

KAIROS

GLOBAL

PRIVATE
CIRCULATION
ONLY

SELF-CONTROL AND THE ART OF LETTING GO...

■ RAIFIEL CYRIL



THE MARSHMALLOW TEST
FOR THE SOUL

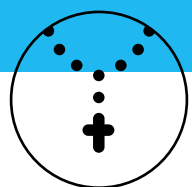
■ SONIA KURIAN

BRINGING HIS 'SANTVANA'
TO YOUR HEARTS

■ SHARROL JOSE



MARY MY BELOVED MOTHER



Immaculate Virgin, our hope in times of trials and failures, pray for us your children, that following your example and strengthened by the Holy Spirit we may gain control of our emotions, and orient our desires to God.

EDITOR'S ROOM



DR. CHACKOCHAN J NJAVALLIL



RESPONSE TAKES TIME, REMOVES ALL EMOTION AND ALLOWS FOR ASSERTIVENESS WITHOUT AGGRESSION.

Exercising Self Control
 What is self-control? It is the active effort we put forth to resisting the temptation to go back to the ways of the world around us, once we've been seen and experienced God's way of life. It is demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit instead of committing to the works of the flesh (Gal 5:19-23). I have found this explanation meaningful and interesting.

This is one area in my life which I am still struggling with, even though there has been significant progress. Something that helped me considerably in this regard is a greater understanding about response and reaction, which dawned on me while reading Stephen R Covey's 'Seven Habits of Highly Effective Families.'

There is a huge difference between reacting and responding. A reaction is typically quick, without much thought, tense and aggressive. A response is thought out, calm and non-threatening. A reaction typically provokes more reactions – perpetuating a long line of hatefulness with nothing accomplished. A response typically provokes discussion – perpetuating healthy discussion (even debate) that leads to resolution.

They both start the same way. The spouse, children, a co-worker, subordinate or superior says something or there is a situation that triggers an emotion. It can be something very simple from somebody disobeying, ignoring your instruction, an unnecessary accusation, undue delay in getting certain things done, to something major like the bureaucratic deferment or even corruption. It could be at home, while driving, in a meeting, via email or over a casual conversation. What happens in the next few seconds, however determines the difference between reacting and responding.

Someone who is reacting immediately hits reply and fires off a scathing tirade and hits send before he takes his next breath. A casual lunch conversation suddenly takes a very negative twist ending in an uncomfortable silence. A normally calm and brilliant employee resorts to name calling in the daily meeting. Reaction, without thinking leads to destruction. The family conversation suddenly turns into an undesirable one.

Reaction is quick. Response takes time. Reaction is emotion-filled. Response removes all emotion. Reaction is often aggressive. Response allows for assertiveness without aggression. Reaction snowballs into unnecessary and prolonged periods of discontent and disagreement. Response resolves conflict quickly.

While preparing for this editorial, I came across the below 'Self-control Self-examination' questionnaire which is interesting and relevant.

- ▶ Have I lost control to dangerous emotions or a damaging sin? How do I know?
- ▶ Why do I have difficulties restraining myself from what I know isn't good for me?
- ▶ Do others describe me as calm and collected or erratic and uncontrolled? Why?
- ▶ Is my first reaction to something a fruit of the Spirit or a loss of control? Why?

One of the ways to help us practice this fruit will be to develop a habit of examining our experiences of the day before we go to bed. This regular review and identifying the reasons for losing it could help us in practicing the fruit of self-control in our lives.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

chackochan.njavallil@kairos.global



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† For God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control
 2Tim 1:7

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

Fr.Cherian Nereveetil
(Jesus Youth International Chaplain)

PRINTER AND PUBLISHER

Dr.Edward Edezhath
(Jesus Youth International Animator)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Shoy Thomas
(Jesus Youth International Coordinator)

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Dr.Chackochan Njavallil

MANAGING EDITOR

Joshy Joseph, Houston, USA +1 8325923675
(infousa@kairos.global)

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Sharrol Jose, Chennai, India
(editor@kairos.global)

EDITORIAL COUNCIL

Ammu Zachariah, Maryland, USA
Jilu Jacob, Boston, USA
Joseph Anthraper, Southampton, UK
Raiffel Cyril, Canberra, Australia
Sonia Kurian, Houston, USA

ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE EDITORS

Divya Immanuel, Mumbai, India
Jiss Jose Thoppil, Kuwait
Jothesh Thomas, Dallas, USA
Ponny Sebastian, Dublin, Ireland

CIRCULATION MANAGERS

Bilas Joseph, Cochin, India. +91 96453 95997
circulations@kairos.global

ASSOCIATE CIRCULATION MANAGERS

Australia: Mintu Vijoy, Melbourne. +61 452538785
Bahrain: Roshan George, Manama. + 973 36906995
Canada: Joby Joseph, Ontario. +12899 686 074
Germany: Anna Paul, Berlin. +49 176 83495451
India: Jistine J Thannickal, Cochin. +91 94462 48368
India: Jackulin Sheela, Mumbai. +91 9967329244
Ireland: Suresh V Joy, Dublin. +35 3879630904
Kuwait: Anish Thomas Kappil, Salmiya. +965 90063685
Netherlands: Jojo Varghese, Utrecht. +31 684974552
New Zealand: Derick Daniel, Auckland +64 291270650
Malaysia: Deepu James, KL Sentral. +60 12649 4628
Oman: Jiju Paul, Muscat. +968 99467516
Qatar: Jomichan P George, Doha. + 974 33688437
Singapore: Jilu Nobin, Sengkang. +65 93294529
Switzerland: Joseph C Robert, Zurich. +41 762499295
Thailand: Mary Harris, Bangkok. +66 843138626
UAE: Thomas Komban, Dubai. + 971 553009006
UK: Shinto Jose, Birmingham. +44 7828311588
USA: Denny Joseph, Houston +1 8326403106

FINANCE MANAGER

Rani George, Cochin, India +91 9446563335
finance@kairos.global

DESIGN

Mustard Tree, Delhi, India

MAILING ADDRESS

☎ Kairos International Inc.
3010 Mason grove Ln
Pearland, TX, USA. 77584
✉ info@kairos.global
☎ +1 832 592 3675
🌐 www.kairos.global
📧 @ReadKairosGlobal
📧 @readkairos

☎ Kairos Media, Jesus Youth
International Office,
No 8/174, Navodaya Studio
Complex,
Thengod P.O, Cochin, Kerala, India.
📍 Pin: 682030
✉ infoin@kairos.global
☎ +91 9895711718

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ASK



FR. BITAJU

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

Q. Why should we not consult tarot cards, astrological calendars/predictions, Ouija boards etc.?

Trying to discover the future through palm reading, tarot cards, Ouija boards or some other form of fortune-telling or trying to control the future through black magic, witchcraft, or sorcery violates the first commandment which says, “I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have any gods before me.” When asked what the greatest commandment was, Jesus Christ repeated the precept found in Deuteronomy, “You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul, and with all of your strength” (Mt. 22:37). While God can choose to reveal the future to His prophets or saints, we as individuals must always have trust in His divine providence. St. Paul reminds us, “We know that God makes all things work together for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His decree” (Rom. 8:28). While we may have that passing curiosity of what will happen in the future, we anchor our lives in the Lord, trusting in His love and care. Sacred Scripture has many condemnations of these activities: “Let there not be found among you anyone who immolates his son or daughter in the fire, nor a fortune-teller, soothsayer, charmer, diviner, or caster of spells, nor one who consults ghosts and spirits or seeks oracles from the dead” (Deut. 18:10-12). St. Paul condemned sorcery (Gal. 5:19). In Acts of the Apostles, St. Paul rebuked Elymas, the magician, calling him “son of Satan and enemy of all that is right” (Acts 13:8ff), and St.

Peter rebuked Simon Magus, a magician, who wanted to buy the powers of the Holy Spirit to make himself more powerful (Acts 8:9ff). The Catechism of the Catholic Church in discussing the first commandment repeats the condemnation of divination: “All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to ‘unveil’ the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers. They contradict the honour, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone” (#2116). These practices are generally considered mortal sins. Any invocation of the devil would clearly be considered mortal sin. We believe, as St. John wrote, “God is love” (1 Jn 4:16). “God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him may not die but may have eternal life” (Jn 3:16). Jesus is the light of the world, shining through the darkness (Jn 1:4-5). He is the way, the truth, and the life (Jn 14:6). To invoke Satan or any other power, to enter the darkness (the occult) for any assistance, or to attempt to usurp powers which belong to God alone is a defiance of the authority of Almighty God. To commit such acts is to turn away from God and place our own souls in jeopardy.

Please send your questions to askfrbitaju@kairos.global and your questions will be answered here.



YOUCAT 355

“YOU SHALL NOT HAVE STRANGE GODS BEFORE ME.” WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

This commandment forbids us:

- ▶ to adore other gods and pagan deities or to worship an earthly idol or to devote oneself entirely to some earthly good [money, influence, success, beauty, youth, and so on]
- ▶ to be superstitious, which means to adhere to esoteric, magic, or occult or New Age practices or to get involved with fortune telling or spiritualism, instead of believing in God’s power, providence, and blessings
- ▶ to provoke God by word or deed
- ▶ to commit a sacrilege
- ▶ to acquire spiritual power through corruption and to desecrate what is holy through trafficking [simony]. [2110-2128, 2138-2140]

POPE TALK...

Dr. Kochurani Joseph
Animator, National Professional Ministry, India



'Amoris laetitia' must be read 'always in continuity' with Church teaching

Pope Francis says that his 2016 apostolic exhortation is to be understood "in continuity" with the traditional teaching of the Church, stressing that Amoris Laetitia is a unified whole which means that, in order to understand its message, it must be read in its entirety and from the beginning. This is because there is a development both of theological reflection and of the way in which problems are approached.

Saints show the heart's true desire

The lives of the saints are attractive because they demonstrate the radical and authentic relationship with Christ each person is called to. In the saints we see what our heart deeply desires: authenticity, true relationships, radicalism. This example can also be found in those "saints next door," such as parents who teach their children to live coherent, simple, honest, and generous lives.

Pope calls entire Church to pray and fast after clerical sex abuse revelations

"The only way that we can have to respond to this evil

that has darkened so many lives is to experience it as a task regarding all of us as the People of God". Pope invited the entire holy faithful People of God to a penitential exercise of prayer and fasting, following the Lord's command. This can awaken our conscience and arouse our solidarity and commitment to a culture of care that says 'never again' to every form of abuse.

Fight evil with action - not apathy

It is not enough for Catholics to not do bad things; they must counter evil by actively living out charity in the performance of good deeds. If we do not oppose evil, we feed it tacitly. It is necessary to intervene where evil spreads; because evil spreads where there are no daring Christians who oppose with good. It is not enough to not speak badly about others; we must stop when we hear someone talking badly.

Seek Jesus before material things

It is not wrong to be concerned with the daily necessities of life, but strengthening one's relationship with Jesus is of far greater importance. The Lord invites us not to forget that if we need to worry about

material bread, it is even more important to cultivate our relationship with him, to strengthen our faith in him, who is the 'bread of life' who came to satisfy our hunger for truth, our hunger for justice, our hunger for love. Jesus wants the encounter with him to go beyond the immediate satisfaction of material needs. This is because Jesus came to bring us something more than



PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR OCTOBER

Evangelization - The Mission of Religious

That consecrated religious men and women may bestir themselves, and be present among the poor, the marginalized, and those who have no voice.

the daily preoccupations of feeding and clothing ourselves, our careers, and so on.

Family is the dream of God for the salvation of humanity

It was in the family that each of us took his or her first steps in life. There we learned to live together in harmony, to master our selfish instincts and reconcile our differences, and above all to discern and seek those values that give authentic meaning and fulfilment to our lives. In our families we need to learn three words - "sorry", "please" and "thank you".

Pope Francis says...

- ▶ Craving for money robs us of life and pleasure, leading to loneliness.
- ▶ Christians turn your gaze to Christ crucified.
- ▶ Only the Lord fulfils the greatest yearnings of our hearts.
- ▶ May we always invoke God's holy name with reverence, as a sign of our special relationship to him.
- ▶ Every one of the baptized should feel involved in the ecclesial and social change that we so greatly need.
- ▶ Families everywhere are challenged to keep growing and keep moving forward.

MISSION

TALK

MARIA SEBASTIAN

Maria Sebastian, affectionately known as Piya, is a graduate in Architectural engineering living in Cardiff, Wales with her parents. She has two older sisters and loves nature, children and travelling.

Dear Piya, thanks a lot for your willingness to share your mission experience with Kairos readers. First of all, could you tell us a bit about your motivation to go for this mission trip?

For a long time, I had this deep desire within me to do missionary work – to go to a new place, meet and experience the people and life over there, and while helping out the community, learn as well from them. After finishing my degree this is exactly what I did! But the one thing I realised from my journey was that I got so much more from this experience than I could possibly have imagined

Tell us a bit about your mission place – the place, the people you met and the life you saw there.

Arunachal Pradesh is a state on the India-China border, a place well-known for its exceptional natural beauty. The mission place I went to is called Mengio, a tribal village located in the middle of the state of Arunachal Pradesh. The small village of Mengio is 7 hours' drive from the nearest town. It is a remote village where the largest building is the school. Every building there is predominately made of bamboo as it is the main local material. Other than bamboo housing, churches, a school and crops of cardamom, there is precious little in this village – nature wins over human dwellings.

