



FR

February 2013

AGNEL

SHRAM NEWS



Be a **MAN**
respect **WOMEN**

FR. AGNEL
ASHRAM

NEWS

February 2013

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We greet our friends and benefactors!

**Risen Lord is Our Peace!
Christ is Our Hope!
He is Our New Life!**

EASTER APPEAL

55 years! More than one thousand orphans! Friend! We need your helping hand as our Partner/Sponsor. To bring Joy to the world of the deprived. Hope to little ones in distress and despair. Love to those deprived of one or both parents, New life to those living on the edge, in slums The Light of Christ to children struggling in darkness.
Yours in the Risen Lord.



Fr. F. Diniz
(Superior)

Please detach the form below and return it with your generous offering

MY EASTER GIFT

To,- Society of St.Francis Xavier, Pilar.

Dear Fr.Superior,

I am sending my cheque/draft/M.O./P.O. for _____
_____ as my EASTER GIFT for an orphan
under your care.

Name & Address: _____

Date _____ Signature _____

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Woman Deserves A Special Place

Women brought you in this world, so you have no right to disrespect one. Every human being has this sacred duty.

India has many women in high position of political and other areas of leadership, but a survey by Trust Law have found 'India to be ranked as the worst country in the world for women.' Women, whether adult or minor are most unsafe in today's society. Increasing number of rapes testify for the same. In schools, in tuition centers, universities, religious centers women are sexually abused and raped. They are not safe at bus stops or when travelling by public transport and even at work place. The tragic killing of a young lady after being gang raped by six cruel 'monsters' in Delhi has triggered an outpouring of angry protests and attracted global headlines. It was condemned by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women who called on the Government of India 'to do everything in their power to take up radical reforms, ensure justice and reach out with robust public services to make women's lives more safe and secure'.

Indian ancient culture considers a woman as a goddess. She is commended as a spiritual force to be honoured. However our day to day stories tell us that women have to fight to seek respect and acceptance from others. Further the malady of our society is that they crave only for a male child. Sad indeed there are women who curse themselves for giving birth to a girl child.

'The Godly woman is precious indeed and one to behold' says book of Proverbs. Men are to love and honour women as they have in part something that a man needs to be complete. God's design for a man and woman in marriage to become one flesh and to be completed in Him. Jesus treated women with singular dignity and respect and elevated them in a world where they were often mistreated. The New Testament mentions numerous healing and casting out of demons. Obviously Jesus cared and had deep respect for women. He showed great concern for a widow in Nain when

He met her as she was weeping just before the burial of her only son. The Lord spoke to her with singular compassion and raised her son. Another occasion when He saw a seriously handicapped woman who had been bent double for eighteen years and was unable to straighten herself, calling her over He touched her and healed her. Jesus' honour and respect was extended to all

women-an unexpected attitude and unknown in his culture and time. Unlike the men of his generation, Jesus taught that women were equal to men in the sight of God. Women could worthily receive God's grace and forgiveness. Like men, women

could be among Christ's personal followers. These were bold and revolutionary steps. Many of his contemporaries, including his disciples were shocked." **There is neither Greek nor Jew, there is neither bond or free, there is neither male and female, for you are all one in Christ** (Gal.3:28).

- Nirbaya has sacrificed her life and our country has awakened to its responsibility. In today's world women have achieved greatest feats. As professionals they are challenging men and outright overriding them in many fields. They are giving abundant proofs that they are worthy and capable in many areas closed to them. Women can never be looked upon as sex objects. God made both man and woman in His image. Bible places both women and men at the pinnacle of God's creation. Neither is deprecated. Parents, educators, formators and other leaders have very serious responsibility. An honest introspection is a must and attitudinal changes need to take place to make our country a better place for women. May be learning the techniques of self-defense is beneficial, but not the ultimate solution. Our very education system will have to make sure that both girls and boys are taught early in life to honor and respect the girl child at home and at school. Married couples should feel genuinely proud to have a baby girl. Every citizen of our country ought to be convinced that women are sacred and deserve a special place in our society.

Ubaldo Fernandes sfx.



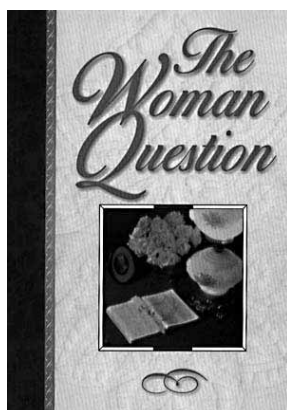
The Woman Question

- Fr. F. Diniz

A terrible upsurge in the cities of Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore and elsewhere in the country of some "Sex Perverts" is playing havoc among the women folk. They are being molested, raped, mutilated, even killed. Their age seems to be of no concern to those perverts as children as young as aged four and middle aged women past forty become their victims.

Their relationship to their victims also does not matter as there are cases of a father having raped his own daughter, of teachers their own pupils, boyfriends their own girlfriends, physicians their own patients etc. This malady had been plaguing the country for sometime but now it has crossed all bounds of propriety; the press and electronic media have brought the bare facts to light and forcefully projected the danger to the security and sanity of the nation. It is a pity that the city of Mumbai that had the reputation of being one of the safest places in the world for women is now being bracketed as one of the most unsafe places. Shocked by these terrible events many people have proposed that all the sex perverts who have indulged in such crimes should be summarily hanged or chemically castrated making it a powerful deterrent against such heinous crime in society.

We should, however, understand that the above mentioned problem is not exclusively of Mumbai or other metro cities. It does exist in smaller cities and rural India as well and also in the world at large. Hence hanging a few rapists may serve as a good deterrent against the evil but will not provide a lasting solution to the problem. It is a problem as old as mankind itself requiring proper understanding of the mentality of various people at various times and places.



The whole problem can be envisaged from the perception of woman's role in Society. In ancient times woman was considered to be the queen of her household; but she could have no role to play outside of it where she was required to be always protected. The Manusmriti solemnly proclaims that a woman has to be always under protection: In the childhood of her father; as an

adult of her husband and in her old age of her son. As per this law her dependence on others is thus preordained. She should, therefore, never enjoy total freedom. A similar custom has prevailed in the ancient times all over the world.

