

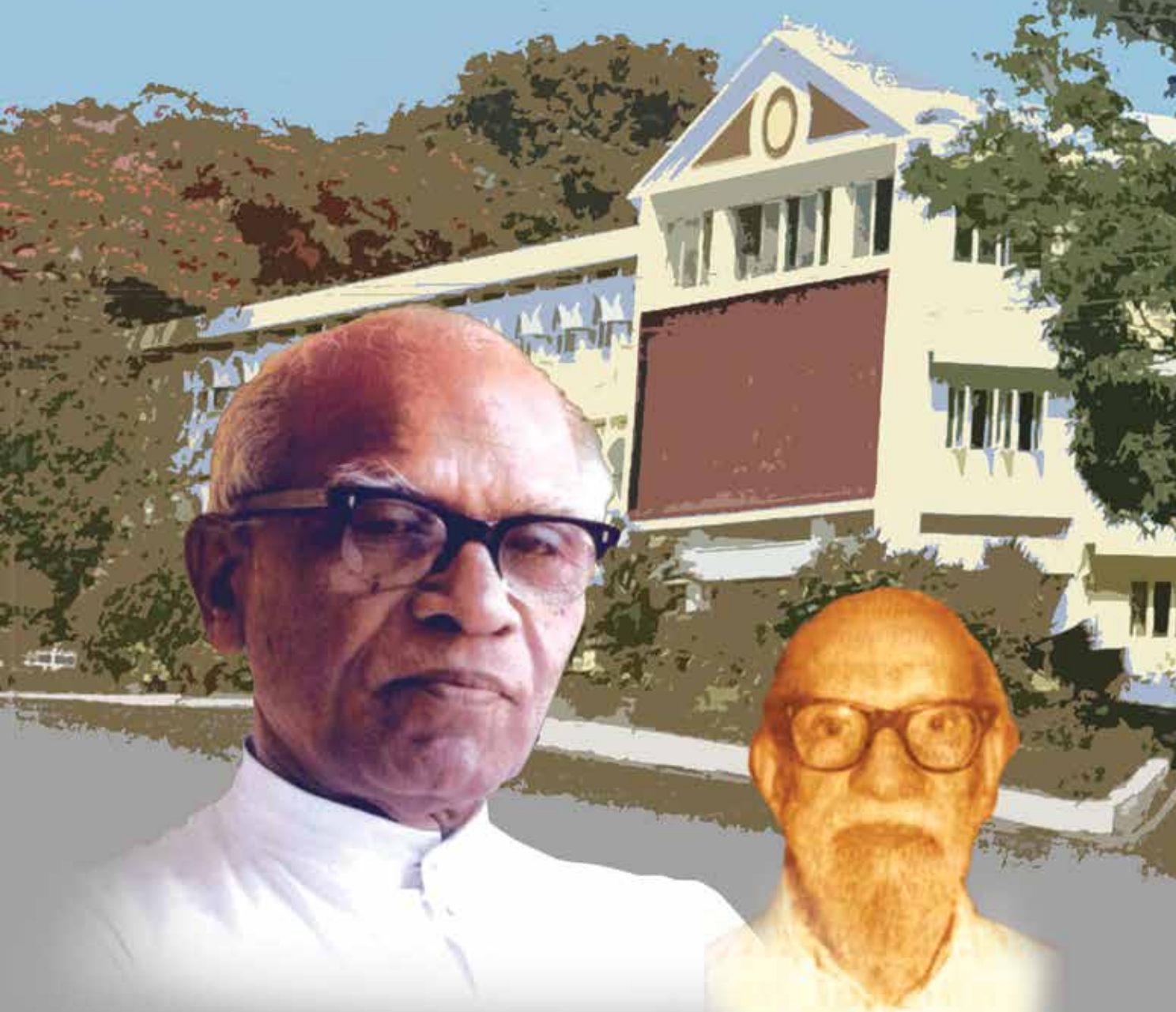


FR

July 2019

AGNEL

SHRAM NEWS



Fr. Conceicao Rodrigues



Fr. Francisco Siqueira

Vision of the Leaders

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July 2019



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Vision of the Leader

Scholars on leadership have defined many different types of leadership styles. The leadership style of the Founder of the Agnel Ashram, Fr Concessao Rodrigues, is most difficult to define. Those who knew him personally had differing opinions about him.

Some found him bold and dynamic while others described him as brash. While some called him strong-willed, his determination was what inspired his peers to follow him to Mumbai. But of all the facets of his personality, both good and bad, one thing that was undisputed was his visionary leadership.

A nationalist to the core, Fr Concessao Rodrigues had a strong sense of identity and belonging to his motherland India. On the other hand, he found that his spirituality was in total synchrony with his patriotic outlook. Thus, his vision statement of “Christ for India, India for Christ” was a dramatic expression of his core belief. Serving Christ meant serving the nation.

To understand the true meaning of this statement, one would need to examine the context in which it was made. India was in the throes of the freedom struggle. Inspirational leaders like Gandhi, Nehru, Patel and others had fired up the imagination of the masses. The long and hard struggle for freedom was nearing its logical end.

Dynamic leaders from a wide spectrum of professions, creeds and communities conjured up their own visions of how Free India would be. Fr C Rodrigues was one amongst them. As a Christian leader, his role model was Jesus Christ. As one who had given up the world to follow Christ, his formation was aptly reflected in his vision. But, this vision is open to many interpretations.

In a narrow sense, one can interpret this vision as taking Christianity to the masses of India and delivering them to Christ. In a broader sense, it could be interpreted as carrying Christ’s liberating message of salvation to the poor and downtrodden in India.

As India emerged from the shadow of

colonialism, it found itself impoverished and backward. The World War had taken a toll on both Britain and her colonies. In fact, many believe that her colonies funded much of the war effort. India was the Jewel in the Crown. It was the largest colony both, in terms of population and economic clout.

India embarked on her journey to modernization. Industrialization was the route chosen. At that point in time, India was a predominantly agricultural economy. For the transformation into an industrial economy, there was a burning need for capital, technology and skills.

Fr C Rodrigues chose the role of empowerment through skilling. The mission was to empower Indian youth with technical skills that would find them gainful employment and in turn contribute to the national effort of industrialization. This serve a two-pronged purpose of social empowerment and nation building.

As India marches forward into the digital age, the challenges have grown manifold. One fourth of the country’s population still wallows in poverty. The paradox is that India is said to be home to the largest number of millionaires ! And we’re not even counting the trillions stashed away illegally in foreign banks!!

So where do we go from here? India is once again at the crossroads. It is poised to become a \$5 trillion economy in the next 5 years ! That would make it the third largest in the world after China and the USA on PPP terms and the fifth largest in absolute terms.

So what do these numbers mean for the middle class and the poor in India? Will they translate into prosperity? Will the spoils of development be shared equitably? Will there be a more balanced development and growth?