What are some of the things that you learned from your time at your mission place? Or how do you think this experience changed you as a person and as a Christian?

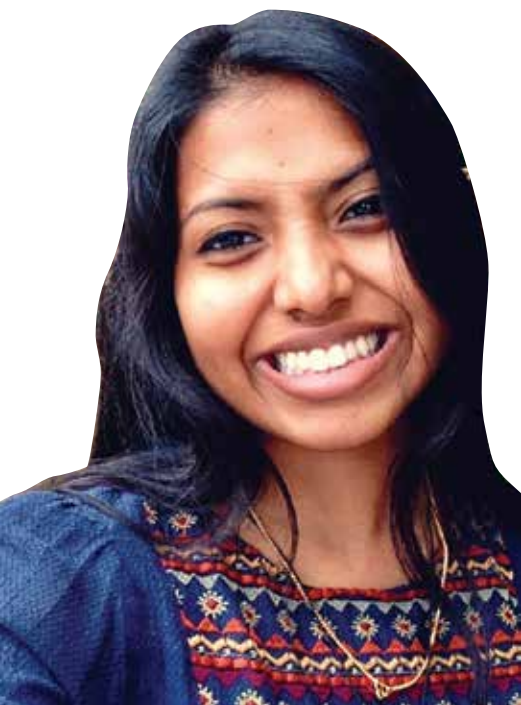
I was so blessed to be part of a community where no matter the struggles and difficulties of their life, I realised that people completely trust Jesus with their life. I went to a prayer meeting as they have a fellowship meeting each day for 4 days a week. We walked up the hills trying to find the place for that day's meeting. After reaching there eventually,



they served us water and then the meeting began. Normally they start by sharing the prayer intentions of the house we are at, and if anyone else wants to share their prayer intentions, then that is also added in.

The lady at the house began speaking and I must admit I didn't understand anything except the word '2005'. She began praying about her intentions from 2005 with a heavy heart, and as she went on, there she was, at times laughing and at times, tears welling up her eyes. About half an hour later, I heard her say '2015'. She looked a little angry by then and then for one last time her eyes welled up. An hour later she finished praying for her intentions – I looked around as I didn't know if this was how it was normally done. Everyone was half listening, but no one seemed surprised with the way things were going and I later found out that this is what usually happens at each house. I looked at the lady and she seemed to me as if she had a huge sense of relief, having completely said and got rid of everything that was weighing her heart down.

Now it was the catechist's turn and he used a bible verse and told her about forgiveness. I understood this since he was quoting the verse "not 7 times but 77 times you shall forgive your brothers". Another half an hour later, we started with the Divine Mercy chaplet and following it we started the praise





and worship. Everyone present was in their element and just praising God. Even though they only said a few words, they used it so beautifully to thank God for each and every little thing; praising him wholeheartedly and loudly with their eyes closed for a good half an hour until it slowly stopped. Afterwards, I looked at Dr Suriya who was with me and asked what was it that the lady said at the start. She told me that the woman was praying for her brother. The woman was talking about how they had an argument in 2005 and what happened ever since.

And then I thought about our prayer meetings – how we get so irritated if it overruns by 5 minutes or if someone praises for a bit too long. I thought about how we try to limit ours' as well as other people's time with Jesus at times with our obstinance. We also continuously worry so much about what and who is around us.

Tell us a bit more about the people you met there?

I loved how clear and uncomplicated the hearts of these people were. What they say and what they do doesn't come with any double meaning or exceptions. There was no crookedness behind their actions. Their interactions were direct and genuine as they

THERE I WAS, IN THE MIDDLE OF IT TRYING TO MAKE SENSE OF WHERE I STOOD IN ALL THIS. I WAS SO COMPLETELY LOST AND DIDN'T UNDERSTAND WHY I WAS THERE. IN THE END, PRECISELY BECAUSE OF THIS IT WAS SUCH A BEAUTIFUL EXPERIENCE.

were not very influenced by the outside world. Their lifestyle reminded me of a time before the world was beset with political correctness and where everyone was viewed through the lens of suspicion. They offer all that they can give, no matter how meagre it might be when you come into their homes and yet they still think it's not enough. They try to adapt to our needs as much as they can even if it is unfamiliar to them.

I was also taken aback by the purity of their hearts. Their faith is so strong and childlike, and they are not afraid of death nor do they care for the material possessions of this world. From this, a desire has grown within me to not dwell on what has and could happen but to live each day for the glory of God and to love others and help them.

What is that one abiding memory for you personally from this mission trip?

Initially, I felt very lonely at Mengio, not knowing anyone and not having the confidence to interact with the community. I was also exhausted by the travel. However, I did make sure to write my reflections each day. For the first three days, I had no one to confide in except God. I befriended Jesus for the first time as he was the only real person in my life. I couldn't communicate with my friends or family and I was in a completely new place where everyone was busy. There I was, in the middle of it trying to make sense of where I stood in all this. I was so completely lost and didn't understand why I was there. In the end, precisely because of this it was such a beautiful experience. When I was completely lost with no one to rely on, I was able to go to Jesus and only Jesus. I spoke with him more and studied about him little by little. I found the freedom to complain to him and only him, just him. With his help, I was able to overcome a few of my fears like spiders and darkness. As I spent time with him alone, slowly he started bringing other people on this journey. Slowly I was able to become part of the community. In loneliness I found Jesus.

JESUS YOUTH



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

Jesus Youth: Called to a closer walk with the poor

→ Mariapura camp has been an unforgettable memory from the early days of the movement. The year was 1978 and that year's national Charismatic summer youth program was a work camp in a remote village outside the south Indian city of Bangalore. I was in the second year of my college and in that May after my university exams I too went over to far away Mariapura to join so many young people from different parts of India.

Today when I look back to those eventful 10 days, forty years ago I am sure of one thing, those were truly decisive days of seed-sowing time for the future international movement. In truly practical terms we learned what it means to take an option for the poor, be near them and serve them meaningfully. As a result the poor has had a special place in the spirituality and life of Jesus Youth movement.

After a long bus drive through a mud road we reached this isolated village. It was a cluster of poor huts surrounded by vast barren lands. There was a church and a bare hall at one end of the village. Our gatherings and stay were in that hall and the girls stayed in a nearby convent. This work camp for university students was organised by the national charismatic renewal and the coordinating body for Catholic

Colleges in India.

We the participants were a vibrant bunch of youth from all over India. The programs of those days were a well-balanced fare – hard work, beautiful times of prayer, inspiring Bible based inputs, fellowship and mutual sharing times of abundant warmth, watching good Catholic media and a lot of time visiting poor families and evangelising the villagers. The manual work part was mainly digging foundations for houses and helping in the masonry work. That was mainly in the forenoon. Afternoons were time for Bible study and group discussion. The evening time was to be in the villages, sharing the good news and knowing closely their life and struggles.

For all of us, the work camp turned out to be a deep encounter of a variety of sorts. Though it was a time of activity and plenty of noise that was also a time of deep spiritual renewal. Bible teachings and prayer times were very effective. Being with the poor and suffering was another kind of deep God experience. Then again, the joyful fellowship was a deep formative experience. The songs, films, games, working in teams and more added to the whole experience.

For me personally the Mariapura experience was a kind of reaffirmation. From early 1977 onwards in our

prayer group in Ernakulam we started receiving messages encouraging us to reach out to the needy. Reflecting on this we started different outreach initiatives, the most important of these was the regular Sunday visits to a poor colony at Thevara. On Saturday evening we would gather for intercession before the blessed sacrament, on Sunday morning most of us students gathered to pray for a while and then we would go to Thevara. After all the visits and interactions the group would again gather for a time of Bible study in the afternoon. This on-going outreach brought together four significant elements of the real presence of the Lord, namely, the Word, the Bread, the Body and the Poor, and became an excellent formative workshop for all of us and I came to Mariapura with this background.



OPTION FOR THE POOR

The Church has always reminded us that our Lord has a special place in his heart for the poor. He opted to 'empty himself' and become homeless with nowhere to lay his head. His mission was 'preaching good news to the poor'. In the Gospel of Mathew chapter 25, the question at the last judgement is about what you have done to the least of my brethren. Embracing a life of simplicity is a hallmark of an evangeliser. That is the reason why most of the saints including the patron saint of the movement Saint Francis opted to be poor and remained close to the poor.

"My hunger is my physical problem, but my neighbour's hunger is my spiritual problem". I came to attend my 1976 renewal retreat with experience from a College students group where the importance of going to poor people had been much stressed, and we used to organise a lot of visits to the suffering. Many of my generation had also a background of Bible reflections emphasising the theme of option for the poor. May be one issue with these beautiful initiatives was that they were at times purely intellectual discussions and at other times frenzied activity. In either case that became irrelevant for most people and they slowly turned away from it. But what I found in our prayer group outreach and at Mariapura was a wholesome balance between a person's inner life and social concern. Here my spiritual needs, my intimate community and my commitment to serve the other all came together and there was a fullness and beauty in it.

MAIRAPURA CONTINUES

In the early 80s it was in the 'First-line Group' that the vision of Jesus Youth movement gradually got crystallized through much reflection and a lot of action-reflection-action steps. In all this, the importance of going to the poor had a special place. No wonder when organised evangelistic initiatives called Ministries were tried out,



Jesus Youth

My hunger is my physical problem, but my neighbour's hunger is my spiritual problem

'Outreach Ministry' was one of the first among them.

In the early 90s Chackochan Njavallil and Rajju Varghese grasped the spirit of Mariapura and planned Outreach Camps. The well-organised first one was at Puthuvaippu, a coastal village near Cochin. From then onwards such camps have been organised at different times and in different places. These camps become a unique experience especially for young people as it combines a variety of elements like staying with the poor and interacting with them, reflecting on the word of God especially one's mission in this world, times of prayer, manual labour and joyful fellowship.

With this rich backdrop it was no surprise that the leadership of the Jesus Youth movement thought of including going to the poor as a sixth pillar among the faith habits of its members. Outreach Child Support lends a helping hand to thousands needy children and it became another telling sign of the movement's commitment to the needy. If we scan through the

Jesus Youth movement around the world numerous such examples, big and small, can easily be seen. Perhaps the most vivid example of the movement's option for the poor has been "Nalla Ayalkaran" (The good neighbour), the well-organised response to the massive floods in Kerala.

The sixth pillar and being close to the needy and the poor, though it has always been central to Christian thinking, has been a big challenge to Jesus Youth. Surely this commitment is an excellent sign of a genuine and fruitful spirituality. As time goes on there will have to be newer ways of challenging the youth and families to set apart thought, time and resources to be near the poor and be at their service.

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

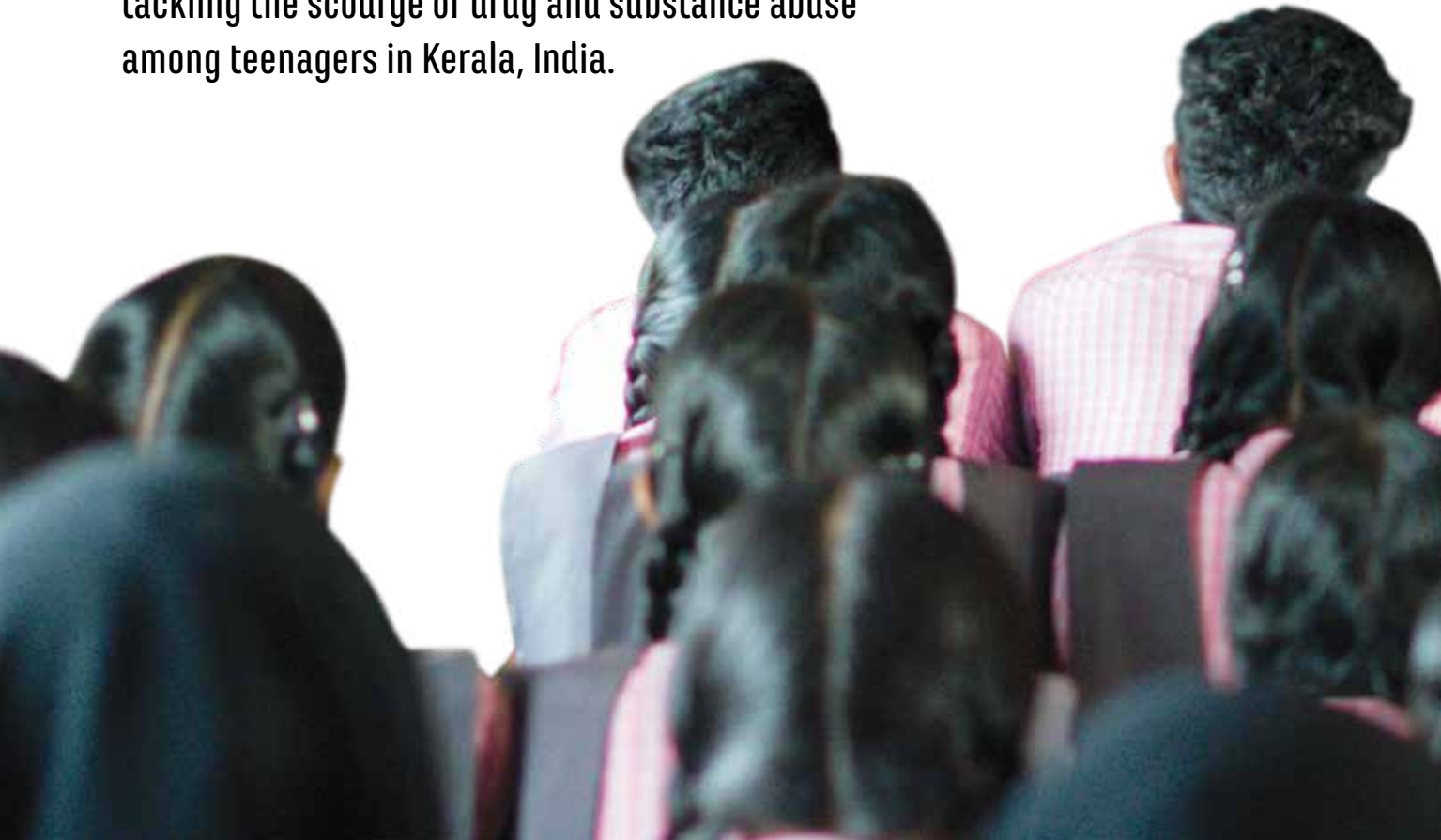
ENGAGE

Yes da



NO IS
THE NEW
YES!