In those days of constant tribal wars and insecurity, women became easy prey to man's depravity and lust; hence all over the world various systems came to surface to protect them. Those systems did a good job and achieved their purpose of protecting women but they jeopardized in the bargain their liberty and right to live as normal human beings not only within the walls of their homes but also in society at large. Those dangers which women faced in society ceased to exist in the course of time but the restrictions imposed on them out of need in those days were dogmatized and continued to subsist for a long time and some of them persist even to this day.

This problem known as "Woman Question" has agitated the minds of many social reformers during the last couple of centuries, and many movements meant for the emancipation of women were started in various parts of the world. In India Mahatma Gandhi adopted the onerous task as a part of the Freedom Movement. He wanted women to participate side by side with men in the attainment of Swaraj to their Motherland. He wanted their dignity as human beings to be respected

by all. He promoted movements for their full education and participation in public life.

As a result of this movement and other similar movements for the emancipation of women, we have today women occupying posts of responsibility in India and participating in all types of activities in society. This change has not been properly understood by many people who would like to consign women within the walls of their domestic activities.

One theory about the present spurt of antisocial activities by sex perverts is that women participating in public life are inviting men to take liberties with them. In other words women are making themselves easily available. It is also a fact that part of Print and Electronic Media, in their fiercely competitive Marketing stratagem, do not hesitate to show women as a sex object or a 'commodity' that can

be had if one can afford the price. This is certainly not the kind of public service expected of one section of the fourth pillar of democracy. Internet also cannot escape the blame in perpetuating this unholy trend.

The need of the hour is therefore, a concerted effort by all those deeply concerned with Law and Order in the country to launch a campaign for educating the public in general and students in particular in the primary and higher education about the role of woman in Society and the respect due to them because of the important and responsible functions they perform in Society.

Also various arms of the Law Enforcement Agencies need to be well coordinated, investigation prompt and impartial and justice delivery system far more swift, determined and efficient to restore the common man's faith in the system.

**Become a
Cheerful Giver**



Letters from some benefactors and friends
of our Balbhavan children

Premila Sequiera, Ahmedabad

I would like to sponsor a child for a full year which is ₹6000. Accordingly I enclose a cheque for ₹1000 for the months of November and December 2012. Bi-monthly cheques of ₹1000 each will be sent to you henceforth. Please ask the children to pray for us.

Maj. Cherunny Chemmanoor (Retd.), Bangalore

Enclosed is a cheque of ₹1000 towards sponsorship of Master Steven D'Souza. Please ask Steven and the children to pray for us, especially for my son who is in the U.S. to get cured of his food allergy problem. I take this opportunity to thank Ven.Fr.Agnel for all the favours and blessings received through his intercession.

Veronica Marion Lewis, Kolkata

I am enclosing a cheque of ₹6000 towards sponsorship of my ward Master Vijay Naidu. I hope Vijay is keeping good health and doing well

in his studies. Please pray for us, especially for the good health of my husband.

Surendra Gandhi, London

Enclosed is a cheque of £101 for the benefit of the orphans under your care. Kindly pray for our family.

Valsa Mathew, Kuwait.

Enclosed is a cheque for ₹5000, ₹3000 is towards sponsorship of our ward for the period January to June 2013 and the balance ₹2000 is our Christmas gift for the children. Please remember us in your prayers.

Mae O'Doherty, France

Attached is a cheque of ₹2777 towards the maintenance and education of the orphans in your Balbhavan. Please continue to remember my family in your prayers.

The Birth Anniversary of The Venerable Fr. Agnelo

Theme: Fr. Agnelo's "Lived Experience" of Faith

Homily By His Eminence Cardinal Telesphore P. Toppo *(An Extract)*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is with great joy and devotion that I am preaching this evening on the occasion of the 144th birth anniversary of a great saintly soul from our country, the Venerable Fr. Agnelo. And in this year of faith the theme aptly chosen is "Fr. Agnelo's 'Lived Experience' of Faith".

Today's readings explain to us how faith is to be understood and how it is to be lived.

The Gospel passage that we have read is placed on the Sunday following the Resurrection of Christ. We don't know why Thomas was not with the other disciples when Jesus appeared to them on Easter evening. The others told Thomas that they had seen the Lord. Thomas was in more than just a state of grief and psychological denial. He was in a state of unbelief. But all of a sudden, everything changes: Thomas unbelief was great, but Jesus' love for Thomas was greater. By presenting himself to his Apostle Jesus brings in that conviction which gives Thomas both the enlightenment and the courage to cry out, "My Lord and My God".

Believing is directing the heart's attention to Lord Jesus. It is lifting the mind to behold Him as "my Lord and my God," and never ceasing to behold Him for the rest of our lives.

This is exactly what the life of Venerable Fr. Agnelo teaches us. His famous saying was, as you know more than I do, "Let us put our trust in God, and remain like a dog sleeping at the feet of his master." His whole life revolved around the expression "My Lord and My God".



I understand it is precisely the acceptance of Jesus Christ as His Lord and Master that made venerable Fr. Agnelo such a convinced missionary. In fact, it was after he made a one month's retreat on the theme of "Death" that Fr. Agnelo decided to join the Society of Pilar. This Holy man lived his faith to the fullest.

In his life he tried to inspire other people to live the faith.

There is an incident I am told that Francis Fernandes who was a tailor often worked at Pilar. He had planted chilies in his kitchen garden. Francis had toiled hard, watered and manured the plants. But, they yielded no fruit. He uprooted one of those plants and brought it to Fr. Agnelo. He looked at the plant, pulled out a branch and returned with this advice "go and plant it again. It will yield fruits". Within two or three weeks Francis (Morgad) was amazed to see the plants bearing chilies in abundance. In fact the Gospel words, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." (Mt. 17:20) came very often true in Fr. Agnelo's life.

