GENEROSITY
The Christian Way of Life
ST. FRANCIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
(ENGINEERING COLLEGE)
(Christian Minority Educational Institute)
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* 51% of the seats are reserved for Christian Minority candidates. Admission to these seats are done as per DTE norms. For more information, enquire using https://forms.gle/ugbb2hJhgnYk6t8T6

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%20SFIT_Engg_Official  SFIT Engineering
അണിയില്‍
മായാരാവുമെന്ന്…

മലയാളത്തില്‍ ആദ്യം കഥാപാത്രമായ ഓവർലുക്ക്. എങ്ങനെയാണ് വീണ്ടുമുണ്ടെന്നും ഒരു മാനുഷ്യമായിരിക്കുന്നു എന്നതും. മലയാളത്തില്‍ മാനുഷ്യത്തിന്റെ മാനന്തവം കഴിഞ്ഞതും ഒരു മാനുഷ്യ ആണ് എന്നും. എങ്ങനെയാണ് ഇന്ന് മാനുഷ്യത്തിന്റെ വിശ്വാസം ഒരു മാനുഷ്യയുടെ മാനന്തവും ഇത് എന്നതും.

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Nurturing Generosity as a Way of Life

Joseph Anto
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As per the Qessa-ye-Sanjan, which is a sixteenth century poem about the Sanjan kingdom, a group of Zoroastrian priests from Iran landed in Sanjan, or the present day Valsad district in Gujarat, to escape persecution by the Persians. The Sanjan kingdom was ruled by a Rajput king known as the Jaldi Rana. When the chief priest sought permission from the king to settle down in his kingdom, the king sent a cupful of milk indicating how overcrowded his kingdom already was. In response, the chief priest added sugar to the brimming cup, indicating that his
The tribe was here to add sweetness to the kingdom. Inspired by this allusion, King Rana allowed the Zoroastrians to settle in his kingdom. One of those Zoroastrians went on to found a huge business empire, which is the current day TATA group. The sugar which was added to the overflowing cup of milk is still visible today in their acts of generosity.

Such is the case of generosity, an art of living which adds sweetness in our stressful lives. Generosity is widely considered as an act of unselfishness and a liberal way of serving others with utmost dignity. Generosity is universally seen as the core value of the multiple religions which exist today.

**Biblical Teachings on Generosity and the Practices of Early Christians**

The Bible puts a lot of emphasis on generosity. The gospels and epistles contain many references to it. According to James 1:17, God is the root of all generosity. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights.” This verse implies that generosity begins by considering and reflecting upon the numerous gifts we have received from God.

1 John 3:17 expresses the concept of generosity in practical terms. “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity upon him, how can the love of God be in him?” By this verse, the message conveyed to us is that it is our prime responsibility to utilize the blessings given to us by God in a meaningful manner.

The early Christians practised generosity by sharing meals in homes with a generous heart and also strived to lighten the financial hurdles of the needy among them (Acts 2:45-46). The early Christians sold their private possessions and threw the proceeds into the common pool. Most of them gave their belongings joyfully and generously irrespective of their situation. They were determined to help meet the needs of others. Above all, they gave themselves to the Lord.

**The Traits of a Generous Person**

The most common traits of a generous person are:

- Seeing things from the other's point of view
- Expressing genuine interest in others
- Respecting the dignity of others

The discipline of seeing things from the other's point of view and identifying their needs strengthens personal relationships. Thus it has been rightly said by a wise man that, “If you can help solve others' problems, the world is your oyster.” Brains, talent and energy are considered as vital for executing a task. However, to win it, there is a secret rule that walks hand in hand along with the aforesaid skills. The secret is “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Hence if we synthesise the multiple aspects, it can be swiftly concluded that generosity plays a vital role in the current environment of cut-throat competition in various fields.
What Does Science Say About Generosity?

Neuropsychological studies have revealed that human nature is very intricate but generally selfish. However, deep roots of generosity are still embedded in human beings. Research and meta-analysis have proved that generosity aids impart a greater meaning towards life, enhances vitality and promotes self-esteem. Also, a direct link has been observed between happiness and generosity. Acts of kindness have been found to reduce stress and anxiety. The part of the brain which is known as the amygdala is widely responsible for eliciting emotional responses. When experiencing stress, anxiety, worry or phobia, it enlarges in size. On the contrary, an individual who has just performed an act of generosity displays an amygdala which is far smaller in size.