Shalini George introduces Project VENDA, an initiative of Fourth Wave Foundation, aimed at tackling the scourge of drug and substance abuse among teenagers in Kerala, India.



A regular day in the office of Fourth Wave Foundation’s ‘Project VENDA’ is abuzz with activity and chatter. Vibrant colours and fabulous creatives spout from laptops and desktops. The average age group of employees at this 12-year-old NGO is 28 years. The work environment is electric! And Project VENDA operates from an old house converted into office in Kochi, Kerala.

Fourth Wave Foundation (FWF) is an organisation created as a response to the call for social change. The volunteers of FWF work relentlessly and selflessly towards a better society. Their projects range from inclusive education, women empowerment to their latest and most challenging of all - Project VENDA in Kochi, Kerala. The alarming rise in the growing subculture of teenage substance abuse, and the ensuing trauma affecting the child, the family and society at large in Kochi is

what directed FWF’s attention here. When the love of Jesus persuades us to look beyond our comfort zone, He opens our eyes to see the underbelly of the world around us. What more – He also jolts us to realise that we are but a few degrees away from these tragic stories of drug ravaged lives of children.

Project VENDA works with teens and young adults empowering them to say NO to drugs and its abuse. The focus of Project VENDA is the age group from 11 to 23. The focus is on this age group because children’s ability to resist the powerful addictive pull of substances and habits are much less than that of adults as their brain’s prefrontal cortex is still not mature. This area of the brain control judgement and behaviour – this is how children understand right from wrong. So good judgement is something a child cannot be expected to excel in. And wrong influences can lead to behavioural dysfunction and criminal deviations in



children. Project VENDA equips children to defend themselves from possible abuse by forewarning and awakening their own internal filters. This is achieved by making them aware of their self-worth and empowering them with the knowledge of how their body is ravaged by drug abuse.

The main work force or the catalysts at FWF are the young voices who spread the message of clean and connected lives to the teens, therefore every person who works with the Project is between the age of 20 - 30. The organisation has no hierarchy – rather everyone is a catalyst of change; youthful





multi-taskers willing to do anything to make a difference. “My father was a chain smoker when I was a kid, but as I was growing up, my dad realised that not only is smoking harmful to him but also a bad act for his kid to emulate. It suddenly dawned on him that I am watching and learning as well. So he decided one day to stop for my sake. It was very difficult for him but he still did it. Seeing him stop for my sake has been my greatest inspiration. That is when I realised that living a life with clean habits can inspire a whole generation of children to follow suit. That is what I do every day through Project VENDA. Since I am young and like a big brother to the kids in schools, they hang on to every word I say. I see their faces light up when I speak their language. This is the reward of my work at Project VENDA!” says Emmanuel, one of the FWF volunteers. Francy, one of the first volunteers to join the organisation accounts, “Sometimes my role is that of a big buddy to affected

children. I hand hold them throughout their traumatic time in therapy right from being a bystander at the hospital to easing them back to normal life. I see small miracles happening every other day and it changes my life too.”

Pope Francis in his message to the young people says “In life, there will always be people who will make you offers to slow or impede you on your way. Please, go against the current. Be courageous! And when people say ‘have a little alcohol, take a bit of drugs’. No. Go against this civilization that is causing us so much harm.” VENDA, the Malayalam for NO, is used in meaningful engagement through untiring work towards empowering the teens and young adults to emphatically say a big No to the abuse of all substances. Along with the awareness programmes Project Venda partners with hospitals, rehab centres, reform homes

to hand hold and bring back affected and addicted children back to normal life. Due to the stigma and expense associated with visiting hospitals for rehab, Project Venda also serves society by operating a counselling and support clinic manned by a team of psychiatrists and psychotherapists free of cost.

“I would reaffirm no to every type of drug use. But to say this no, one has to say yes to life, yes to love, yes to others, yes to education, yes to greater job opportunities. If we say yes to all these things, there will be no room for illicit drugs, for alcohol abuse, for other forms of addiction”, says Pope Francis to the teens and young adults of the world. And this encapsulates Project VENDA’s main agenda; every time you say No, you say YES to a different set of things, therefore the Project opens up avenues for teens and young adults to channelise their creative energy into arts, sports, music and drama.

The image of God our Father in heaven prompting us to make the right choices through the counsel of the Holy Spirit and strong bonds fostered by His Son Jesus Christ, is the model by which FWF runs Project VENDA. This reminds the society at large that sometimes we have to say NO, to help us say YES to whole new set of things which will capacitate life to the fullest!



SEEING MY DAD STOP SMOKING FOR MY SAKE HAS BEEN MY GREATEST INSPIRATION. THAT IS WHEN I REALISED THAT LIVING A LIFE WITH CLEAN HABITS CAN INSPIRE A WHOLE GENERATION OF CHILDREN TO FOLLOW SUIT



Shalini George, a Jesus Youth, a freelance commercial writer who writes under the banner of iOW! (In Other Words) lives in Kannur, India with her husband George and two children.

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

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6th - 9th

FROM THURSDAY 5PM TO SUNDAY 4PM

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

PSALMS 42:2



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686604

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

ENCOUNTER



Joel and Julia with their dad

FINDING LIGHT IN DARKNESS

Life is unpredictable. **Joel Adimathra** learned it the hard way. He shares about the painful turning point in his life which also helped him realise that the only constant in all our uncertainties is Jesus

It was May 20, 2012, three days after my 23rd birthday. That Sunday night, my life changed forever. After having dinner, my father, Jacob, went to sleep while I waited for my sister, Julia, to come home from work. My mom, Jessyamma, was in Seattle, working night shifts as an ICU nurse. My dad usually came to visit us in Houston.

Soon after Julia got back home, we heard our dad's scream and found him struggling to move. He could only move the right side and his speech was slurred. He was having a stroke. At the hospital, they diagnosed that his brain was swelling causing him to go in and out of consciousness. Immediately, my mother took the next available flight to Houston.

Within a week, he stopped breathing on his own. He was airlifted to the Memorial Hermann campus in the Medical Centre for a surgery in a last-ditch effort to save his life. We were preparing for the worst. My mom told us that she had seen such cases before. The outcome has never been good. We didn't know what to do, we felt very useless and frozen in that moment. My mom started to call immediate family and tell them what was happening.



After a three-hour surgery, the doctor informed us that his condition is stable. They performed a craniectomy, where they removed a piece of my dad's skull to relieve the pressure that was built up in his head. The brain was very swollen, but the bleeding was superficial. They were sure that he was going to be completely paralyzed on the left side.

For the first time in my life, I saw my dad in a compromised position. He was the typical Malayali alpha male. He was always sure of himself, very confident, very brash, and intelligent. He prided himself on being very independent, always able to do things on his own without any help. In a matter of a few days, that all changed. The road to recovery became long and arduous.

The first few weeks were really hard for all of us, my dad was relearning how to eat, how to speak, how to sit up. My mom was commuting back and forth from Seattle to Houston. My sister and I spent our every moment with dad. We would trade shifts, I'd spend my nights with him and early mornings, while my sister went to school and work. Julia would spend her afternoons and evenings with him while I worked.

Our father's recovery became our number one priority. In a strange way, our relationship with our parents got so much better. We were talking to them every single day, and very often.

Our dad relied on us for everything. We bathed him, lifted him, dressed him, and spent time with him during his therapy. After a while, it felt like our dad became the baby, and my sister and I became the parents. We were helping him with walking, eating, talking and fixing his slurred speech. We made him read books, and something strange happened. He started to read the Bible and watch Abhishekagni on Youtube.

My father knew his scripture and grew up in the CSI church. But we rarely saw his Christian conviction. He was more of a man of logic, and that aided him greatly in his career in real estate. All of the Christian conviction we saw came from our mother. It was her faith, her prayer, her blood, sweat, and tears, and her devotion to Christ that turned all of us to Jesus. One thing I remembered about her was that she always had a prayer time. Before she went to sleep, and whenever she woke up, she would spend at least 30 minutes praying. With her rosary in hand, she would pray for everything and everyone. It was something I never understood until I got older. Her time with

We didn't know what to do, we felt very useless and frozen in that moment. My mom started to call immediate family and tell them what was happening

Jesus was very precious, and none of us disturbed her. Growing up in a mixed Christian home, my dad decided that the decision to choose which path to follow would be left to us. The problem was that there wasn't any direction. My sister and I knew we were Christians, but we didn't know what that really meant. I had the knowledge and history in my head, but my beliefs never transferred to my heart.

Meanwhile, the nurse assigned to my dad mentioned about a retreat by Fr. Xavier Khan and my dad wanted to attend it. We took him to St. Joseph's church, where the retreat was happening. We were introduced to a lot of kind souls who ultimately became family to us. The first year after my dad's stroke, my mom, sister, and I were completely dependent on each other. There weren't people to help us, to keep my dad company, to visit him, or to relieve us. And

Joel's parents on the first Christmas after the stroke



the three of us were physically, mentally, and emotionally spent.

After being introduced to these wonderful people, we felt part of a community. It seemed weird at first to have people who genuinely cared about you and your well-being, to have people who weren't related to you, pray for you. These people became our family. They showed us the meaning of who a Christian is. They were believers who willingly shared the gospel, read the Bible, and lived their lives unashamedly for Christ. We felt the love of Christ in these people and it was overwhelming.

One weekend, Julia and I were invited to a youth retreat, and at the end there was adoration. At that point, I didn't know what that was, nor did my sister. It was our quiet time with God. To dig deep within ourselves, and to ask God for his Holy Spirit to come upon us. At that moment, all I could think of was that verse in John 1, to have deep, lasting joy, we have to truly know Christ. I prayed and left all my burdens at the altar. For the first time in my life, I knew that I wasn't in control. I needed to trust God that he will guide me in everything I do, and everything I will endeavour upon. I cried unashamedly. I felt like a child asking to be held by his father. It was the most vulnerable moment in my life, and it was at that point I decided to give my life to the lord. My sister decided to do the same.

On November 9, 2013, we were baptised, confirmed, and received the sacrament of communion for the first time at St. Joseph's Church. Since then, we have had many ups and downs, but our lives have significantly increased with favour.

After three years of hospital visits, rehab facilities, and therapy, we had exhausted all our resources and finances. My mom decided to leave her job in Seattle, and move to Houston. Soon we realised he would be better taken care of in India. After several instances of ayurvedic therapy, his health significantly improved. The doctors were able to wean him off of insulin injections, his weight decreased, his diet was much better, and he was able to stand and walk a few steps.



If anyone were to ask my 18-year-old self what my life would be like 10 years later, it wouldn't have been this. My family is an example of life not going according to plan. Even though our lives are far from perfect, we are much happier now than we've ever been. To be part of the body of Christ has brought immeasurable joy to my family. Our lives are so much better for it, and it is something that we endlessly thank God for. Life is truly unpredictable, and we are never in control. The only constant in all of this is that Jesus is real, and he is with us in every step we take in our lives. That's why we must always trust in the Lord with every fibre of our being, and never lean on our own understanding. ■



Joel Adimathra is an investment broker from Texas, who also happens to be a musician. He loves to spend his free time traveling and experiencing different cultures.

UP CLOSE



I Felt
Completely
Loved

Lester Miranda was your regular teenage rebel. But what happens when the “bad boy” of school encounters the good shepherd? He shares with **Joseph Anthraper** about his roller-coaster Christian journey and how his heart is full now



Lester Miranda is a Jesus Youth former full-timer who lives in Leicestershire, UK with his wife Yonyta Miranda and his parents. Having encountered Christ in 2009, he has been actively involved in Jesus Youth in the UK and served his commitment year in Australia. He recently got married to Yonyta in July 2018.

Dear Lester, thanks for taking the time to talk to us for Kairos Magazine. Could you give us a bit of background about yourself?