Somewhere in this chaotic muddle of should-have-been and could-have-been lies the path ahead. The path that will take Christ’s liberating message to the poorest of the poor. To the last person in the line. To the one waiting patiently for the healing touch!

-Hansel D’Souza

Beyond Passion and Belief... to where others have not gone before

(the watershed phenomenon of the Foundation of
a Missionary Society of St. Francis Xavier in 1939)

In December 1931, two young men, whilst praying at the Shrine of the great itinerant Saint Francis Xavier, were struck with an idea that would turn their life around in a manner they never imagined.

From the beginning of recorded history, mankind has aspired to unravel the mystery that continues to elude us, our yearning to be immortal vis-à-vis our corruptible nature. In great many ways, Philosophy, throughout history, and far more robustly, Religion have made several attempts to apply salve to mankind's ceaseless quest. The quest for immortality goes hand in hand with the mystery of human suffering and death, both of which are universally dreaded. Attempts to address it have been were myriad, but the quest goes on, as humankind seeks tangible, verifiable solutions such as modern technology can present.

The role that Religion has and will continue to have in human history, and both, the good and the havoc its followers have created around it and because of it, is a clear indication that it is here to stay. In the days more metamorphoses of it will appear, that perhaps will continue to appeal or repeal to mankind in a gentle or strong manner. When I look at the bloodshed and internecine strife, religious followers have caused to each other, I wonder what ails this natural and legitimate quest of mankind to understand his ultimate destiny and the journey to its discovery, that it should be marred by so many tragedies, hatred and suspicion.

The major cause of the strife appears to happen, when cultures, ethnicity (most often of course aided by vested interests) that exist in a given geography, perceive the newcomers with their socio- religious and philosophical beliefs and

persuasions as alien and threatening their stability and existence. What is spoken here is not about superiority or inferiority of one culture over the other, but simply about the differences and lack of initial appeal not amounting to repulsion, leading to resistance that occurs in each case.

In our country all dominant religious streams, so to say, are alien to it. All, Aryans included and later invaders, merchants or missionaries of itinerant preachers, have brought with them a wealth of knowledge and belief systems which have largely integrated in many areas but not so, in others. The mainstream Hindu faith is itself a result of socio-cultural initiatives that slowly and steadily percolated large areas of the subcontinent and in the proof the process of this large scale over layering, they rolled over the existing primitive cultures and beliefs.

The Islamic roller that came largely through military interventions, became subsequently the preferred choice of millions and the cultural imprint it has left on the history and culture of India, will be reckoned for all times to come, as an integral heritage of India and by any accounts amazingly incredible.

It is stupid to go back and think of amending the adaptations, accommodations and assimilations of each other which in the course of time have been embedded in each other's history and culture, as undesirable. If it were so, most of what we believe, in India, would itself be subject to the uprooting process. There is no stronger healer than time and history.

The advent of Christianity in India, allegedly in the first century, followed the natural assimilation process, primarily because of its structural attraction and more deeply because of

its egalitarian nature. None of its fundamental tenets appear to have challenged the existing primitive practices, except when the issue of idolatry popped up. Later, initiatives in the 15th century were not so peaceful.

The western world, through its progressive and structured view of the world, has changed from its icons of the past, *Deivos* (cognate with Sanskrit *Deva*, Latin *Deus*, Old High German *Ziu* and Lithuanian *Dievas*), representing forces of nature, etc (not unlike other parts of the world), primarily due to the influence of education and rationalism, and still later more profoundly, due to the early Gospel evangelizers and finally, with Constantine in (306-337). That was not an assimilatory process but a complete turn around, embedded with time. It was to all purposes a seamless cultural blending, i.e. without disrupting it from within.

Religious ideology or a way of life, opted as a chosen way of life over others, or which has been inherited at birth is a natural, a universal transcultural phenomenon, and indeed, fulfils human aspirations. Problems, however, pop up when a new perspective is made available and is resisted primarily due to its “outsider” element to one’s culture or perceptions. This historical resistance became more and more marked as human groups became more and more entrenched in what they believe their way of life (culture, social ethos) is, and thus became attached to their traditional world view.

Sociologically one could simply describe the initial type of assimilation where religious perspectives changed in mass movements, as different from the latter types where resistance is more visible and sustained. In the former case, the transition from one type to another, was a ***ethno social*** phenomenon, which essentially means seamless cultural assimilation of ideas and practices without disturbing identity values connected with one’s understanding of its cultural (ethnic) identity. The second type however, where assimilation happens, with some level of internal resistance, the phenomenon, may be called ***ethno religious***. In this type of assimilation, the internal resistance happens due to the perceived ideas that the new offering does

not match with one’s inherited cultural identity traits, but is received for other reasons, social mobility, emotional attraction, clan affinities, etc. There is however a dormant separation. The former has much deeper emotional and cultural assimilation whereas in the latter, the assimilation is more layered. The Sikh movement, the Naicker movement in Tamilnadu, and the Communist movement in Kerala, are indicators of a ethno religious phenomenon that went awry.

When two young men, Fr. Conceicao Rodrigues and Fr. Francisco Jasso Sequeira, were struck with a divinely inspired idea of being called to give Christ to India, they were confronted entirely with the challenge of an absolutely new reality. They had inherited their Christian faith, brought up and been instructed in it, yet their call demanded from them a definite departure, that for a stranger would still look revolutionary and disruptive. Their calling, unlike that of any evangelizer of preaching the Gospel to the world was different.

Their calling required of them to take the Gospel to another culture and religious belief, while at the same time respecting their value systems and not uprooting them. This calling was different from early missionary movements by men and women from the West, who although genuine, could never culturally and ethnically connect with the local peoples although they genuinely tried to do. Apparently it looked simple, but given the fact that they had been completely overtaken by a foreign culture in the understanding and practice of the faith, through processes and symbols entirely contrary to their original ones, the task was more complex.

In their deep understanding of their calling they had already arrived to a clear view that India, with all its people and cultures, was their Mother. This understanding was not a political, cultural or ethnic alone, but was much more profound. It had a perfect mix of (i) the religious element of the Gospel Call of Jesus to tell the world that God loves man regardless of the culture he belongs to, and has intervened in its History through His Son Jesus, (ii) and of the inner identity that this vast community of millions of men and women, who for more than 4500 years were stated to be

alien to them, enemies of faith, and inferior in culture, were in fact, their brothers and sisters. They had strangely arrived to a watershed socio-religious belief paradox. To add to that, the idea was objectionable both to the political and religious dispensation.

The religious and political dispensation in Goa were hand in glove, for obvious reasons of the self-preservation. When they approached the Patriarch with their proposal, in 1934, they met with stiff opposition, primarily driven by the fear of the opposite, the destabilization of the status quo. It does not mean that the authorities were anti-Gospel, but their paradigm was obviously diverse and anything contrary to that would be stymied. Various proposals to ask them to join existing groups, or adopt statutes of existing Portuguese society were proposed but all were gently but resolutely rejected. This tug of war, to and fro continued for almost 5 years.