Mathew (Mt. 13:44) speaks about a man who by chance found a hidden treasure. After covering it again, he went to sell all that he had to buy the field and possess this rare treasure. Fr. Agnelo too made Jesus the only treasure of his life. He must have relished hours together in His presence in the Sacrament. "There was a rare glow when he prayed before the Blessed Sacrament", testifies his sacristan who accompanied him even during late hours at night. Fr. Agnelo's physiognomy became seraphic when

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Give Women Their Due

-P.K. Ravindranath

Indian Society, impoverished by two centuries of Colonial domination had relegated women to a secondary position, both at home and in the public domain. A girl child was always regarded as a burden on a family that could hardly afford to feed all members. Besides, following tradition, she had to be married off with a dowry, which again was a burden.

The girl child, thus, came to be looked upon as a curse. This led to deprivation of educational facilities to girls, in preference to their male siblings, and even starving them, if there was not enough food to go around.

Girls, when they grew up, were made objects of carnal pleasure, by men. Even though such abuse of girls had been rampant in Indian Society, they came to be highlighted, as the media grew. The television channels were quick to pick up such instances of molestation, gang rape and sexual harassment of women. The channels even went to the extent of sensationalising such incidents, leading to public anger.

The Delhi gang rape of a 23 years old medical student in October last, was so gruesome that it led to spontaneous street protests by young men and women, demanding immediate action by the Government to stop such heinous crimes. They demanded stringent punishment of the perpetrators of the crime, speedy trials in such cases and better enforcement of existing laws.

As the agitation went off for days, the Government came down heavily on them- with police lathi charges and water cannon. The spirit of the protestors remained firm.

The Government has ultimately come out with some preliminary measures to secure justice for the victims.

The media, by and large, has rendered a great service to Society, by highlighting cases of child abuse at home and in public. All this has, no doubt, created a sense of aversion in the right-minded people. Even though among some sections of the people there is still a medieval outlook about women, it should disappear over time, as the media continues to harp on the atrocities committed on women.



Even in Kerala and Meghalaya, the two states that have the Matriarchal system, cases of women being abused in the home and subjected to

harassment, by word and deed, surface once in a while.

Aware of the intensity of public feeling over the issue, the government is moving towards stricter and harsher punishment, setting up fast track courts to handle all cases of rape and molestation and raising the punishment to death sentences.

It is strange that our Constitution adopted 63 years ago had decreed equality of women with men in all walks of life, and till today the old mindset still prevails.

The only redeeming feature is that more and more women continue to enter the work force with confidence, and in many fields are doing as well, if not better, than the males. There are several NGOs working for the welfare of women, besides the women's council, set up by the government to attend to their welfare. Together they could make a change for the better, and speedily.

The Beloved, My Beloved And Me

-By Leon Bent

The love- life of a couple flowers best when the partners are on a faith-journey, where God does things to them, in them, and through them! Love is the deepest of all human mysteries. As Thomas Merton opines, "The heart is capable of knowing only God." Mystery is not a problem we must set out to solve. It is, rather, an invitation to look for deeper insights and truths into the Unfathomable Mystery - the Beloved One, one's beloved and oneself.



The first truth is that True Love is not so much communication as Communion. It is silence: beyond words, beyond speech, and beyond concept. It is not that we discover a new unity. However, we find an age-old bond. We are already 'one'. But we imagine that we are not and need to recover the oneness of our first parents: live the "original blessing" of Paradise! This is the primal experience of bliss, timelessness, perennial fruitfulness, contemplative union, the *shekinah* (cf. Ex.26:1; Mt.28:20; Jn.1: 14), when Adam was delighted to see Eve (Gen.2:23), and when our first parents walked with God in the cool of the afternoon breeze (Gen. 3:8). Lovers live out the "original blessing" when there is indwelling with the Beloved, with the marital other, and at-oneness with all creation! Thomas Merton referred to this sublime experience as "purity of vision, perpetual newness and incredible mystery!" The unity of God's plan shines forth in and through the intense inner drama of pristine purity, God-in-his-own-simplicity, sacred love, spousal holiness!

The second truth of True Love is Dialogue – a completely non-judgmental, caring and sharing of truth. It is not only a spontaneous exchange of *my truth* with

my spouse, but also a spontaneous sharing in *the truth* of my nuptial partner that has still to be revealed to me. The etymological derivation of 'dialogue' is the Greek verb *legein*, which means "to speak," and the preposition *dia*, which means "across." So, dialogue literally means "to speak across," the "space" or the "differences" that divide or separate one from the matrimonial other, by pouring out one's feelings to the other in openness and honesty, unreservedly disclosing the '*living core*' of who one is, and inexorably seeking to know who the vowed other is. This reaching out bridges the gap, yields space and opens up what seemed closed frontiers.

The essential charism of the Marriage Encounter Movement is Daily Dialogue/ Deeper Dialogue: frequent, free-flowing self-disclosure (feelings of fear, anger, pain and joy), mutual listening with the heart (active, attentive listening, assimilates the *truth* of the other and makes it one's own; instills hope), genuine acceptance, deep appreciation, exuberance and gratitude, followed by gentle, tender and sensitive feedback, concluding with discerning one's options on changing one's behavior (redemptive love) for the good of the marriage. True dialogue is an enriching, and rewarding experience. This intimate exchange's prized breakthroughs and illuminating offerings are: charity, listening together, unity in truth and faith, unquenchably light, the sensuous spontaneity of dancing, and the inexhaustible freshness and surprises of one another! The process is so fruitful that, one becomes a world unto the other, and one has a world in the other! One begins to see reality in sync with the other! Dialogue gives

partners clarity of vision, a new horizon and a definitive direction!