I was born in India in a place called Daman (Union territory), and we moved to England in 2002. I have two lovely siblings - a brother and a sister, who are both older to me. Both are married and settled with their own family. I am very blessed to be a practicing Catholic and I am a Motor Mechanic by profession. My parents are both from Daman and having a Portuguese lineage, our mother tongue is Portuguese.

Tell us about your encounter with Christ?

My journey with Christ began when I was about 18. For most of my childhood, we lived in India and for as long as I can remember – though it pains me to say this, but the truth was that I was an absolute rebel. My parents, especially my mom tried many things to prevent me from getting into trouble, but the more they tried the more defiant I became, and once we moved to England, things just took a turn for the worse.

I was 12-years-old when we moved to the UK and initially I was quite excited about the change. However, everything started to change as I began school. During the first couple of months things were alright mostly because I did not understand what was going on around me. I did not realise when I was being bullied nor



During the full-timership in Australia

In a moment I realised that the emptiness of my heart cannot be filled by anything or anyone except God himself

did I understand when someone made a racist comment or joke on me. However, I quickly picked up the culture and the language, and soon reality dawned on me. Moving to year 8 and throughout secondary school, I somehow just wanted to fit in with everyone else. So, I started getting into fights, backchatting and swearing at teachers. It went downhill very fast - before I knew it, there I was bullying other kids, smoking, drinking heavily, indulging in pornography, girlfriends and what not. All of it just to be the "coolest guy" or to be called the "bad boy." By the time I finished secondary school, I was notorious in school - yes, everyone knew me, but for all the bad reasons. Now that I think about it, I feel I probably even had no sense of shame then. After school, I carried on with things as before, and life was getting worse. Of course, during all this I was still

a catholic – going regularly for Sunday mass and even being an altar boy. But as time went on, I began cutting down on church also.

Yet, even after trying all these things, I still experienced an emptiness within me – a feeling that something was still missing. When I was 15, I got introduced to a Protestant Christian who used to take young people including many of my friends, to boxing training sessions. He would talk a lot to us about Jesus and was always inviting us to their service. I ended up going for one such service, and I did have some sort of an experience over there, but at the same time, I left feeling very awkward. However, after this, I began questioning the Catholic Church and its teachings – the images and idol worship and the usual protestant objections to Catholic faith. Deep down I began to wonder whether God even existed or not. It was 2008, and at around this time, a group of young people came to our parish from Jesus Youth, wanting to start a prayer group. Through a friend's cousin, myself and all our friends were invited for the introduction at our local parish church. They gave an introduction to Jesus Youth, mentioning the catholic charismatic spirituality of the movement. Most importantly, they invited us for the next prayer meeting happening at the church. As many of my friends were going, I too decided to go for that – just for

the sake of going.

Though I went for the following prayer gathering, I just found most things funny – whether it be the action songs or the praise and worship. However, I continued going and gradually got more and more involved with the prayer meetings, yet still not experiencing Jesus or even convinced that God existed. The following year, in 2009, there was a JY national conference, and I was looking forward to attending it. I went for the conference with a very open mind. So far, I had tried a lot of things in life, but was still extremely unhappy and for me this was the last chance – to try God! I resolved to do whatever they told me at the conference, even if it was going to be difficult like waking up early or sitting and praying – all to know if God really existed and if He did, whether he would intervene in my life.

All through the conference, I stayed true to my resolution and did whatever was asked. On the penultimate day, I went for confession and afterwards there was a time of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. During the Eucharistic adoration, we were asked to totally surrender our lives to Jesus and I did – I raised my hands and with a heavy heart kept repeating, "I want to know you God." Suddenly, I experienced what seemed like an electric shock going through me (the anointing of the Holy Spirit) and tears started flowing down my cheeks. But above all, for the first time in my life I felt completely loved. In a moment I realised that the emptiness of my heart cannot be filled by anything or anyone except God himself. This was the beginning of my Christian journey and during that conference, I gave my heart to Jesus.

After your encounter with Christ, can you remember how the Jesus Youth movement helped you to sustain this new life?

After this initial encounter with Christ, I was over the moon and I decided to make radical changes



in my life. Of course, it started well, but as time progressed, the decisions faltered and many of my old ways and addictions began making their presence felt. This is where Jesus Youth played an even bigger role. Through fellowship and helping me live the Jesus Youth six pillars, a few of my JY friends and families really shouldered me, to nourish and sustain my faith in many different ways including by keeping in touch and regularly following up on me on a personal level. I also got the opportunity to attend many training programmes as well as retreats helping me root myself in the teaching of the Catholic Church.

Slowly and surely my addictions began subsiding and I began to experience a new freedom. Even though I still fail, the one thing I am absolutely sure is that our God is a merciful God whose love is unconditional. Though my sins put a barrier preventing His merciful love to flow in and through me, I remind myself to always take recourse to the lovely sacraments Jesus has instituted in His Church to get back on feet and keep moving closer to our loving God.

Please tell us about the miracle in your life while on the full-timer's training.

During the training in Thailand, I contracted dengue fever and was in a critical condition with my platelet count having dropped below 20,000 (the normal count needs to

Even though I still fail, the one thing I am absolutely sure is that our God is a merciful God whose love is unconditional

be above 140,000). I was hospitalised and they tried giving me a platelets boost, which was not effective. All through my illness, people from around the world were praying for me round the clock with Masses offered and sacrifices raised up. I too was praying really hard and after a few days my platelet count began going up. Though it was a scary experience, God was once again assuring me that He is in total control of my life and that He has a definite purpose and plan for me. After I got back home from Thailand, I spent a month in England before going off to Australia for the rest of the year for my mission work.

You have known and experienced God in your life. How do you want to share this God to the people around you?

I would like to share the God I have experienced – the God of love to people around me by letting Christ be the center of my life and by practicing Christianity through my words and my actions. I also try to make use of every opportunity available to me to share the wonders my Lord Jesus has done in my life and is still doing.

Lester, it was an absolute privilege to speak with you. We assure you of all our prayers for you and Yonyta, and may God bless you both abundantly. ■



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

LIVING LIFE

LIVING
LIFE IN

Self Control

Worry is an area I deal with greatly as a mother and wife – about my family’s health, future, studies etc. Regardless of the awareness that I am only a steward to my children and heavenly father knows what they need even before I ask, sometimes I feel helpless not to worry. In those times repeating Philippines 4:6 brings divine peace in my heart which surpasses all human understanding. I realised that some days when I feel I am filled with God’s grace, I can be less angry, more patient, not losing temper comparing to other days. So whenever possible I make sure that I, as a GIVER (to my family and people around me), RECEIVE from the everlasting source through personal prayer, sacraments and Holy Mass so that there is enough to give as if I won’t be able to give £100 to someone if I only have £50 with me. Sometimes comparison may lead to jealousy without even my knowledge and I utter like St Paul “I do not understand my own actions”. I cry before my high priest who sympathise with my weakness and approach the throne of grace, with boldness so that I may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Heb 4:15-16).

Like an apple tree can only produce apple not any other fruits, a child of God, led by the Holy Spirit will produce self-control, which is one of the fruit of Holy spirit.

Ani Thomas,
WORCESTER, UK

I had always thought of self-control to mean giving up the freedom that I had. It was when I tried to live a more disciplined life that I realised that the lack of freedom in my life was due to the indulgences I had allowed, which influenced most of my decisions. I prayed for the grace to be able to make decisions through discernment of what is good and right, and not based on my desires alone. This prayer helped identify the areas in my life that I needed to actively exercise self-control in. It involved giving up social media and certain apps for a while and fasting as a way of interceding. And in these situations, it is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that I can overcome any temptations and continue to strive even when I fail.

Ann Divya Tomy,
BOSTON, UK

The seeds of “Self-Control” were first sown in me by my mother. I heard “Self-control” first from her, when she used to take my mind away from expensive clothes and accessories. Her words – “Self-control is an act of piety”, still rings in my mind. It gave me the feeling of doing a great mission when I compromised on many things I desired. In fact, during my childhood, the key area where I needed to “control” my “self” was to “let go of things”. As I grew up, the necessity of “Self-control” increased. I understood the importance to master my emotions especially my anger, fear and pain, for living a joyful life. The verse from Sirach 19, “Be brave, it will not make you burst!” is something that I cling on to sustain “Self-Control”. Still the endless journey continues to attain this art, with the help of Holy Spirit who showers his fruits on those who call upon him.

Sinda Rebello,
BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

Step 1. Take Glass of Water.
Step 2. Take a long sip - do not swallow or gulp.
Step 3. Hold for 10 seconds.

If someone were to suggest you this as a means of controlling your misplaced anger or sinful thought, you might end up throwing another fit. Yet this is a scene from a movie, and all did end well with the character. Well, at least whoever was to be the object of contention got a 10 second break. When it comes to anger, self-doubt or lust you’d be ill-disposed if you ask someone to hold a mouthful of water until the feeling dissipates. We know from scripture (Matthew 5:28), the inception of sin is the thought itself.

Daily it is good to think of those moments which caused us to lose our self-control. Here’s how I managed to work on the myriad of my issues with the vices against this virtue. As I sit to pray I call to mind those instances where I failed. Having surrendered them, I offer prayers for the individuals with whom I might have locked horns with. If I were the sole offender, I meditate on the verse 2 Timothy 2:22, or any scripture that I’m inspired to. I receive the sacrament of Reconciliation over the week and commit to not rehash after praying the Anima Christi.

It may so happen that we repeatedly find ourselves committing to certain causes, yet fall habitually. It is only the mercy of God and the intercession of Mother Mary that can help us up. Spend time over each day meditation on the mysteries of the Rosary. Self-control is a virtue par excellence.

The only question that remains is if we’re ready to seek the virtue of self-control in all earnestness. In order for His Name to be glorified, let us start.

Nimmy Chacko,
DUBAI, UAE

IN FOCUS



THE MARSH MALLOW TEST FOR THE SOUL

Falling to every desire that crosses your path doesn't make you free; it only makes you a slave to your desires. Sonia Kurian tells you how...

AS a child, I had to give up my toys, my space, my preferences, and my freedom for the sake of others, because (as I seemed to be told, by every adult I knew) it was what “Jesus would want” or “it was the Christian thing to do.” Perhaps self-control is one of the first things we learn as children, even before we step foot in a church. St Paul encourages us to do the same, when he says, “Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we for an

imperishable” (1 Corinthians 9:25).

To Paul and the early Christians, who saw self-control as one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, it's clear that they saw the virtue as paramount in the life of any Christian. And validly so, because without self-control, falling to vice and sin becomes incredibly easy. It is the necessary foundation on which the Christian life of “being perfect, as your father in heaven is perfect,” (Mathew 5:48) is built. It takes self-control to avoid temptation, to sacrifice and to say ‘no’ when saying ‘yes’ is easier and seems more rewarding. It takes self-control to

stand against the tide of the world, and to stand for something much greater and more valuable than the perishable wreaths on earth.

Even in the interior life, self-control is vital. There was a Fr. Maximos who expanded on this idea saying, “When a person is liberated from egocentrism through the practice of temperance, there comes the second fruit of the Holy Spirit, which according to St. Paul, is gentleness, a product of humility. You see, temperance and self-control give birth to humility, and humility paves the way to gentleness.” Now, we spoke about

IT TAKES SELF-CONTROL TO STAND AGAINST THE TIDE OF THE WORLD, AND TO STAND FOR SOMETHING MUCH GREATER AND MORE VALUABLE THAN THE PERISHABLE WREATHS ON EARTH

the fruit of gentleness in an earlier issue, but as Fr. Maximos observes here, even in trying to attain the other fruits of the Spirit, you will find yourself needing the virtue of self-control.

Of course, self-control and temperance are virtues easier spoken than done in today's world. We happen to live in a "whatever-makes-you-happy" era. We're encouraged to indulge in our desires as much as we need. "This is why we have freedom!" the world seems to say, "Why should you ever have to deny yourself, whatever you want?" Here, fasting, penance, and self-control seems rather masochistic and like a medieval torture tactic imposed by the Church on its people. As any Catholic theologian could tell you, falling to every desire that crosses your path doesn't make you free; it only makes you a slave to your desires.

The ideas and teachings of the church are not held as true because the church teaches them, rather the church teaches them as true because they are true to begin with. One of the beautiful side-effects of this, is that from time to time, science will prove the "antiquated notions of the church," to be true. One such instance was the Stanford experiments, conducted by Prof. Walter Mischel in the 1960's. Prof. Mischel attempted to study impulse control in children and its downstream effects over their lifetimes.

In his study, he gathered four or five-year-old children who were individually brought into a room, seated on a chair, with a table in front of them. A researcher would then place a marshmallow on the table and make a proposition. The researcher would tell that, he/she would leave the room for a little bit. If the child could keep from eating the marshmallow, until the researcher got back, they would be given a second marshmallow. And if they ate it before the researcher got back, they would not get the second marshmallow. So essentially, they were



given two choices - one marshmallow now, or two marshmallows later. The researcher would then leave the room for 15 minutes and, the child was observed for the most “Awww” inspiring 15 minutes of battle between desire, will, and self-control.

