the majority of Bengal's population. Ethnically, the majority of the people are Bengalis who follow Hinduism. There are also many tribal groups living here – mainly Santhals, Munda, and Lodh. A long time ago, the practice of Sati (widows being burned in her husband's pyre) was prevalent here. Even now, it is said that offerings to gods in the form of human sacrifices are made here. Jeevan ka Mukut's work for the past 13 years has been transformational in many ways, especially in terms of trusting in Christ.

#### Worship Life in the Mission Fields

All our mission centres can conduct worship on Sundays. Our missionary, Tapasmal from Bandwan, is a Bengali and his wife Rajlakshmi is a Brahmin. Now they are undergoing a year-long learning programme at the Eternal Grace Bible College in UP. Our Lord is helping our work to prosper in Bandhwan. After the completion of the course, they will be settling in a new workplace within Bandhwan. Br. Sushil Chandra Sardar is taking care of the Supur area in Bankura, residing in an adjacent place called Puvabahan.



#### Pray for those Who Minister for the Harvest.

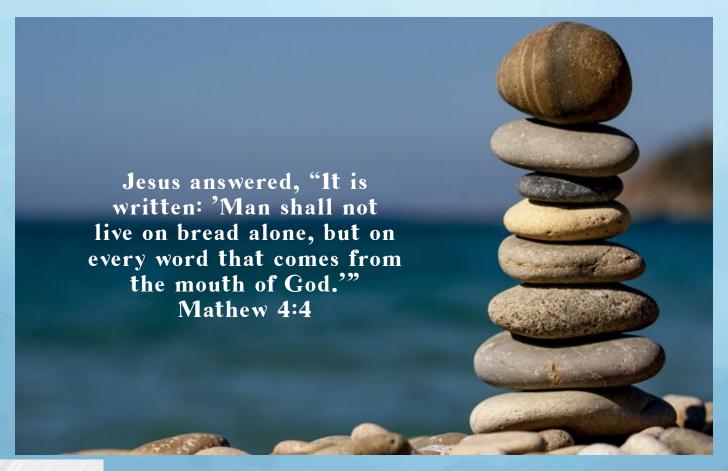
Jesus said not to pray for a harvest but the labourers on the fields. "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." Matthew 9:37–38.

The number of people entering God's marvellous light is growing. Even though opposition to the gospel work remains in various places, the number of new gospel ministers is also encouraging. At present, seven Bengali brethren

are getting trained. People can see the remarkable qualitative transformation in various areas in the lives of those living in the light of the living God. Please Pray more for this land – to send more missionaries and stand by those who are sowing the Seed.

As the Melbourne CSI celebrates its 10th year of formation, may the Lord continue to bless the congregation to send labourers on the glorious mission to reach out to the unreached.





# With best compliments from

## HOLY TRINITY CSI CHURCH BRISBANE

Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens! Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness! Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!

Psalm 150:1-6





#### Introduction

As a community of believers, what should we aspire to be? I would say that a fresh perspective of witnessing and its effective execution ought to be the sole agenda of the church today. Why? Because the present-day challenges to witness Jesus Christ are many and varied. Witnessing nowadays becomes either feeble (weak) or false. True witnessing results in notable signs like perfect health (Acts 3:16; 4:10, 14, 16), people's repentance and their belief in Jesus (Acts 3:19; 4:4), and the emergence of a community of sharing (Acts 4:32–35). If they constitute the much needed and the most desirable outcome of witnessing, it is doubtful whether true witnessing occurs today, because we are desperately bereft of this outcome in our milieu. Therefore, we must be mindful of the gradual fatigue of witnessing which happens at the present time.

A witness (martus) affirms that she/he has seen or heard or experienced something. To be precise, a witness validates someone or something. Witnessing is the first and foremost activity of mission. The witness is bound to tell, as Beverly Roberts Gaventa says, "the truth to the world about God's action in Jesus Christ." This proclamation of truth must be evident in both word and action.

Unlike the "Great Commission" in Matthew 28:19–20, Jesus' utterance just prior to his ascension in Acts 1:8 is a promise rather than a command.<sup>4</sup> In other words, it is an assurance that when the Holy Spirit comes upon them (apostles), they will receive power and that they will be his witnesses in many and significant regions. This promise envisages or calls for an obligation to witness Jesus. Witnessing anticipates or envisions transformation. Therefore, it is mandatory to understand, given the wider setting of Acts, the focal point of witnessing, its beneficiaries, and accordingly its relevance in today's context.

#### The book of Acts and witnessing

Luke is the sole evangelist to write a sequel to his Gospel entitled The Acts of the Apostles. This sequel narrates the ways in which the followers of Jesus carried out his mission under the guidance of his Spirit. In short, the Lucan sequel depicts diverse modes of witnessing. In each context, it renders us a model to be emulated. Hence, Acts can very well be described as a 'compendium of witnessing.' In all these events, the direction of the Holy Spirit was (has been) pivotal. The Johannine portrait of the Spirit (John 3:8) is significant here: "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know from where it comes and where it departs; so is everyone

who has been born of the Spirit." It points to the unpredictability and infiniteness of the Spirit. The same Spirit is super-active in Acts effectively guiding the apostles or believers in witnessing Jesus.

#### The stimulus of witnessing

Knowing and believing the one whom we witness is a necessity. How passionately a witness is affixed to the one whom she or he witnesses, is absolutely pertinent. Acts proves that those who bear witness are driven by a single stimulus, Jesus Christ whom they witness. Peter's speech immediately after the Pentecost episode centres on Jesus, well attested by Old Testament prophesies (Acts 2:22–36).8 The same Peter while healing the lame at the temple gate says to him: "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk" (Acts 3:6). Before being stoned to death, Stephen, having filled with the Holy Spirit, says: "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:56). He prays: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (7:59). Thus, throughout the Lucan sequel, we find that Jesus Christ is the true stimulus of witnessing. Such witnessing really moved people. The effect was far-reaching. How about the present-day witnessing? Any mode of witnessing without Jesus as stimulus is totally ineffective. If we are far removed from Christ, let us keep him as the drive of our witnessing.

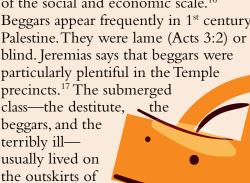
"The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know from where it comes and where it departs; so is everyone who has been born of the Spirit."

#### The beneficiaries of witnessing

A geographical progress of Christian witnessing is envisaged by Luke in Jesus' assurance in Acts 1:8. Geographical progress of the Christian message from Jerusalem through Judea and Samaria to the lands of Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome is quite apparent in Acts. It gives a view of the swift spread<sup>10</sup> of the Word of God and the apostolic testimony borne about Jesus. It covers a wide variety and a large number of regions, cultures, and people. Significantly enough, it starts with Jerusalem. The religious, cultural, and political significance of Jerusalem is the key here. 11 Accordingly, the Jewish roots of the many events recorded in Acts cannot be ignored or denied. Israel in continuity could well have been a Lucan thrust. As Ellis says, "The Book of Acts does not describe a transition of the Christian mission from the Jews to the Gentiles, since Jews are recipients of the message throughout the book." 12 At

this point, Jerusalem as the starting place reminds us of the pertinence of witnessing in one's own place (community/house/region/culture/locality) at the outset. Before going to others, make sure that our own village/community/family imbibes and lives the true essence of the good news. In other words, witnessing should transform the plight of our own people first and then others.

Secondly, witnessing ought to bring a change in the plight of the less fortunate around us. The socioeconomic fabric of Jerusalem informs us something. According to David A. Fiensy, "Jerusalem in the 1st century [CE] was a moderate-sized urban centre with a socially and culturally pluralistic population." 13 It was composed of the very rich, the craftsmen, and the destitute, among others. Both the literary sources and the archaeological findings of the Jewish quarter of Jerusalem attest to the fact that a significant wealthy class<sup>14</sup> resided in Jerusalem before the first Jewish war. The upper class lived mainly in the Upper City and consisted of the Temple nobility and the lay nobility. The lower classes consisted of the poorer priests and Levites, 15 the small merchants, the craftsmen, and the unskilled labourers. The 'submerged' class or the class of 'outcasts' which included slaves, beggars, those from unapproved occupations, the diseased, and those from questionable births, formed the very bottom of the social and economic scale.<sup>16</sup> Beggars appear frequently in 1st century



Witnessing must lead those who cause injustice and resultant disparity in society to repentance. In this regard, the agents of oppression and injustice, if they are led to repentance, too are beneficiaries of witnessing. At the same time, as depicted in Acts, those who are denied life or deprived of everything benefit from witnessing as it altogether transforms their status.

the city.

#### Conclusion

The assurance of Jesus that we will be his witnesses needs to be taken seriously today. It calls for a fresh vision of witnessing. As we witness, Jesus Christ alone must be the spur behind it. Let us overcome other stimuli which diverts our attention from Christ. Besides, the first recipients or beneficiaries of witnessing have to be our own people. One cannot simply ignore the pathetic plight of his or her own people and move to others to witness Christ. Witnessing should happen first at home (Jerusalem). Moreover, the beneficiaries of witnessing can be both the oppressor and the oppressed as the oppressor repents by hearing the good news and puts an end to the modes of injustice. Thus, the ultimate end of witnessing is to impart life to all.

#### Bibliography

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#### **Endnotes**

- 1 Witness is, first of all, a legal, judicial, courtroom word
- 2 Mission, in simple terms, is to continue the earthly ministry of Jesus by bearing witness to him. It is a term which refers to the act and result of sending, the sending of believers.
- refers to the act and result of sending, the sending of believers.

  3 Beverly Roberts Gaventa, ""You Will Be My Witnesses": Aspects of Mission in the Acts of the Apostles,"

  Missiology 10/4 (Oct 1982): 413–425, 417.
- **4** Here, the verb is indicative instead of imperative. Besides, the statement occurs in a context where other promises are found such as the coming of the Holy Spirit and the return of Jesus.
- 5 The title found in the best Greek manuscripts is Πραξεις Αποστολών (P<sup>54</sup>, κ, B, D, Ψ, I, 1175). One may also find at times variants. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, The Acts of the Apostles, AB 31 (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 47.
- 6 The Pentecost account (Acts 2:1-13), Peter's dynamic speech (Acts 2:14-36), healing of the lame at the temple gate (Acts 3:1-10), the bold witness of Peter and John in front of the elders, rulers, and high priests when they were imprisoned (Acts 4:1-22), the settlement of the Hellenists' complaint against the Hebrews concerning the negligence shown towards their widows (Acts 6:1-6), and so on. Acts is full of such manifold witnessing.
- 7 The apostles who testify Jesus surely had an intimate experience with him. They had seen his manner of life, his miracles, his meckness, his sufferings; they had listened to his instructions, and had conversed and eaten with him as a friend; they had seen him after he was risen and were about to see him ascend to heaven. Knowing, believing, and subsequent witnessing stem from such a bosom experience with the Lord. Thus, they were qualified to bear witness to these things in all parts of the earth.
- $\pmb{8}$  Peter acknowledges and proclaims Jesus of Nazareth to the multitude in this way: "[A] man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you..." (v 22).
- 9 Acts 1:1-7:60 (Jerusalem); 8:1-11:18 (Judea and Samaria); 11:19-12:25 (Syria); 13:1-16:10 (Cyprus and Asia Minor); 16:11-19:22 (Greece); 27:1-28:31 (Rome). See E. Earle Ellis, ""The End of the Earth" (Acts 1:8)," Bulletin for Biblical Research 1 (1991): 123-132, 123.
- 10 That spread involves the emergence of a community of disciples, eventually called "Christians" (Acts 11:26) and

Bulletin for Biblical Research 1 (1991): 123–132.

Fiensy, David A. "The Composition of the Jerusalem Church." In The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting. Vol. 4. Edited by Richard Bauckham. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1995.

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Kee, Howard Clark. Good News to the Ends of the Earth: The Theology of Acts. London and Philadelphia: SCM and Trinity, 1990.

also "church" (Acts 5:11; 8:1, 3; 9:31; 20:28). See Fitzmyer, The Acts of the Apostles, 57.

11 The disciples are commanded by the risen Christ to remain in Jerusalem (Acts 1:4). The prominence of Jerusalem as explained by Howard Clark Kee is to be noted: (1) The innermost court of the temple is believed to be the dwelling place of God. (2) It is in this city that the religious leaders of Judaism are concentrated. (3) It is there that, in accord with Roman policy for administering ethnic territories which it controls, the leading citizens meet as a council to determine regional social and religious policies (Acts 4:5). (4) It was in the temple courts there that throngs of local and visiting Jews gathered, as well as pious or curious non-Jews. (5) It is in Solomon's Portico within the temple compound that the angel of the Lord instructs the apostles to go and preach to the crowds (5:12, 20). All these are physically and functionally within the structure of Judaism as it existed in the first century CE. Jerusalem and its temple serve as the launching platform for the movement to reach across the Roman world, not just geographically but socially and culturally. See Howard Clark Kee, Good News to the Ends of the Earth: The Theology of Acts (London and Philadelphia: SCM and Trinity, 1990), 42–43.

12 Ellis, "The End of the Earth," 124.

13 David A. Fiensy, "The Composition of the Jerusalem Church," in The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting, vol. 4, edited by Richard Bauckham (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1995), 213. Pliny calls it the 'most illustrious city in the east.' See Pliny, Naturalis Historia, 5.70, cited by Fiensy, "The Composition of the Jerusalem Church," 214.
14 The wealthy class includes large landowners and aristocratic priests (especially the High Priestly families). For a detailed description, see Fiensy, "The Composition of the Jerusalem Church," 213–219.

- 15 Levites formed a subgroup in the lower class. Joachim Jeremias conjectured the two subgroups of the Levites as the singers and the servants or doorkeepers. They were of unequal rank. The singers were considered to be higher in social standing. See Joachim Jeremias, Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus: An Investigation into Economic and Social Conditions during the New Testament Period (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1969), 212f.
- 16 See Fiensy, "The Composition of the Jerusalem Church," 223-224.
- 17 Jeremias, Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus, 116f.







"THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU; THE LORD MAKE HIS FACE TO SHINE UPON YOU AND BE GRACIOUS TO YOU."

Numbers 6:24

Best Compliments from

Anand, Anita, Anu, Anju, Ansu & Andrew







or we walk by faith, not by sight is a devoting memory verse from 2 Corinthians 5:7. The meaning of this memory verse is relatively self-explanatory. But I'm still learning that elaborating out on those words can be a much tougher task.

Walking by faith and not by sight requires you to go to a place you do not know, one that God will reveal as you walk in obedience. Put your faith in Him. Just look at Abraham as an example. Walking by faith means you proceed to cling to those aspiring dreams that God has planted in your heart. They'll slowly start to sprout. Trust in Him even when the cruel eyes of the world misjudge you for things you didn't even commit.

Think about Noah building an ark for a flood when it had never even rained on earth. Think about Moses standing before the Israelites in the wilderness, telling them they would eat meat until it disgusted them but having no idea where that meat would come from. Finally, think about Joshua marching around the walls of Jericho as God had told him to and wondering what good it was going to do.

If you choose this path, you must be willing to step out of your comfort zone. You must be willing to let God take your world and turn it upside down, shake it up, and start all over again. You must be willing to let God out of the neat little box you have put Him in, to let Him show up as He sees fit.



Psalm 34:8
Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.



Sunish, Sanjana, Rachel & Hannah



rowing up, I was told that I had to be a good girl if I wanted God to love me. Being a good girl meant being obedient, respecting elders, studying well, praying before sleeping – the usual things you expect from an eight-year-old girl.

His plan for our salvation was put in place thousands of years before we were born.

This thought of being good to gain God's love was ingrained in me for a long time. I felt guilty and undeserving of God's love every time I did something wrong. You see, I was not good all the time. I was disobedient. I was stubborn. I lied. I disrespected people. Whenever I did something wrong, I felt like I deserved to be punished even though I grew up in a Christian home where we read the Bible and prayed every night. This thought pushed me away from God, and it became the biggest barrier in my relationship with God.

What does the Bible say about this? Do we really need to be good to deserve God's love? The answer is no. God is not a transactional God. He does not love us because we obey Him or follow His commandments. He loves us irrespective of what we do. His plan for our salvation was put in place thousands of years before we were born. He went to

the extent of dying on the cross for our sins so that we could live and enjoy eternal life.

Even when the Bible talks about unconditional love, we find it hard to fully understand it because we have only experienced conditional love built on expectations. Our society expects us to behave a certain way to be accepted. Our families set expectations from our birth. Every personal relationship has some expectations, and we are accustomed to it.

Maybe it is time to pause and think about it. You do not have to do anything for God to love you. It is essential to realise that. Say it out loud, and let it sink in.

We all know the verse John 3:16 – it starts with 'For God so loved the world...' I do not remember reading "For God so loved all the good people in the world or For God so loved the people who met His expectations". God loved the world – the good, the bad and the ugly as they were. God loves you just the way you are. You do not have to do anything except believe. If you feel that you are not good enough to deserve God's love, remember Luke 5:32 'Jesus came to call the sinners.' He came for people who needed His love and compassion. All He needs from you is to BELIEVE.



The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him.