The third truth of True Love is brought out best in the Vatican Council II Document on Ecumenism through the words of Jesus in John 15:12 and 13:34: "This is my commandment, love one another as I have loved you." Jesus' mandate stands at the very heart of the hierarchy of truths and deserves the utmost priority. This is the Lord's gift to us, the basis of his message and mission, and the unfolding of a new Reign! What is unique is that this is *his* command to love, *as he loves us!* In other words, we must *become* (like) *him!* His love was unconditional and self-emptying in its intensity. He was willing to go wherever love led him; to a meal with sinners and to the Cross. It was unconditional *in its extension*: it embraced all women and men, aliens, the marginalized, even his enemies. It was unconditional, too, *in its universal applicability*: it gave the world whatever meaning it possesses. It was also unconditional *in its motivation*. It had the deepest respect for the truth that lies in the innermost recesses of a human being. Besides, it touched the nerve-centre of Christian faith; the very foundation! (Vat II). So must 'Couple Love' be!

John's Gospel and Epistles make the utter centrality of this special brand of love sparkingly clear. For example, "One who is without love (the fiery mystical intimacy of consecrated wedlock) knows nothing" (I Jn.4:8).

Karl Barth expressed this Third Truth remarkably well when he said: "God deals with us not with a natural *therefore*, but with a miraculous *nevertheless*. The sequence is not: We are unworthy, *therefore* God rejects us; but, rather, we are unworthy, *nevertheless*, God accepts us." My thirty-four-year experience with Lorraine tells me one must love the other, not *because* the other is loving or lovable, but *in spite* of one feeling unloved, or the other being seemingly

unlovable. This is the challenge of True Love!

Thomas Merton put it subtly, succinctly: "Our love is a *need*, Jesus' is a *gift!*" We are prone to love in the *flesh*. Jesus invites us to love *in the Spirit* (Gal.5:22), with *faith-filled* endurance! For, it takes '*Spirit*' to know Spirit – that unstoppable, life-giving, invisible, wonder-full, awesome, holy mystery!

If you wish to learn the Fourth Truth about True Love, lay your head tenderly on Jesus' breast like the beloved disciple, John did (Jn.13:23,25). Should you wish to delve deeper into the extraordinary abyss of passionate, romantic, piping-hot, scintillating, authentic love, both, divine and human, search tearfully in the garden for the one you love, like Mary Magdalene (Jn.20:15), and the Shulamite bride in the Song of Songs, did.

The anonymous writer of *The Cloud of Unknowing* writes movingly, in old English, of the exuberant, sublime intimacy between Jesus and Mary Magdalene: "Sweet was the love between Our Lord and Mary. Much love had she to him. Much more had he to her....He blamed Simon the Leper in his own house, because he thought against her! This was great love. This was all-surpassing love." It was a love that "bears all things, hopes all things and endures all things" (1 Cor.13:7).

The Song of Songs is bathed in warm, bubbly and delicate emotion, wrapped in devoted passion: "How beautiful you are, my love, how beautiful" (4:1). Bride and bridegroom are simply fascinated by the blinding beauty they see in one another. "You are altogether beautiful, my love; there is no flaw in you" (4:7). We ought to strive hard to come somewhere close to this ecstatic, utterly selfless, transforming union in our own marriage (passionate fidelity to a hundred little things), if we hope

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Celebrating
144th Birth Anniversary
of Ven.Fr.Agnelo
at Bandra



Tiny-tots of Vashi perform in style



A Balbhavan child welcomes Cardinal Toppo with a bouquet of flowers



Balbhavan children along with Fr.Victor glorify the Lord in song



Cardinal at the Altar



Cardinal blesses the devotees



A prayer dance performed by Agnel Technical Complex children (Vashi)



Cardinal Toppo along with Fr.F.Diniz and other members of the clergy



The entrance procession



Cardinal Toppo celebrates Eucharist along with the Concelebrants



A child at the offertory procession



The faithful attending in the Eucharist

OBITUARY

Rev. Fr. Peter Martin Rodrigues

On 26th January, 2013, Rev. Fr. Peter Martin Rodrigues, Superior of Fr. Agnel Technical Complex, Verna was called to his eternal reward and his funeral took place on the 28th at Pilar. There was an Eucharist at Mission Seminary, to pray for the repose of his soul. V. Rev. Fr. F. Carvalho, Superior General of Pilar Society was the main celebrant along with 60 odd priests. Fr. F. Diniz, Superior of Fr. Agnel Ashram, Bandra in his homily highlighted that Fr. Peter Martin was a man of great simplicity and deep spirituality. Fr. Peter Martin was interred at the cemetery in Pilar after the final rites.

Earlier another Eucharist was offered at Fr. Agnel Ashram's Chapel (Verna) where thousands of children participated to pay homage to their beloved Father who had cared so much for them. Rev. Fr. A. Carvalho in his homily explained the virtues that adorned the person of Fr. P. Martin.

Fr. P. M. Rodrigues who hailed from



Betalbatim -Goa joined the Pilar Seminary in 1946. After a brilliant course in Philosophy, he was deputed to go to Rome where he did his Theology and Licenciante in Biblical studies. After being

ordained priest in Rome on December 20, 1959 he returned to Goa and was appointed professor of Mission Seminary, Pilar. Later on, he was elected Councillor General of the Society. He also worked in Agnel Ashram, Bandra in various capacities. Then Fr. Peter Martin assumed the post of Director and later Superior of Fr. Agnel Ashram, Verna (Goa) and under his leadership this largest technical education complex in Goa achieved new heights. He was a man filled with missionary spirit and had very special love for poor children of the Balbhavan, Verna. He was a priest in true sense of word with fine character, unusual simplicity and deep spirituality. May His soul rest in Peace.



JOY

*If you have ever seen a skipping lamb
Full of joy and carefree abandon,
Or a pet dog greeting you, tail a-wagging
With the same infectious joy worth a ton,*

*Kittens at play, bounding here and there
In mischievous glee for the paper ball to be won,
You would also want that joy priceless,
That Jesus promises in His Word ageless,
And is free for the asking
To whoever will put on his joy,
In any situation easy or tasking
So that we build our character
Based on the hope of a tomorrow that's better,
And know in our hearts
That Jesus never hurts.*

- Sandra Kay

AGNEL HAPPENINGS

Goa Assembly pays rich tributes to Fr.Rodrigues

Goa's educational hub will evolve around Fr. Peter M.Rodrigues' concept of the Verna Educational Hub, said Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar while paying homage to the departed Superior of Agnel Ashram, Verna.