Responses varied, but were incredibly adorable. Some of the kids would jump up and snatch the marshmallow as soon as the researcher left the room. Others would try to look away, wiggle and fidget and eventually give in. And the last portion of kids employed a very entertaining and adorable series of tactics, to actually last the entire 15 minutes- from covering their eyes, to sitting on their hands, to singing songs to distract themselves from the marshmallow. Now the study didn’t actually end here. The researchers followed about 1/2 of the participants, for around 40 years after the Marshmallow Test, and tracked various facets and characteristics of their lives. And this is where the amazing emerged.

The researchers began to notice that the children who were able to delay gratification and wait the entire 15 minutes had higher SAT (college board exams) scores, lower levels of substance abuse, better responses to stress, better social skills as reported by their parents, more verbally fluent, rational, attentive, playful, and had a lower likelihood of obesity. Time and time again over the 40 years of longitudinal study, it seemed that they did better in a range of other life measures that were used to gauge the wellness of the participants.

Specifically, the children who, had more difficulty delaying gratification, continued to show reduced self-control abilities and had more difficulty as adults, in suppressing their impulses. Higher delay ability was also shown to promote the development of better social-cognitive and emotional coping in adolescence and buffered against the development of a variety of physical and mental health vulnerabilities in middle age, such as a high BMI, cocaine/crack use, features of borderline personality disorder, anxious overreactions to rejection, and marital divorce/separation. The above findings were true, even when accounting for differences in childhood social environments and childhood health (Sources cited at the end).

AS part of the study and its results, the research team recognized that a key component of cognitive control processes, is the ability to suppress or override competing attentional and behavioral responses. Part of this ability includes, inhibiting or replacing routine, reflexive behaviors with more appropriate behaviors. The researchers also recorded that, the participating children used three basic strategies to stave off temptation: (i) blocking the entry of unwanted information (e.g. shutting out information by paying attention to something else) (ii) suppressing unwanted thoughts (e.g. by thinking about something else) or (iii) stopping an action in favor of an alternative one (e.g. suppressing a response or impulse). As Christians trying to grow in virtues, incorporating these strategies could mean avoiding near occasions to sin and following the advice of Paul in Philippians 4:8, on the best way to train our thoughts towards desirable virtues, instead of being a constant slave to our every impulse and desire.

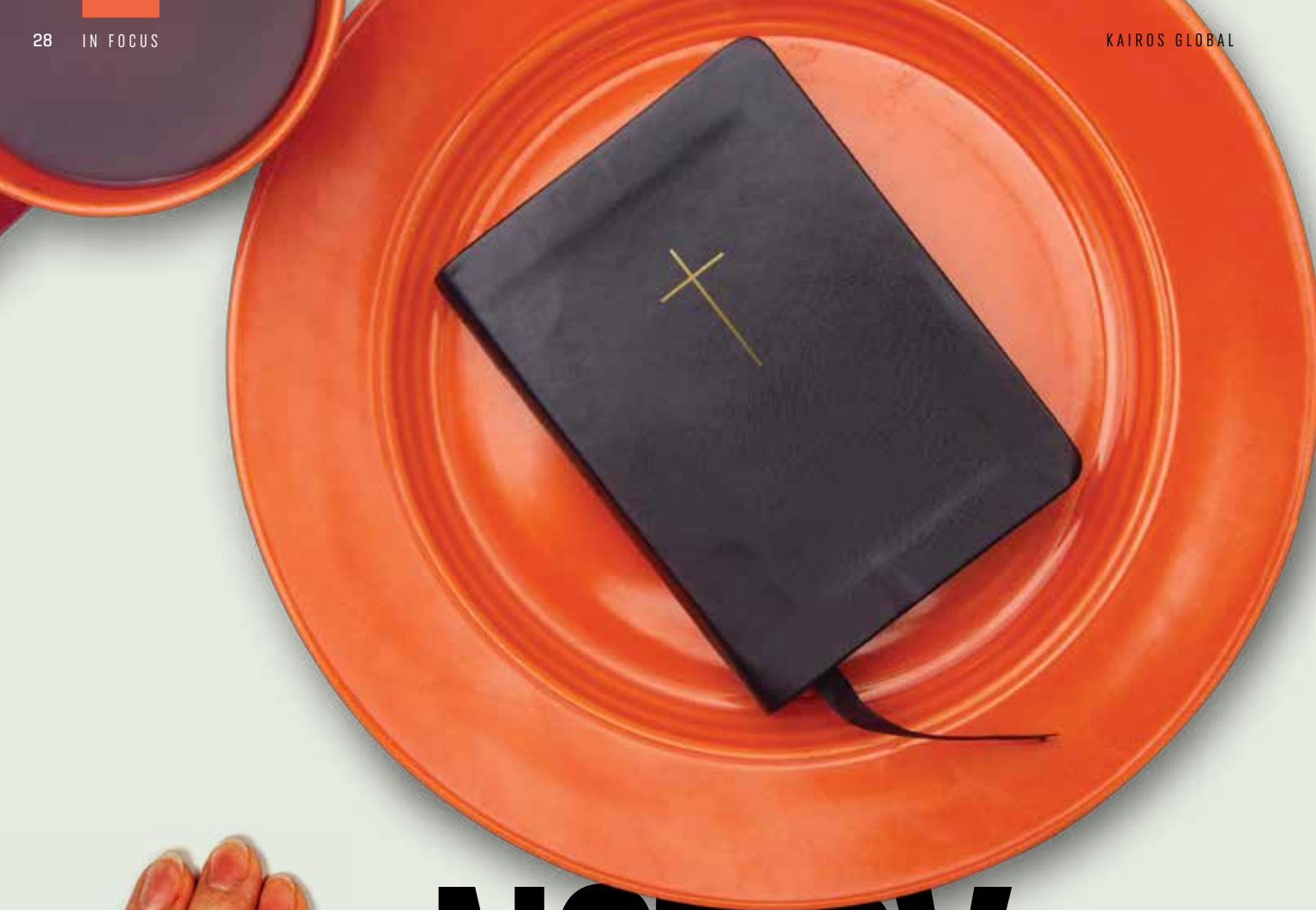
How beautiful it is to utilize the truth revealed in its various forms, including

How beautiful it is to utilize the truth revealed in its various forms, including within science, to help us grow ultimately in virtue and holiness

within science, to help us grow ultimately in virtue and holiness. To tie St. Paul and the Marshmallow Test together- it takes an eye set heaven-ward, to start on the journey of self-control. And one of the best ways to conquer the lower desires, is to set our eyes on a more noble and higher desire. For instance, nothing makes you notice the fleeting happiness of a newly bought outfit, like encountering the deeply rooted and overflowing joy of the poor. Similarly, in seeing the true and eternal goodness and beauty of heaven, we can allow the Holy Spirit to reveal our weaknesses, and teach us to be formed in a manner worthy of the feast of heaven, even though it may mean small sacrifices now. ■■



Sonia Kurian is a writer and preacher, and is actively involved in Jesus Youth. She works as a Clinical Systems Analyst in Houston, USA and is part of the Kairos Global Editorial Council.



NOT BY BREAD ALONE



Feasting and fasting are both intrinsically part of Christian life. We might be masters of feasting but how about fasting? **Joseph Anthraper** delves into the tradition and theology of fasting in Christian spirituality

The Corporal works of mercy mandates a Catholic to feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty, so much so that Jesus says that in the final judgement the Son of Man would separate the righteous from the rest based on these works of mercy. Following the mandate of its founder, the Church from its foundation has been keen to exercise these works of mercy in and among her brethren, by feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. Paradoxically, this same Church from her inception has also exhorted her sons and daughters to fast and pray – as a means to enter more into the mystery of God himself.

TWO DIMENSIONAL FAST

So when food is a basic human necessity for sustenance, why fast? As with the Sacraments and most other things in Catholicism, fasting also has two dimensions – a human dimension and one that transcends human dimension and touches the divine.

Everything God has created, including our desires is good – and food is no exception. In fact, as we pray at Mass during the preparation of gifts, “Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you: fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life” – to take the gifts of the earth and make it a life-giving ‘meal’ through the ingenuity of his/her hands, served and shared at a table with his/her friends and family around is a uniquely human gift. Through fasting, as we say ‘No’ to this gift, the hope is that we are saying ‘Yes’ to a much greater gift – the gift of God himself. The great tragedy of humanity from time immemorial has been

that we get so engrossed in the gifts of God that we forget God himself, who is the greatest gift. We seek happiness in the created order that we seldom have time for the one who promises us joy in its fullness (Jn 15:11). By taking a step back through fasting, one is creating the space for him/her to be filled with the joy of God himself – from the realisation that the insatiability of his/her desires can only be satisfied in God (Jn 4:14).

The second dimension can be considered a vicarious one. As St Athanasius says, “the Son of God became man so that we might become God,” the goal of Christianity is such that we become like God (Jn 1:12) following the footsteps of the one who emptied himself (Phil 2:6-8). Paradoxically, it is at the depth of ‘God-forsakenness’ that we find God – as Christ redeemed humanity on the cross, crying aloud “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” (Mt 27:46). Albeit in a very small way, fasting can be an entrance into this place of suffering and God-forsakenness, where without us understanding how, God makes it redemptive and through it works miracles and wonders.

SELF-CONTROL

Fasting has long been part of the ascetic tradition of many religions – not just the Catholic Church, because of its inherent ability as a gateway to orient human desires in proper order. Desires by themselves are good, in fact very good. Each of our desires is a gift from God that ought to serve us in our journey of life. Yet, the reality of Sin is in us and all around us – and desires often become our masters and we its servants. Throughout history and especially with the Christian Monastic Tradition that began in the fourth century, fasting prayer has always provided a sure means of entering into one’s interior life, thereby orienting one’s desires in the proper order. Even today, fasting can be a good starting point for the proper ordering of one’s desires.

DELIVERANCE

In the Gospel of Matthew, we read Jesus casting out a demon his disciples couldn’t and telling them that “this kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting.” The Old Testament in particular abounds of stories of deliverance that came about through prayer and fasting. The Church has also long advocated prayer and fasting as a means of deliverance from evil, and as a sure means of having prayers granted. Jesus himself fasted and prayed for 40 days before beginning his ministry (Mt 4:2).

SLOW AND FAST

Most of us find fasting extremely hard – so how to go about it? The Church recommends that we fast every Friday, in addition to the mandatory days of fasting. Start slow – start by skipping lunch or even reducing food during the day, and work it up. There might be ups and downs, but don’t get disappointed. Always remember that fasting is not our ultimate goal – it is just a path to our goal. And combine prayer with fasting, for as apologist Matt Fradd puts it, “fasting without prayer is, well, dieting.”

We are a pilgrim people on a journey towards a feast – the wedding banquet of the Lamb and His bride. And on this journey, fasting prayer is a crucial source of nourishment building up our spiritual self, making us more like Jesus. Feasting and fasting are both intrinsically part of Christian life, and without one the other loses its meaning. Of course, we feast because “we are an Easter People and Alleluia is our song” (JP2 Angelus, Easter 1986), but as St John Paul II himself reiterated, more than ever in today’s world we also need to “discover anew the humility and the courage to pray and fast so that power from on high will break down the walls of lies and deceit” (Gospel of Life, 100). So, let’s get on and get going!



Joseph Anthraper lives in Southampton with his wife Mahima and kids, Anna-Claire and John-Paul and loves reading, movies and apologetics.

He is part of the Kairos Global Editorial Council.

SELF-CONTROL

AND THE ART OF

LETTING GO...



RAIFIEL CYRIL
LOOKS AT
THE FRUIT OF
SELF-CONTROL
FROM A FRESH
PERSPECTIVE;
HOW IT IS
MUCH MORE
THAN SAYING
'NO' TO A FEW
VICES





WIKIPEDIA

describes self-control as 'an aspect of inhibitory control, the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviour in the face of temptations and impulses'. The CCC says, 'The fruits of the Spirit are perfections that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the first fruits of eternal glory. The tradition of the Church lists twelve of them: "charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity.'

Recently a verse in the Bible that I had read thousands of times before really stood out for me. Gal 5:24 says those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires. This made me reflect that if I still have passions and desires it may mean that I do not belong to Jesus. This thought really cut to my heart and unsettled me. I want to belong to Christ wholly. Anything less than a 100% for Him who gave His life for me would be insufficient. However, what about all these desires within me and things that I am passionate about, though many of them would not be classified as sin at all.

Before encountering Christ, my greatest vice was books. I passionately desired to read more and more and more. Reading a few books a week on an average was hardly uncommon for me. It would be fair to say that if my eyes were awake and free I would be reading. After my encounter however, I quit reading. I just knew that I didn't want anything else to take up room in my heart any more. Even though looking back I know that was a huge change, it did not feel that way at the time because I was simply flying with the Holy Spirit and immersed in the sweetness of God's love. I stopped watching television, movies, listening

to the radio or any secular music. I just instinctively did not want to engage anything that did not have God as its central focus.

Some years down the line I remember travelling for work across the country in a train. This kind of time would normally involve a lot of reading and music for me. I had always wanted to read War and Peace by Leo Tolstoy and I started having a conversation in my head leaning towards allowing myself to read it. I figured it was okay, it was not a sin to read. I obviously didn't have the book so waited for the next station which would have a book stand. On reaching there I hopped off, rushed to the stand and asked for the book. The bookseller said he didn't have it. I roved my eyes around the stacks piled high and saw it in the corner and said hey, there it is. I ran back with the book just in time before the train left. After several years of having not read any fiction I looked at the book and held it with a familiar grip. I opened the first page and started reading. After a few pages I just could not continue. It wasn't because the book wasn't good. I just didn't feel comfortable reading it. I quit and gave it to my sister.