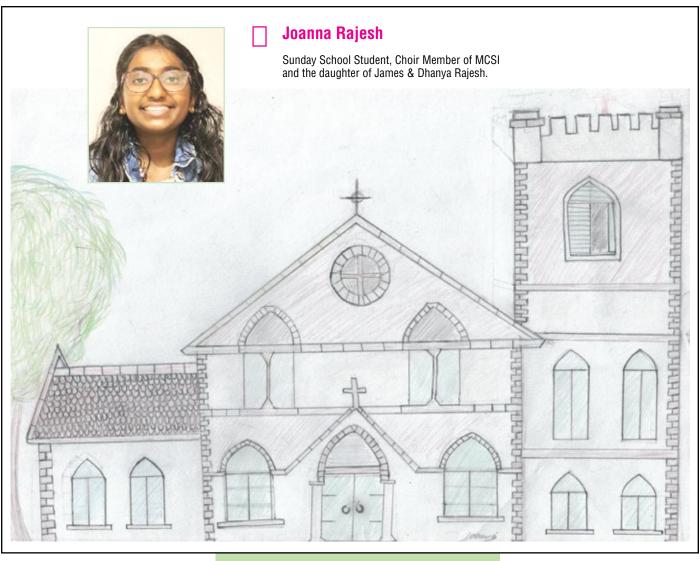
Psalm 28:7



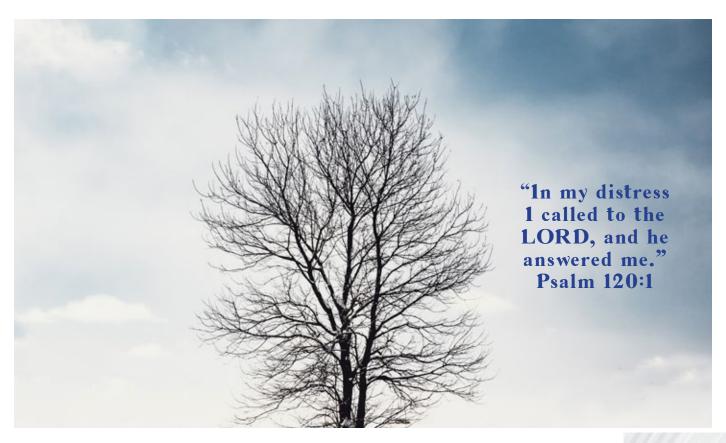
### WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS

——— Ashok Varkey and Family ———





Pencil sketch of Mateer Memorial Church, Trivandrum





#### ഒന്നാം ഭാഗം:-

മാർദ്ദവവും മിനുസവുമുള്ള മെത്തയിൽ കൈകൾ അമർത്തി ഇരുന്നു. വളരെ മൃദുവായ മെത്ത, ഇങ്ങിനെ ഇരിക്കുവാൻ ഒരു പ്രത്യേക അനുഭൂതി. പുറം കൈയ്യിൽ നനവു്, ഞാൻ അറിയാതെ എന്റെ കണ്ണിൽ നിന്നും ഉതിർന്ന ബാഷ്പകണങ്ങൾ എന്റെ കൈ നനച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. ഞാൻ ഏതോ മായാലോകത്ത് ആണെന്ന് തോന്നി. വിശ്വസിക്കുവാൻ കഴിയുന്നില്ല . . .!!! വീണ്ടും കണ്ണുകളിൽ നിന്നും കണങ്ങൾ പൊടിയുന്നു. . . . കാഴ്ചമങ്ങുന്നു . . . അവ്യക്തത . . . ഓർമ്മകൾ എന്നെ പിന്നീലേയ്ക്ക് കൊണ്ടുപോയി . . .

വീട്ടിലെ ഒരു പഴയ കട്ടിലിൽ ഞാൻ മയങ്ങുകയായിരുന്നു. ഉറക്കത്തിൽ നിന്നും അറിയാതെ ഉണർന്നപ്പോൾ കുതിരകളുടെ കുളമ്പടി ശബ്ദം കേശീക്കുന്നതുപോലെ. ഞാൻ കാതോർത്തു . . . അതെ കുതിരകളുടെ കുളമ്പടി ശബ്ദം തന്നെ. അവയുടെ ശബ്ദം ഏറ്റവും ഉച്ചത്തിലായി. കുതിരകളുടെ ശബ്ദത്തിനനുസരിച്ച് എന്റെ ഹൃദയമിടിപ്പും ഉച്ചസ്ഥായിലായി. പോടുന്ന നെ ശബ്ദം നിലച്ചു. എന്റെ ഹൃദയത്തുടിപ്പും നിലച്ചതുപോലെ . . . എന്തു ചെയ്യണമെന്നറിയില്ല. കൈ കാലുകൾ ചലിക്കുന്നില്ല. അല്ലങ്കിലും കാലുകൾ ചലിക്കാതായിട്ട് വ്ർഷങ്ങൾ ഏറെയായി.

പടയാളികൾ മാഖീരിന്റെ (നാളുകളായി ഞാൻ പാർക്കുന്ന ഭവനം) വീടിനു മുമ്പിൽ കുതിര വണ്ടി നിർത്തി. എന്റെ പരിഭ്രമം കണ്ടു മാഖീർ പറഞ്ഞു, ഞാൻ പോയി്നോക്കിവരാം. മാഖീർ വീടിനു

മുമ്പിലേക്കു നടന്നു. അല്പം കഴിഞ്ഞ് രണ്ടു പടയാളികളുമായി ഞാൻ കിടക്കുന്ന മുറിയിലേ ക്കു വന്നു.

പേടിക്കാനൊന്നുമില്ല, ഒരു പടയാളി എന്നോടായി പറഞ്ഞു. ദാവീദു രാജാവ് നിന്നെ കൊട്ടാരത്തിലേ ക്കു് ക്ഷണിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. കൽപനയല്ലേ, മറുത്തു നിന്നിട്ടു കാര്യമില്ലല്ലോ. മാഖീർ എന്നെ നോക്കി പോയ്വരു എന്ന് ഹൃദയത്തിൽ പറയുന്നത് എനി ക്ക് മനസ്സിലായി..

വന്നവരിൽ ഒരു പടയാളി എന്റെ കാലുനോ ക്കി, എന്തു സംഭവിച്ചു എന്നാരാഞ്ഞു. എനി ക്ക് അഞ്ചു വയസ്സുള്ളപ്പോൾ എന്റെ പിതാവ് യോനാഥാനും മുത്തച്ചൻ ശൗൽ രാജാവും ഫെലിസ്ത്യരാൽ കൊല്ലപ്പെട്ടു. ഈ വാർത്ത അറിഞ്ഞ ധാത്രി (എന്നെ ശുശ്രൂഷിക്കാൻ ഭവ നത്തിൽ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്ന സ്ത്രി) എന്നെയും എടു ത്ത് ജീവരക്ഷാർത്ഥം കൊട്ടാരത്തിൽ നിന്നും ഓടി രക്ഷപ്പെട്ടു. ഓടുന്നവഴി താഴെവീണ് എന്റെ രണ്ടു കാലുകളും ഒടിഞ്ഞു. അങ്ങനെ ഞാൻ ഈ വിധത്തിലായി.

പടയാളികൾ എന്നെ ദയനീയമായി നോക്കി. തുടർന്ന് അവരുടെ സഹായത്താൽ എന്നെ കുതിര വണ്ടിയിലിരുത്തി. മാഖീർ എന്റെ അടുത്തേ യ്ക്ക് വന്നു . . . മകനെ . . . മെഫീബോശെ ത്തെ . . . സന്തോഷമായി പോയി വരിക. ദാവീദു രാജാവ് നിന്നെ വിളിപ്പിച്ചതല്ലേ . . . നല്ലതെ നിനക്കുവരു. എന്നെയും കൊണ്ട് കുതിര വണ്ടി നീങ്ങി. ഞാൻ പിന്നിലേക്കു് നോക്കി. ഇത്രയും കാലം എന്നെ ശുശ്രൂഷിച്ച മാഖീർ വീടിന് മുൻപിൽ നോക്കി നിൽക്കുന്നു. കുതിര വണ്ടിയുടെ ദൂരം കൂടുന്നതനുസരിച്ച് മാഖീർ എന്റെ കണ്ണിന് ചെറുതായി വന്നു. പിന്നെ കണ്ണിൽ നിന്നും പൂർണ്ണമായി മറഞ്ഞു.

ഞങ്ങൾ ദാവീദ് രാജാവിന്റെ കൊട്ടാര ത്തിൽ എത്തി. പ്രത്യേകം തയ്യാറാക്കിയ മുറിയിൽ എന്നെ അവർ ആക്കി. കൂടെ സഹായത്തി നായി രണ്ടുപേർ അവിടെ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. ഞാൻ ശുചിയായി പുതിയ വസ്ത്രം ധരിച്ച് കട്ടിലിൽ വന്നിരുന്നു.

#### രാജാവ് വിളിക്കുന്നു . . .

അപ്പോഴാണ് ഞാൻ എന്റെ ചിന്തയിൽ നിന്നു ണർന്നത്. എന്നെ രാജാവിന്റെ സന്നിധിയിലേ യ്ക്ക് ആനയിച്ചു. എന്നെ കണ്ടമാത്രയിൽ ദാവീദ് രാജാവിന്റെ മുഖം തെളിയുന്നത് ഞാൻ കണ്ടു. അല്പനേരത്തേയ്ക്ക് രാജാവ് ചുറ്റുപാടുകൾ മറ ന്നോയെന്നു തോന്നിപ്പോയി.

യോനാഥാൻ . . . യോനാഥാൻ . . . എന്റെ പ്രിയ കൂട്ടുകാരൻ യോനാഥാൻ . . . ദാവീദ് ഉച്ചത്തിൽ വിളിച്ചു.

രാജാവ് അവിടെ നിന്നവരോടായി പറഞ്ഞു "ഞാൻ ശൗൽ രാജാവിനെ പേടിച്ച് ഒളിവിലും ഓട്ട ത്തിലും ഒക്കെ ആയിരുന്നപ്പോൾ എന്നെ രക്ഷിച്ചതും എന്നെ സഹായിച്ചതും മെഫീബോശെത്തിന്റെ പിതാവ് യോനാഥാനായിരുന്നു. യോനാഥാനായി ഒന്നും ചെയ്യുവാൻ എനിക്കു് കഴിഞ്ഞില്ല. പ്രായശ്ചിത്തം എന്നോണം കുറഞ്ഞപക്ഷം യോനാഥാന്റെ മകനെയെങ്കിലും എനിക്കു് സഹായിക്കണം".

എല്ലാവരോടുമായി പറഞ്ഞു . . . "ഇന്നു മുതൽ മെഫീബോശെത്ത് എന്നോടൊപ്പം ഈ കൊട്ടാ രത്തിൽ വസിക്കും. അവൻ എന്നോടൊപ്പം ഭക്ഷണം കഴിക്കും. സീബയും കുടുംബവും (ശൗലിന്റെ ഗൃഹത്തിലുള്ള ഒരു ഭൃത്യൻ) മെഫീബോഗെത്തി നെ ശുശ്രൂഷിക്കുവാൻ ഇവടെ തന്നെ ഉണ്ടാകും. എല്ലാവരും രാജാവിന്റെ കല്പന ശരിവച്ചു. മെഫീബോശെത്ത് തന്റെ പിതാവിന്റെ ദൈവത്തിന് നന്ദിയർപ്പിച്ചു. സേവകർ അവനെ മുറിയിലേ യ്ക്ക് കൊണ്ടു പോയി. പോകുന്ന വഴി ഹൃദയ ത്തിൽ ആരാഞ്ഞു . . . ദൈവമേ . . . ഇതിനു് ഞാൻ യോഗ്യനോ . . . . ??

#### രണ്ടാം ഭാഗം:-

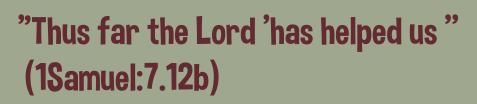
ലോകത്തിന്റെ വിവിധ ഭാഗങ്ങളിൽ ആയിരുന്ന നമ്മെ ഈ ദേശത്തേക്കു് (ആസ്ട്രേലിയ) കൊണ്ടുവന്നിരിക്കുന്നു. ഇവിടെയും പല സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ ആയിരുന്ന നമ്മെ മെൽബൺ സി. എസ്സ്. ഐ സഭയുടെ കീഴിൽ ഒരുമിച്ച് കൊണ്ടുവന്നിരിക്കുന്നു. നാം നിർമ്മിച്ചിട്ടില്ലാത്ത ഭവനങ്ങളിൽ പാർക്കുവാനും നാം നട്ടിട്ടില്ലാത്ത ഫലങ്ങൾ ഭക്ഷിക്കുവാനും ദൈവം അവസരം നല്കി. കൂടാതെ വലുതും ചെറുതുമായ നിരവധി നമ്മകൾ അനുഭവിക്കുവാൻ കുടുംബമായ്, വ്യക്തികളായി ദൈവം നമ്മെ സഹായിച്ചു.

ഇതിനു് നാം യോഗ്യരോ .....??

ദൈവം എപ്രകാരം നമ്മെ യോഗ്യരാക്കി . . !!!

ദൈവം തന്റെ സ്വന്തപുത്രൻ ക്രിസ്തുവിനെ ഈ ലോകത്തിലേക്കു് അയച്ചു. നമ്മുടെ പാപങ്ങൽക്കായി സ്വന്തജീവനെ ക്രൂശിൽ വെടിഞ്ഞു. ആ ക്രിസ്തു മുഖാന്തിരം നിത്യത നമുക്ക് സാദ്ധ്യമാക്കിതന്നു. യോനാഥാൻ ദാവീദ് രാജാവിന് ചെയ്ത നന്മ മുഖാന്തിരം മകൻ മെഫീബോശെത്തിന് ദാവീദ് രാജാവ് നന്മ ചെയ്തു.

എന്നാൽ നാം ദൈവത്തെ മറന്നിട്ടും നമ്മെ മറക്കാതെ ക്രിസ്തു മുഖാന്തിരം നമുക്ക് നന്മ ലഭ്യമായിരിക്കുന്നു. ഈ നന്മയ്ക്കും അനുഗ്രഹ ത്തിനും നാം യോഗ്യരോ? അല്ല, ഞാൻ യോഗ്യനോ? പത്തുവർഷം പിന്നിടുമ്പോൾ സ്വയം വിലയിരുത്തുവാനുള്ള ഒരവസരം ആകട്ടെ ഇത്. ക്രിസ്തു ഇഛിക്കുന്നതു പോലെ നാം നല്ലഫലം കായ്ക്കുന്നവരായി തീരുവാൻ ദൈവം നമ്മെ സഹായിക്കുമാറാകട്ടെ.

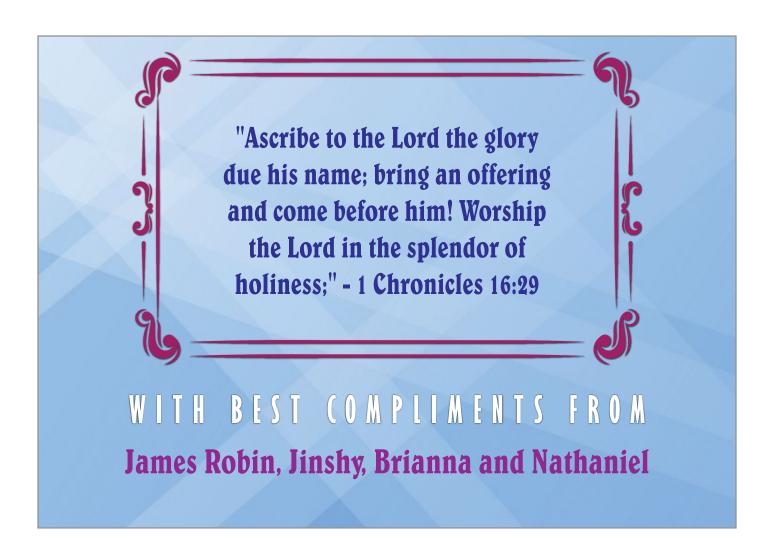




# Best Compliments

Rtd. Comm. Dr Poulose Yohannan &

Kunjamma Yohannan







narrows, the commonly found unnoticeable type of bird live in proximity with people and dodging between the legs of pedestrians to pick up the morsels of discarded food. The Bible uses the imagery of sparrows to tell us the all-encompassing love of God; and how the sparrows reciprocate to the love of God by finding rest and security at the Lord's altar. Even the smallest of birds can find shelter at the Lord's altar, how much more His faithful worshippers? Psalm 84 unravels many of those findings with reference to the sparrow's discovery of God's Temple.