Implementing Generosity in Our Lives

Although generosity imparts multiple benefits to us, our selfish human nature makes its practice a humongous one. Some of the measures which can be employed to make it a way of life are:

1. Beginning your day with gratitude:
   Start your day by showing gratitude towards God.

2. Study the life of philanthropists:
   Identify generous personalities and search for specific traits in them. These would enlighten you about daily practices to be implemented.

3. It is not always about money:
   A common misconception associated with generosity is that it's always about finance. Small acts of kindness such as spending time with the needy, showing concern for others, gifting a simple smile to uplift others mood, etc., also qualify as acts of generosity.

4. Start small, build a base and capitalize on it later:
   It's always an uphill task to consciously develop a new habit. However small resolute steps taken daily can compound and yield huge dividends.

5. Enrol an 'accountability partner':
   Walking alone would not take you far, but having a partner who has the same vision would help take you to your destination. Having a partner in such an act would be a boon in the long run. One will complement the other.

6. Spend time with other generous persons:
   Generosity is highly contagious, hence spending time with people who already practise it can assist in developing the necessary traits.

7. Limit the materialistic possessions:
   The materialistic lifestyle of the world we live in pushes us in the direction of stress, worry and anxiety. A minimalistic approach would be suitable for limiting the materialistic tendencies and finding solace in the things that are truly required for life.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced a paradigm shift around us. The permanent scars left behind due to the pandemic will stay for a longer duration of time. However, it has made us realize what truly matters in life. All of a sudden, the materialistic world seems meaningless and it is inner peace which is of utmost importance. Just like Dr Viktor Frankl once said, “Attitude matters the most.” Developing an attitude of sharing would function as a boon in such a scenario. Just like the sugar which added sweetness to the brimming cup, the attitude of generosity can sweeten multiple areas of our lives and promote inner peace.
The word “tithe” literally means “a tenth”. Tithing isn’t merely giving something to God. It's giving back what was God’s, to begin with. All that we have, or hope to have, comes from God. The Bible says that tithing is a reminder that God is the supplier of everything. It teaches us to always put God first in our lives. Our ability to acquire wealth is a gift given to us by God, and we need to be mindful of how we use these resources to fulfill God's work, to further God’s kingdom and take care of others.

Many Christians struggle with the issue of tithing and refuse to submit to the biblical exhortations about making offerings to the Lord. Tithing/giving is intended to be a joy and a blessing. The tithe was a requirement of the Law by which the Israelites were to give 10 percent of the crops they grew and the livestock they raised to the temple. (Deuteronomy 12:5-6)

Every Christian should diligently seek God’s wisdom in the matter of tithing and/or how much to give (James 1:5). Above all, all tithes and offerings should be given with pure motives and an attitude of worship to God and service to the body of Christ. “Each man should give what
he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Tithing and generosity were instilled in me by my ammamma (my paternal grandmother). Memories of my childhood vacations spent with my grandparents at my ancestral home in Thrissur are still fresh. Our home, being just opposite the church, early every morning my Ammamma used to give milk (freshly milked from the cow at home) and freshly laid eggs (from the chicken coop at home) to the church presbytery. Every weekend, she used to give live chicken and fresh vegetables to the church. Out of a child’s curiosity, I asked ammamma why we needed to do this. She responded that whatever we have is the Lord’s blessing and we need to return a small portion to him as an expression of gratitude. Let’s always be courteous like the sole leper (Luke 17: 11-19) who came back to thank him.

I experienced during my 9 years of stay in the UAE, the generous parishioners diligently coming to the church office month-on-month and offering their tithes to build up the Lord’s kingdom. Since many years, my family and I have been tithing to our parish/charities/evangelization ministries. Whatever pocket money or cash gifts my daughters receive, they keep 10% aside to sow in the Lord’s vineyard. My elder daughter didn’t buy her birthday dress this year and donated that to buy a liturgical item for the parish. Both my daughters, during the lockdown, donated their pocket money towards the Karunya Trust’s campaign of ‘Give Pads, Gift Hygiene’. A few of my friends maintain separate bank accounts only for tithing purposes.