As destiny would have it, on March 19, 1937, the Holy See, after having made 3 final appeals to all existing religious groups, existing before the promulgation of the Code of Canon Law in 1918, from 1918 to 1922, to comply with the new norms, lifted the existing ban on establishing new religious societies issued in 1900, and permitted the establishment of new ones in the mission lands, and even suggested that they could even revive defunct movements that had failed. This, indeed was a God-given moment for the two pioneers to press their case with the Patriarch who finally yielded, and agreed to the original proposal, but not before stating that this was a continuation of an old (defunct) Society (Association; of course this remark had no juridical value of any kind).

Fr. Conceicao and Fr. Francisco perceived their calling as a real challenge and rose up to face it with a revolutionary idea, rarely seen in religious life. They had 3 areas to contend with : an adverse political and ecclesiastical authority, their loyalty to the Church, and the call of India. To manage all three and yet follow their calling was a very complex task. They decided to found a Society whose sole aim would be to bring Christ to India. However, to make things happen was another story, and here lies the saga

of two men who created an entirely different evangelizing paradigm.

To think creatively and organize a movement that required extraordinary out of the box solutions, they devised a process that could only come from a leadership that clearly knew what they wanted and a robust faith in God who had called them. The language and the elements of the Gospel that they professed were evidently western and alien to the Indian ethos. Since the Gospel and the message of Jesus, themselves have no exclusive cultural and ethnic identity, although set in a Palestine environment, the message of Jesus suffers from no particular cultural baggage.

At the core of their heart they had clarity that the Gospel can have multicultural colours, and therefore, although strapped to what they were, they were internally convinced that God who had called them for a task, would also guide them through that difficult path. The two pioneers, however, were strapped to a still more complicated cultural baggage, the colonialist's baggage. So they developed a three pronged strategy: **ADVOCATE, ADOPT AND IMMERSE.**

Advocate the aspirations of millions of Indians who were struggling to free themselves from foreign domination, and refused to toe the official (the Church and the State) line, which they had already rejected by refusing to comply with the prodding of the Patriarch to join a Portuguese religious Society. Obviously, the distancing became more and more pronounced and Fr. Conceicao had to flee Goa to Independent India and continued what was truly part of the plan, of bringing Christ to (free) Indians.

They **adopted** the pursuit of integrating with the Motherland, by introducing the study of Indian languages and religions in their mainstream study curriculum. That was indeed a jump into an unknown, because to study Indian languages in a hostile environment where even the word Jai Hind could land you in jail, or the speaking in Hindi, in trouble, was indeed an offense. Side by side, they drafted a document that gave the institute complete independence from interference by the Ecclesiastical authority,

provided for independent internal governance that would leave the authorities no chance for arm twisting, into shifting their goals.

They **immersed** themselves into where they believed they belonged: they boldly launched a Magazine called “India”, strangely different and contrary to all existing trends that called themselves India Portuguesa. They decided to launch their first evangelization movement in Nagar Haveli (outside Goa), as their clear demonstration of where they belonged and where they wanted to proclaim the Gospel. They introduced Indian symbols that clearly required ditching their present symbols that clearly reflected western mentality and origin.

By doing what they did, in the circumstances they were restricted in, they truly broke the glass barrier that most people even today struggle to attempt, and most importantly they defied the prevailing trend and created a rare paradigm shift: that in order to communicate the Good News of God’s love, you do not need to ride

on a particular culture, because he Good News is transcultural and the only right way to communicate it, is through the medium, symbols, language of the people they serve, and aligning their human aspirations with the universal hunger for the experience of the Divine.

They clearly broke the barrier that mystics like Kabir demonstrated that when one experiences the Divine, you are neither bound by the culture or the practices of what you believe, because faith and the experience of the divine transcend that. The courage and the wisdom that Fr. C. Rodrigues and Fr. Francisco Jasso Sequeira demonstrated by answering the call of Jesus to follow Him and “give Christ to India” is a unique event in the life and the history of India.

Therefore, the Society of Pilar that came to be in 1939, is truly a milestone in the history of the Christianity movement in India.

-Fr. J. A. Carvalho

**Fr. Agnel Ashram - Bandra
MASSES and NOVENAS ON SUNDAYS**

MORNING			
TIME	MASS	TIME	NOVENA
07:00 a.m.	English	07:45 a.m.	English
08:00 a.m.	Konkani	08:45 a.m.	Konkani
09:30 a.m.	English	10:15 a.m.	English
TIME	NOVENA	TIME	MASS
10.30 a.m.	Tamil	11.00 a.m.	Tamil
EVENING			
TIME	NOVENA	TIME	MASS
03.00 p.m.	Gujarati & Marathi	03.30 p.m.	Marathi
06:15 p.m.	English	06:30 p.m.	English
07:15 p.m.	English	07:30 p.m.	English

Weekdays Mass in English at 6.00 p.m.

Novena Prayers and Kissing of Relic are held on every Saturday after 6.00 p.m.

Mass Favours obtained, petitions and offerings may kindly be sent to :

Rev. Fr. Superior

Fr. Agnel Ashram

P.O. Box – 6656, Bandstand,
Bandra (W), Mumbai – 400 050.

Tel : 67114000.

Fax : 67114100.

Email : agnelashramnews@gmail.com

Web : <http://ash.fragnel.edu.in>

*Success is not final; failure is not fatal:
It is the courage to continue that counts.*

- Winston S. Churchill

80th Reorganization Anniversary of the Society of Pilar

-Leon Bent

The Missionary Society of St. Francis Xavier is more popularly known as the Society of Pilar, Goa, also Missionary Society of Our Lady of the Pilar. **The Society was instituted on 2nd July 1939. Hence, July 2, 2019, is the 80th Re-Organization Anniversary of the Society of Pilar (SFX).** The Society was formed on September 26, 1887 by a priest in south Goa, India, called Father Jose Mariano Bento Martins, who, together with his three companions, decided to dedicate his life for the service of God's people. The Patrons are St. Francis Xavier, Our Lady of Pilar.

As a Deacon, Jose Mariano Clemente Bento Martins, from Orlim (Salcete Taluka), started a school, in 1878, in Tilamola (Quepem Taluka). After his priestly ordination, he had told the Bishop that, "in order to serve God and the Church in a better way, out of his own will, he had dedicated himself to the religious education of the peoples of the Portuguese Territories, in 1881. By 1884, he founded 'the Society of the Missionaries of St Francis Xavier' on 26th September 1887.

Seeing their dedication and service, the first Patriarch D. A. S. Valente gave his Summer Residence of the Pilar Monastery to them as the headquarters of the new Society on 4th February 1890 and since then, it came to be known as the "Society of Pilar".

On 2nd July 1939, the clarion call of Pope Leo XIII, "Your own sons, India, will be ministers of your salvation", made them resolve to dedicate their lives to the Missions. Among them were two first-year students of Theology, Conceicao M. Rodrigues and Francisco J. Sequeira. Back in the Seminary, they shared their experience with each other and then with other seminarians. Thereby began a movement. They called this movement, "Liga Xaveriana" in honor of St. Francis Xavier.