#### **Finding Sanctuary**

Matt 10:29-31 demonstrates the ubiquity of sparrows saying, "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your father's care." The sparrow that sheltered in His tabernacle experienced a lot of His tender care, mercy, and assurance from time to time. It was very well acquainted with the meticulous ways in which the loving father had

kept an account of all its needs both significant and inferior hitherto. It witnessed the swiftness of His respondence to satisfy the young ravens when they cried out and wandered about in hunger. It saw how the righteous ran to the shelter and kept them safe. For the sparrow, the temple courts are proved to be the safest place where all its agonies and aspirations are equitably met. The Psalmist touched by this vision, yearning for the blessings of His dwelling place. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

#### Finding Hope

Hope is the quintessence of every being. It is hard to define, understand and add some personal attributes to the word 'hopelessness' when there are no internal or external forces to disturb the tranquility of our souls. With the outbreak of a global pandemic, hopelessness has attained a more realistic touch in the lives of many around us. When we find ourselves in a state of despondency and despair, how can we replicate the calmness

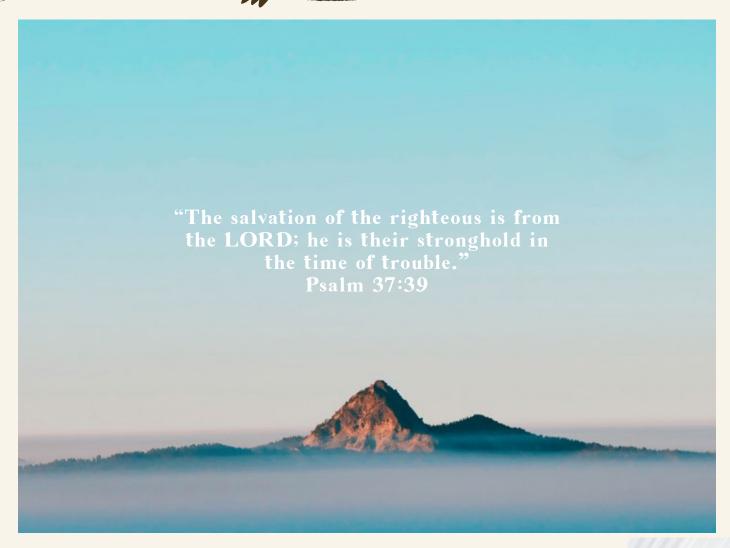
and hope the little sparrow has found in the temple of God? In Romans 10:13 Paul says, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." So, hope comes with trust in the Lord. Throughout the Bible, God proves His faithfulness to His people by leading them safely through or delivering them from all their predicaments and troubles. He will never leave or forsake His people; His plans are to prosper, not to harm them (Jer 29:11). His mercies are new every morning and His faithfulness will remain the same even in the bleakest of circumstances.

#### Finding New Beginnings

Having experienced so much safety and security, dwelling in the presence of the Lord, the sparrow intends to raise its young ones in the same premises. It is not even considering the possibility of relocating, rather waiting upon the Lord for new beginnings. If we

reiterate the same question once Jesus has asked to his disciple Peter, the response would be the same even from this tiny creature.... "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also, we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." It is not ashamed to introduce its anchorage of lifetime to its fledglings. Envisage how marvelous it would be when God is not ashamed to be called our God when our descendants and we refer to Him as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!

When Christ had emptied and made himself as a living sacrifice for us, eternal life was promised to the entire mankind. We have a foretaste of eternal life even now while we live in this world having been justified by faith through Jesus Christ. Let's take delight in knowing that we are the sojourners, for here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. (Heb 13: 14)

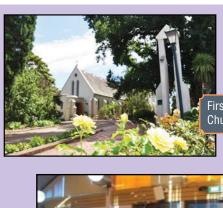




# MY KALEIDOSCOPIC MEMORIES OF MCSI



**Manoj David** A founding member of MCSI and a Church Warden of the Pastorate.



First discussion about CSI Church in Melbourne - Sep 2011











Service with Anglican Bishop and Website Launch - Dec 2011





Easter Service -Apr 2012











MELBOURNE CSI CHURCH'S

MELBOURNE CSI CHURCH'S

BBQ

6.00BM

JANUARYA12 a 9.30AM

Fun, Food Games, Beach

MORNINGTON PARK

MORNINGTON

VICTORIA

The day is sure to be a memorable one.

Reception to Bishops -Jun 2013





Summer Picnic -

Jan 2013









Summer picnic -Jan 2014

Oct 2013



















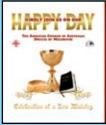






Farewell Programme-Rev.Thomas P Korah - Jun 2015







4th Anniversary tube well project -NOV 2015







Oct 2015

Bishop's visits -Nov 2015





Christmas carol service -Dec 2015



Convention -Mar 2016

100



Apr 2016













Multicultural fellowship. Friendship group @ Ashburton -Aug 2016



Women's Sunday & Onam -Sep 2016

MELBOUNRE CSI HARVEST FESTIVAL & 5TH ANNIVERSARY



MCSI annual retreat at Wattle

Harvest festival 2016 & 5th Anniversary - Nov 2016







Carol Rounds -2016





Dr Freier welcomes Indian church leaders to Melbourne





The Melbourne Ecumenical Youth Conference - NOV 2016



Carol Night -

The Melbourne Youth team on their way to Adelaide for the VBS - Jan 2017



Second Lenten Meditation -Mar 2017

















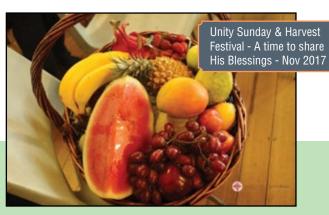


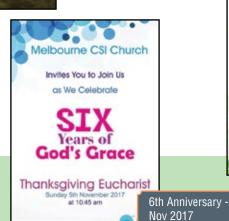














































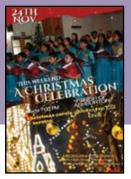
















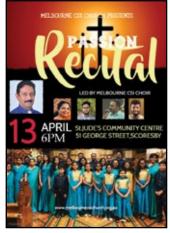
















Welcome to Rev Kurian Peter and family to Melbourne and MCSI family - May 2019

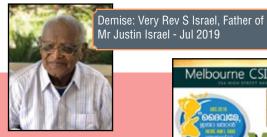












Onam

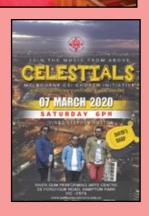
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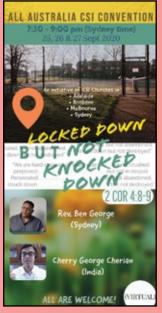


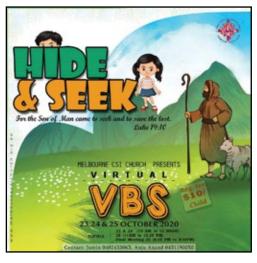


















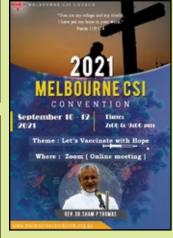






















#### Fr. Dr. Jacob Joseph

Vicar of St. Thomas Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church, Melbourne and a faculty at the St. Athanasius College, University of Divinity, Melbourne in the field of Theology and mission.



# Young People The Present of the Church

hristian churches postulate a special emphasis on their young people in the Church. The church realises that the future of the Church reckons in the hands of the youth. It reassures when their motto is placed as: "A world without youth is a world without a Future, and if the Church does not take care of youth, it is like a house founded on sand." (This is a quote from the Ordo Fratraum Minorum Franciscan Friaras website). This claim promises the importance of young people in the very life of the Church. However, the youth are expected to be the 'future' of the Church but not 'the present.'

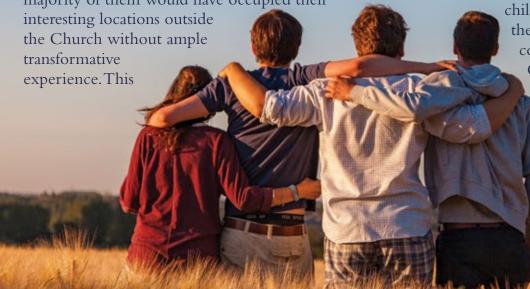
Since 'youth opportunities' are preserved for the future of the Church, they find new locations as their comfortable place in the present. In other words, by the time youth are given the batten, majority of them would have occupied their

write-up will investigate the scope of our youth becoming the 'present' of the Church life.

Two years ago, I attended a seminar on how to build "online" communities for religious gatherings. This was conducted by a Paster turned Facebook executive from the USA. She said that "FB is an easy platform to organise young and old communities." Suddenly, one of the participants raised a concern that our "youth are unseen on Facebook." They are on Twitter, Instagram etc., "Why do they dislike FB?" The speaker quickly answered, "all of you – the adult men and women – are there in FB, and then, how can youth find space there?" This answer opened my eyes to think about the status of our youth in the present Church life.

Recently, one of the immigrant parents shared with me concerns about their young

children. According to them, their children "were more comfortable outside the Church than inside." Despite their children being very devout in the Church during liturgical services, in most cases, they



chose a comfortable place outside the Church. This causes a burden on the parents and most often affects relationships. In the midst of such stories, as a Christian community, we need further investigation in this much-neglected area to find some concrete solutions.

Taking the above example, while not wanting to sensationalise the issue, I would like to explore one fundamental aspect concerned, if they are, in fact, a problem! Before we go deeper into this concern, let me share three questions raised by the parent's comments. First, after all, is this a problem to be concerned about or worried about? Second, if it is, who is responsible for this issue, is it the Church, the young people, or their parents? And third, what attracts the young outside the Church better than inside?

#### "Allow them to make mistakes but guide them with our transformed life."

Studies in the department of social science provide us with some exciting data. The 2020 report of the NRAAG — Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Trade References Committee titled "Issues Facing Diaspora Communities in Australia" provides an important observation about the 'youth mind' of the diaspora youth in Australia. The report suggests that "due to growing intergenerational differences, survival guilt, and at times misaligned expectations to succeed against all odds, diaspora youth require tailored and specific support to meet their needs as they make Australia their home." The three major concerns that they identified are first, "intergenerational differences," second, "survival guilt," and the third, "misaligned expectations." This causes a dichotomy among our parents and young people in understanding each other's concerns.

Further, another similar study on the topic "The Second Generation and the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study" provides a precise observation that "first-generation immigrants have always been a restless bunch, here one day and gone the next: in society, but not yet of it." It creates a gap between the youth and parents and results in a twofold disconnection between youth and their parents. First, parents

underestimate the living strength of youth and second, parents and youth minimise the transforming power of the Church. I do not wish to identify it as one-sided, either family/parents or spiritual (Church)/public space (society). One cannot overlook the genuine interest of the parents and the Church in providing a religious and cultural space for the next generation. However, the question is: do we create a 'real space' for youth within the transforming power of the Church?

In many cases, parents undervalue the religious and social competence of our youth. They forget to prepare a space/church as an agent of God's transforming power. The primary task of the Church's youth mission is to transform parents into a life in the world as St. Paul envisioned in Romans 12:1-2, so that our youth will follow parents to make their lives a better space inside and outside the Church. The option, therefore, is not only to leave the entire responsibility to the youth but also to the parents. Young people must be encouraged with a feeling that they are the present Church. Their talents and God-given gifts are to be given primary importance.

Parents must deliberately take time to keep confidence in our young generation and help them dream about the present Church, which exists in the world. Our youth community is neither "empty vessels" nor 'good for nothing'. Allow them to make mistakes but guide them with our transformed life. Let them not see a dichotomy in their parents both inside and outside the Church. If we achieve that goal, that will be the living theology of the transforming Church.

Let parents, therefore, share their space with our young people to shape our communities as youth parishes. Let the youth lead the Church to feel that they have to extend church in their public place so that they can transform the public place into a religious space. Even if our youth go outside, fear not; they will carry an unadulterated or non-dichotomic faith that they have imbibed from their parents. Help them believe that the transformed Church is their role and goal, so much so with society, which is an extension of the present young Church.







ENTER HIS GATES WITH THANKSGIVING AND HIS COURTS WITH PRAISE; GIVE THANKS TO HIM AND PRAISE HIS NAME. FOR THE LORD IS GOOD AND HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER; HIS FAITHFULNESS CONTINUES THROUGH ALL GENERATIONS. - PSALM 100:4-5



With best compliments from Britto & family



Melbourne: Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and all those presently with me in the land of the living. Love and shalom from all those of the faith who have fought the good fight, finished the race and kept the faith. On a special occasion such as the completion of a decade since your church was first established in 2011, I have been granted special permission from our Lord to write to you and encourage you in continuing the race which you have so marvellously run.

From just a handful of unsure but eager believers who gathered in a humble home one winter night expressing their desire to initiate the Church of South India for the first time in the

Southern Hemisphere, you have come very far. Carrying the baton of your traditional fathers in the far east in India to the land of the marsupials must not have been an easy ordeal. I especially commend your unique commitment to uniting the four and now six dioceses from Kerala. Apostle Thomas takes much pride on his journey east in AD 52 and has on many occasions spoken highly of your bold decision when we've met for the monthly Apostle's banquet.

Your inclusion and equal treatment of people of different languages and cultures have brought particular delight and rejoicing in heaven. This is precisely one of the messages I had been trying to convey in my letter to the church of Galatia, which I must admit I had not the faintest idea the

Lord would include in the scrupulously curated Word of God available to humankind which you now call the Bible; and for that matter any letter I wrote. Had I known this, I would have made my stance much clearer on constantly being debated topics.

What you have done with the children in your church is applause worthy. Sunday school is not just a place to come and learn your memory verses and earn enough trophies to shelve a cupboard by proud parents; it is where children begin to grow into the best version of themselves.

"The word of God has a strange way of becoming real and alive when you need God the most, and no other book can give you that".

It is a time that fosters hope, patience, curiosity, and creativity among young minds. What you are sowing in the minds and hearts of children and youngsters now, the Lord will harness further down in their lives; when in a dilemma, or a tough choice that pulls on their virtues, or when they find themselves in a state of dejection. The word of God has a strange way of becoming real and alive when you need God the most, and no other book can give you that.

Mind you, in the kingdom of God there are

plenty of surprises and beautiful places especially reserved for children by the good Lord. I have often got news of young people imagining eternity in heaven to be a place to mindlessly chant hymns and play harps forever and beyond, but that could not be far from the truth. We worship and praise God in everything we do here, in our words, interactions with others, the birds, the flowers and the trees; everything here radiates God's love. Tell them to imagine a land with Disney world, the world's best adventure park and a tropical island all in

one place – heaven is a thousand times better than your best imagination of heaven.

To the choir, I ask that they be not dismayed when singing a disharmony or two. Even a discord has a unique beauty; one that of a welcome change from a panoply of perfect notes. There are instruments in heaven that are yet to be invented on earth, harmonies that transcend human comprehension or musical rules set out by Bach or Debussy. There are schools of all kinds here, including music, theatre, world history, astronomy and much more.

The women of your church are well known for showing warmth and hospitality to guests and strangers. I have also heard of their refined culinary skills and special pickled fish during the fellowship of the harvest. I urge them to continue to be those that spread the love of God to those near and far.

Finally, to the young, old, men and women alike, I would say, press on and do not give up. The world around you will change time and time again and dangerously so, but those that trust in the Lord, the remnant He will preserve.

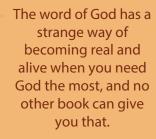
Death, my friends, is but a liar, so do not fear him. He makes himself appear bigger than he is. Think of your loved ones who have passed, as

> in a beautiful room next to yours. You need not worry about them, if at all, it is they who ought to feel sorry for you. When it is time for you to reach the door between, you will be reunited after a brief pause.

All God's people here send their greetings. May the grace of the Lord Jesus

Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

-A figment of my imagination



waiting



Taste and see that the LORD is good! blessed is the one who takes refuge in him!
- Psalms 34:8

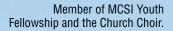
# with hest compliments

Priya Justin



# My Faith Journey

Priya Justin





irstly, I want the thank the Almighty God for the past ten years of Melbourne CSI church. It only seems like yesterday that we gathered in Endeavour hills for our first church service ten years ago. We, as a church, has come

a long way. Many have joined, and others have left for several reasons, but our fellowship that started ten years ago has remained the same. If anyone told me I would be part of a CSI worship service here in Melbourne, I would have laughed it off. The only time I thought I would be attending CSI services would be during our holidays in Kerala. But, by the grace of God, here we are ten years later, celebrating what God has done for us. Like 1 Timothy 4 reminds us that everything God has created is good. As a church, we have received God's goodness with thanksgiving and prayer. I hope that in the next ten years, we will continue to spread his goodness.

> I joined this church as a teenager who had little knowledge of the CSI church. As I reflect now, I can say many of our church's ways have influenced me as a person and my journey with church. The value of the fellowship is something we value dearly in our church. It is an essential part of our

faith. The bible reminds us in several places to love another, encourage each other, hold each other accountable, be selfless without expecting anything in return and build up one another. As 1 Corinthians 14:26 reminds us, everything we do together should build up the church. Every time we gather as a church, we surround ourselves with people with like-minded goals. It recharges us spiritually, emotionally, and mentally as well as challenges us to question our journey. Our bible studies, worship sessions, prayer meetings,

Our bible studies, worship sessions, prayer meetings, thanksgiving prayers, conventions, retreats, and camps are many ways to strengthen our fellowship.

thanksgiving prayers, conventions, retreats, and camps are many ways to strengthen our fellowship. Listening to various preachers, priests, and bishops has helped me spiritually nourish and examine my journey with Christ. Our fellowship has enabled me to better my walk with Christ.

I've had the opportunity to travel and represent our church in different cities, states, and countries, and I never thought that I could do especially being so young. Like Jeremiah 1:5 reminds us, God had known us before he formed us in our mother's womb. God has our beginning, middle and ends written, and no matter how far we try running away, he will always try to pull us closer to what he created for you and me to be. Jeremiah 29.11 reminds us that God has a plan and purpose for us and plans to prosper us and not harm us. Our church is a testament in our lives that God has a plan and purpose for each one of us. He is using us to spread his word and mission far and wide, not just here in Australia but around the globe.



## **PHOENIX**

## **FINANCIAL SERVICES**

CRN - 524405

Home Loans

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- Personal Loans







#### **Jessymole Justin**

A founding member of MCSI, Secretary of the MCSI Women's Fellowship and Sunday School Faculty.