Coming back to the topic of self-control, I think humans tend to feel quite comfortable in extremes. And as I have grown in the Lord I have had to allow

If there is anything that we are getting desperate for or are unable to change in our lives, it probably means some part of us is still a slave to our flesh which means we are not completely submitted to Christ

the Holy Spirit to chip away at a lot of extremes. I have come to believe that any fixation on an idea, belief or way of behaving is usually not Spirit led. Any statement with, 'I would never' or 'I will always' or 'I hate..', which is not connected to a virtue calls for closer examination and often reveals our flesh as it's driving force.

When we talk about self-control we automatically think about restricting anger, food or unholy communication. But self-control is keeping ALL fleshly tendencies in check. I have always struggled to express anger, so for me self-control would involve expressing anger. Social media is another area where we need to really apply some self-control tactics. After a lot of trials, I have now limited my WhatsApp use to post dinner every day. MasterChef is a show that had become a passion and desire to such an extent that I knew it was time to be weaned from it. Another weakness I have is food as well as avoiding exercise. While I am a far way off from overcoming my flesh in these areas I am well aware that I am failing to glorify God through His creation which is my body. Finally, self-control is not just about 'stopping' yourself but also starting what you need to. There are some projects that the Lord has led me to which I have failed to be consistent with and finish. Sometimes self-control is also needed in learning to say no. An assumption that all ministry work is Gods will is also false and I often struggle to hit the pause before I jump in to say yes just because I like it. There is wisdom in going slow and asking the Lord for His opinion before committing to anything.

The whole point in all this is about belonging to Christ. If there is anything that we are getting desperate for or are unable to change in our lives, it probably means some part of us is still a slave to our flesh which means we are not completely submitted to Christ. Are you and I the 'living sacrifice' that St. Paul spoke about or are we still busy fattening the calf?



Raifiel Cyril is a writer, counsellor, national council member of JY Australia and part of the Kairos Global Editorial Council. She lives with her husband, Cyril Abraham in Canberra, Australia.

FAMILY IN FOCUS



BRINGING
HIS
'SANTVANA'
TO YOUR
HEARTS

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE FOR MISSION. THAT'S WHAT ALEXY AND SHINY PROVED WHEN THEY PACKED THEIR NORMAL LIFE AND SET ON A JOURNEY WITH THREE KIDS. **SHARROL JOSE** TALKS WITH THEM ABOUT THEIR LIFE AS FULLTIME MISSIONARIES



Certain conversions are so remarkable, they can make a mark in the history. The life of Alexy Pallan and Shiney Alexy is an example. From a regular life of supporting youth and their activities, they have come a long way. Today, they are in the forefront of proclaiming the Gospel in India. Joining the Santvana Community, they are now fulltime missionaries.

Meet them along with their children Savio (20), Veronica (19), Rosa (17), Daniel (14), and Ruth (12).

Can you share with us your encounter with Christ and your involvement in the movement?

ALEXY: I was in a phase of life where I was a rebel to the Catholic Church and criticising its teachings and practice. My parents were insisting me to attend a retreat. I went for it unwillingly. During the retreat, I had a great conversion experience and it became a turning point in my life. I took a decision to stop criticizing the Church and started obeying the Church teachings. Most of my doubts on Catholic teachings were cleared slowly over a period of time. After the retreat, E.X.James, a JY leader invited me to prayer meetings and JY programs. I started becoming involved in the parish ministry and attended various training programs. I became the zonal coordinator for Ernakulum and was also part of the Kerala Youth Central Team (KYCT).

SHINEY: I was a law student when I attended a Jesus Youth campus meet at Palakkad. My brother Wilson, who had attended a campus meet earlier, was actively involved in the music ministry and was an inspiration for me. After the campus meet, along with a few other friends, we started a prayer meeting in our college. Later on, I attended another JY retreat and this was a huge turning point for me. Prof CC Alicekutty, one resources at the retreat became a big influence in my life. Mentoring with Alice chechi is the backbone of my spiritual growth. Moving on, I became actively involved in Jesus Youth and also became part of the KYCT.

How did you get married and how was the initial few years.

Both of us were already active in Jesus Youth when a few senior Animators and elders brought the proposal for our marriage and discussed with our parents. The proposal was considered by our parents and we got married in June 1996. After marriage, I continued my business and Shiney shifted her practice to the High Court of Kerala. We continued our journey in Jesus Youth and were actively involved in all activities.

What inspired you to join Santvana Community?

In 1999, there was a JY Kerala Conference, and the theme was Mission. We were inspired by a few testimonies of those who went for mission. We got a deep desire to go out as a family for mission and started enquiring about possibilities. It was then we met Fr Dheeraj

**WE HAVE
A TIME OF FAMILY
MEETINGS WHERE
WE GET A QUALITY TIME
AS FAMILY. DURING THIS
TIME, ALL ARE
ENCOURAGED TO SHARE
THE HAPPENINGS**

Sabu IMS, who introduced us to Santvana. He invited us to stay with them for a month and that changed us. The community living inspired us to live a life of holiness and the reach outs were a tremendous influence. We decided to become fulltime missionaries. We went back to Kerala, made necessary arrangements to close our business and practice, and was ready for our new life.

Could you tell us more about the Community and its activities?

Santvana is a Community of Christian faithful consisting of Missionary families, Missionary Sisters and Brothers including clerics. It is canonically recognized as a 'Pious Association of the Faithful' in the Archdiocese

**VALUES
ARE NOT TAUGHT
BUT CAUGHT. IT
IS A LIFESTYLE
THAT WE HAVE IN
OUR FAMILY**

of Delhi in 2003. Fr Dheeraj Sabu IMS is the founder of Santvana Community. Our Apostolate is Prayer and Proclamation - evangelisation of India through intercession, reaching out to the unreached - mission to the remote villages in India, organising and conducting trainings and mission exposure trips to equip the faithful for the Evangelisation.

What is the relevance of the Santvana community in your family?

Santvana is a home away from home. The community made us a missionary family. This is like a large joint family with a common vision of evangelisation and the spirituality of 'Prem - Marg' - Path of Love. Living as a community compels and helps us to walk the talk. Frequent coming together and sharings encourage and support one another to learn from others. The best thing is that the community had played a very relevant role in the formation and outlook of our children.



What prompted you to choose homeschooling? Is that a step for mission?

It was Fr Dheeraj, who introduced the community towards homeschooling as the best method for the formation of children and kept on encouraging us and motivating it. After much discussions and prayer discernment, we were convinced that this may be the best formation they may get for their integral development. Along with the academic studies, they get time to be spiritually equipped and formed to face the modern world. A time for personal prayer, bible study, family time, playing, household works, visiting new places and people etc. We also take part in National Secular homeschoolers meets and organize Catholic homeschoolers meet ups which gives them good exposure. These get-togethers brought similar children from different states and now, they have friends from all over India. The Community has the concept of LifeSchool - Santvana neighbourhood homeschools, i.e. two or more families come together regularly. Twice a year, all the Lifeschoolers come together for 'Lifest' where they have different activities like art, craft, music, sport, retreats etc. They get to travel, they get to learn firsthand, they study on their own and take up initiatives and do things. It gives them leadership and life skills. This helps them to grow in relationship with Jesus and His mission and leadership. They have taken up teaching the poor children who are part of Santvana Sahara mission which support and enable the underprivileged children in Delhi suburbs. They are growing as resources for children's retreats and other programs.

Isn't it difficult with so many kids? How do you manage everything?

So many kids? We have only 5 children. We just celebrate our family life. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and he will provide." The first part of this Word of God is important. When we do the Lord's work, He takes care of us.

What are some of the things you do as a family to inculcate faith?

Values are not taught but caught. It is a lifestyle that we have in our family. When the children were smaller, the prayer times were filled with fun. e.g. we sit in a circle, pass the ball around and praise the Lord. We practice 1Thes 5:16-17 (Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you) and encourage the children to thank the Lord in all things, happy and unhappy incidents, success and failures. They were thus encouraged to make prayer a joyful time. The children took up small initiatives for lent and were at times more steadfast to Lenten practices than elders. Once, we noticed that the elder children were very regular in weekly confession. This inspired us to do weekly confessions. We realised that when we took small steps for the Lord, He made much larger strides for us by inspiring the Children to grow deeper in faith and catholic values.

We have a time of family meetings where we get a quality time as family. During this time, all are encouraged to share the happenings. Share the joy, hurts, misunderstanding etc. This is helping us to improve our communication and to be open to share everything, and accept everyone. As parents this has helped us to improve ourselves too. We also have a



weekly family adoration and a weekly bible study where we try to live the Word of God. Some time back we've had a retreat for our family. We have a consecration of our family to the Sacred Heart daily. As Pope Francis says in *Amoris letitia*, we have a saint for our family, St. Teresa of Lisieux.

What do you think are the dangers faced by today's families?

Communication is the backbone of family life. Some time back, some kids who are part of the Santvana Sahara Mission, came to our house and had lunch with us. One little girl came to me and said, "thank you so much not only for the food but for allowing me to sit at your table and have food. In our family we do not sit together and eat. I found so much joy in sitting together." This time that we spend together as a family and the communication we have, is very important for families to grow.

We have gadget free times (8-9 am, 1-2 pm, 8-9 pm) in our family where none of us use any gadget whatsoever. This time also coincides with our meal times so everyone gets to communicate with each other over the meal.

Savio, your eldest son has chosen priesthood as vocation. How did he take this decision?

From the time of their birth we have been praying for the vocation of our kids. God has something for each one of them, and we pray that they may choose what Lord wants them to be. From his childhood, Savio has seen Fr Dheeraj celebrating holy mass in our community house. He used to say that he wanted to be a priest who can celebrate mass at home.

Every year, we organise mission trips for teenagers, youth and others. One such mission trip was for a group of teenage boys who were inclined or had at least a tiny desire to take vocation as priests. Savio was there for this mission trip. During one of the visits in a remote village in North India, he saw sisters at the convent distributing the communion which was previously consecrated by the priest who visits there once or twice in a month. He realised then, that without priests, we would have no Eucharist. He was then convinced that his call was for priesthood. ■



Sharrol Jose has been actively involved with Jesus Youth movement since her college days and is currently the formation coordinator in Chennai and the Executive Editor of Kairos Global. She lives with her husband and three children in Chennai, India.

The Feminine Genius and the gift of self

What does it mean to be a woman? What is a woman's vocation? Sherin Alexander delves into these questions and tries to find answers through *Mulieris Dignitatem* an apostolic letter to women written by Saint John Paul II

In the past 100 years, women all over the world have experienced many different cultural changes and freedom. The role of women at home, society, and Church has evolved. These changes have surely raised many questions deep in the hearts of both men and women. What does it mean to be a woman? What is a woman's vocation? What unique contributions can a woman bring to the society?

As a young high school student, in an attempt for success and security, I focused quite a bit of my energy, time and thoughts on advancing in education and securing a good career. In the process, I found myself putting more weight in what I do than who I am. I felt both personal pressure and societal expectations to be an educated, independent, successful, influential woman that contributes to family, society, and the Church.

Since my first inner conversion of faith in early high school, I searched for clarity about my

vocation as a woman. I found healing and strength in the scripture passages that involve Jesus interacting openly and freely with women: Mother Mary, Martha and Mary, Mary Magdalene, woman at the well, the haemorrhaging woman, the Syrophenician woman, etc. He considered them important, worth his time, and included them in his mission.

Despite being in school for my dream career, I lacked an inner peace and conviction about my vocation as a woman. I looked

to the Church for answers. I first read *Mulieris Dignitatem* (On the Dignity and Vocation of Women) when I was 22-years-old, while doing my graduate degree. *Mulieris Dignitatem* is an apostolic letter to women written by Saint John Paul II. It was first published on August 15, 1988. In this letter I found healing, clarity, confidence, and conviction about my place in the world and the Church.

Saint John Paul II mentions “The history of every human being passes through the threshold of a woman’s motherhood.” All human life owes its existence to the great ‘yes’ of their

mothers. This shared commonality reminded me of the strength and power of a woman’s choices and decisions. Men and women, while being created equal in dignity, are not given the same roles. Both men and women have capacities of love and nature that is reflective of God. Women have a special place in this world: to be the special caretakers of all human creation. A woman’s capacity to foster life in her own body gives her a special gift of being aware of the other. “This unique contact with new human being developing within her gives rise to an attitude towards human beings not only towards her own child, but every human being which profoundly marks the woman’s personality.” Even if she never gives birth, this capability gives her the special power to be aware and be in service to others. In fact, a woman “cannot fully find herself except through the sincere gift of self.” The ‘Feminine Genius’, as Pope John Paul II called it, is this very ability to make herself “a sincere gift of self.” The more a woman focus on her education, career, and status as merely a self-defining factor, the farther away she goes from her true calling to make a gift of self to others.