We too have our share of challenges but we just cling on to Jesus, the provider and recite Philippians 4:19: “And your God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus”. We know well that we are blessed so that we in turn can be a blessing to others. I do agree that we all have financial commitments like EMIs, household expenses, kids’ education expenses, insurance premiums, medical expenses etc., to be met, but trust me, just start tithing and experience the unadulterated joy of giving. Luke 6:38 assures: “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.”

During tough times, my tithes have even gone down to the level of the Widow’s Mite (Mark 12:41-44), but I’m sure that God, who sees the heart, is nonetheless pleased with my offerings and sacrifices. Mother Teresa once said: "We may feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean, but the ocean would be less because of that missing drop." It is said that "Our memories of the ocean will linger on, long after our footprints in the sand are gone" (author unknown).

Claim, recite, meditate and hold on to Malachi 3:10: “Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing."
Until now, we have been exposed to all the major facets of Christian life such as faith and rituals. But we are now forced to review everything under the weight of Covid-19 and its negative impact on all aspects of human life – religious, cultural, social, educational, scientific etc. The oft-repeated word today is 'online' because of the new situation which has imposed on everyone a much unwanted and unusual experience of isolation and social distancing. We are compelled to conduct our routine activities in a 'contactless' manner. The priest celebrates Holy Mass without the congregation, the teacher teaches without the class, even doctors consult without seeing the patient, sellers transact without meeting the customers, etc. Even the practice of generosity has taken hitherto unknown routes. Counselling the needy, attending to the sick, burying the dead, reaching the essentials to the homes of the isolated – everything is done 'online'.

Jesus's Attitude Towards the Needy

Let us revisit the Gospels, the Old Testament and the history of the early Church regarding one of the fundamental aspects of Christianity, namely catering to our needy neighbour. In St. Luke's gospel, we find a lawyer asking Jesus, 'Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' Jesus replied, 'Love the Lord your God', to which he also added, 'and your neighbour as yourself' (Lk 10/27). Jesus condensed the Ten Commandments into just two, both of equal value. Further, he explained who one's neighbour is: he is not just the one who stays close to our house, but the one who is in need.
wherever he may be. The parable of the Good Samaritan was a clear explanation of this standpoint of Jesus. About His own ministry, He said, '....the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and give His life for many' (Mt. 20:28). He did this symbolically by washing the feet of the disciples (Jn 13:5) and concretely by dying on the cross for the expiation of the sins of the world.

**Generosity in the History of the Church**

Throughout the history of the Church, we find an uninterrupted flow of Christian charity towards the needy. Whenever people were under the grip of the plague, the Church was there to assist them. Many Capuchin Friars have died in the past as a result of serving the plague victims. Widows and orphans were given care and support. The aged, the marginalised, the handicapped and all those mentally and physically challenged have been the beneficiaries of Christian love and mercy.

**St. Vincent De Paul:**

Among those who have become luminaries in the world of Christian benevolence and mercy, St. Vincent De Paul (1581-1660) stands out as one without parallel. At a time when the whole world was busy with selfish pursuits, Vincent, a young French priest, ventured into the field of charity in which he remained till his death. His concern for others was as wide as the sky. Today every parish has a St Vincent De Paul Society through which many poor people are getting help for their various needs.

**Mother Teresa:**

Another example of Christian concern for the abandoned is St. Teresa of Kolkata, who was simply known as 'Mother' around the world. She started with abandoned men and women found on the streets of Kolkata and babies unwanted by their mothers. From this 'City of Joy', she spread her wings to the entire world. Caste, religion, language, nationality and race were of no concern to her. She embraced everyone, whoever and wherever they may be, who required her intervention. It was she more than anyone in the world who raised the social consciousness of the average person concerning the pathetic situation of thousands everywhere.

**Pope Francis, a Man with an Open Heart**

Pope Francis who became the Head of the Catholic Church in the year 2013 is the embodiment of concern for the needy in the world. This has endeared him to the leaders...
and people of all nations. He comes from a country infested with poverty, terrorism, military oppression and drug trafficking. Even as a Bishop, he had worked in the slums of his Diocese and knew first hand what poverty means. Ever since he became Pope, he has insisted on simplicity in life and focussed on ameliorating the pathetic situation of the poor and refugees all over the world. In the last week of July 2013, he visited Brazil, where he exhorted the bishops and priests not to be holed up in their premises, but instead go out into the slums where people are waiting for the Word of God. He told the people if only we could show a little more warmth, we could reduce the cold and build a more just society. Pope Francis even declared a Year of Mercy from 8th December 2015 to 20th November 2016 so that the Christian community may open their hearts to the harsh realities of their fellowmen. The indifference of the rich to the cries of the poor needs to end. The wounds of the voiceless are innumerable and he called us during that Jubilee Year to heal those wounds with diligence and care.