#### PREPARATION

- 1.Drain tuna from the can and flake the chunk into smaller pieces.
- 2.Heat oil in a pan/kadai add mustard seeds and sauté till they crackle
- 3. Then add the dry chillies sauté till they change colour.
- 4. Once the dry chillies change colour, add the sliced onion. Sauté at regular intervals till they turn translucent.
- 4. Then add curry leaves, chopped green chillies, minced ginger and garlic and sauté for a few more minutes.
- 5. Add turmeric powder and mix well.
- 6. Add tuna flakes and sauté for 3-5 minutes. Now add black powder to this mixture and mix well
- 7. Finally add the coconut and salt as required and mix very well
- 8. Close the pan with a lid and cook in slow flame for 3-5 minutes.
- 9. Remove from the flame and garnish with slit green chillies.

Serve hot and enjoy!!

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1. Tuna: 425 g (I used John west)
- 2. Grated coconut: 1/4 cup
- 3. Minced Garlic: 3 medium sized cloves.
- 4. Minced Ginger: 1/2 inch
- 5. Green Chilli: 3
- 6. Brown Onion: 2 medium sizes (thinly sized)
- 7. Tumeric powder: ½ tsp
- 8. Black pepper powder: 1 tbsp
- 9. Curry leaves: 1 sprig
- 10. Salt (As required)
- 11. Oil: 1- 3tsp
- 12. Mustard seed: ½ tsp
- 13. Dried chillies: 2-3

Tuna thoran is an easy and quick dish that you can serve with rice, Cherupayar parippu curry, and padappam or even use it as a filling for your wrap and sandwiches.

#### **ADDITIONAL TIPS**

- •Adjust the number of green chillies according to your spice tolerance.
- If you are using desiccated coconut, add warm water to the coconut and keep aside for 5 minutes before you start preparing the thoran. This will help soften the coconut.
- As this dish is quite dry, make sure you stir at regular interval to avoid it from sticking to the pan.
- •Add salt at the end as some canned tuna can be saltier than others.





Rev. Sujit David
Vicar of Sydney CSI Congregation.

orship is central to the Christian faith. The ultimate expression of our faith is through our worship. Our understanding and participation in worship is a reflection of our experience and understanding of God. Worship is not an activity that happens once a week, but it becomes an integral part of our faith and practice. This is not to undermine the significance or importance of corporate worship, but to reinstate that worship happens not only within the four walls of the church, it is ultimately our response to God's revelation of Himself to us. Glen O'Brien defines worship "...is human response to the Triune God's self-revelation, expressed in the celebration of, and thanksgiving for, God's saving activity in Jesus Christ". The conventional understanding of worship is limited to once a week activity, particularly that which happens in collective worship. But such an understanding is limiting and neglecting a large part of our faith.

Collective and individual worship is rich in the Bible, and emphasis is given to both. In the Old Testament, temple worship was central to the faith of the

people of God. The spiritual activity was primarily confined to the temple and home. The God who had journeyed with the people through the desert made His dwelling among the people. In the New Testament, the temple was an important place to Jesus and His disciples.

Jesus was taken to the temple when He was eight days old. The next mention and the only mention before His earthly ministry is when he was twelve years old (Luke 2:42), which talks about Him in the temple. Verse 41 says that He was taken to the temple every year.

Jesus, during His earthly ministry, taught in the synagogues and also cleansed the temple. Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians 3:16 says, "Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"

The picture of the temple of God in the book of Revelation is that of angels, elders, living creatures and myriads of myriads worshipping God.

The dynamics of public worship has gone through several changes over time, from the large spectrum of traditional orthodox liturgical worship to free worship. Several reasons are attributed to these changes. The world itself has undergone changes that have impacted many aspects of individual and corporate life. The onset of the recent Covid pandemic restricted the public gathering of people.

This impacted our patterns of worship which have resulted in "worship from home'. The advancement of technology has made it possible to begin online service, live streaming, hybrid service, virtual service, and so on.

It is impossible to worship God on a Sunday in a Church if one has not discovered what it means to have a personal time of worship.

These alternative methods have and will continue to have an impact on our understanding of worship. The latest trend of working from home has given us the option of worship from home too. Today we have online prayer meetings, online worship services, online Bible studies, online pastoral care, online praying for the sick etc. The word 'zoom' has become a household name among the tech-savvy and the older generation. Worship from home has eased many of our troubles, reduced our travel time, given us a little more sleep on Sunday morning without the need to dress up. For some, there is no need to get out of bed, while others choose to multi-task, and there is no offertory. It is easy to hide behind 'no video' and fulfil the duty of having attended church. This is not to rule out those who participate in worshipping God in truth and spirit out of sincerity. Are these new patterns turning us out to be a community that offers spirituality in a virtual world? The scope for faith expression in the virtual world is transitory. Faith is personal, but it finds its expression in the community. The virtual online services have created virtual fatigue for people who are now eagerly looking for that which is authentic and real.

True worship is that which should stem out of one's own relationship and perception of God. Worship has its expression both at the personal realm and at its consummation in corporate worship. The Scripture has many references to both individual and corporate worship. Church or the Body of Christ is primarily

a gathering of people for worship. The common terminology that we use today for our Sunday or weekly gatherings is "Worship Service" but the question is, does one feel that they have an experience of worship? Most often, we find our Sunday services more of a ritual and a tradition. The reason for losing out on Sunday worship is because we have not found space for a personal time of worship. It is impossible to worship God on a Sunday in a Church if one has not discovered what it means to have a personal time of worship. A brief reflection from the passage in Isaiah chapter 6 portrays what worship is.

Isaiah chapter 6 begins with Isaiah giving a historical reference to his experience. He says, "In the year King Uzziah died..." This is more than a historical reference, and the death of Uzziah had brought spiritual terror among the people.

In 2 Chronicles 26, we read the story of Uzziah, who became a king at the age of 16 and reigned for 52 years. He was a good king who feared God, and he did the right things. God blessed him abundantly, and he prospered in every aspect of his rule. However, in verse 16, we read, "But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the Lord his God, for he entered the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense". Furthermore, we read that by ignoring the priest's warnings, "leprosy broke out on his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord, beside the altar of incense..." as mentioned in verse 19. Uzziah remained a leper till the day of his death. So, the death of Uzziah sent a strict warning pertaining to the things of God and particularly the worship of God.

Isaiah says in chapter 6 verses 1-3 "...I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple.

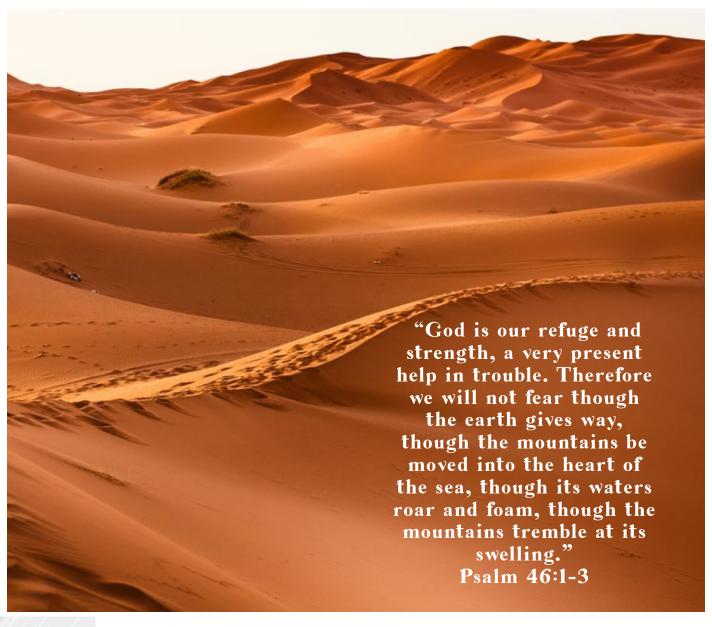
Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings; with two, he covered his face, and with two, he covered his feet, and with two, he flew. And one called out to another and said, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory" Worship of God begins when we get a glimpse of God. This is not only through visions, but it happens when we set our minds to think of who God is. We look at the attributes of God - He is Almighty, Good Shepherd, Loving, Kind, Merciful, Forgiving, Alpha and Omega, Everlasting Father, King of Kings, Lord of Lords and Prince of Peace, to name a few. However,

there are many more that we can list. We can worship God only when we know who He is. Our participation and attitude to worship is a reflection of our knowledge and understanding of God. When Isaiah got a glimpse of the Holy God, he looked at himself and said in verse 5,"...woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips. For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Isaiah recognises his sinful nature and seeks God's forgiveness and cleansing. The seraphim flew down to him and touched his lips with a burning coal and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips, and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is forgiven." This is further followed by a question that Isaiah is asked in vs. 8 "Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, whom shall I send

and who will go for Us?

Then I said, here am I, send me." Isaiah heard and responded. Similarly, Worship is complete when we understand God's purpose for us and respond to God.

Worship is an experience of God that stems out of a relationship with God. As we discover the greatness of God, we stand in awe of Him, and with our whole being, we express how great He is. In the light of His holiness, we realise that we are sinners and confess our sins to God. We are cleansed and sanctified to listen to His wonderful word, which challenges us to become His servant in this world. In the present circumstances, even if worship is from home, let us worship Him in truth and in spirit.





n 2013, I met with a road accident when I was five months pregnant with Emmanuel. As I started to cross the South Gippsland highway after work, with a clear conscience that the road was clear from vehicles, one car which was coming at 100 KMs/hr hit the driver side where I was, and my car was displaced 1-2 metres away from the original spot. The door of the driver seat crushed inside and hit my stomach. Immediately, I felt intense pain. I couldn't move or open my door; I was stuck inside my car. Several colleagues of mine witnessed this incident, called an ambulance, and prayed. A short time later, firefighters came on the scene, cutopened the door, took me out, and placed me in the ambulance. The terrible pain I was going through could not be explained in words, but God's presence was near me the whole time. His presence assured me not to worry as I was safe in His hands, as mentioned in Psalms 91:11,12: "For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. In their hands, they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone."

Throughout my journey to the Royal Women's Hospital, I trusted God and prayed earnestly and sincerely. As soon as we reached the hospital ER, they wanted to run tests on me, and I rejected the tests since I knew I had God's protection and was safe. However, scanning was first done to check

"For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone."

if the baby was alive, then head to toe scanning and x-rays to check for broken bones and blood bleeds. The doctors and nurses couldn't find any injury anywhere inside or outside my body to their surprise.

The 'Amazing Grace' of Jesus Christ kept both my son and me alive. Hence, we decided to name this baby 'Emmanuel', which means 'God is with us.' God is indeed with us all the time!

Amen.

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Greetings from the Members of the Congregation,
Pastorate Committee and Presbyter

## CSI CHURCH SYDNEY

Blessings and prayers for the Decennial Celebrations of the Melbourne CSI Church

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

1 Peter 2:9



CSI Church Sydney www.csichurchsydney.org

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:22-23



## with best compliments

John, Jenny, Joshua & Joel





## About us.

At Naili Beauty Center, we offer a wide range of quality beauty services for hair, body, and nails, bridal makeup, hair care, natural skincare are all available under one roof. Hygiene being a very important factor for most of us, we make sure it is kept up to the mark. The products we use here for every service are well established. Therapists here are trained under the concerned and authorized people for the same.

#### Awards.

Best Young Female Entrepreneur 2021

#### **Christy Abraham**

Best Beauty Center
1st prize for media makeup artist
Best beauty consultants



## Our Gervices.

- Skincare
- Haircare
- Nail Art and Extensions
- Waxing Services
- Bridal Make-up
- Paraffin Treatments
- Beauty Consultation

#### Achievement.









#### Naili Beauty Center

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Akhil Mohan

Member of MCSI

Youth Fellowship
and Sunday

School faculty.

"God's love is demonstrated in the presence of judgment not in the absence of it"

# RESTORED RELATIONSHIP

he best part of a relationship is restoring it. God created Adam and Eve and placed them in the garden of Eden.

Little did they know that the tree from which they weren't supposed to eat was placed in the garden to demonstrate their freedom of choice, to practise free will, to love. I sometimes imagine what if I was in Adam's or Eve's position.

Knowing the lures, desires, and struggles, I face daily, I can easily conclude that I would've let God down as well.

God is love. But often, we forget the fact that God's love cannot overrule His justice. God's love is demonstrated in the presence of judgment, not in the absence of it. Since God is love, He longs to restore the relationship He once had with humanity so that we can walk with Him as Adam and Even used to in the garden of Eden. God's justice cannot let sin go unpunished. The movie Avengers Endgame had a punchline, "Whatever it takes!" which came to meaningful fruition when Tony Stark (aka Ironman) sacrificed his life in the end for the sake of others (which was the only way!).

Before the beginning of time, God also knew that the only way to reconcile humanity to Him was to give Himself up for them. And the first promise given to us from the Bible was regarding "the offspring of the woman" (Genesis 3:15) who would crush the head of that serpent which shall also strike His (woman's offspring) heel. This promise was fulfilled when Jesus defeated death once and for all by sacrificing Himself on the cross for our sake (which was the only way!). As it is rightly said, the cross of Calvary is where God's love and justice meet. That, my friends, was the only way!

This reminds us why 2000 years ago, Jesus was born in that manger in Bethlehem. That was God incarnate, the creator of the Universe, who intervened at a time in history to fulfil the law and the prophets and reconcile humanity back to Him. I hope this sacrificial love of Christ renews us daily, and the least we can do is share this amazing love wherever we are placed in life.

It is true that the best part of a relationship is restoring it when you think about it.



5)6)(3 എല്ലായ്പ്പോഴും വിശുദ്ധി പാലി ക്കണമെന്നാണു ദൈവം നമ്മെക്കുറിച്ചു ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നതു. ഒരുവൻ/ ഒരുവൾ ദൈവവിശ്വാസി ആണെന്നു അവകാശപ്പെടുകയും എന്നാൽ ജീവിതത്തിൽ ദൈവ വചനപ്രകാരം വിശുദ്ധി പാലിക്കാതിരിക്കയും ചെയ്യുന്നു എങ്കിൽ അവൻ/ൾ ഇനിയും സ്വന്ത ജീവിതത്തെ പരിശോധി ക്കേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. ഒരാൾ വാസ്തവമായി ദൈവ മകൻ ആണോ അല്ലയോ എന്നു തിരിച്ചറിയുന്നതു അവന്റെ ദൈനംദിന ജീവിതത്തിൽ ചെയ്യുന്ന പ്രവർ ത്തികളിൽ കൂടെയാണ്.

നമ്മുടെ വിശുദ്ധ ജീവിതത്തിൽ അശുദ്ധി കടന്നു കൂടുന്നത് നാം അറിയാതെ തന്നെ ലോക താൽപര്യ ങ്ങൾ നമ്മിൽ കടന്നു കൂടുമ്പോഴോ ലോകത്തോടുള്ള ആശ്രയത്വം നമ്മിൽ വർദ്ധിക്കുമ്പോഴോ ആണ്. ഏലി പുരോഹിതന്റെ മക്കൾ യഹോവയുടെ പെട്ടകം കൂടെയുണ്ട് എന്ന അമിത ആത്മവിശ്വാസത്തിൽ മുൻപോട്ടു പോകയും അപ്പോൾ തന്നെ പിതാവിന്റെ പദവി ദുരുപയോഗം ചെയ്തു പാപം ചെയ്യുകയും വിശുദ്ധ യാഗവസ്തുക്കളെ മോഷ്ടിക്കയും ചെയ്തതി ന്റെ ഫലമായി ഫെലിസ്ത്യരുടെ കയ്യാൽ കൊല്ലപ്പെട്ടു എന്നു മാത്രമല്ല , " ദൈവ സന്നിധിയിൽ ഏലിയുടെ പിതൃഭവനം എന്നും പരിചരിക്കും" എന്നുണ്ടായിരുന്ന ദൈവ കൽപ്പന പോലും ദൈവം നീക്കിക്കളകയും മക്കളെ അനുസരണത്തിൽ വളർത്താൻ ശ്രമിക്കാതി

#### **Anand Kuttapuzha**

A founding member of MCSI and the Vice-President of the Pastorate.

രുന്ന ഏലി കഴുത്തൊടിഞ്ഞു മരിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു.

ദൈവ വചനം കൃതൃമായി ആചരിക്കേണ്ടതിനു അതു കൽപ്പിച്ചു തന്നിരിക്കുന്നു (സങ്കീർത്തനം 119:4) എന്നുള്ള യാഥാർത്ഥ്യം ഏലിയുടെ കുടുംബത്തെ പ്പോലെ നാമും പലപ്പോഴും മറന്നു പോവുന്നില്ലേ?? നമ്മുടെ ജഡികമായ താൽപര്യങ്ങളോ, നാം കാണുന്ന ആഡംബര വസ്തുക്കളോ, സ്വത്തുക്കൾ നേടുവാനു ള്ള അതിയായ താൽപര്യമോ നമ്മുടെ വിശുദ്ധ ജീവിതത്തിനു തടസ്തം നിൽക്കാറില്ലേ?