The Goa Assembly paid rich tribute to Fr. Rodrigues during a condolence motion moved by Curchorem MLA Nilesh Cabral. His contribution to the growth of technical education in Goa was hailed by MLAs and ministers many of whom were students of Agnel Ashram.

Those who spoke include Alexio Reginald Lourenco, Sudin Dhavalikar, Mickky Pacheco, Mauvin Godinho, Digambar Kamat and opposition leader Pratapsing Rane.

While Reginald remembered Fr. Rodrigues for his exemplary services to the youth of Goa who have made careers from technical education imparted at institutions, Digambar Kamat remembered him for his simplicity. Godinho described Fr. Rodrigues as a visionary and a devout spiritual leader.

Women's International football at Agnel's Vashi

The Netherlands

The Western India Football Association along with the All India Football Federation organised two International Exhibition matches between the Indian Women's assorted team and the Dutch Women's assorted team, played in Kolhapur and Navi Mumbai on January 17 and 20 respectively.

There was a weeklong camp starting January 9, in Kolhapur, the venue of the first match.

The Netherland women's team upon their arrival in India were all excited about their maiden visit to our country. This is the first initiative of this kind motivated by the All India Football Federation with support from the Western India Football Association, the Kolhapur Sports Association and Fr. Agnells, Vashi.

Navi Mumbai got its first ever taste of International Women's football action with the second game being hosted at the Fr. Agnel Sports Complex. Fr. Agnel

is at the forefront of promoting all sports be it football, hockey, rifle shooting or swimming and is also host to the All India Football Federation Regional Football Academy. Fr.Almeida, Managing Director was proud to have this match and said, **"We are glad and thank the All India Football Federation for this opportunity. We are happy to host the 1st International Match in Navi Mumbai on the Agnel Astro Turf. We want to show to the children and their parents, especially the girls, the benefits of taking up football and what better way to do that then host one of the best women's football teams in the world, the Netherlands. Dr. Sanjeev Naik, Honourable Member of Parliament graced the occasion as the Chief Guest."**

The match at Agnel's Vashi was an exciting affair and a great motivation for young ladies to play football. Indian women became netonas . Ashalata Devi scored the winning goal for the Indian team.

See Photos at the back

A Memorable Day For Balbhavan - Delhi

The Agnel Balbhavan stepped into its 13th year of celebration of the miracles wrought by the power of love. The morning of the 12 January saw clear blue skies and a warm sunshine as the children of Balbhavan (a 230 strong) set about getting ready to welcome a steady stream of guests and well-wishers, all longing to be part of this glorious enterprise.

The guests settled down to what they knew would be a morning filled with some amazing entertainment by the children. The prayer dance was a well-choreographed and synchronized dance set to a melodious number which extolled the power of light over darkness'.

Fr. Carvalho addressed the gathering. He thanked the guests for being part of this celebration of a dream that they have made real with the support of men and women who responded to their hearts call and none of this, he said, wouldn't have been possible without the grace of God.

Then came the hallmark of Fr. Bento directorial prowess- his ability to take us by surprise and to amuse. The children's kept the guests enthralled by creating music out of virtually everything from pots and pans, to buckets and balls, to stones and shoes. The lesson: music is everywhere if we would only pause awhile and listen.

The tiny tots gave a gripping karate demonstration. Their war cries filled the air and you would see the intense

concentration writ on their little faces as they presented the moves. They were trained by their friend Gipson, a black belt. East met West in a fusion dance performed by the young lads and lasses. A treat to the eyes indeed.

The Balbhavan choir has become renowned for its singers and musicians. They have held the audience spell bound on numerous occasions and this one was no different. From one soulful number to the next they treated everyone present to some truly beautiful moments of music and melody.

By now everyone was filled with a sense of anticipation, knowing the best was yet to come. The crowning glory of the morning went to the skit "Jesus and I" adapted from a play by OmCherry Pillai, a renowned writer who has won many awards including the prestigious Shahitya Academy Award. The guests had the privilege of meeting him and he addressed the gathering. He was moved by the fact that Fr. Bento chose his play and said that he felt more honored by this than all the literary awards he has received.

As the morning slipped into the evening and as one day continued to flourish and blossom and the dream of two daring men Fr. Bento and Fr. Carvalho and the Agnel community will continue to awaken into a new reality.

By Sreeja Kharol

See Photos at the back

MINI SPONSORSHIP SCHEME

The scheme offers the benefactors of Fr. Agnel Ashram an opportunity to share in their noble work of bringing up 600 orphan children in their Orphanages at : Bandra in Mumbai, Vashi in Navi Mumbai, Pune, Goa, Greater Noida.

You can become a Co-Sponsor of an orphan child by paying Rs.600 or more per year. You can pay the amount in monthly installments of Rs.50 or more. We also have the Full Sponsorship Scheme for members paying Rs.6000 or more per year. The amount also can be paid in monthly installments of Rs.500 .

Please contact : Rev. Fr. Superior.,

Fr. Agnel Ashram, Bandstand, Bandra (West),

Mumbai - 400 050.



Fr.Agnelo's Cardinal Virtue - Temperance

-P.A.D'Mello

Temperance is a virtue by which we control our appetite in those things which give us enjoyment, such as food, sleep, rest, pleasures, etc. This virtue extends to everything – the way of talking, to the way of acting, to self-control, both in joy and in sadness. It makes a man always a master of himself and of his actions.

Prudence regulates the other virtues, temperance moderates them, keeping the balance. The one completes the other.

It is easy to see how Fr.Agnelo, who possessed to a high degree the other three Cardinal Virtues, must also have had this one. In fact, Fr.Agnelo possessed this virtue in such a remarkable degree that perhaps, this was the virtue most striking in him, specially in regard to food, drinks and rest. Many persons even think that this was the special characteristic of Fr.Agnelo.

Truly, Fr.Agnelo was so sparing in his food and drink that almost all who knew him make special reference to this aspect of his life, so sober and mortified: "Fr.Agnelo was taking pride to live on air... I believe that he was eating scandalously little." - This is what is written by someone who knew him intimately.