Accepting our dignity and vocation as women can empower us to be confident in our worth and unique contributions

In 1995,

Pope John Paul II released “Letter to Women” in which he added, “Perhaps more than men, women acknowledge the person, because they see persons with their hearts. They see them independently of various ideological or political systems. They see others in their greatness and limitations; they try to go out to them and help them.” Women have a special calling to foster a civilization of love. As pressure increases for women, there is a dangerous tendency to start relying solely on our physical contributions to the world as the value of our worth instead of focusing on our unique gift of beings who live out our callings selflessly and generously.

Accepting our dignity and vocation as women can empower us to be confident in our worth and unique contributions. A woman who has a healed acceptance of her identity as a daughter of the loving Father can do great good to her communities. She can bring in a perspective of love that is uniquely feminine and necessary to this world. It was especially comforting to know that Church doesn’t limit women’s influence to the walls of her homes. In fact, John Paul II, in his letter, thanks women in different vocations, fields of work and service. In his apostolic letter, the Pope points women to the example and intercession of Mary to live out each of our unique feminine callings. He also gave thanks to the Lord for “the gift of this great treasure which is womanhood.”



Sherin Alexander, a Jesus Youth, a Physician Assistant at a family practice, and a certified Marquette Model

Natural Family Planning instructor lives with her husband in Florida, USA.



Newswatch

Jesus Youth International Fulltime Volunteers' Training 2018



The Jesus Youth International Fulltime Volunteers' Training for the year 2018 was held in Bangkok, Thailand, at the Camillian Pastoral Care Center from July 6 to August 2. The training followed a multi-dimensional approach and enriched and transformed the 14 participants from nine countries to discover new levels of faith and personality.

The training began with a focus on self-awareness. A retreat guided by Tomas Michael helped the fulltimers to renew their relationship with Jesus. The next part of the training was under the leadership of Jude Antony from Malaysia. He focused on giving the young people a zeal for a

mission; while emphasising on discipleship and a missionary lifestyle. The participants were also taken to a park for a one-on-one evangelisation experience with the local people. The activity was definitely challenging but filled everybody with a new joyful sense of mission and they were convinced about their role in this present year very specially.

The Dramatics and Self-discovery modules under noted film director Leo Thaddeus, which gave equal importance to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual areas of an individual, was a turning point for many as they discovered hidden talents and potential. Sessions that followed covered aspects of the Church, the movement, the Sacraments,

the Bible, charisms, personal integrity, etc. and proved very useful to the group as they learnt new things, gained better clarity, and strengthened their faith convictions. Resource persons for these sessions included Fr. Fio, Alex Njavally, Fr. Ditto, Fr. Das, Manoj P Jose, Shoy Thomas and Subin Jacob. The counseling and interactions with the training team comprising of Fr. Das, Sr. Thresiamma, Subin Jacob and Sumol Pious also helped many of the participants in their personal lives to a great extent.

The training came to a close with the Commissioning ceremony held on the last day. JYIFT indeed turned out to be a life-changing and enriching experience for all the participants.

Jesus Youth International Animators Training 2018

The Jesus Youth International Animators Training 2018 was held from July 9 to 20. This year, we had 15 participants from eight countries. After an initial day of getting to know each other, the participants were led through a three-day retreat on holiness and integrity. They were introduced to the concept of a journal wherein they were asked to reflect on key moments of their lives right from their childhood right up to the current time. This was a revelation to most participants and they were able to bring all their joyful, sorrowful, painful and life-changing moments into the presence of the Lord during Eucharistic Adoration. Many talked about this being the highlight of the training this year.

The main resources for the training were Fr. Cherman, Manoj Sunny, Toms Michael, Alex Njavally and Shoy Thomas. The presence of four of our own Priests, Fr. Cherman, Fr. Shibu, Fr. Das and Fr. Ditto, as part of the training team was a great blessing this year. Being enriched with knowledge and filled with the power of the Spirit, the participants went back to their own mission places with a deep conviction of their call to being a Jesus Youth Animator.



JESUS YOUTH INTERNATIONAL LEADERS' TRAINING 2018



This year, 16 Jesus Youth leaders from eight countries converged at the Camillian Pastoral Care Center, Bangkok, Thailand from July 7 to 20 for a time of reflection, learning and self-discovery as part of the Jesus Youth International Leaders' Training programme.

The modules for the training were handled by key resource persons in the movement such as Fr. Cherian, Manoj Sunny, Tomas Michael, Alex Njavally, Fr. Fio Mascarenhas, Adolf Goldwyn, Fr. Shibu Xavier OCD, Fr. Vignan Das, Manoj P Jose, Subin Jacob and Shoy Thomas. The sessions

provided opportunities for each of the participants to reflect and realise the need to have strong roots in personal prayer and the Word of God, accountability through fellowship, and a genuine heart.

The concept of accompaniment was introduced to the participants with each participant having a companion from within the training team who would meet with them daily. They were also introduced to the concept of a journal where they were asked to reflect on key moments of their lives right from their childhood right up to the current time. The training opened up various

avenues for the group to explore how working together along with each one's weaknesses and strengths can give glory to the Living God. The one-on-one interaction with leaders, the reflections, the input sessions, discussions and group dynamics, all enabled the leaders to evaluate themselves and their understanding of the movement and the Church. JYILT was also a time to rediscover the beauty of silence and the basics of faith. The unique ways in which the Holy Mass and the Adorations were conducted left a great impact on the participants, filling them with renewed energy and strength.

Chandeliers

MODERN SAINTS

✪ Blessed Chiara Badano

By Sharrol Jose



Born: 29 October, 1971

Died: October 7, 1990 (aged 18)

Beatified: 25 September, 2010

Feast: 29 October

In 1971, after praying and hoping for a baby for more than 10 years, Ruggero and Teresa Badano of Sassello, Italy, welcomed a little girl whom they named Chiara Badano. Even at the age of four, Chiara seemed aware of the needs of others. She would sort through her toys to give some to poor children, and she would never give away just the old or

broken ones. She invited less-fortunate people into the family's home for holidays and visited the elderly at a retirement center. When other children were sick and confined to bed, Chiara visited them. She loved the stories of the Gospel and loved to attend Mass.

When she was nine, Chiara was introduced to the Focolare Movement. It was to be fundamental for her future life. There she encountered the spirituality of unity. She wrote "I've rediscovered the Gospel in a new light. Now I want this book to be the sole purpose of my life!" Later she writes "I discovered that Jesus Forsaken is the key to unity with God, and I want to choose him as my only spouse. I want to be ready to welcome him when he comes. To prefer him above all else."

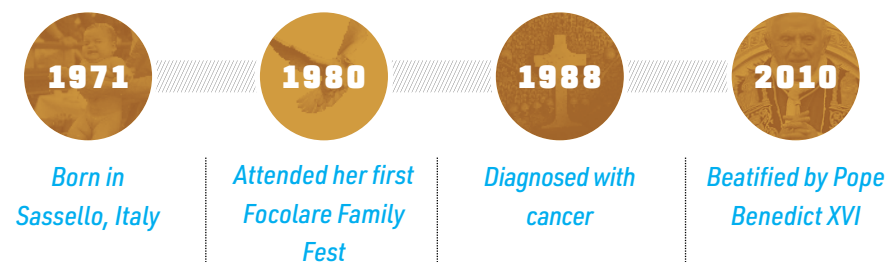
"I've rediscovered the Gospel in a new light. Now I want this book to be the sole purpose of my life!"

Growing up, she liked to hang out with her friends and was very popular. She tried to share the Gospel with them in every possible manner - "by the way I listen to them, by the way I dress and above all, by the way I love them." When she was 17, a sharp pain in her shoulder was diagnosed as osteosarcoma, an aggressive bone cancer. The prognosis was grim and Chiara Luce struggled to say "yes" to this will of God for her, but she did. Chiara had a profound sense of redemptive suffering. Each time a new, painful treatment was performed, she would say, "For you, Jesus; if you want it, I want it too!" A friend wrote, "At first we felt like we were going to visit her in order to support her, but quite soon we noticed that whenever we went into her room, the feeling came over us that we were being projected into the splendid adventure of God's love. And yet, Chiara didn't say any extraordinary words... She simply loved."

After two years and the loss of the use of her legs, it became clear that Chiara wouldn't survive. Despite her pain she refused morphine so that she could remain lucid and offer all her suffering up to Jesus. She encouraged her parents and tried to prepare them for life after her death. Chiara requested to be buried in a wedding gown. As the end of her short life drew near, she told her mother, "When you're getting me ready, Mum, you have to keep saying to yourself, 'Chiara is now seeing Jesus.'" Chiara died on October 7, 1990, with the final words "Bye, Mom, be happy, because I am."

Within nine years, the bishop of her diocese began the work on her cause for canonization. Pope Benedict XVI declared her "Blessed" in 2010. Chiara's brief life showed us how much one person can accomplish in God's name. She was a normal girl in all respects, with her eyes fixed on Jesus and Love.

Quick Facts:



SOUNDREPLY



MOVIE

THE RED TURTLE

In his famous work 'Politics', Aristotle contends that 'Man is by nature a social animal'. As the pinnacle of creation, human beings are of course, intellectual,

rational, social, moral and spiritual beings. Yet in the depths of his being, every man (and woman) knows that he (or she) is very much on his own – alone. As most men (women) enter adulthood, he becomes acutely aware of how lonely he is, with no one (not even himself) being able to truly understand him.

The Red Turtle is a 2016 animated fantasy movie directed by Michaël Dudok de Wit and co-produced by Studio Ghibli. It is an allegorical movie, whose charm to capture one's imagination is made more vivid by the fact that there are no dialogues in the movie.

The movie begins on a stormy night with the waves crashing and the rains thundering down – a small boat caught up in the storm with a nameless man struggling to keep alive. Eventually the nameless protagonist is washed ashore a small island with a lot of vegetation and fresh fruits, a bamboo forest, source of clean drinking water and lots of crabs. Marooned on the island, the man explores the island and eventually with what little tools he can find around, builds a raft and sets sail out of the island, hoping to engineer a Robinson Crusoe style escape. Yet, not long

into his journey, an unknown creature wrecks his raft and he is left with no other option but to swim back to the island. He tries a second and a third time, but the result is still the same. The third time he eventually meets the cruel animal that had been wrecking his dream – a huge red turtle.

Sad, dejected, hopeless and in despair, the man returns to the island with no desire to live, to find the red turtle coming ashore. All his despair turns into anger and in his wrath the man attacks the red turtle and flips it over to exact his revenge. Later after a dream the man has, he is remorseful and tries in vain to flip the turtle back on its feet but finds the turtle already dead. The man in his agony and guilt tries different ways to atone for what he did in his anger, but then something magical happens. The turtle turns into a woman and the man and the woman eventually fall in love, becoming a family to bring forth a son of their own. The rest of the story follows the nameless protagonist to his death, the struggles the family goes through, their many trials and difficulties, but more importantly the joy he experiences in his manhood, his fatherhood and the simple things of life.

The Red Turtle is an allegorical movie – what is seen can be interpreted in different dimensions, making sense to different people in a myriad of ways. The storms with which the movie begins with can be interpreted as the aimless tumult of teenage and

Every man is prone to mistakes and errors, yet as seen in the movie, some of our greatest errors when soothed with the balm of true contrition and penance turn into channels that brings forth healing and love.

youth – with the surge of one's emotions and hormones finally settling down as one enters adulthood. But adulthood with its responsibilities and innate dryness, often feels like an island and one feels the relentless desire to escape – yet how much ever one tries, there's little chance of escape. Every man is prone to mistakes and errors, yet as seen in the movie, some of our greatest errors when soothed with the balm of true contrition and penance turn into channels that brings forth healing and love. In the end, the circumstances of our life hardly change, yet in love and through love, we begin to make sense out of this life. As Viktor Frankl says, "suffering ceases to be suffering at the moment it finds a meaning, such as the meaning of a sacrifice".

Meaning – in life and of one's life is what humanity yearns for. The God-shaped hole in our hearts can and would only be filled by God. And self-sacrificial love, resulting in one's metamorphosis from a 'selfish gene' steeped in the rigors of worldly travails to a life-giving divinity is a calling only some have the courage to tread. And from this aspect, I thought the movie, The Red Turtle was a poetic portrayal of humanity and God's innate love and care leading humanity to its true purpose and goal.



REVIEW BY

Joseph Anthraper

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



Blooming KIDS

Dare To Be

I want to introduce a boy probably your age, who became a Superstar resisting and withstanding pressures from all phases of life. This boy was an Israelite. He was from royal lineage but destined to be born into slavery when his motherland was being torn apart by the mighty King Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 1-3). Daniel was chosen as an intern in the King's 'White House' to be trained for three years. On successful completion of the three years training period, he was to be assigned as an ambassador to Israel from the White House. The King prescribed food and wine from the King's own table (1-5) for the training group. But Daniel made up his mind not to defile himself by eating food forbidden by God or drinking wine of the royal court.

Daniel took a bold decision – to stand out. The result of the decision could be fatal!! But the faithful Daniel trusted the Lord more and was ready to face the repercussions. We will see the result of the bold decision later. Let me ask you a question – are you ready to take a stand based on our Christian values and not based on peer pressure? Let me assure you, the result would be Gorgeous – because our loving Lord respects his faithful!