യെരിഹോ പട്ടണം പിടിക്കുന്നതിനു മുൻപായി ദൈവം യോശുവയിലൂടെ യിസ്രയേൽ മക്കളോടു കൽപിച്ചിരുന്നു " ഈ പട്ടണവും അതിലുള്ള തൊക്കെയും യഹോവക്ക് ശപഥാർപ്പിതം" ആണു എന്നു. ശാപഗ്രസ്തമായ വസ്തുക്കളിലൊന്നും ദൈവ ജനം തൊടുവാൻ പോലും പാടില്ല.. ഉയർന്ന കോട്ട കൊത്തളങ്ങളുള്ള യെരിഹോ പട്ടണം യിസ്രയേൽ മക്കൾ പിടിച്ചശേഷം ആ ആത്മ വിശ്വാസത്തിൽ താരതമ്യേന ശക്തി കുറഞ്ഞ ഹായി പട്ടണം നിസ്താര മായി കീഴടക്കാമെന്നു യിസ്രയേൽ മക്കൾ കരുതി.

എന്നാൽ ഹായി പട്ടണത്തോടു യിസ്രയേൽ മക്കൾ തോറ്റു പോയി. യിസ്രയേൽ ജനത്തിൽ മുപ്പത്തിയാറു പേർ കൊല്ലപ്പെടുകയും ചെയ്തു. കാരണം അമ്പേഷി ച്ച് ചെന്നപ്പോൾ യിസ്രയേൽ ജനത്തിൽ നിന്നും ആഖാൻ എന്നൊരാൾ പിടിക്കപ്പെട്ടു.. അവനെ ചോദ്യം ചെയ്തപ്പോൾ ....അവൻ പറഞ്ഞു " മനോഹര മായൊരു ബാബിലോന്യ മേലങ്കിയും കുറെ സ്വർണ വും വെള്ളിയും യെരിഹോ പട്ടണത്തിൽ നിന്നും ഞാൻ മോഷ്ടിച്ചെടുത്ത് പോയി " എന്നു (യോശുവ 7:21).. ദൈവത്തിന്റെ മാറ്റമില്ലാത്ത നിയമപ്രകാരം ആഖാനെയും കുടുംബത്തെയും കല്ലെറിഞ്ഞു കൊല്ലേണ്ടിവന്നു.

ഇവിടെ രണ്ടു വ്യത്യസ്ത സാഹചര്യത്തിൽ വീണു പോയ രണ്ടു കുടുംബത്തെയാണു നമ്മൾ കണ്ടതു.. ഒന്നു അധികാരസ്ഥാനം ദുർവിനിയോഗം ചെയ്തു പാപം ചെയ്തു. രണ്ടാമത് ധനത്തോടും പ്രതാപത്തോ ടും ഉള്ള അത്യാഗ്രഹം മൂലം പാപത്തിൽ വീണു

പോയി. നമ്മുടെ ഓരോരുത്തരുടെയും ജീവിതം പരിശോധി ച്ചാലും നമുക്കു ഇത്തരം ബാബിലോന്യ മേലങ്കികൾ കാണുവാൻ കഴിയില്ലേ? ആഖാൻ മേലങ്കി ഒളിച്ച് വച്ചു എങ്കിൽ നാം പലരും ഈ മേലങ്കി ധരിച്ചു നടക്കു ന്നവരല്ലേ? നമ്മുടെ കർത്താവു നമ്മെ പഠിപ്പിച്ചു " ഞാൻ വിശുദ്ധനായിരിക്കുന്നതുപോലെ നിങ്ങളും വിശുദ്ധരായിരിപ്പിൻ". അതായതു നമ്മുടെ ജീവിത ത്തിന്റെ എല്ലാ വശങ്ങളും കർത്താവിനായി നാം വിട്ടുകൊടുക്കണം . ആ മർമ്മമാണു മത്തായി 6:33 ൽ നാം വായിക്കുന്നത്. മുൻപേ അവന്റെ രാജ്യവും നീതിയും അന്വേഷിപ്പീൻ , അതോടു കൂടി ഇതൊ ക്കെയും നിങ്ങൾക്കു ലഭിക്കും.. ഇതിന്റെ അർത്ഥം , നമ്മുടെആവശ്യങ്ങൾ എന്നു നാം ചിന്തിച്ചു വ്യാകുല പ്പെടുന്നതെല്ലാം നമ്മുടെ മനസ്തിൽ നിന്നും നാം മാറ്റേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു . ദൈവം അവയെ നമുക്കു നൽകേണ്ട സമയങ്ങളിൽ നമുക്കു നൽകി ക്കൊള്ളും. നമ്മുടെ ആവശ്യങ്ങൾക്കാണു നാം ദൈവേഷ്ടത്തേക്കാൾ പ്രാധാന്യം നൽ കുന്നതെങ്കിൽ നമ്മുടെ ജീവിതം അർത്ഥ ശൂന്യമാകുകയും ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ ലക്ഷ്യം തെറ്റുകയും ജീവിതം തോൽ വിയിൽ കലാശിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു.. എന്നാൽ യേശുക്രിസ്തു നമ്മിൽ

കർത്ത്രുത്വം നടത്തു കയും അവന്റെ ഉപദേശങ്ങൾ നാം അനുസരിക്കയും ചെയ്യുമ്പോൾ നമ്മുടെ ആവശ്യങ്ങൾ അറിയുന്ന കർത്താവ് , എല്ലാം അതതിന്റെ സമയത്തു സാധിപ്പിച്ചു തരും.

എന്നാൽ ഇന്ന് അനേകർ ധരിച്ച് വച്ചിട്ടുള്ള മേലങ്കി കൾ കാരണം ദൈവത്തിനു ഉപയോഗിക്കുവാൻ നിർവാഹമില്ലാതെ ധാരാളം പേർ ഉപയോഗ ശൂന്യരാ യി തീരുന്നുണ്ട്. ഇന്നത്തെ ക്രിസ്തീയ തലമുറയുടെ അനുഗ്രഹത്തിനു തടസ്സമായി നിൽക്കുന്നതും ആധു നീകതയുടെ ഈ "സവിശേഷമായ മേലങ്കി" കളാണ് എന്നു പറയാതിരിക്കുവാൻ നിർവാഹമില്ല... ഈ ലോക മയത്വമുള്ള മേലങ്കി വലിച്ചെറിഞ്ഞു , ശ്രേഷ്ട മായഉപദേശങ്ങളുടെ സമ്പുർണ്ണത ആയ യേശുവിന്റെ സാരോപദേശങ്ങളുടെ കളങ്കമില്ലാത്ത വസ്ത്രം ധരിക്കുന്നില്ല എങ്കിൽ , നാമും ആഖാനെപ്പോലെയോ ഏലിയുടെ കുടുംബത്തെപ്പോലെയോ നിത്യ നാശ







## with best compliments

Justin, Jessy, Priya and Angel





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here have been but few who have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us. Since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, so that you may know the truth of the origin of our church.

#### The Birth of the MCSI Church

Mr Ashok Varkey, one of the church's founding members, credits the true birth of the Melbourne Church of South India (MCSI) long before its inauguration in December 2011. It occurred in a nondescript park in November 2008, in Dandenong, on Princess Highway - a place with neither beauty nor majesty to attract us to it.

It was there that Ashok, who would go on to become the first Secretary of the church, and Mr Anand Kuttappuzha, soon to be the first President of the church, met and prayed, with the express intention of building a CSI Church in Melbourne, and the first in Australia. But it took

a further three years of prayer and anticipation for that vision to begin to take form.

#### Why a CSI Church?

Youth Fellowship.

At that time, the CSI community was somewhat scattered and formless. Some were in the Anglican church, others in the Mar Thoma church, etc. There was no strong impetus for people to join to form a CSI church.

I asked Ashok a pertinent question: With the existence of the Mar Thoma, and Anglican churches in Melbourne, what was the need for another one – that of a CSI denomination? The response was sublime in its eloquence:

"My response would be: WHY NOT? This is a question that is pertinent to all the church denominations, whether Jacobite, Mar Thoma, Orthodox etc." Ashok went on to note the

differences between the Mar Thoma Church and the CSI, and the fundamental difference is its liturgy. "The CSI church is 50% of my life," says Ashok. The question then became: how was one to survive, thrive and worship in a foreign land without a CSI church?

#### The Establishment of Services

A group of 13 families were assembled in an Anglican church hall in Dandenong on the 10th of September 2011 to discuss the establishment of a CSI church. There, the fundamental doctrinal tenets of the church were laid out:

"Our church is unique, in that every rotation, we receive a vicar (fondly known as Achen in Malayalam) from a different Diocese," says Ashok. "I don't think any CSI church has this kind of arrangement in place." Similarly, Anand made special mention of this decision, and it was very important to the founders of the church:

"That they may be one," says Anand.

"That they may be one?" I asked.

He elaborated: yes — that's our mantra, the church's credo. Although we may hail from different dioceses, we have come to accept different achens from different dioceses in Kerala. First came Rev. Jobby John, from the Madhya Kerala Diocese. After him came Rev. Vinod Victor, from the South Kerala Diocese. And then after that, Rev. Kurian Peter from the Cochin Diocese.

Given the popular support for establishing a church by all the families, we decided to organise another meeting to discuss the possibility of CSI service in Melbourne and to bring more available CSI families to the second meeting.

"We hired a hall in Dandenong the very next month for our second meeting to confirm the interest of all 13 families to start a CSI church," says Ashok. Initially, services were conducted on a monthly basis. Our first service at Uniting church, Endeavour Hills, in November 2011 was conducted with the help of an Anglican priest – Rev Saji from Adelaide, who was visiting his family in Melbourne. Letters of introduction were then written by our CSI Bishop – Thomas K. Oommen in Kottayam, to the Anglican Archbishop Philip Freier, requesting aid to

the fledgling MCSI community. As a result, on December 04, 2011, the MCSI church was formally inaugurated, with Archbishop Philip Frier conducting the service, at Mitcham Anglican Church. Services were then conducted on a fortnightly basis which subsequently became weekly services by visiting priests and lay leaders till Rev. Jobby John arrived in Melbourne in July 2012.

The Anglican church had been of great support and helped in establishing the congregation. I asked Ashok to elaborate:

Anand attended an Anglican multi-cultural event. There, Archbishop Philip Freier approached him and asked: 'How can we help?' Anand responded by saying that the CSI community, at that time, did not have the financial backing to sponsor an

"Particular mention must be made of the late Barry Parker, whose character, presence and steadfast support of the MCSI church can never be forgotten"

Achen to come from India to Melbourne. The Anglican community graciously afforded that sponsorship.

This sponsorship allowed the CSI congregation to welcome Rev. Jobby John to Melbourne as our first achen. Due to unforeseen circumstances, Rev. Jobby John had to depart from Australia for a few months. During the intervening period, the church was without a minister. However, by God's grace, for about 4–5 months, church services were conducted by Rev. Thomas Korah – Merson Korah's father, who was the choirmaster at that time. Korah achen, by sheer coincidence, happened to have been in Melbourne, visiting with Merson and family then. His presence was a great blessing to the church.

#### From Mitcham to Ashburton

After conducting services in Mitcham for about seven months, the Anglican Archbishop Philip Frier referred the MCSI administration to an Anglican Bishop - Barbara Darling. She was the Regional Bishop of the churches in the greater Ashburton area. She informed MCSI that there was an existing congregation - the St Matthew's

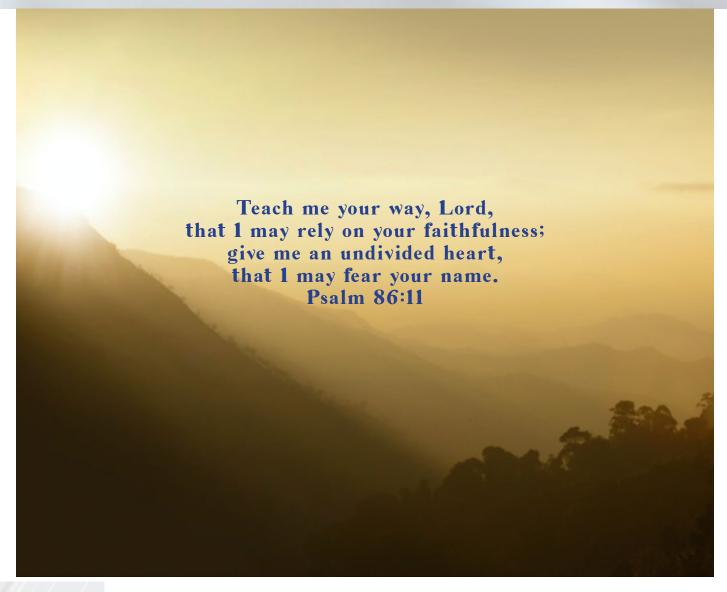
Anglican Church - who was without a priest. It was suggested that it would greatly help the St Matthew's congregation if our CSI achen could conduct services for the latter congregation. This arrangement also allowed for a church and parsonage to be provided to the CSI congregation to conduct its services. It was here that the first MoU was entered. In addition, under the exemplary leadership of Rev. Vinod Victor, the St Matthew's congregation had their parish status reinstated (it was withdrawn previously). All of this was a great blessing to everyone. Particular mention must be made of the late Barry Parker, whose character, presence and steadfast support of the MCSI church can never be forgotten. He will be fondly remembered and missed.

#### The Present

The MCSI church has grown substantially from its initial 13 families, and there are now 43 families (subscribing and non-subscribing). The church now has the following vibrant and active ministries under the guidance of Rev. Kurien Peter: (i) Sunday School, (ii) Youth Fellowship, (iii) Choir, (iv) Men's and Women's Fellowship, (v) Young Families' Fellowship, (vi) Cottage Prayers, and (vii) various missionary projects across India. These ministries have served to bless and enrich all involved.

#### **Epilogue**

I do not profess to quote exactly the words of my witnesses. I only quote its substance. I hope I have done justice to everyone's views and words and pray no injustice is done, apart from the unavoidable injustice of making special mention to all who gave their time, energy and funds freely to the establishment of this church. Many were involved, in addition to that divine providence, which makes all things possible. I present this history asking nothing but that it meets the reader's approbation and begging the reader's patience for any errors or omissions which may be found.





She started saying in a loud voice,

"I saw the Messiah. He was there near

the well talking to me." Everyone in

the village believed her and started

following her.

t was early morning, and I was out to get some water to prepare breakfast. I saw my best friend getting some water from the well. I quickly ran towards her. We talked while we were collecting water. We talked about the different food we were going to make and some

other things around the village. In the distance, we saw a man walking towards the well. He looked exhausted and thirsty. The man said to us, "Give me some water

to drink." But my friend said, "This man is a Jew, and we don't have anything to do with him." So, I just went with my friend's words, and I started drawing some water from the well. Then I heard the man talking to my friend a lot. I realized some of those words he was saying reminded me of the Messiah. I heard comments like 'living water,' 'no one will go thirsty. I was surprised I carefully

listened to what he was saying. Then when Jesus' disciples came back from the market and asked, "Why are you talking to this woman? And turned to the woman asked, "What do you want?" My friend quickly ran, leaving her jar behind. I followed her into the village. She started saying in

a loud voice, "I saw the Messiah. He was there near the well talking to me." Everyone in the village believed her and started following her. They saw Jesus and

asked him to stay with them for two days, so Jesus stayed. So many other people in the village believed and trusted in God. I said to my friend, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world."

# Best compliments and Prayers

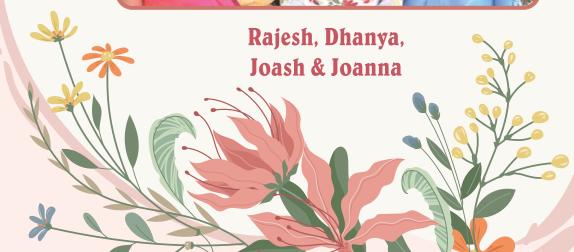


Jayachandra Kumar & Sarojam Ponnuse (parents of Dhanya)



J Retnarajan & Santhosha Kumari (parents of Rajesh)

















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#### **Geo Gladin Peter**

Secretary of the MCSI Youth Fellowship and the Church Organist.

In Psalms, we can see how David loved music and used his talent to compose, sing, and glorify the name of the

usic plays a vital role in the life of Christian believers. People nowadays live in a period where music can be heard everywhere, whether on the television, radio, shopping malls or even while playing video games. Music has a significant impact, and sometimes we feel incomplete without it. The Church has witnessed a wide variety of music, from classical hymns to the latest Christian rocks. In this article, I would like to describe the transformation of music that happened in churches.

The word "Hymn" originates from the Greek word "Hymnos", meaning Song of Praise. The entire congregation typically sings them, and the composition of hymns is called hymnody. In Psalms, we can see how David loved music and used his talent to compose, sing, and glorify the name of the Lord. Many other musicians did the same, but church hymns got started in the form of Gregorian chants during the Middle Ages, and most of these were sung by monastic choirs in Latin. During the 16th century, the congregation was given more access to hymns

with the Introduction of German technology in printing, and people started singing together in congregations.

People till the 17th century used to sing just Psalms, but Isaac Watts of England strongly believed that hymns should also express people's feelings, and he became a writer creating hundreds of new hymns. Isaac Watts has been described as "the liberator of English Hymnody" as the hymns that he wrote made people change from just singing Old Testament psalms to singing from their hearts with an outstanding level of understanding and faith. Another significant movement known as the Methodist movement took place during the same time, led by John Wesley. He and his brother Charles used simple melodies and rhythms that could help the congregation sing. These brothers wrote the most popular hymns, such as Love divine all loves excelling and Hark the herald angels sing etcetera.