The Society was re-organized and re-vitalized on 2nd July 1939 by the two, who accepted the advice: Fr. Conceicao Rodrigues and Fr Francisco Jasso Sequeira, together with Fr B. R. R. Gomes, by now the lone survivor of the old Society, and a few more who joined them, namely Fr. M.J. Barreto, Fr. J. A. F. Albuquerque, Fr T. Cabral and two candidates Paixao Lacerda and Peter Mascarenhas as lay brothers. They started their Novitiate in the Pilar

Monastery on 5th August 1939, and made their commitment on 8th September 1940. Unlike the old Society, which had limited its activities to the then Archdiocese of Goa, the Re-organized Society slowly spread its missions and socio-educational activities throughout India and abroad. Today, the Society is spread in four Provinces and one Region in different parts of India and has opened a few units abroad. On 30th September 2010, Pope Benedict XVI granted the Society the canonical status of Pontifical Right.

The Re-Organization of the Society of Pilar on 2nd July 1939, gave a spurt to the Missions of the Church. The first concern of the Re-organizers was to ensure the stability and progress of the Society, by establishing in 1942, a Seminary in the Pilar Monastery, with only 7 students on its rolls, for the recruitment and training of the future members of the Society. No doubt, there was initial criticism and scepticism from some quarters, but with the support of the ecclesiastical authorities, the reorganizers boldly went forward with their vision.

The Reorganized Society spread its activities everywhere, thanks to the priests trained and formed in the Pilar Seminary, who gradually joined the ranks of the missionaries. They aimed at doing pioneering work for the socio-educational uplift of the poor and downtrodden.

Right from the initial stage, the Reorganizers had envisaged and made efforts to get the Society recognized as a Missionary Society of Pontifical right, in 1942, when the Constitution was submitted for the approval of the Ordinary. The approval of Constitutions came only in 1946 after dropping such provisions, as by that time, the Society had only 11 professed members. The second time the Superiors tried to get it was in 1968. But soon the Society went through ups and downs, coping mainly with internal conflicts, to the point of threatening a division. However, time and efforts at dialogue and intervention of the Holy See, through the good offices of Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay, brought in the desired Reconciliation and Unity, on 30th November 2006. After this, the Superior General made another request in this direction, and Pope Benedict XVI by a Decree

Contd. on pg 15

Agnelites Excel In H.S.C. – 2019

There was jubilation at **Fr. Agnel Multipurpose School and Jr. College, Vashi** as the HSC results came in. The pass percentage this year too is 100%.

Akshat Deo with 92% stood first in the Science stream. Janhavi Shedde and Adesh Choudhar with 91.08 % stood 2nd and Ruchi Upadhyaya and Prathamesh Nikam with 90.92% stood 3rd respectively.

In the Commerce stream, Sofiya Sawkar with a score of 609/650(93.54%) bagged the highest percentage. She is followed by Omkar Karnani

with 92.31% and Jigar Kotak with 91.23%.

This year 148 students from the Science stream and 139 students from the Commerce stream took the HSC exams and all passed with excellent scores.

10 Students with special needs who took the HSC examination this year passed with flying colours which includes one student with Autism, Jay Jadhav (75.84 %), and one student with Cerebral Palsy, Vaishali Khsirsagar (71%).

Twins Riya Ganjekar scored 89.38% and Priya Ganjekar scored 79.53%.



Agnelites Excel In S.S.C. – 2019

There was great jubilation at **Fr. Agnel, Vashi**, as the SSC results came in online on 08th June 2019. This year too Agnel posted 100% results. Urja Merchant and Anjika Nair stood first in the English Medium with 98.4 % (492 /500), and Li Shu Ma with 97.6 % (488/500) stood 2nd, and Pranav Magar and Madhura Chatufale with 97.2 % (486/500) stood 3rd respectively.

In the Marathi Medium Section Urvi Patil with a score of 95.4 % (477 /500) bagged the highest percentage. Vedant Avhad with 94.8% (474/500) stood 2nd, and Sakshi Patil with 94.4 % (472/500) stood third.

9 students with learning disabilities and 1 student with Schizophrenia from English Medium and 2 students with learning disabilities from Marathi medium who

took the SSC examination this year passed with flying colours.

Madhura Chatufale scored 100 out of 100 in Sanskrit.

International Table tennis player Deepit Rajesh Patil currently playing in China scored 83.6%.

Awesome Twosome

It was a happy day for three pairs of Agnel Twins who performed well.

1. Ruta Purohit and Ruchira Purohit – 92.2 % and 91.2 %
2. Ruchi Jadhav and Prachi Jadhav – 72.8% and 90.4 %
3. Ranak Singh Bhambra and Girik Singh Bhambra – 88.6% and 91.8%



Congratulations

FR. AGNEL, BANDRA

AGNEL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL - S.S.C. TOPPERS



*Singh Tushar
Dinesh
85.40%*



*Shaikh Sajid
Abdul Majid
78.20%*



*Mishra Dhruv
Lavkush-
80.00%*

JR. COLLEGE & H.S.C VOCATIONAL (SCIENCE)



*Khan Haarish
Irshad Saba
Tarannum
(Science)
65.08%*



*Dudhane
Om Prashant
Vidhya
(Science)
64.77%*



*Patel Shoheb
Abdul Aziz
Nazema
(Science)
55.23%.jpg*

JR. COLLEGE & H.S.C VOCATIONAL



*Sayyed Umar
Sajid Nasim
(E.t.)
82.31%*



*Khan Md
Arbaz Afroz
Mokarram
(E.T.)
81.69%*



*Shinde Aniket
Arun Surekha
(M.T.)79.69%*

FR. AGNEL, PUNE

S.S.C. TOPPERS OF 2019



*Chavan
Vishvesh
Madhukar
92.20%*



*Gilbile Monali
Vasudev
92.00%*



*Modhale
Gaargie Balu
91.00%*

H.S.C. TOPPERS OF 2019 (SCIENCE)



*Karande
Hrutuja
Basweshwar
84.76%*



*Ansari Shanja
78.61%*



*Momin Gufran
Akhtar
74.46%*

H.S.C. TOPPERS OF 2019 (COMMERCE)



*Khoja Simran
Malik
88.62%*



*Rathore
Nagusingh
Babusingh
87.23%*



*Hritik Kumar
Arun
85.08%*

s to our Toppers

FR. AGNEL MULTIPURPOSE HIGH SCHOOL,
VERNA, GOA

S.S.C. TOPPERS OF 2019



*Merrick Joush
Pereira-First
Ranker
91.50%*



*Pearl Barbosa -
Second Ranker
89%.jpg*



*Cassandra Filomena
Braganza - Third
Ranker
88.50%*

H.S.C. TOPPERS OF 2019 (COMMERCE)