Not even on days of festivals would he partake of appetizing dishes served on the table, or take wine, though he was not a complete teetotaler as he himself once declared. Many who knew him very closely say that he even mixed salt in his food or tea in order to spoil its taste. His main food was curry and rice, or rice gruel.

The Patriarch himself, Dom Matheus, who knew very well that Fr.Agnelo ate so little would make Fr.Agnelo sit down by his side and put by force in the plate of Fr.Agnelo all variety of food, saying: "Eat Holy Agnelo." Fr. Alcuino D'Costa, his assistant at Sanvordhem, speaking of his temperance writes: "He never complained at the table nor commented about the food to his servant. It could come



ill-condimented, insipid or salt, to him everything was welcome. A real mortification of tongue and taste."

Due to this so feeble a diet, the health and vigour of Fr.Agnelo sank rapidly. He seemed to be a "dry stick" during his last years, and when, after his death, they wanted to wash him they found only skin and bones.

In spite of eating and drinking so little, he wanted to observe the fasts and abstinences prescribed by Holy Mother the Church, and in order not to be deceived, he used to consult other priests about the quantity which was licit in those days. Once during a fasting day, he asked for plain tea. He was given it without milk, but when he had taken it he doubted if he could have drunk it as it contained sugar. He wrote to the parish priest consulting if his action was right. In this connection, he suggested to priests and seminarians not to attend grand dinners, and, if perforce they had to go, he advised them to be very cautious and temperate in order to save the good name of a priest of Our Lord. He used to commend also assistants (in parishes) not to speak against Parish Priests, on account of food.

When invited for preaching, he did not like to stay at the place of those celebrating the feast, as they used to prepare for him good accommodation and food, but he preferred to remain in the parish house or in the Chapel and take only curry and rice, and nothing more. Even when he had to stay at any private house, he used to remain in his room, talk very little with the inmates of the house, and partake only of his usual curry and rice, unwillingly causing embarrassment to the family who had taken all the trouble to prepare a variety of dainty dishes.

After Vespers, there are usually fireworks in Goa on a big scale. Fr.Agnelo after his sermon, used to retire before the Holy Eucharist, or to hear confessions, but nobody ever saw him attending such fireworks.

*Temperance is moderation in the things that are good
and total abstinence from things that are foul."*

- Frances E. Willard

I Have Fr.Agnel's Blessings



I am Ajay Naik from Panjim. I am 14 years old and studying in 9th Standard. I joined Balgram on June 4, 2001 because my father died and I only had my mother. At that time

I was in 1st Standard. I was good in studies. My cottage mother has also helped me a lot. I did not know how to speak English. My cottage mother taught me to speak and pronounce the words. Many years have passed by and now I have grown up. We have many

activities like Basketball, Football etc. I am a Basketball player and I have played for my school. Now we have a new cottage prefect who is very kind. He gives us whatever we need and takes care of us. The Fathers here are working very hard for us. With the help of the benefactors they are providing all the necessary things for us. I love to go school every day. My hobbies are playing and gardening. My ambition is to become a computer engineer. I will try hard to fulfill my dreams.

-Ajay Naik

I Have Found Many Friends Here



I am Anessa Dias, I am 13 years old and studying in 8th Standard. I'm from Goa. My mother is Rosy Dias and my father is John Dias. I have one younger sister. Since

my parents were unable to educate me due to poverty I have been put in this Balgram in Verna. When I was 5 years old I joined this Balgram but I did not want to stay. After some days I got

new friends and a good mother so I felt happy. My cottage mother supports me in my studies and gives me what I need. She gave me love like a real mother. In this Balgram we get equal share of good nutrition to keep our health fit and enjoy participating in sports, music and other extracurricular activities. Our parents come every Sunday. I love to see them. My ambition is to become a good Taekwondo player.

-Anessa Dias

AGNEL –COOPERATORS

You can join the Ashram Family by becoming a member of Agnel-Cooperators and enjoy the fruits of a Special Daily Mass offered at Fr.Agnel Ashram,Bandra for all the members. You will also enjoy the fruits of all the prayers and good works of the Agnel Ashram Fathers and entire Agnel Ashram Family.

Membership Fees:-

Ordinary Co-operators : Individual ₹.100

Family : ₹. 500

Benefactors : ₹. 1000

Patrons : ₹. 5000

Please contact : Rev. Fr. Superior. Fr.Agnel, Ashram,Band Stand,
Bandra(W), Mumbai-400 050.

The Birth Anniversary of The Venerable- Fr. Agnelo

Contd. from pg 6

celebrating the Eucharist and his countenance appeared to be transfigured from the moment of consecration. Fr. Agnelo had an intense devotion of the Sacred Heart and it was a delight to hear him speak of Jesus and of His passionate love for us. Indeed he inflamed the hearts of his seminarians and the people with the devotion of Sacred Heart. He would inculcate in his people love for the Apostleship of Prayer, as an efficacious means of "winning souls of God". He would walk through the Seminary corridors, with hands in the pocket, praying the Rosary. Yes, he belongs to all races, castes and creeds. Far and wide, he showers favours and grace on all of us.

My dear Brothers and Sisters, as we celebrate the birth anniversary of Venerable Fr. Agnelo, he invites us to place our complete faith in Jesus Christ.

The Beloved, My Beloved And Me

-Contd. from pg 9

to have a foretaste of the eternal banquet of love, in the present moment.

Now, this gold nugget! When the virgin Israel grew tall and beautiful, Yahweh entered into a covenant with her, taking her as His bride (cfr. Ezek. 16:8-9). Ah! YHWH! Take us, Lorraine and me, in unison, as your ravishing bride too, despite our 'charming imperfections and colourful eccentricities' that, our relationship may bask in your reflected glory! A marital couple becomes God by participation! Wow!