In the late 19th century, a new style of hymnody called the gospel emerged. These songs had a strong lead vocal voice with exciting harmony that made the hymns more beautiful to hear.

There were many composers for hymn tunes.

and one important person to mention is Ira D. Sankey. He created melodies that were combined with strong rhythms that attracted people of that time. In the United States, he collaborated with Philip Bliss and published a gospel song collection, "Gospel Hymns and Sacred Songs". These collections of songs are still being used in different parts of the world.

20th and 21st centuries saw a wide range of hymn writers and approaches as communication and travel became much more accessible. A whole variety of tunes have also sprung up. Nowadays, the style of congregational singing is being replaced by a lead singer or a worship band in many churches. The use of various instruments such as drums and guitar are more common than ever before.

At first, music started from King David, and here we are in this generation where churches are also adapting to Christian Rocks. We can all learn something from each era and worship the Lord our God together in our churches and homes with the diverse gift of music that the Lord has given us.





Amarnath Porselvan

Member of St. Matthew's Anglican Church and belongs to the church of South India.

The unprecedented, once in a century pandemic - COVID 19 outbreak and lockdown has forced the traditional churches to "do" church differently and reimagine the church's future. This may be a boom time for the emerging and contemporary churches but a very challenging time for the conventional churches and their practices. Do the new practices, using the online platform over physical presence in churches for worship, support spiritual growth or fuel already fading Christian belief in the community? Let's analyse both sides of the coin.

The concept of using an online platform to conduct churches shouldn't be just nudged or overlooked as it comes with its advantage. It has always been a challenge to churches or the gospel in reaching those outside the reach of the existing church. It is proven that if the churches were to wait for society to come to it, it might wait forever. The online platforms have opened a whole new world with opportunities for nonbeliever to understand Christ without visiting a church. The individuals also can explore various gospels, analyse, and choose the denomination that suits them. The online churches also have simplified the preparation for worship, made it cost-effective and improved the sustainability of the church. Before much focus was placed in giving time, effort, and resources on making our churches more attractive and appealing, at least in terms of ambience. Online churches have simplified those by just focusing on the altar.

With all the magic and fancy of technology, we

Christians have undermined the threat posed on our fundamentals, zeal, and faith in Christ.

Let's start with the gospel. The benefit of choice, which the online platforms have given to an individual (non-believer) to shop around and choose the best belief which suits him. This has just made one wander and experiment with a simple flip of channels. This could often end up only in window shopping or like a seed sown over rocky ground (Luke 8: 5–15). Christian faith could be better cherished by experiencing and practising and certainly not by glancing at an ideology. The online way of spreading the

Moving on to analysis of online celebration of the Eucharist. St Paul, the apostle in 1Cor 11:17-34, refers to Holy Eucharist as a true communion that happens during the celebration between each individual and Christ and simultaneously and inseparably a communion between the different members who all become one Body of Christ. For him, this communion is so real that it involves sharing the meal, without which the Eucharist received, instead of being a blessing, becomes a curse (1 Cor 11: 27). St Paul highlights that communion should be celebrated with a real fellow believer and not a reel or virtual one.

Whereas online, they tend to pick things only from their family members. In the virtual environment, they could grow only as an individual. They might not come up well when they face a community. This stand-alone nature might become the root cause for all future problems like depression, self-centredness, and non-submissiveness that keeps an individual away from Christ.

gospel may succeed in generating Christians by headcounts and not souls, which may fade in tough times. Hence, the argument of reaching out to non-believers is ruled out.

Accordingly, to the logic of media, an online mass and gospel will be well attended if it collects more likes. It creates or influences the experience of believers, as it quickly changes the perception of the church and even to the denomination. It is dangerous and unacceptable that an individual's fulfilment in Christ is influenced by somebody sitting behind a computer and promoting it with different motives, including commercials.

Also, too many choices generally lead to a riskier decision or spoil a task. Choices could be a playground for Satan in bringing false doctrines into Christians. Generally, in an online platform, one will be alone in receiving the message without any filters to the gospel one receives. The audience's attention usually would be influenced by appearance, voice modulation, presentation and more likes and reviews from unknown people. There is every possibility that all the above said would be manipulated to deliver a false doctrine. Those false doctrines may challenge one's fundamentals in Christ and the Bible, which is very unlikely in physical congregations.

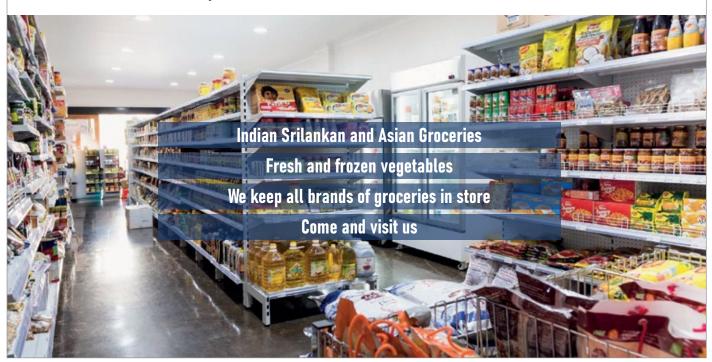
Finally, on the mental health of the children. Children are another reason for sticking to a church and congregational style of worship. The survival of any church or gospel depends on the zeal of the children. There is no equivalent to a kid learning about Christ at church, learning by interacting and working as a team with friends. In a physical congregation setup, they develop faith and discipline by observing elders in the church. Whereas online, they tend to pick things only from their family members. In the virtual environment, they could grow only as an individual. They might not come up well when they face a community. This stand-alone nature might become the root cause for all future problems like depression, self-centredness, and non-submissiveness that keeps an individual away from Christ.

My believers in Christ, I urge you to pay no heed to all your comfort, convenience, and influence from the community on the so-called new norm – online worship and turn towards our Lord's house whenever you get a chance. And there is no better place on earth to encourage Christians to spend time together and find a way out of deprivation and isolation during a tough time.



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# **Apple & Dates Cake**

#### Dhanya Rajesh

Member of MCSI and a member of the Pastorate.

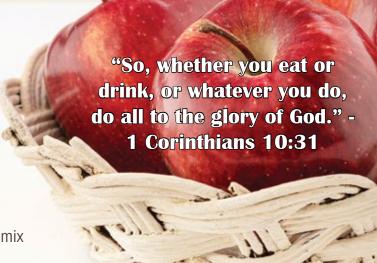
I fondly share with you a homemade cake recipe. When I first arrived in Australia, I tasted this cake and cherished keeping the recipe with me and the measurements. I lovingly remember Mrs Valsa Mathew (w/o Dr Kuruvilla Mathew), Perth for their hospitality and warm welcome we received when we were in Perth. I thank God Almighty for His abundance of Grace showered on my family and me over the years.

### **INGREDIENTS**

- 2 large red apples (peeled and chopped)
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate soda
- 125g unsalted butter
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup boiling water
- 185g of pitted dates (chopped)
- 1 cup caster sugar
- 1½ cup of self-rising flour

### **METHOD**

- Put chopped apples, dates, and bicarbonate soda in a bowl
- Pour boiling water into the same bowl and mix well. Let the mixture to soak for at least 1hr (preferably 2hrs)
- Beat butter and sugar for 2-3 minutes in a bowl
- Add one egg at a time to the butter and sugar mixture and beat it well
- Add flour to the mixture of eggs, butter, and sugar and mix well
- Add the apples, dates and bicarbonate soda mixture to the above mixture and mix well
- Preheat your oven
- Grease a tin pan (loaf tin)
- Pour the mixture into the pan
- Bake at 180°C for 45 minutes to 1 hour (use a skewer to check the inside is baked well)
- Remove the cake out of the oven once baked and allow it to cool completely
- Enjoy the delicious cake along with whipped cream, or custard.







MCSI Decennial Souvenir

**KERYGMA** 



ur motherland holds an important place in our hearts, and it is where we belong and gives us our identity. We might visit new places in our lifetime and love them for a while, but there is no place more beautiful than one's motherland. In the same way, our mother church holds a special place in shaping our character. The enduring effect of our cultural and religious values help us to shape our character and allow us to pass the same values to the next generation. This article outlines how my association with the CSI church in Kottayam has helped me to shape my Christian values.

#### CSI Community in Kottayam (Syrian Anglicans)

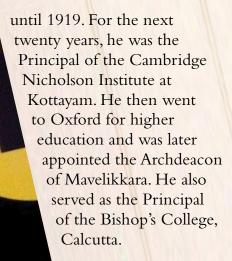
The history of the CSI church in Kottayam dates back to the Church Missionary Society (CMS) work in Travancore. R.H. Kerr and Claudius Buchanan visited the Malabar Syrians in 1806. Lord William Bentinck sent Kerr to Travancore to investigate the state of the native church. During the British period, CMS missionaries started

a relationship with Saint Thomas Christians; a division occurred between Orthodox Syrian Christians and a minority from the church, who favoured the reformed ideologies of the CMS missionaries. According to some estimates, about 6,000 – 12,000 Orthodox Syrian Christians joined the Church of England in India in 1837. These were known as Syrian Anglicans.

#### First native Bishop of CSI

Cherakarottu Korula Jacob was the Bishop of Travancore and Cochin in the mid-twentieth century (1945–1957). He was the 6th Bishop of the diocese and the first native Bishop of the Church of South India.

Jacob was born in Pallom in 1886 to T. Korula Ashan (my great grandfather's brother). He was educated at the University of Madras and joined the CMS College High School, Kottayam as a teacher. Later he studied theology at the Cambridge Nicholson Institute. Ordained as an Anglican priest in 1914, he served in Melukavu



C. K. Jacob was consecrated as a Bishop

on 6th May 1945 at St George's Cathedral, Madras. He was the first Indian to be elected to a diocesan See, native to his diocese. On 27th September 1947, he presided over the inaugural service of the Church of South India, the successor to the Anglican Church in South India, after Indian independence. He was also the first moderator of the Church of South India. In acknowledgement of his contributions to the

that the students being prepared for university examinations lagged in English, Mathematics, and Physics, Rev. Joseph Fenn, who succeeded Rev. Bailey as Principal in 1818, initiated a feeder programme in the form of a Grammar School. Those who graduated from the grammar school were able to meet the challenges of the college and the university. This grammar school later evolved into a separate entity called the CMS College High School. The first native Principal of CMS college is Mr C. K. Thomas, brother of Bishop C. K. Jacob.

#### Holy Trinity Cathedral, Kottayam

Many churches were built in this part of India during the early Victorian period. The Kottayam Mission of CMS built churches in several places — not only Kottayam but also in Mallappally, Pallom, Kollad, Olessa, Ericadu, Changanacherry, Mavelikkara and Mundakayam. However, amongst these, the largest and most beautiful was the Holy Trinity Cathedral Kottayam, which Bishop Wilson called 'the noble Gothic church, the glory of Travancore.' It was the work of Rev.

Many of the great hymns have been sung literally for centuries, but we do not sing hymns because they are old; we sing them because they are so authentic that they have survived all the fads of language, rhythm feels and musical trends.

formation of the Church of South India, he was presented with an honorary doctorate by Wycliffe College, Canada.

Because of his deep Bible knowledge, he used to be called the "Bible Dictionary". He retired from office in 1957 and died on 17th December 1957. He is buried at the CSI Holy Trinity Cathedral, Kottayam.

#### CMS College, Kottayam

CMS college was established in 1817, more than 200 years ago. CMS college now belongs to CSI church. As an alumnus of CMS college, it always brings beautiful memories of my college days. In 1817, CMS missionary Rev. Benjamin Bailey took charge as the first Principal of the college. He laid the foundations of modern secular education by implementing a curriculum with an intense concentration of subjects such as Syriac, Sanskrit, Latin, English, Greek, History, Mathematics and Geography. Realizing

Benjamin Bailey, whose laborious service in Kottayam went on apace. Bailey was laborious; he had already established the first printing press in the area, translating the New Testament into the local language, Malayalam, in 1829 and the whole Bible in 1841. This was the very same scholarly Benjamin Bailey with whom Keats had once corresponded and to whom he wrote on 22 Nov. 1817 of "the holiness of the heart's affections".

#### Hymns and Choir

A hymn is meant to be sung corporately. When we gather with other believers, we sing together praises to God or remind each other who this God is that we serve. Many of the great hymns have been sung literally for centuries, but we do not sing hymns because they are old; we sing them because they are so authentic that they have survived all the fads of language, rhythm feels and musical trends. I was lucky enough to be a part of a choir from a very young age and trained by

Mr Abraham C. Mathew, one of the best CSI musicians from Kottayam. I love the promise found in Revelation 12:11 that we would overcome the obstacles of any age "by the blood of the Lamb and the Word of our testimony." This explains the power we find in hymns — those songs that extol and express praise for the qualities of God and the work that Jesus did for us on the cross.

#### Overseas CSI congregations and its importance

Western countries, where Protestant Christianity originated, and Catholicism has been based for most of its history, has become one of the world's most secular regions. Although most adults say they were baptised, today, many do not describe themselves as Christians. Some say they gradually drifted away from religion, stopped believing in religious teachings, or were alienated by scandals or church positions on social issues, according to a new major Pew Research Centre survey of religious beliefs and practices in Western Europe. We have an almost identical situation in Australia.

Different church models involve the partnership of migrant Christians developed, or being developed, in most Western countries, to combat the rising growth of Islam. One of the suggested models allows for mixed congregations, where local people and immigrants use the same building but use worship liturgy in distinct patterns. At Melbourne CSI Church, we follow this model, and so far, it has worked well in different ways. As one of the founding members of the Melbourne CSI Church, I am incredibly proud and thankful to God to be a part of this small but growing congregation.

As a migrant CSI population, we have always desired to have our traditional worship services in this foreign land; and thus, the Melbourne CSI church came into existence. I hope Melbourne CSI church will stand for its future generations and would fulfil the priestly prayer of Jesus Christ, the Lord of the church "that they all may be one, and that the world may believe that you have sent me", for any CSI member residing in Melbourne and all future CSI migrants. And I pray the Melbourne CSI Church would become an effective instrument of God's mission so there will be greater peace, closer fellowship and fuller life in the church, with a renewed commitment for the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through word and deed.







# NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD



Jessymole Justin

A founding member of MCSI, Secretary of the MCSI Women's Fellowship and Sunday School Faculty.

irstly, I thank the Heavenly Father for a decade of Melbourne CSI Church. Thank the Lord for letting me and my family be a part of this church and fellowship over the last ten years. As I look back, I remember attending the inauguration day on the 5th of November 2011, and we have come a long way as a church. I never thought I would have the opportunity to participate in a Malayalam CSI worship service here in Australia. I had to leave the CSI church in Kerala when my dad joined the Salvation army. Even though the Salvation Army church played a huge role in my life, I missed being part of the CSI church. Probably this is why God gave me my husband, who is from the CSI church. Even though I became part of the CSI fellowship again, I could not attend any CSI services as we moved out of Kerala.

This church is God's testament in my life that he knows every thought of yours even if you have forgotten it. God fulfilled a childhood wish of mine. It took many years, but he didn't forget the wish of a seven-year-old Jessymole; to be part of and worship in a CSI church.

It was always my dream to be a Sunday school teacher, but I didn't have the courage to come forward.

When I attended the MCSI church inauguration

service, Rev. Saji spoke from 1 Samuel regarding God's calling. It inspired and encouraged me to listen to God's calling for His glory in whatever shape it might be. Rev. Saji reminded us to obey the Lord just like Samuel did, even though we didn't know the outcome of trusting him. At that time, for Sunday school was looking for an intermediate teacher, and I decided to put my hand up and become part of the team.

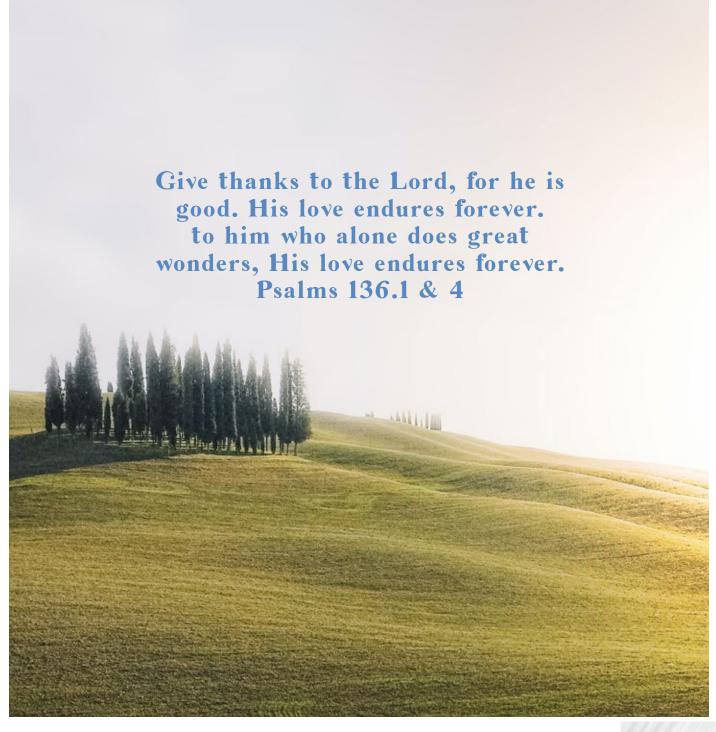
By the grace of God all these years, I am still part of Sunday school teaching the intermediate class. When we celebrated Sunday school's first anniversary, every teacher was awarded a memento. At that time, tears rolled out from my eyes because I remembered, NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD.