*Josfran Denzil Pereira
90.5%*

H.S.C. TOPPERS OF 2019 (SCIENCE)



*Shenelle Maegan
Cecilia Pereira
91%*

H.S.C. TOPPERS OF 2019 (VOCATIONAL COURSE)



*Melvin DaSilva
E.T.
90.75%*



*Magen
Marques
MAREEDA
86.12%*



*Mashton Paul
Cardozo C.T.
79.37%*

FR. AGNEL, AMBARNATH



SSC MARCH 2019

NAMES	%	RANK
Nidhi Khushalani	96.4%	1
Simran Totlani	95.6%	2
Rashika Kukreja	95.0%	3
Oracle Bonthu	94.6%	4
Prem Tharwani	93.8%	5



HSC COM. FEB 2019

NAMES	MARKS	%	RANK
NIKITA LOUNGANI	594	91.38 %	1
ASHWATHY NAIR	568	87.38 %	2
DEVIKA NAIR	568	87.38 %	2

HSC SCI. FEB 2019

NAMES	MARKS	%	RANK
KUNIKA VERMA (ELECTRONICS)	593	91.23 %	1
OMKAR PAWAR (ELECTRONICS)	550	84.62 %	2
SASI ANUKOOL (ELECTRONICS)	541	83.23 %	3

Agnel Happenings

Agnel Swimmers qualify for Nationals

8 swimmers from Fr. Agnel, School, Vashi, have won at the Maharashtra State Swimming Championship organised by the Swimming Association of Maharashtra and qualified for the National Championship to be held in Rajkot from 25th June to 30th June, 2019, by the Swimming Federation of India.

Taasha Fernandes from Std VI competed in Girls under 11 category and won a Gold Medal in 50 butterfly, 100 m backstroke and 50 m backstroke while her classmate Rasika Nadar won a Silver Medal in the 50m backstroke and Bronze Medal in the 50m freestyle. Mayank Periwal from Std IV won the 50m backstroke and the 100m backstroke in the Boys under 11 category.

Among the Juniors, Zaara Jabbar from Std VIII won a Gold Medal in the 200m Breaststroke and a Silver Medal in the 100m Breaststroke and 2 Bronze Medal Medals in the 200m IM and the 400m IM in the Girls under 14 category

Arya Kripalani from Std X secured a win in the 100m Backstroke, a Silver Medal in the 400m IM and Bronze Medal Medals in the 50m and

200m backstroke events in the Girls under 17 category.

Anshuman Jhingran from Std IX won 2 Gold Medals in the 50m butterfly and the 100m butterfly, a Silver Medal in the 400m freestyle and a Bronze Medal in the 1500m freestyle in the Boys under 14 category.

Suchit Patil won 2 Silver Medal in the 50m freestyle and the 50m butterfly and a Bronze Medal in the 100m freestyle.



All the above swimmers except Zaara and Arya train at the Fr Agnel Sports Center Vashi under Head Coach Gokul Kamath and Age Group coach Amit Awale.

Zaara Jabbar trains at Otters Club Mumbai and Arya Kripalani trains at GAF Mumbai.

For further details contact 9820724157 Gokul Kamath.

Note: In addition to the above swimmers Vanshika Parti from DPS, Navi Mumbai, and a trainee at the Agnel swimming pool also won a Silver Medal in the 200m freestyle and qualified for the Nationals.

Trotting Across Rajasthan!

Brewing with excitement, we, the youthful students of std. VII, VIII and IX of **Fr. Agnel Multipurpose School, Vashi**, headed off to witness the beauty of a wondrous place in the 'Incredible India', Rajasthan. After boarding our train from Mumbai Central on the night of 11th November, we got down at Sawai Madhopur

station in the afternoon, the next day. In the evening, we left in our jeeps to visit the scenic Ranthambore National Park. We all enjoyed watching the herds of deer while some fortunate groups spotted the tiger. At night, we viewed the traditional Rajasthan dance in amazement. Next day at Chittorgarh, we went to see the

famous light and sound show in the Fort, which enlightened us with the brief history of Rajasthan. On day 3, we visited the Rana Kumbha Palace, Meera and Shyam temples, Vijay Stambha and the Padmini Palace in the enormous fort of Chittorgarh, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. That night, we checked into our hotel, Kanj Ayaan Resort, nested in the midst of a valley in the white city of India, Udaipur. Next morning we visited the City Palace and gaped at the historic place in awe. On the last day, we toured Akshardham and the exquisite Kankaria Lake and Garden wherein we took delight witnessing

the laser show, in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. After the night in Duronto Express, at the crack of dawn on the 17th of November, we got down at Mumbai Central. Upon reaching school, we said our prayers and thanked our teachers and sirs for taking the utmost care of such a large group of about 217 notorious students. We also thanked Agnels for giving us memories to savour within our hearts and will all be forever grateful to have received this opportunity of a lifetime. The memories of this trip will remain etched in our minds.

“ Let Us Go, and Die with Him ”

-E.F. Joseph

The title is a bold exhortation by St. Thomas, the Apostle, at a decisive time in the life of Jesus Christ. When all other disciples were scared to accompany Jesus to Jerusalem, for fear of the Jews who had once tried to stone Him to death, St. Thomas came forward and said courageously “ Let us go and die with Him” (John 11-16), thereby, he manifested his steadfast love and loyalty to his Master. Years after, true to his words, he was martyred for the sake of love to his Master at Chinnamala, (St. Thomas Mount) near Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Of all the 12 disciples of Jesus, St. Thomas, by nature, was a brave and inquisitive person. While all other disciples had concentrated their Missionary activities (preaching of the Gospel) in Asia Minor, Rome and other near places, St. Thomas took a daring journey, braving all odds to a Far East country, that is India, Incredible India, our own Mother Land.

Striding thousands of kilometers, he arrived at Kodungallore, Trichur, Kerala in A.D 52. He preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ and baptized ancestors, thus he sowed the seed for Christianity in the Indian subcontinent. St. Thomas founded seven Churches in different parts of Kerala. Prominent among them is St. Thomas Catholic Church at Palayoor, in Trichur district, Kerala, a Church with 2000

years of Christian tradition which is considered to be the Cradle of Christianity in India

The Catholic Church commemorates his heroic death on the **3rd of July** every year, which is called **Dukhrana**, a Syriac word which means (Remembrance).

St. Thomas is often called ‘**Doubting Thomas**’, and it has now become a phrase to denote the people who refuse to believe without direct personal experience. St. Thomas refused to believe the truth that Jesus had risen from the dead and appeared to other disciples. He insisted that “unless I see the scars of the nails in His hands and put my finger on those scars and my hand in His side, I will not believe”. Eight days later, Jesus appeared to clear up all his doubts, and convinced him of His Resurrection. Jesus said to him “Thomas, stop your doubting, and believe. Do you believe because you see me? How happy are those who believe without seeing me” (John 20.26). Out of his deep conviction, he adored Jesus and made the Great Proclamation on the Risen Christ “My Lord, My God”.