And, this final flourish! When

He used to tell his listeners, "Without continual divine breathing, we would be reduced to nothing." Let us put our lives into the hands of God like Venerable Fr. Agnelo calling out to Jesus "My Lord and my God". As St. Paul tells the Romans in the reading today speaking of our father in Faith, Abraham: "he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God". Following the example of Venerable Agnelo let us ask God to bless us with the same faith which inspired and guided Venerable Agnelo. Let us pray that more and more people may invoke God through the intercession of Fr. Agnelo and that we may soon have the miracle necessary for his beatification. In this Year of Faith, through the intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnelo, may God grant abundant blessings upon our families, our communities and upon the Church in India. Amen.

sacramental love is filled with and enriched by juicy, soul-stirring, ancient myths, stories, remembrances, 'memorials', as shared above, it becomes archetypal and liminal, and is exalted no end! It is fired up by ageless wisdom!

The punch line! This is the vibrantly alive and pregnant, yet, ordinary everyday kind of mystical, contemplative and prophetic witness, *luminous matrimonial lovers inadvertently display and exert in the market-place!* This piping-hot conjugal connection cannot just remain hidden within cold, rugged, isolated monastic walls and in books, in unvisited libraries and dusty, cobwebby attics!

In this faith, a covenanted couple can fly!

Love and respect woman. Look to her not only for comfort, but for strength and inspiration and the doubling of your intellectual and moral powers. Blot out from your mind any idea of superiority; you have none.

-Giuseppe Mazzini



FR. AGNEL'S BLESSINGS

SUCCESSFUL OPERATION

Bandra : My 55 year old mother was having uterus cancer. It was in the 3rd stage. She was under treatment in Tata Hospital with seven chemotherapy. An operation was to be performed. We the family prayed to Ven.Fr.Agnel for successful operation. I am happy to inform you that through the intercession of Ven.Fr.Agnel the operation was successful and she is alright now. In thanksgiving an offering of ₹500.

-Elizabeth Fernandes

DUES RECOVERED

Kuwait : For the past 3 months my closing due amount was held up. I was trying to get my settlement as soon as possible but there were many obstacles. I started praying to Ven.Fr.Agnel. I am happy to say that through his intercession I got my dues now. In thanksgiving an offering of ₹500.

-Dominic Fernandes

WOUND VANISHED

Vasai : I had a wound on my chest. I was under treatment. I started praying to Ven. Fr.Agnel and pleased with him that it get vanished without surgery. I am happy to say that through the blessing of Ven. Fr.Agnel the wound was completely cured. In thanksgiving an offering of ₹500.

-R.Gonsalves

PAIN SUBSIDED

Goa : My daughter was suffering from terrible pain due to an abscess. No medicine was helpful. I turned to the heavenly intercession of Ven.Fr.Agnel. Through his intercession she recovered. We are very grateful to Ven.Fr.Agnel.

-Jasmina Vaz

SUCCESSFUL OPERATION

Canada : My daughter had a big tumour in her uterus. She was under medication. The doctor advised an operation. It was a major operation. I prayed to Ven.Fr.Agnel for its success. I am happy to inform you that through the intercession of Ven.Fr.Agnel the operation was successful. In thanksgiving an offering of ₹200.

-Ruby Irani

GOOD JOB SECURED

Dadar : I am a firm devotee of Ven.Fr.Agnel. I was attending his novena on Sundays at the Ashram. I am very happy to say that through his intercession I secured a good job. In thanksgiving an offering of ₹500.

-Neha D'Souza

OPERATION AVERTED

Goa : My daughter had a 6 mm ovarian cyst. The doctor advised an operation. She had to undergo many tests. We gave her the mud relic of Ven.Fr.Agnel and prayed to him that she may be cured without operation. Through his blessings the next sonography report was normal. We are very grateful to Ven.Fr.Agnel.

-E.Rodrigues

STANDING DUES CLEARED

Vasai : For a long time my outstanding dues were not cleared by management. I started praying to Ven.Fr.Agnel for his help. Through his intercession the management cleared all my dues. In thanksgiving an offering of ₹2500.

-Francis Carvalho

CURE OF SERIOUS SICKNESS

Goregaon : My husband aged 50 years was very sick. He was admitted in the hospital. He was unable to swallow food. The doctor gave up hope of his survival. I deeply prayed to Ven.Fr.Agnel and started attending his novena on Sundays at the Ashram, at Bandra. I am happy to say that through his intercession slowly, progress was shown in his health and within 2 years he was able to swallow food and today he is quite alright. We are very grateful to Ven.Fr.Agnel. In thanksgiving an offering of ₹500.

-Rekha M.Bhise

GIFT OF A CHILD

Goa: since my husband suffered from varicose veins we had no child for five years. With great hope we started praying to Ven. Fr.Agnelo. We are happy to inform you that through his intercession we received the gift of a child and we have named him Agnel.