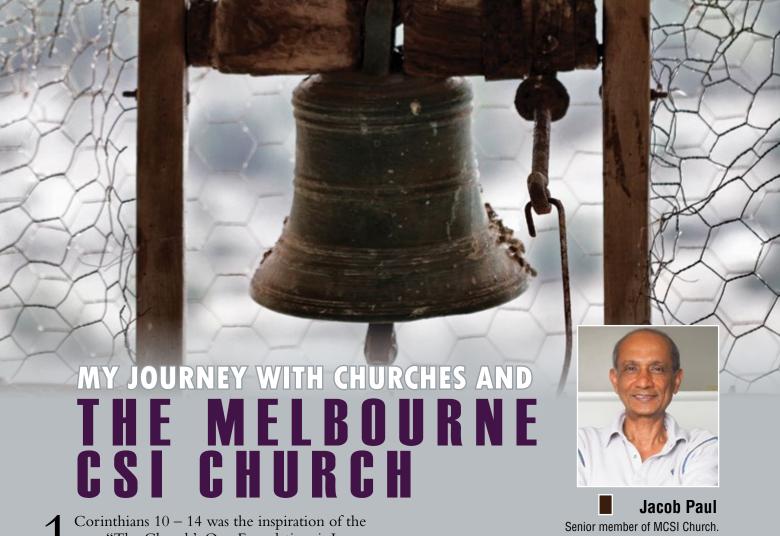


Mission has always played an essential role in CSI church and my life. My dad was a missionary, and he travelled the world doing God's work. As a family, we were able to build a worship building in India through MCSI Church mission work. I thank God for all the various mission activities that we are a part of as a church. I also thank God for allowing me to be part of the women's fellowship. I have been fortunate to be part of our church activities and events from the beginning. It gives me the joy to do my part for God's glory.

Psalms 118.23 says, the LORD has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes. God brought

us together to start a church in Victoria, and Melbourne CSI church will always be a part of history. May the LORD bless each of us who is part of building this church through their prayers, hard work and contribution. I remember and thank all the Achens who contributed their time, effort, and mission to our church. May the Lord bless each of them in their ministries. Again, I praise God for this church and thank him for all the blessings we have received through this church. May God continue to lead and guide this congregation in the coming years.





Corinthians 10 - 14 was the inspiration of the song "The Church's One Foundation, is Jesus Christ her Lord". It is a Christian hymn written in the 1860s by Samuel John Stone. It brings to my mind images of churches all over the world, having a myriad of issues, but also chosen for a reason. Today's world is witnessing the leaving from the church as the many that are being enfolded into it, and for reasons all are well aware of.

Christianity and the followers of Jesus span the globe. But the global body of more than 2 billion Christians is separated into thousands of denominations. Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Baptist, Apostolic, Methodist — the list goes on. Estimates show there are more than 200 Christian denominations in the U.S. and a staggering 45,000 globally. A cursory look at this institution indicates that this is due to differences in beliefs, power grabs and corruption; however, a theme that brings Christians together is the worship of Christ. To the average church going individual and to their families, it's mostly traditions and family backgrounds. For example, consider in our church – the Melbourne CSI Church and other such denominations existing in Melbourne such as the Mar Thoma and the Orthodox Churches and of other linguistic churches in Melbourne.

Not everyone has had the privilege and experience of living with their parents and being brought up by attending one church throughout their days, or an association with just one of the many branded churches in the world. There are few, like me that have travelled diversely, but have seen the mercy and love of God in my life and as reflected in different churches throughout and realise that people of God all over the world, no matter what the denomination, all worship the same triune God. It also may be said that humanity all over the world is exactly the same, with the same attitudes and differences, loves and hate, strong and the weak, the poor, lowly and the rich and powerful and all of this is reflected in all of God's creation of "Man".

That we may all be one is the theme of the CSI church, which is certainly a good motto to have but hard to implement as there are more than 45,000 denominations of Christians in the world of 2 billion Christians against a population of 5.5 billion people, and has the CSI church met up with this motto? What may seem impossible to man is possible to God.

My earliest memory of church is related to the sexton of the CSI church Ernakulam, John, coming home to collect monthly payments, and of pastors coming home – and that too on bicycles to pray for the family, and I can recollect that the Achens also used to join us for a meal and without notice, but was glad to spend time with each family in the congregation. I remember too, walking from my home to church,

and the 5 paisa coin my father used to give, as an offering to be made in church in the late 1950's. I also clearly recollect going with my grandmother in the afternoon, after church, to a Pentecostal mission service close by, where we sang songs to the beat of a very large drum.

My father was from CSI background and my mother was a Jacobite as referred to in those days but now called by different names (two factions). Hence, we were CSI due to the paternal hierarchy of the marriage system. My mother's sister was married by a Jacobite from the other faction of Jacobites. Hence, I was used to going to both factions at early ages. But CSI was the predominant one in my younger days.

On turning 4, I was admitted to a boarding school run by catholic nuns about 7 kms away from home and I used to come home only for holidays. As it was a catholic school run and maintained as part of the Catholic Church, we, children from the nursery school, would be sitting / kneeling right close to the priest during services.

"I thoroughly enjoyed this long walk and the privilege to get out of school on a pretext of going to church."

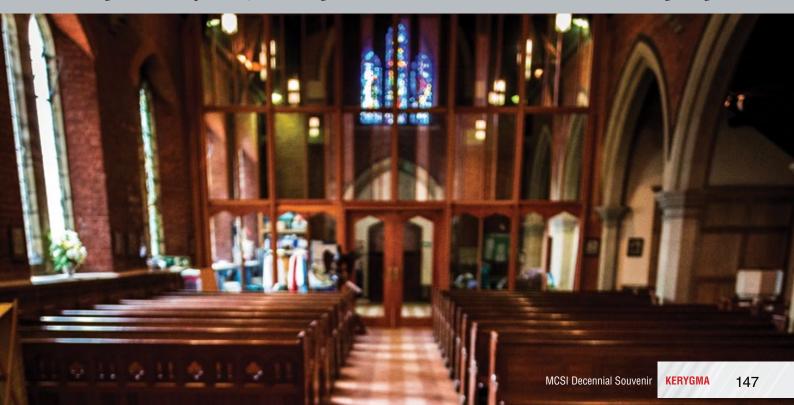
I could speak and write in English at the age of 4, and I would write a letter to my parents every week, of course supervised by the nuns. (Considered a very great thing in those days – to be able to speak in English).

Due to the realisation that, I was going to be someone important, as the school made us speak in English from date of joining (didn't know speaking in English was a great achievement in becoming someone important (– that thought never materialised-) I was then sent to a well-known boarding school in Trivandrum, another catholic school but this time managed by Jesuit priests.

Here I became a lead singer in the Catholic Church at the age of 7. I used to start the songs. (I am now quite surprised at my memory and recollection of the singing – possibly acquired from singing our CSI songs at home during prayer time.) Due to the catholic upbringing and being associated with other children in the boarding school, who were all Catholics, my most fervent desire was to become like Dominic Savio, a youngster who died at the age of 14 and was canonised by the Pope in 1954 to be a saint. I was part and parcel of the traditions of the Catholic church, reciting rosaries, attending Mass, learning all it takes to be a good catholic.

Move forward a few years and I was studying in Coonoor, Nilgiris, a hill resort in Tamilnadu, a school run by Irish Patrician Brothers. Here I was made and came to realise that I was not a catholic, but encouraging Christians being a core philosophy, I was given permission to go to a church called "All Saints Church" – an Anglican church now listed as a place of tourist interest for visitors to Coonoor. Every odd Sunday I looked forward to going there as it was down one hill and up another hill, a walk that took about 40 to 50 minutes. I thoroughly enjoyed this long walk and the privilege to get out of school on a pretext of going to church. So here I was back to being a protestant.

Moving on in years I then came to Kerala for my graduation. Here due to my parents' influence, my interaction with the CSI Church in Ernakulam rose considerably. With constant interactions with the then Achen, now the Late Bishop George Isaac, I became associated with a lot of activities including being the



secretary of the youth fellowship for about 2 years till I moved out for higher studies. During this period, I also did participate in two church camps one in Mannuthy – 1974, near Thrissur and one in Sultan Bathery – 1975.

In continuation of my higher studies, I then moved to Delhi, and my church of constant habitation became the Green Park Free church, which comes under the Church of North India. I was also associated with a Methodist church in RK Puram close to our university, due to some common guardians and friends. Of and on, we used to have visiting pastors to the university, (freelance) and we used to meet either on the rocks outside in open air during winters and indoors during summers. These were all pleasant memories.

On getting employed, I had my first posting at Dehradun for a period of two years, and during this period, I was not associated with any church whatsoever. From here I moved onto Agartala, in Tripura, in another corner of India for a period of 6 months and here too, I did not have any association with any church.

I was then posted back to Delhi for 3 years and I became a member of the Centenary Methodist church in Lodhi Road. This was the church we became associated with as a family. My children attended Sunday school and Susan my wife, was a Sunday school teacher. We certainly enjoyed the camaraderie-ship of the church and its pastors.

Due to office reasons, I was quite constantly transferred, between Delhi and Dehradun. Hence, the frequency of church visits was nil in Dehradun and in Delhi it was quite regular. I was for a period of two years also posted to Bombay, with accommodation in company quarters in Panvel, here too church going was not part of my Sunday exercise.

#### Melbourne CSI church

When I came to Melbourne in 2013, and living in the western suburbs, church was an immediate concern. Hence, we as a family visited about 8 churches in and around Werribee, to see where we could fit in as a family and make a church the home-church. We were not connected with many others, nor were we as a family interested in a Malayalam service as such, as the children having grown up outside of Kerala, were not very familiar with Malayalam. Finally, it came down to four, "The Werribee Church of Christ", the then Southwest Christian Church now called "Equip International" (assembly of God church), another Assembly of God Church made known to us by our Philippino

neighbours and the Uniting church at Williamstown. I continue to visit all of them as I really do not see any difference in the worship of God. All of them worship the Triune God, all of them follow the bible. My wife and children settled down and made "Equip Church" their base.

On a visit to India 4 years ago, to my parent church, I met Lilly Kochamma, the wife of the late reverend Bishop George Isaac, in the Ernakulam CSI Church, wherein she informed me about the Melbourne CSI Church run by Vinod Victor and in her words "a very smart Achen". Hence on my return, I met up and became a member of the church.

It is with great pleasure and with a feeling of nostalgia that I was able to associate with my mother tongue and church and to hear the rituals as sung and remembered by me, of my very early formative years and to listen to the Malayalam language.

As I live about 55 kms away, and distance being a small concern, I find it convenient and very worthwhile to make a once a month visit to this faraway church, to be part and parcel of this Malayalam congregation.

My journey has been good in the Lord, and I have listened and marvelled at different speakers in different churches all preach the word of God in truth and in spirit and have come to rely on the bible and its word. Life is a long journey for man but gone like the grass that springs up in the morning. In the morning it blooms and flourishes but by evening its dry and withered; and in this "seventy years have been given to man and some live up to 80, even these are filled with pain and trouble, soon they disappear, and we fly away" philosophy; life has been blessed by the knowledge and love of the Lord. It is now with pleasure I remember different churches, same philosophy, same God, and hope that one day when man comes to finally realise God, then - "that we may all be one" is understood by one and all.

I would like to extend a word of appreciation to the efforts made by Rev. Kurian Peter towards the dream of making an independent CSI church, here in Melbourne. Sincere appreciation also made to members of the church and church committees for their dedication and fortitude to the church and to all its activities. Wish the church the very best in its efforts.

God be praised.



ver these years, I admit that my faith has wavered numerous times, and I had not relied on God when I needed him most. Outside of church, it's been challenging for me to talk and engage with others about Christianity because most of my friends identify as atheists or non-practicing Hindus or Muslims. It's devastating how one can have no faith because, despite anything, I don't see a day where I live my life not believing in God.

Whether growing up immersed in Christianity or attending church every Sunday, I believe everyone must find out what their faith means to them. I consistently attended church, so the idea of believing in a God that is not visible to the naked eye was something that I just accepted. However, I've come to realise there's a lot more to it than just stating that something has an existence. Especially during these unprecedented times, belief and faith can help us "consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." (Romans 8:18). It's important to remind ourselves of this, even when life seems unbearable.

Many analogies help me understand how faith works in my life. The most common one we've all heard is the comparison of faith to the mustard seed. Among the smallest seed that could exist, the mustard seed can grow and become an enormous plant. This symbolises the potential of growth, representing the manifestation of trust and belief in God from even the smallest

things. The mustard seed is used in many stories as faith is similar to it; it is limitless and can grow if you nourish it well. A famous saying from Mahatma Gandhi quotes that "far more indispensable than food for the body is spiritual nourishment for the soul." This speaks volumes because life is meaningless without my faith in God, and I lack direction or a definite sense of morality. Religion helps me answer the big questions in life about my existence and why I was brought into this world, questions, for example, science can't quantify. It's just a matter of immersing yourself in the wisdom and beauty the Christian provides.

Fellowship and Church Choir.

As atheism becomes far more common amongst younger generations, it's hard to engage in conversation or share opinions with others of similar beliefs. A saying by Pope Shenouda goes, "A church without youth is a Church without a future. Moreover, Youth without a Church is Youth without a future." This is important to me as, despite everything, it's our job to sustain, share and immerse ourselves and each other in the love of God and faith. In saying this, I urge the younger generation especially to hold on to your faith even when it's difficult because we are the future of our Church, and the Church depends on us.



#### Introduction

ou probably would've read about courageous people from the Bible, but there's one person I'm going to write about, and that's Moses. God called Moses to set the Israelites free from Egypt, but he was scared. But he knew it was the right thing to do. Moses was also known as Moshe Rabbenu and was the most important prophet in the Bible. He wrote a few books of the Bible himself, he wrote five books, and they're all in the Old Testament. God gave Moses the Ten Commandments written in the Bible in Exodus 20:2–17 and Deuteronomy 5:6–21. Personally, being courageous was a tricky thing for me. I found standing up for myself

was hard, and when I tried my best to face my fears, I always ended up losing against them, and my worries grew, making me feel like a speck of dust. But I knew God was always with me, just like Moses trusted God and believed in him. Deuteronomy 31:6 says: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you." Follow Moses in this incredible journey to save the Israelites from Egypt.

the daughter of James &

Dhanya Rajesh.

150

#### Who was Moses?

Moses was a courageous man from the Old Testament, and he was born in the Land of Goshen. He lived with his Mum, Jochebed, Dad Amram, brother Aaron and sister Miriam. When Moses was three months old, his mother put him into a papyrus basket so the Egyptians wouldn't kill him. His mother put the basket into the Nile River, and it floated to the Pharaoh's palace. Mariam, Moses's sister, followed the basket so she could see where it went. The basket landed near the Pharaoh's daughter, and Mariam took the child and looked after him. Later Mariam found a woman who would take care of little Moses and asked her to nurse him. But little did she know that that lady was Moses's mother. Later, when Moses was older, he became a great leader and led the Israelites out of Egypt and saved them from Pharaoh. He took the Israelites to the Promised Land (Canaan). Moses died at Mount Nebo in Moab, and when he died, he was 120 years old in 1273 BC. Moses' wife's name is Zipporah, and their children's names are Eliezer and Gershom. Moses means "Drawn out of the water."

#### Challenges Moses faced

There were some challenges for Moses, and some were tough to handle. Moses told Pharaoh that there was only one God, the Living God, and if he didn't let God's people go, he would send deadly Plagues. Some of the Plagues were: the water would turn into blood, darkness, killing the firstborn, frogs and more. When Moses went to the wilderness, it was hard surviving without food or water, but God helped him, and the Israelites and God gave them water and sweet bread called Manna. God helped the Israelites and Moses to cross the Red Sea. When the Egyptians tried to cross the sea, God stopped that and allowed the sea to go back to its original state.

#### Moses's Relationship with God

The relationship between Moses and God was good, but there were some disagreements, but he still listened to God, and he discovered the Ten Commandments. Moses was the only one who saw God's back at Mount Sinai. When Moses saw the burning bush, he was petrified, and he was

wondering why the brush wasn't burning? That's when he heard, "Moses, Moses." He was in shock. Where was that voice coming from? Then Moses replied, "Here I am." Then when Moses kept on talking, he realized it was God who was talking to

When Moses went to the wilderness, it was hard surviving without food or water, but God helped him, and the Israelites and God gave them water and sweet bread called Manna.

him. God told him to go to Egypt to rescue God's people, but he was scared and didn't want to go to Egypt, but he listened and decided to go.

#### What Did Moses Do to Become Courageous

Moses became courageous by trusting the Lord and going to Pharaoh and asking him to let his people go several times. He went to the desert for 40 years and trusted God that he would protect them and give them food and water. Moses wrote the first five books in the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

#### The True Meaning of Courage

If you look up 'courage' in a dictionary, you probably will get an answer like 'the ability to do something that frightens one; bravery.' Courage is something not everyone can achieve, but if you put your mind to it and say, 'I can do it!' But through God, you can perform many things. God will always be with you no matter how complex the problem maybe He will never leave your side. Courage is one crucial thing.

#### Conclusion

Overall, I found Moses an essential and courageous person from the Bible. Moses helped me understand the true meaning of courage, and trusting God was the key thing he did, and God helped and guided him. Moses saved the Israelites, who knew just one man could save thousands of people from Pharaoh, but he did that through God, and without Him, he probably would never have saved the Israelites and would be stuck in Egypt. After reading all of this, I hope you understand what courage means because Moses did.