Driven by Divine Inspiration and profound conviction in the resurrection of his Master he took the great challenge of evangelization and ventured a daring journey to explore a new world to preach the Good News of Jesus to all.

जॉर्ज कुरियन
उपाध्यक्ष
George Kurian
Vice Chairman



भारत सरकार
Government of India
राष्ट्रीय अल्पसंख्यक आयोग
National Commission For Minorities

Warm greetings,

I would like to express my great appreciation for the Society of Pilar, which has been rendering yeoman service to the people irrespective of caste, creed or religion. A purely Indian institution which draws inspiration from its culture and traditions and the teaching of Jesus Christ, as rightly stated by Fr. Conceicao at the inauguration of the Fr. Agnel Ashram on 9th June 1957, the Society has always lived up to its ideals of promotion of the message of Brotherhood of Man by practicing and preaching its educational, cultural and charitable activities.

Religion should never be the cause of disharmony among people, the greatest service to our religion is service to humanity. The purpose of all religions is to bring about peace and universal brotherhood. As Thomas Merton writes: "Peace cannot be built on exclusivism, absolutism and intolerance; neither can it be built on vague liberal slogans and pious programs gestated in the smoke of confabulation. There can be no peace on earth without the inner change that brings man to his right mind "Jesus Christ lived and died for peace. Peace is the prime requirement of acceptance, mutual respect and trust, This is exactly what Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he said 'Sabke Saath, Sabka Vabka Viswas' as the guiding principle of his government.

In this context, I appreciate Fr. Agnel Ashram Fathers for their commitment and self-less service and devotion to the ideals of Jesus Christ and his Church. Yours activities aimed at liberating the people of India from exploitation, moral degradation, ignorance, social backwardness, poverty, superstition, etc will help build and equitable and prosperous India. I wish you all the best in all your efforts.

(GEORGE KURIAN)

George Kurian
Vice Chairman
National Commission for Minorities
Block No.-3, CGO Complex
New Delhi-110003

कमरा न० ३०१, (तीसरी मंजिल), ब्लॉक-३, सी जी ओ कॉम्प्लेक्स, लोधी रोड, नई दिल्ली-११०००३
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80th Reorganization Anniversary of the Society of Pilar - Contd. from pg 8

dated 30th September, 2010, granted the request as a “Society of Apostolic Life for mission ad gentes of Pontifical Right”.

On February 1, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI gave his approval to the Goa-based Society of Missionaries of St Francis Xavier, Pilar (Society of Pilar), as a Society of Apostolic Life for mission Ad Gentes of Pontifical Right. To mark the event, His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay presided over the solemn Eucharistic Celebration at 4 pm, on 4th December, in the Pilar Seminary Chapel, in Goa.

Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Archbishop of Mumbai, Cardinal Telesphore Toppo, Archbishop of Ranchi, Archbishop-Patriarch Filipe Neri Ferrao and Archbishop Emeritus Raul Gonsalves, of the Archdiocese of Goa and Daman, concelebrated the Mass.

Fr Theodore Mascarenhas, (then) in charge of the Departments of Asia, Africa and Oceania at the Vatican’s Pontifical Council for Culture, in an exclusive interview to AsiaNews stated that, “the Society now has to gear up to its new role and new status.” “The missionary charisma is to be further strengthened, and new ways should be found to exercise it. The Constitution has to be amended to incorporate the changes ordered by the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.”

“These changes will affect governance and reflect the new powers, rights and responsibilities of the major superiors in the Society, and about the relationship of the Society to the Holy See, and to other Bishops,” said the then Fr. Mascarenhas.

Fr. Mascarenhas told AsiaNews that the “Society was born in the Archdiocese of Goa in 1887, founded by a priest of the Archdiocese, hence [granting] this Pontifical Right to our Society is a tribute to the people of Goa and the Archdiocese”.

The “Pilar missionaries are called to blend with the culture they are assigned to, on the model of their Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. To preach the Gospel more effectively, the Pilar missionaries are to fully integrate themselves in the culture of the place, and live in communion with the people to whom they are sent, and be part of their social and cultural world. This calls for detachment from many features of one’s own culture.”

“The Gospel way of life is to inspire our missionaries” so that they can “make innovative cultural proposals while, at the same time, remain cautious about the risks of syncretism and relativism.”

“It is most significant to note the concluding words of the Decree,” which read, “May the Society of the Missionaries of St. Francis Xavier (Society of Pilar), be always guided by the same missionary zeal that took St. Francis Xavier to distant lands, moved solely by the love to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ . . .”

In 2017, the Society of Pilar had 26 houses, 480 members, including 330 priests, the remaining are lay brothers and Pilar Sisters. It also comprises Bishop (now) Emeritus Aleixo das Neves Dias, of Port Blair, Andamans & Nicobar Islands, India, and Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas, Titular Bishop of Lysinia, Auxiliary Bishop of Ranchi and Secretary General of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India.

Fr Cosme Jose Costa s.f.x., M. A., B.Ed., (a “miracle baby”, as he is famous for) Member of the Society of Pilar, Goa Province, is the one whose birth has been accepted as a miracle to complete the process of beatification of St. Joseph Vas, Apostle of Kanara and Sri Lanka. I was very privileged to meet the octogenarian Saint in his room, about four years ago, where we had a fleeting interface. He blessed me profoundly and profusely. A “Saint” already, in his lifetime!

The crowning glory of the Society of Pilar:

Agnelo Gustavo Adolfo de Souza, was born at Anjuna, Goa, on 21st January, 1869. God had destined Agnelo for a perfect life. He wanted to live the Evangelical counsels in a religious order. After much prayer, reflection and consultation, on 17th July, 1897, he joined the Diocesan Missionary Society of St. Francis Xavier of Pilar, Goa. On 24th September, 1898, he was ordained a priest by Dom Antonio Sebastiao Valente.

Both, the Professors as well as the students referred to Fr. Agnelo as model Priest- humble, prayerful, self-denying and saintly. Even while he was alive he was lovingly referred to be “our Saint”. As a Spiritual Director, he was loving and caring, to both, the Staff and students.

He had a very holy death on 20th November, 1927.

Upon his death everyone said, “a Saint has passed away”. Even before his funeral had taken place, the Staff and the students from the Seminary began picking up the few possessions of a frugal Fr. Agnelo.

On 10th November, 1986, Pope John Paul II declared Fr. Agnelo “Venerable”. Now, we are awaiting God’s intervention with a great miracle, to prove his sanctity, and be canonized a Saint!

Let Democracy Evolve into Cosmocracy

The worst form of democracy is a million times better than an ideal form of dictatorship. Democracy provides an environment and all possible opportunities for citizens of a country to realise their potential in terms of their capabilities and creativity. There can be good democracy, there can be bad democracy; it cannot be compromised with any other system of governance. However, ever since its inception and initial honing, democracy stays where it began. It seems to have become stagnant. Has it fallen prey to certain non-evolutionary dogmas? A system, doctrine, philosophy, religion and even a god not in evolution stays rusted and infected with certain civilisational diseases. Terrorism is also an outcome of the cessation of a society's own evolution. Non-evolutionary democracy is becoming a national disease often cultivating hatred, violence and terrorism as evident from many corners of the world.