-Josefina Pereira

Out of Their Bounty

K. Vaz	Mumbai	40000	J. Captain	Mumbai	3000	L. F. D'Souza	Vasai	1000
P. Srivastava	Mumbai	35000	F. Fernandes	Mumbai	3000	K.P. Jacinta	Mumbai	1000
M. Kini	Mumbai	25000	Edna Colaco	Mangalore	3000	K. Jayashree	Chattisgarh	1000
S. D'Mello	Mumbai	15000	S.A. Joe Lobo	Mumbai	2700	J. Fernandes	Nallasopara	1000
M.J. Tibrewala	Nashik	12000	L. John	Delhi	2600	J. D'Souza	Mumbai	1000
J. D'Souza	Mumbai	12000	V.S. Bilolikar	Mumbai	2500	J. D'Cunha	Bangalore	1000
Z.J. Bharucha	Secunderabad	11111	F.J. Daruwalla	Pune	2500	I. D'Souza	Mumbai	1000
M.Rayani	Mumbai	11000	B. Asoni	Mumbai	2500	H. Mehra	Mumbai	1000
S. S. Rane	Nallasopara	10000	T. Rodrigues	Mumbai	2400	H. Fernandes	Thane	1000
V. Rebello	Vasai	10000	A. Vaghasia	Vasai	2025	G. Lobo	Mumbai	1000
Tatum D'Souza	Mumbai	10000	H. Meshram	Dumka	2020	C.C. Mathew	Kerala	1000
P.A. Shah	Mumbai	9500	T. M. Nadar	Thane	2000	C. Xavier	Mumbai	1000
Prajapati Fly.	U.K.	7511	S.S. D'Mello	Vasai	2000	C. Thomas	Bahrain	1000
X.C. Raj	Dombivli	6000	R.R. Irani	Mumbai	2000	B. Miranda	Bangalore	1000
V.M. Lewis	Kolkata	6000	P. Rogers	Kolkata	2000	B. Almeida	Diu	1000
S.S. Solanki	Ahmedabad	6000	P. Pinto	Mumbai	2000	Annamary E. T.	Kerala	1000
P. Fernandes	Mumbai	6000	M. Ildephonse	Kerala	2000	A.G. Abraham	Kerala	1000
M. Pauline	T.N.	6000	K.K. Karkaria	Mumbai	2000	A.D. Telang	Goa	1000
I. D'Sa	Mumbai	6000	J. Saldanha	Muscat	2000	A. Varki	Hyderabad	1000
A. Roche	Qatar	6000	F.F. Pereira	Mumbai	2000	A. Rodrigues	Mumbai	1000
H.Z. Bharucha	Secunderabad	5211	E.A. Thomas	Mumbai	2000	A. Gomes	Mumbai	1000
T.R. Menon	Mumbai	5000	Dr. Nariampampil	Kerala	2000	A. D'Souza	Mumbai	1000
T.R. Menon	Mumbai	5000	B. Joseph	Kerala	2000	Ambika Metal	Mumbai	900
T. Philipose	Kerala	5000	Antony M.	Kerala	2000	J.D. Lam	Nashik	800
S.A. Murzello	Virar	5000	A. Noronha	Mumbai	2000	S. D'Sa	Mumbai	600
S. Varghese	Bangalore	5000	A. Joseph	Mumbai	2000	S. Almas	Mumbai	600
S. Rodrigues	Mumbai	5000	S.P. Koli	Thane	1500	J. Shaju	Kerala	600
R.C. Fernandes	Mumbai	5000	S.P. Dias	Vasai	1500	F. Pittalwala	Mumbai	505
R. Steaven	MiraRoad	5000	S. Dias	Virar	1500	R.M. Joshi	Mumbai	501
R. Ambekar	Mumbai	5000	R. Thomas	Kerala	1500	M.J. Sheth	Mumbai	501
P.R. Thakkar	Mumbai	5000	N. Andavan	Mumbai	1500	Ashok H. Malde	Mumbai	501
P. Thakkar	Mumbai	5000	Mathew K.F.	Kerala	1500	V. Shah	Mumbai	500
O. John	Kerala	5000	Delma	Australia	1500	T.R. Deroose	Mumbai	500
M. Aranha	Mumbai	5000	S.R. Kolji	Mumbai	1200	S.V.S. Rama Rao	Mumbai	500
L. Britto	Virar	5000	D. Mavis	Nerul	1200	S. Pillai	Mumbai	500
J. Thomas	Mumbai	5000	S.A. Selvaraj	T.N.	1150	S. Gomes	Kolkata	500
J. Rele	Mumbai	5000	B. Manek	Mumbai	1111	P.J. George	Kerala	500
J. Carrasco	Mira Road	5000	R.N. Mehta	Ahmedabad	1002	O. P. Pimenta	Mumbai	500
J. Baptist	Ranchi	5000	S. Suresh	Mumbai	1001	N. Thomas	Kerala	500
J. Baptist	Ranchi	5000	P. R. Sanya	Mumbai	1001	N. Mehra	Ahmedabad	500
Hugh & Colleen	Mussoorie	5000	L. Dias	Vasai	1001	M. McCarron	Mumbai	500
G. Lobo	Mangalore	5000	J. Mathew	Kerala	1001	M. D'Souza	Bangalore	500
G. Lobo	Mangalore	5000	V. Fernandes	Goa	1000	K.H. Ganatra	Mumbai	500
F. Quadros	Mumbai	5000	S. Vaz	Virar	1000	J. Pereira	Vasai	500
D. Swamy	Mumbai	5000	S. Eustachius	Nagpur	1000	J. Jojo	Mumbai	500
D. Swamy	Mumbai	5000	S. Dhruv	Mumbai	1000	J. Alves	Mumbai	500
B.A. Borges	Anjuna	5000	R.K. Nazareth	Bangalore	1000	J. Almeida	Mulki	500
A. Deshpande	Belgaum	5000	R. Zaman	Kolkata	1000	H.P.Sinha	Mumbai	500
J. Menezes	Mangalore	4000	R. D'Almeida	Udupi	1000	Grace D'Silva	Mira Road	500
D. Rebello	Mangalore	3500	R. Chury	Mumbai	1000	E.V. Margaret	Kerala	500
S. Joseph	Kerala	3000	P. Kishore	Pune	1000	E.T. Brunton	Canada	500
R. Subramaniam	Mumbai	3000	Nilesh Kadam	Virar	1000	C.A. Cardozo	Mumbai	500
N. Rodrigues	Virar	3000	Maj.Chemmanoor	Bangalore	1000	B. DeSales	Mumbai	500
N. Kundar	Mumbai	3000	M.A. Paulson	Kerala	1000	Agnel George	Kerala	500
N. Kamdar	Mumbai	3000	M. Mukherji	Mumbai	1000	A.A. Juvatkar	Kharghar	500
M. Philip	U.A.E.	3000	M. Martis	Mumbai	1000	A. Milton	Mumbai	500

Balbhavan Day at the Greater Noida



Omcherry Pillai addresses the gathering



A melodious expression of love...The Balbhavan Choir



Breaking out of the mould...music with just about anything



It all starts with God



War cries fill the air...the little ones do the Karate routine

Women's International football at Agnel's Vashi



Fr. S. Almeida, Dr. Sanjeev Naik, MP and other dignitaries



The winners trophy for the Indian women's football team played against Netherland



India vs Netherland football