The King Rewards

The mighty king bowed to the ground before Daniel's steadfast courage and faith in God (2:46). Let us consider the mighty king as a symbol of evil in today's world. My dear children, with your courage and faith in God, you can bring all evil in the modern



Different

world bow down on its knees before God! Are you ready for it? Read the abundant blessings that Daniel received in the book of Daniel 2:48. That is splendid – the great achievements of a teenager!! All because he decided to stand out and stand strong!

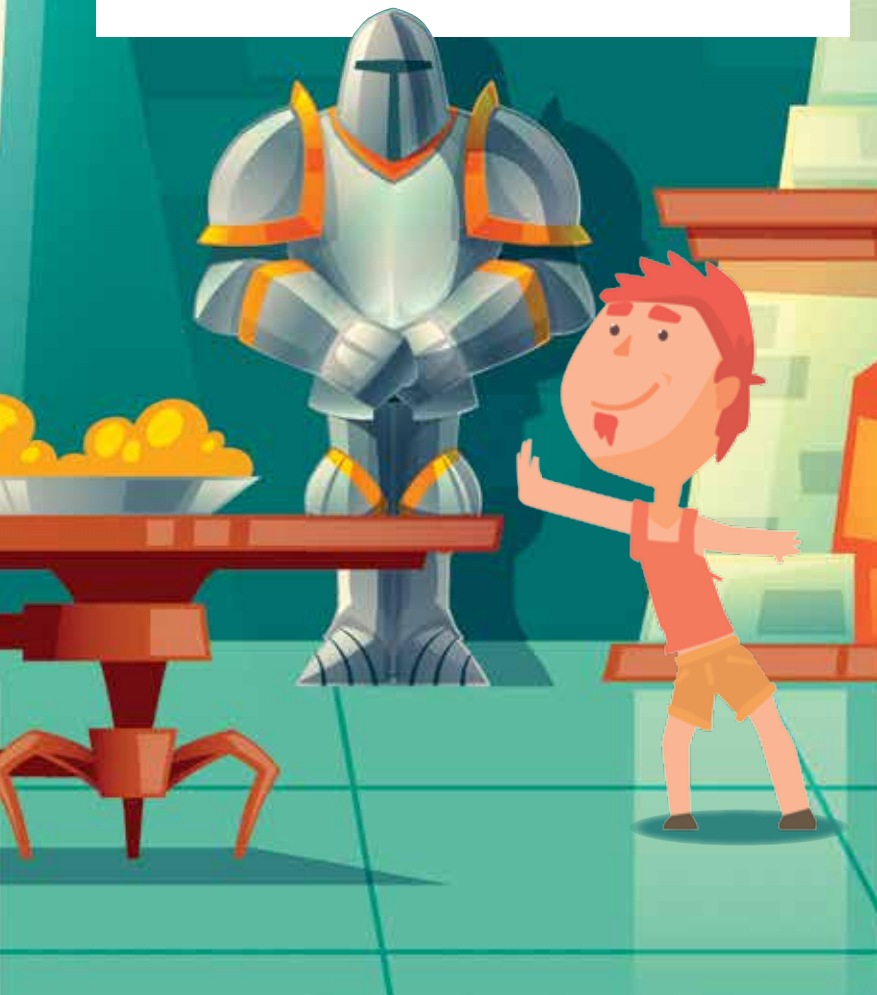
We will face evil temptations, especially when we step out into the world. They present itself in different forms, but mostly the starting point is peer pressure. There will be times when evil becomes the norm. But stand out and stand strong for your values.

You will not be left alone but will be lifted up by your Lord! Dare to be different!

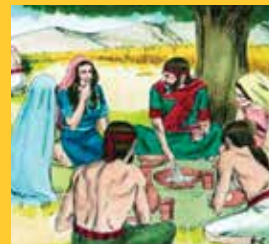
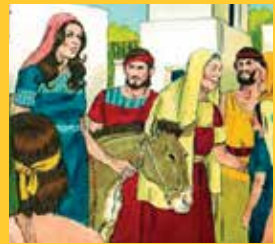
Note: Read the beautiful prayer in Daniel 2:20-23.



Sanu Abraham, a Jesus Youth from Houston, USA lives with his wife, four children and parents. Sanu works in the IT field and believes more information from the scripture, the living Word of God, can bring transformation in minds towards Christ.



IDENTIFY THE BIBLE INCIDENT AND THE BOOK OF THE BIBLE THAT DESCRIBES THE INCIDENT.



QUIZ TIME

I IDENTIFY THE BIBLE CHARACTERS

1

The descendants of Adam and Eve had become evil and wicked, and God was sorry He had ever created mankind. He decided the only thing to do was destroy them all and start over! But there was one man, who was obedient to God and found God's favour. God told him to build a big boat, called an ark; and to take one male and one female of every kind of animal and bird into the ark



2

He is the original good guy in the age-old question: Why do bad things happen to good people? He was about as close to perfect as you could get when disaster struck. His wealth, his ten children and his health were all taken away. In the face of adversity, this man simply says, "The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised".



3

The long-haired strong man who picked up the jaw bone of a donkey and killed a thousand Philistine soldiers on the battlefield. It all went well until his woman friend, Delilah sold him out to the Philistines for 140 pounds of silver.

4

Two women living in the same house gave birth to sons. One woman's baby died during the night. Now both the women wanted the baby that was alive. Each mother said he was her baby. They approached the King to tell them who could keep the baby. Name the wise king of Israel who cleverly found the mother of the baby.



5

A brave young woman who saved her people from being wiped out. She was a beautiful Jewish orphan girl who became the queen of Persia around 475 b.c. after winning a beauty contest. She was able to save the Jewish people in the Persian Empire from being destroyed. A book of the Bible is named after her.



6

The name of this man means 'God is my help'. He and his sisters were friends of Jesus. They lived in Bethany. It is at his tomb that "Jesus wept".

7

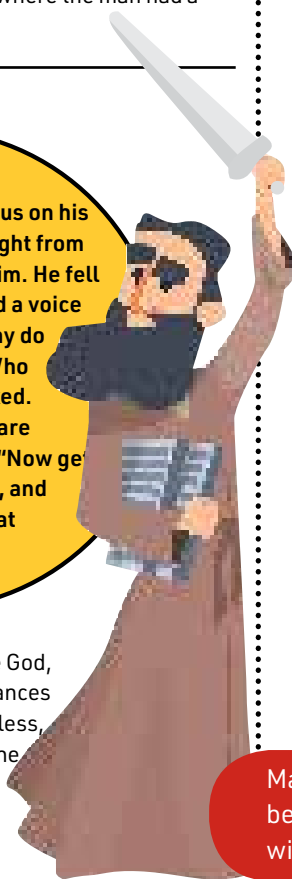
He was the chief tax collector in his place and was a wealthy man. He climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus. Jesus brought him down and went to his house, where the man had a change of heart.

8

A ruler of the synagogue, whose 12-year old daughter was raised from the dead by Jesus.

9

As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "___, why do you persecute me?". "Who are you, Lord?", ___ asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting", he replied. "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."



10

She and her husband were "righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless". They were also childless, until God blessed them with a child in their old age. The child was to become the forerunner of Jesus, and it is he who baptized Jesus.

II

FILL IN THE MISSING LETTER

(For each of the Bible names below. Clue: Each letter in the English alphabet will occur once and once only.)

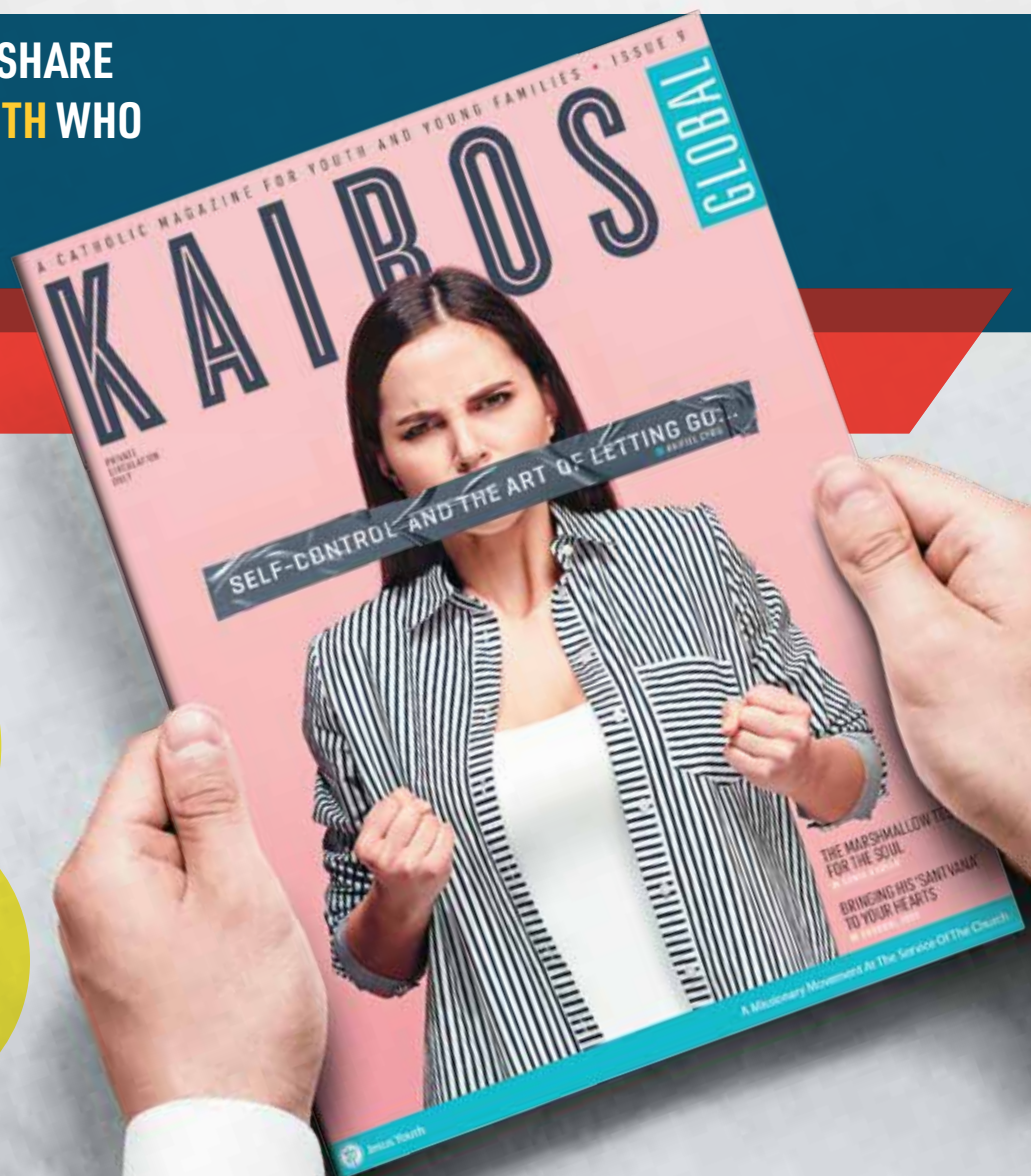
- 1 E _ HRAIM
- 2 ISHMAE _
- 3 ESA _
- 4 _ ESTUS
- 5 L _ VI
- 6 _ ORDECAI
- 7 _ URINIUS
- 8 BA _ THOLOMEW
- 9 M _ CAH
- 10 BA _ HSHEBA
- 11 _ ECHERIAH
- 12 FELI _
- 13 A _ EL
- 14 _ ESSE
- 15 MALA _ HI
- 16 NOA _
- 17 DA _ ID
- 18 NA _ MI
- 19 _ IDEON
- 20 REUBE _
- 21 ANDRE _
- 22 HEZE _ IAH
- 23 DION _ SUS
- 24 HERO _
- 25 _ SHER
- 26 THADDEU _

Mail your answers to quiztime@kairos.global before **31st October**. The winner will be rewarded with 1 year subscription of **Kairos Global**.

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Lukas and Ray

By Steffi Andrat Faria

I NEED 20MINUTES FROM YOU LUKAS. IM DOING AN EXPERIMENT.

RAY, YOU'RE DOING WHAT? FINE, WHAT DO WE DO?.



I SEE.

CONTROL YOURSELF FOR 20MINUTES. IF YOU DO, I'LL GIVE YOU SOME MORE.



SURE SURE.

THE STANFORD MARSHMALLOW TEST. EITHER AN INSTANT MARSHMALLOW OR WAIT 20MINUTES AND DOUBLE THE REWARD. KIDS LIKE ME, WHO WAITED, WERE MORE SUCCESSFUL IN LIFE.



AND DISTRACTION IS THE BEST WAY TOWARDS SELF CONTROL. LET'S SEE, ADVANCED CALCULUS? THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR RAY.

THERE, $x=125$. YOU'RE WELCOME, RAY.



ALMOST TIME FOR MY REWARD.



IM BACK. HOW DID YOU DO?

YOU CAN GIVE ME MY SECOND MARSHMALLOW NOW. AND I HELPED IN YOUR HOMEWORK.



I GOT YOU SOME MORE ADVANCED CALCULUS BUT YOU SHOWED NO SELF CONTROL WHATSOEVER, LUKAS. PITY.



OUR PASSIONS NEED THE MOST SELF CONTROL. NOT OUR APETITES. AND $x=20$.





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