Cosmocracy, a concept of governance propounded by eco-philosopher Henryk Skolimowski, invites us to be the part of democracy at cosmic level. These new notions implant in our mind wonderful ideas to redesign our thinking and systems of living at cosmic level. A synonym of eco-democracy or eco-cracry, cosmocracy for him means “recognising the power of nature and of life itself, means observing the limits of nature, designing with nature, not against it, creating ecologically sustainable systems, reverence for the planet – not its continuous plundering”.

Putting his finger on the pulse of evolution, he opines, “We need new concepts to acknowledge the world we have created.” He further writes, “Cosmocracy is one of such concepts – one of the new windows through which we can look onto the new worlds.” Cosmocracy aims at sustainable systems encompassing well-being not only of human beings but of all living species.

Cosmocracy is democracy for the entire cosmos. It helps us to be on higher and transcendental paths of our duty. It also helps humanity to occupy a central role and exercise cosmic responsibility in helping life (entire biodiversity) to blossom throughout, as evolved by nature. Human virtues – consciousness, love, compassion, ethics, aesthetics, spirituality, sense of responsibility, imagination, wisdom, creating joy etc – which evolution has nurtured over its long journey of creativity also happen to be of potential value for sustaining eco-democracy for all living species on Earth.

In Abraham Lincoln's definition of democracy as government of the people, by the people, for the people, there is no place for non-human forms of life. Crying ‘people, people, and people’ does not denote any respect for overall life. Human species is just one of the innumerable species prospering on Earth due to which Earth is a Living Planet and also perhaps the most beautiful planet in the cosmos.

Human destiny would be at stake if non-human species are squeezed out of our vision. Of course, human species are born with virtues to take care of and ensure welfare and sustainability of all species, without which our own welfare has no meaning and our own sustainability will be unsustainable. Thus, governance for democracy by people is okay, but not only for people and of people. If we make Lincoln's definition more meaningful by saying “Democracy of life, by the people, for life”, it would define eco-democracy or cosmocracy. Cosmocracy is conceived for the whole cosmos and is evolutionary in its designs and meaning. May 4 is Eco-philosophy Day, tribute to Henryk Skolimowski

-Courtesy The Times of India



FR. AGNEL'S BLESSINGS

FERVENT PLEA ANSWERED

KUWAIT : I am from Holland working in Kuwait since last few years with a reputed company. For the last few months I was facing some serious problems in the company and I was mentally disturbed. In this predicament, a staff member Mr. Shaikh Ansari who is ex-student of Fr. Agnel school at Bandra advised me to pray to Ven. Fr. Agnel. Although I did not have his Novena prayer leaflet, trusting in his heavenly intercession I fervently prayed to him. I am now very happy to inform you that through the blessing of Fr. Agnel I am relieved of all tensions and I am now happy at my work place. With a grateful heart an offering of Rs.5000/- to the Ashram.

-Kathleen Hellen

SAVED FROM DEFAMATION

MULUND – MUMBAI : Although we belong to some other faith, we are ardent devotees of Ven. Agnel for the last many years. We were praying to Ven. Agnel for a particular favour in a critical time which otherwise, would have been a black mark on our family reputation. Through the intercession of Ven. Agnel our prayer was granted in the right time. Our sincere thanks to Fr. Agnel with an offering of Rs.11,000

-Meena Vashi & Shardaben Naik

SHOWER OF BLESSINGS

SANTACRUZ : By the grace of Ven. Agnel my son passed SSC with high marks and secured admission for higher studies in a reputed

College despite stiff competition. Moreover, I am blessed with a good job with a handsome salary in a foreign country. As a token of our profound gratitude, an offering of Rs.10,000/- (Rupees Ten thousand only) for one time meal for the poor children at the Ashram.

-Victor D'Souza

SECURED VISA TO CANADA

ANDHERI : My daughter was trying to go to Canada for higher studies but her application was rejected due to some technical reasons. We were very upset. In this plight, we entreated the intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnel and fervently prayed for his blessing. We are now very happy to inform you that through the intercession of Ven. Fr. Agnel all the legal hassles were removed and she will be flying shortly. Our sincere thanks to Ven. Fr. Agnel with offering of Rs.1000/-

-Reginlad Noronha

SUCCESSFUL CEREBRAL OPERATION

MALAD: My brother, who is 65 years old, had to undergo a major operation for cerebral Haemorrhage. The doctors had no hope on success of the operation as he was down with many other infirmities. In this predicament, we entrusted him to Ven Fr. Agnel and fervently prayed for his healing touch over him. We are now very happy to inform you that by the blessing of Ven. Fr. Agnel the operation was successful. He is now quite hale and hearty. Our thanks offering of Rs.201 has been put in the box at the Samadhi.

-Nainina Prajapati

People who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do.