The Secretary to the MCSI Young Families Fellowship & STEFM Youth Representative.

**Aparna Anna** 

izza is one dish that has remained my all-time favourite, and this intricate yet straightforward dish is my go-to comfort food. Nothing beats the joy of a lazy night, enjoying pizza with a glass of wine while watching a movie (a dream, date night scene which is yet to materialise). The lockdown, the subsequent shutdown of restaurants, and the restraint on travel meant I had to learn how to make pizza. It is something that I had always wanted to do but dreaded at the same time because of my fear of making a bad batch of dough for the pizza base. As I tried my hand at making the base, I realised it was not that hard. You do not have to follow the recipe meticulously. The measurements of the ingredients, for the most part, can be adjusted, which will become easy after baking one or two pizzas. The recipe that I followed was the easy pizza base recipe by Jamie Oliver.

#### **PIZZA BASE:**

The essential part of any pizza is its base, and it needs to be flavoured well. Kneading the dough is very important as it makes the dough elastic and gives it the structure. The time taken to knead the dough is anywhere between 10 - 15 minutes. You will know the dough is kneaded well when it stretches without breaking.

#### **INGREDIENTS:**

• Plain Flour: 400g Yeast: 1 x 7g packet

• Sugar: 1/2 tsp or just enough to jump start the yeast

• Water: 300ml of lukewarm water

• Olive oil: 4 tbsp

• Salt: to taste

• Herbs: Thyme, Rosemary and Oregano as per your choice

• Chilli flakes (because I like the base, spicy)

• Semolina: as required

#### **METHOD:**

- **1.** Mix the yeast and sugar in lukewarm water and set it aside for 5 minutes.
- **2.** Transfer all the dry ingredients (except semolina) into a bowl and mix them to incorporate all the ingredients.
- **3.** Pour the yeast and water mixture into the bowl and start mixing. You can mix the dough with

your hands or a fork.

**4.** Add olive oil to the dough and continue to knead. (If you feel there is too much water, balance it out by adding flour. You will realise that when you start kneading the dough. If there is too much water, the dough will stick to your hands even after kneading for 5 minutes)

- **5.** Once the dough is mixed well, place it on a clean, well-floured kitchen counter.
- **6.** Use the base of your palm to push and stretch the dough. Fold the dough, rotate it, and continue stretching. Do this till the dough stretches without breaking off.
- **7.** Once you are satisfied with the kneading, divide the dough into two to four equal portions depending on the number and size of the pizza you want to bake.
- **8.** Take a baking tray, spread semolina on the surface to prevent the dough from sticking to it. Place the dough on the baking tray. (I divide the
- dough into two equal portions and place one on one tray. The dough will need enough space to rise. Using semolina is better that using flour because semolina will prevent the dough from sticking to the base)
- **9.** Wet a clean cloth and place it over the dough to prevent it from drying out.
- **10.** Let the dough rise for at least one hour.

After the dough rises, you can knead the dough again to push the air out, and continue to make the pizza, or store the dough wrapped in cling wrap, in the freezer, for later use.

#### **PEPPERONI PIZZA:**

Once you have made the dough, the rest is easy. You can use any topping of your choice. My favourite is the pepperoni pizza.



#### **TOPPINGS:**

- Spicy Salami as many as you want
- Mozzarella cheese
- Pizza sauce (Passata 1 cup, herbs to season, salt to taste, chilli flakes)
- One chopped red onion
- Chopped capsicum
- Olives
- Jalapenos
- Sun-dried tomatoes

#### **METHOD:**

- 1. Place the pizza dough on a baking paper and roll out the dough. I like a thin base; hence I roll it out till the base is very thin. Flatten the dough using the back of your hands and then slowly spread it out using your fingers. Start from the centre and spread it outward. Do not use a rolling pin.
- **2.** Top the pizza with the pizza sauce. I cover the entire surface with the sauce.
- **3.** Cut the mozzarella cheese into thin slices and place them on the base. Do not keep it too close to the edges or the cheese will leak once it starts to melt.
- **4.** Add the sun-dried tomatoes, olives and capsicum.
- **5.** Top it with the spicy salami, sliced red onions and jalapenos.
- **6.** Bake the pizza at 200C for 15 minutes.
- **7.** Remove the pizza from the oven, cut it into slices (or not), and enjoy.



#### Introduction

Structural engineering is a sub-discipline of civil engineering in which structural engineers develop the 'bones and muscles' that create the form and shape of man-made structures. Structural engineers calculate structures' stability, strength, serviceability, and rigidity for buildings and nonbuilding structures. The structural designs are integrated with those of other designers such as architects and building services engineers and often supervise the construction of projects by contractors on site. They can also design machinery, medical equipment, and vehicles where structural integrity affects functionality, performance, and safety.

Structural engineering theory is based upon applied physical laws and empirical knowledge of the structural performance of different materials and geometries. Structural engineering design uses several relatively simple structural concepts to build complex structural systems. In addition, structural engineers are responsible for making creative and efficient use of funds, resources, structural elements, and materials to achieve these goals.

#### Engineering as a Calling

As the former US President and mining engineer Herbert Hoover wrote, "[Engineering] is a great profession. There is the fascination of watching a figment of the imagination emerge through the aid of science to a plan on paper. Then it moves to realisation in stone or metal or energy. Then it brings jobs and homes. Then it elevates the standards of living and adds to the comforts of life. That is the Engineer's high privilege."

Hoover's quote provides a good definition of an engineer, but the highest priority and primary motivation are to glorify God as believers. Therefore, they use their God-given gifts of specialist technical knowledge and practical abilities to the betterment of humanity so that God is glorified, and society is improved (Matt 5:16, Jeremiah 29:7).

Many of the technological challenges described in Scripture are on enormous scales: Noah's ark, building the temple, reconstruction of the walls of Jerusalem, and so on. However, in all these cases, the emphasis was on the heart of the individual. Local skill and labour were used, particularly in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 3). In the construction of the tabernacle, specific tasks were undertaken by Spirit-filled craftsmen (Exodus 31:1-11). The status of artisans depended entirely on their God-given talents and to what use they put them to. Conversely, craftsmen who make idols are described as "nothing but men" who "will be brought down to terror and infamy." (Isaiah 44:11).

#### God the Master Structural Engineer

"In the beginning, God created." - The Biblical account starts with God engineering and creating the earth we live in. Then, in His crowning work,



God created man "in His image" – also with creative powers. The engineering community has made a career out of exercising this God-given creative power – creating the physical environment that we live and work in. Thus, engineers have the distinguished legacy of following in their Creator's footsteps, thinking God's creative and analytical thoughts after Him. If we recognise the activity of an engineer when we observe mechanical devices, we can also find the activities of a Designer when we follow similar features in living organisms. The complexity of Goddesigned structural mechanisms is much higher than man-made designs, and the quality is incomparably greater. The similarities point to a single Designer with a holistic approach to design.

In the biblical context, God himself is the greatest Structural Engineer of all. Many fundamental principles adopted in structural engineering comes from the world around us, His Creation. Structural engineers can learn much from nature because it is a self-optimising system. Nature inspires structural engineers to design and build a structure with a high level of adaptability and requires a minimum amount of maintenance.

Later in the Bible, we can see Noah being one of the earliest Structural Engineers and Naval Architect. With God giving him the basic geometric requirements of the ark, Noah was entrusted with designing the ark from the concept stage to construction and testing. Similarities found in nature point to a single Master Engineer. However, one is a plant and the other an insect, the stiffening veins of a leaf and those of an insect's wing show similar approaches to membrane stiffening principles. The skeletal frame of an eagle and the shell of a King crab, unrelated animals, have

structures that are stiffened in very similar ways – by struts and braces to achieve maximum strength with minimum weight and material. These similarities in unrelated things point to a single creative mind in their design.

#### Structural Engineering in Nature

Plants have several structural systems. The stem of a plant is typically a compression member, holding up the weight of the superstructure. In addition, the stem must also resist the bending caused by winds. In doing so, it functions as a cantilever beam anchored at the base by its root system. The stem materials are optimally designed for this type of loading. They are anisotropic - strong in the longitudinal axis but weak in any other direction. Similarly, tall buildings are designed with similar structural systems to plants. Natural structures like mountains are inherently stable and can be almost infinitely scaled (as opposed to most other structural forms, which cannot be linearly increased in size in proportion to increased loads). Engineers adopted various geometric features from spider webs. For example, spiders manufacture their webs with two distinctive treads to prevent prey break or bounce back from the web: a robust and stiff tread for supporting or structural purposes and a flexible and sticky tread to retain the prey on the web. The manufacturing process that our Creator designed for spiders to use is also unique. Spiders make silk threads in environmentally benign ways. Proteins are processed from water-based solutions without using any petroleum products or organic solvents. The closest artificial material to spider silk is Kevlar, which uses petroleum-based materials at high temperature and pressure in a sulfuric acid bath - all of which are

harsh on the environment.

Honeycomb is another live structure that inspired many structural engineering projects. A popular application is the utilisation of the honeycomb cell for sandwich construction. The sandwich components are rigidly joined with the core-to-skin adhesive to act as one unit with high rigidity in torsion and bending. Besides saving building material, such a sandwich structure also offers other benefits (i.e., durability, low weight, high stiffness, and stability) than usual materials. Thus, materials are used efficiently without sacrificing strength.

We can see how marvellous and intelligent our wonderful Creator is.

#### Stewardship and Sustainability vs Consumerism

Much current engineering practice is unsustainable; for instance, in Australia, we consume raw materials such as steel, cement, and fossil fuels at unprecedented rates. Charles Bugg has defined Christian stewardship as: "Utilising and managing all resources God provides for the glory of God and the betterment of His creation." The drive for efficiency is at the heart of much engineering and sits comfortably with Christian stewardship of land, natural resources, and talents. However, there is also pressure on the Engineer to design for failure so that consumers will continually purchase products rather than on a once-for-all basis. The disposable culture in which we live presents a challenge for the faith community.

#### Conclusion

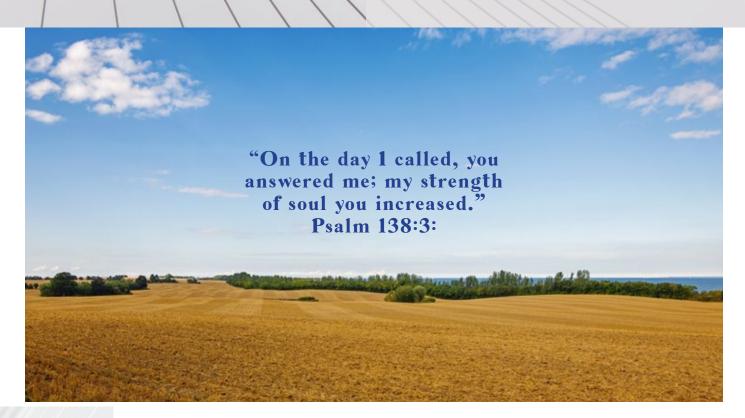
The created world is a lesson book for engineers. The incredible, awe-inspiring designs in nature point to the wisdom and creativity of its Engineer and show us how finite our knowledge is. God's holistic design scheme holds many lessons for human engineers regarding design principles, functionality, materials selection, aesthetics, safety, recyclability, and environmental renewal. Exploring the wonders and mysteries of nature also sets up anticipation for life to come, where our queries will be answered, our perplexities solved, our understanding enlarged, and our engineering education completed at the feet of the Master Engineer.

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Painting by Priya Saldanha

# Portrait of Faith

It is a statement of faith, an affirmation of a family's commitment and covenant to serve the Lord.

It is a reminder to check our heart, the activities in our home, the example we set for our family, and what our family is watching or listening to.

It's a chance to check behaviours, actions, and attitudes to ensure all of what we say, think, and do align with Jesus.

It is a promise to do the best we can to make sure that everything inside the home honours God.

It is also a prayer that the children raised there will follow in the faith of their parents.



Priya Saldanha

Member of MCSI
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Fellowship.



Akhil Mohan Member of MCSI Youth Fellowship and Sunday School faculty.

That is a really good question", is what I said when this question was posed to me during one of my year-end reviews at work. The review was undertaken by one of our team leads, who was also responsible for our firm's 'People' pillar. What this meant was that one of his responsibilities included helping individuals advance in their careers. Even in my career as a Sustainability Consultant (aka ESD Consultant/ESD Engineer/ Sustainability Engineer; we go by many fancy terms), there are many focus areas that I could pursue as I progress further. So, this question was critical because it got me thinking about why I chose this field and what keeps me excited as

I will try to summarise my 'why' from what I penned down a couple of years ago when I joined this gig. "I hope one day we'll get to that perfect world we all love to be a part of. Until then, let us remind ourselves that we are stewards of this beautiful planet and ought to make a conscious effort towards taking care of our fine-tuned and intelligently designed earth. I'm someone who is actively learning and practising sustainable measures within the built environment. Are you?"

I suppose this is a great question when it comes to us believers

> as well. If I were to ask you, hey, why are you in this gig? Why are you a Christian? Why do you follow Jesus? As you are reading this, try to respond to these questions. And I know it is hard to give a one-line response to these questions. But we ought to have an answer—a clear, thought-out response. For any building, the foundation is key and this applies to our faith too. I believe a strong foundation is like an anchor that helps us ground ourselves

somewhere rather than floating astray.

I continue in this field.

Oxford Mathematician John Lennox says, "If I were to summarise in just a few words why I am a Christian, it's because Christ gives me the biggest story to put my life into of any story that there is on offer; in other words, He solves for me the problem of meaning and significance".

# I'm a Christian because I want to live in a way that reflects the truth.

Josh McDowell, who was once an agnostic (who has now written or co-authored 151 books in 128 languages including 'More than a Carpenter' and 'Evidence that Demands a Verdict') says, "Finally, I could come to only one conclusion: If I were to remain intellectually honest, I had to admit that the Old and New Testament documents were some of the most reliable writings in all of antiquity. And if they were reliable, what about this man Jesus, whom I had dismissed as a mere carpenter?"

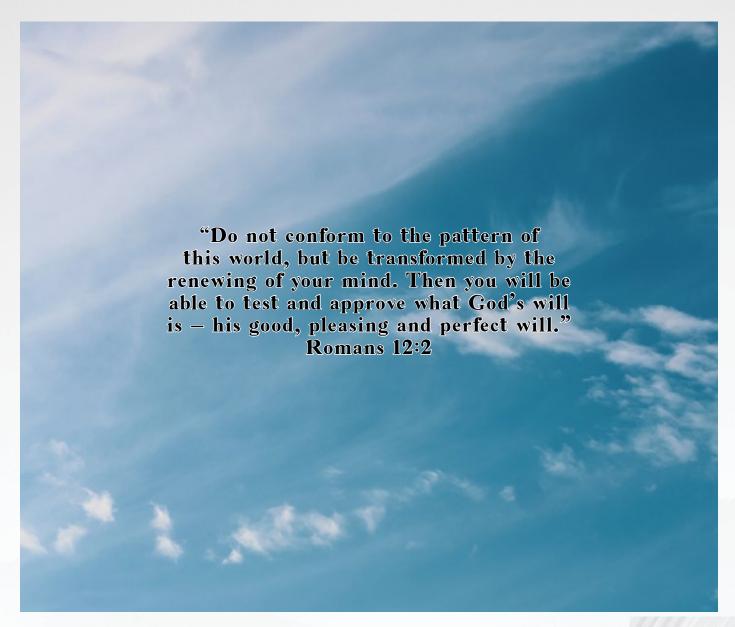
Astrophysicist Hugh Ross says, "Discoveries in astronomy first alerted me to the existence of God; and

to this day, the Bible's unfathomable depths, predictive power, and remarkable applicability to life rank as major reasons for my faith".

Cold-Case Detective J. Warner Wallace (author of 'Cold-Case Christianity', 'God's Crime Scene' and 'Forensic Faith') says, "I'm a Christian because it is true. I'm a Christian because I want to live in a way that reflects the truth. I'm a Christian because my high regard for the truth leaves me no alternative".

These quotes are from a few of my favourite faith heroes of our time. I believe each of them has an answer to the 'why', a strong conviction behind their reasoning because they've thought out their faith. It is equally important because it reminds us why we believe and keeps us ignited as we continue in our faith.

As I conclude, let me ask once again, "why you in this gig?"



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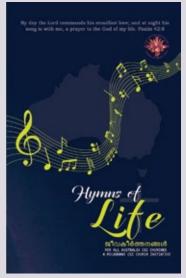


Diocese of Malabar CSI Cathedral, Kozhikode



Diocese of South Kerala Mateer Memorial Church, Thiruvananthapuram (Note: MM Church is not a Cathedral)

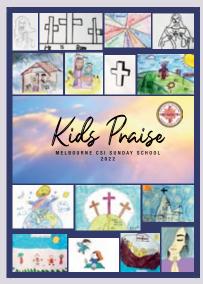
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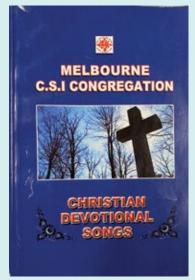
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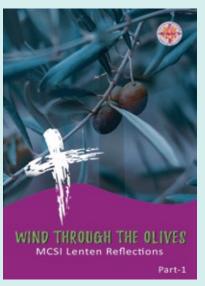
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