-Rob Siltanen

Out of Their Bounty

P. Srivastava	Mumbai	5000	L.S. Dabre	Vasai	1000	Machado & Sons	T.N.	500
Kenneth Remedios	Mumbai	5000	Dilip Parkhe	Raigad	1000	L.B. Clancy	Bangalore	500
R. Palackal	Khargar	35000	Pratap Chavan	Mumbai	1000	Ayshabi	Kerala	500
R. Gonsalves	Vasai	25000	Kushal N. Manek	Mumbai	1000	Riju A.X.	Kerala	500
Leroy Fernandes	Oman	20000	Mary Dabre	Vasai	1000	V. Sophia	T.N.	500
S. Naik	Mumbai	14500	C.N. Nayak	Mumbai	1,000	E. Villavarayar	T.N.	500
V.G. Idnani	Mumbai	13000	V.S. Bilolikar	Thane	1000	Hiren U. Gala	Dombivli	500
Anita M. Pereira	Vasai	12000	Mathew Gregory	Kerala	1000	Thomas Philip	Karnataka	500
F Contractor	Mumbai	10000	Arun Jadhav	Kerala	1000	G. Thomas	Kerala	500
T.V. Antony	Mumbai	10000	Martha Thomas	Kerala	1000	K.Y. Macan	Gujarat	500
Swati S. Sawant	Mumbai	10000	M.D. Mathai	Kerala	1000	T.V. Scharia	Kerala	500
Hyrapiet	Kolkata	10000	A. Santhappan	T.N.	1000	V. Puppal	Ahmednagar	500
Hetal Patel	Vasai	9000	A. Mittathany	Kerala	1000	Violet D'Souza	Gujarat	400
Uma Datta	U.S.A.	7000	Rita Johnson	Kerala	1000	D. Joseph	Daman	300
Jasmine G. Gill	Mumbai	5900	V. Kedari	Pune	1000	O.L. Sirvel	Vasai	300
Minaxi Christian	Vadodara	5000	A. Devarajan	T.N.	1000	A. Nirmala	Kerala	300
B.R. Kajar	Australia	5000	T.T. Punnen	Kerala	1000	Shernaz Mistry	Pune	300
Amelia Fernandes	Mumbai	5000	Jacob Cherian	Kerala	750	L. Savarimuthu	T.N.	300
Subramaniam	Mumbai	5000	Irudayaraj M.	T.N.	750	Justine Fernandes	Kerala	300
Jayesh Thakkar	Mumbai	5000	G.P. Fonseca	Mumbai	750	P.K. Alphonsa	Kerala	300
Maria Aranha	Mumbai	5000	C. Nariman	Mumbai	600	M.F. D'Souza	Mumbai	250
V. S. Daniel	Surat	5000	Shilpa	Mumbai	600	Anto Paul	Kerala	250
S. Katak	Mumbai	5000	Divya	Mumbai	600	Laxmi Patel	Mumbai	201
Vijay Bakshi	Mumbai	5000	Arielle	U.S.A.	600	C. S. Tope	Thane	201
Z. J. Bharucha	Vasai	4500	V.A. Ghate	Nanded	501	J.S. Mistry	Mumbai	200
Jerson Fernandes	Mumbai	3000	E.A. Fernandes	Mumbai	500	Sunil Almeida	Nalasopara	200
S. Carvalho	Mumbai	3000	Jatin Desai	Valsad	500	Shobha Pillai	Mumbai	200
S. Inigo	T.N.	3000	A. Mendes	Mumbai	500	D. Kansara	Valsad	200
Pragna D. Naik	Mumbai	2505	H. Bhatt	Mumbai	500	D. S. Audhish	Mumbai	200
P.B. Popat	Mumbai	2500	Johnny Dias	Mumbai	500	P.S. Patwardhan	Pune	200
Techno Products	Chennai	2500	S.D. Furtado	Palghar	500	John Baptist	T.N.	200
Irene D'Souza	Mumbai	2000	B. Tristram	Ambanath	500	Stella Thomas	Pondicherry	200
Sonya Mathias	Pune	2000	S.D. Machado	Virar	500	Prema Indrani	T.N.	200
H. Engineer	Mumbai	2000	P.G. Kelawalla	Mumbai	500	William Pereira	Karnataka	200
A.S. Nalavade	Pune	2000	Shaila Lopes	Virar	500	C.K. Fernandes	Ahmedabad	200
B.R. Colaco	Vasai	2000	Anamika	Virar	500	V.S. Jadhav	Ahmednagar	200
L. Damakici	Mumbai	2000	Pascal Fernandes	Mumbai	500	M. Sussai Nathan	T.N.	200
S.C. D'Silva	Dahisar	2000	S.R. Vaz	Vasai	500	K. Alexander	Kerala	200
Mable Fernandes	Mumbai	2000	R.R. Tuscano	Nalasopara	500	S.N. Bhatt	Mumbai	101
J.S. Sawant	Mumbai	2000	S. Fernandes	Mumbai	500	H. Gonsalves	Mumbai	101
A. Vangare	Ahmednagar	2000	S.V. Christian	Gujarat	500	S.S. Kulkarni	Mumbai	101
Dinshaw C. Itacia	Mumbai	2000	S. Darole	Mumbai	500	Nikhil Kulkarni	Mumbai	101
J.G. Bhaduri	Bilaspur	2000	Ashok Patel	Mumbai	500	Urmila M. Wagle	Virar	101
F Mascarenhas	Mumbai	2000	M.P. Malde	Mumbai	500	Recha Lopes	Virar	100
G. Marques	Panaji	2000	Eka Sharma	Mumbai	500	U.K. Patel	Mumbai	100
Q.J. A. Nadar	Dharavi	2000	D.P. Dave	Mumbai	500	B. Pulpiya	Mumbai	100
Cynthia Gonsalves	Bahrain	2000	Anu Koshy	Mumbai	500	L. Correa	T.N.	100
Harikrishnan A.	Mumbai	1001	Valerian Samson	Mumbai	500	D.c. Dawson	Jharkhand	100
K. S. Sangeetha	Mumbai	1001	D.F. Motafaram	Mumbai	500	Antony R.	T.N.	100
V.P. Pavri	Mumbai	1000	M.J. Lam	Nashik	500	Ernest Aruja	Kerala	100
Merlyn Sahitya	Navi Mumbai	1000	Hitesh Hirji D.	Mumbai	500	E. R. D'Cruz	Karnataka	100
S.S. Christian	Pune	1000	Arjun Kmar	Mumbai	500	Elsy Francis	Kerala	100
P.V. D'Costa	Mumbai	1000	M. S. Pawri	Mumbai	500	L.a. Cecilia	Pondicherry	100
Jaya S. Almeida	Nirmal	1000	Linda Gonsalves	Vasai	500	Mary Philomia	Kerala	100
R.K. Patel	Mumbai	1000	S. Pereira	Mumbai	500	I.S. Anandraj	Bangalore	100
S.D. Kuble	Mumbai	1000	H.N. Desai	Gujarat	500	E.F. Bhamgara	Nagpur	100
			Edwin David	Bangalore	500			

A Day of Yoga and Music

International Yoga Day and World Music Day were celebrated with great enthusiasm at **Fr. Agnel Multipurpose School and Jr. College, Ambernath** on 21st June, 2019.

The day began with melodious singing which uplifted the soul. The school choir presented “Show a little bit of love and kindness” and “Let the music heal your soul” and won hearts. A brief speech encouraged everyone present to make music an integral part of one’s life as it can bring about healing and well-being in our troubled times. The students made the day a memorable one by giving artistic cards to the members of the staff.

This was followed by a short talk about the benefits of yoga and the recitation of a simple yet effective rap “10 minutes yoga... bada faayda hoga” by all the students.

Later, during the course of the day, yoga sessions were organized for the students. Each 30- 35 minute session began with meditation and pranayama. The students were encouraged to perform simple yogasanas like vajrasana, tadasana, vrukshasana, hastapadasana, shavasana etc. ,with soothing music in the background, while learning about the benefits of each. The echoes of children’s voices as

they chanted the omkar and recited shlokas filled the air.

The students were guided by, Yoga Instructor, Mr. Sunil Sachdev . He encouraged students to practice yoga regularly to remain fit and improve concentration.

Since its inception in the year 2015, June 21 is celebrated as International Day of Yoga all over the world. This idea was proposed by our Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi. He said, “Yoga is an invaluable gift of India’s ancient tradition. It embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfillment; harmony between man and nature; a holistic approach to health and well-being. It is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with yourself, the world and nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help in well being.”

The school administrator Madam Antoinette enlightened the students about the importance of yoga and music in their lives, expressing the faith that regular practice of yoga and love for music will surely help the students achieve a better life, physically, mentally and spiritually as well.



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