Covid-19 and the Church's Response

As in past crises, so also today when the whole world is reeling under the Covid-19 pandemic, the Church is pooling all her resources to meet the unprecedented situation which shows no sign of abating. The Church in India surrendered to the Government all her major institutions and hospitals to cater to those in quarantine and to treat all those infected by the virus. In many places, the concerned managements met all the expenses to prepare these institutions to receive patients, besides contributing substantially to the Government coffers for making elaborate arrangements for treating the infected persons as well as preventing the spread of the disease. Pope Francis appeared on Italian television on the day prior to Palm Sunday in April 2020 and appealed to the Christian community to care for the sick and console the isolated. He said that 'even if we are isolated we should help others with broad love'. He said that he is with everyone in this pathetic situation. Thus the entire Christian community is at the service of those affected by this deadly disease with all her human and institutional resources and keeps praying incessantly for the amelioration of the situation. The generosity of the Christians knows no bounds and keeps flowing in every direction.
Davis Edathiruthikaran
belongs to St. Thomas Catholic Church,
Mira Road East
"തെയ്യ കൈതസശ്വലത്തിന് ഓമി, ഗ്രിസ്ലാഡ് വാക്ക് അപേക്ഷിച്ച് ഇണങ്ങി" (മുസ്‌ലിം 1:37). 

അവരുടെ അടുത്ത് തമ്മിൽ നിന്നും കടിക്കുകയാണ് മൂന്നാണ്‌ അടുത്ത് നിന്നും. വാവ്യാശ്രാമ്യ അഥവാ അപേക്ഷിക്കുകയാണ്. 

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250 കണ്ണിരാശി മൂന്നാണ്‌ അടുത്ത് 

ഐഹികതയിലെ മരിയാമാർ മൂന്നാണ്‌ അടുത്ത് നിന്നും കടിക്കുകയാണ് സംസ്കാരശാസ്ത്രത്തിന് കൈതസശ്വലത്തിന് കൈതസശ്വലം വാക്ക് അപേക്ഷിക്കുകയാണ്. 

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അവരുടെ അടുത്ത് തമ്മിൽ നിന്നും കടിക്കുകയാണ് മൂന്നാണ്‌ അടുത്ത് നിന്നും.
മാസം ഉത്തരാദിപ്പ് തോസായ് തീയ്യസാരം (പ്ലാറ്റോമാ, 2:24-35) കൊണ്ട് കുറാണം തൂലികാനം മാത്രമാണ്. 

യുദ്ധവാതാരം പുതുക്കം പാലിച്ചുനു പാലിച്ചുനു പുതുക്കം തോസായ തീയ്യസാരം കൊണ്ട്.

നായന്റെ ഭാഗം കൊണ്ട് വാഴു നായന്റെ ഭാഗം കൊണ്ട്.

അവസാനത്തില്ല വിശ്വസിക്കുന്ന പെറ്റായ ജീവികളാണ്.

ജീവിതത്തിലുള്ള പിൻപടിക നായന്റെ ഭാഗം കൊണ്ട്.

ജീവിതത്തിലുള്ള പിൻപടിക നായന്റെ ഭാഗം കൊണ്ട്.

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കാൽത്തൊഴി ഉണ്ടെങ്കിൽ പുറം തോസായ് തീയ്യസാരം (പ്ലാറ്റോമാ, 2:2-9) ൽ കെട്ടിയിരുന്നു. 

ആദാരം പാലിച്ചുനു പാലിച്ചുനു പുതുക്കം തോസായ് തീയ്യസാരം (പ്ലാറ്റോമാ, 2:2-9) ൽ കെട്ടിയിരുന്നു.
Jessymol Saji
belongs to Carmel Parish,
Wadgaonsheri, Pune

“ആവിഷ്കാരം കാലാന്തരിക അവധിയിലെ അംഗങ്ങളും അവസാനമായ സ്ഥലത്തിലെ പ്രവാചകന്മാരും നാടൻ പ്രവാചകന്മാരുമായി പരസ്പരം സംസ്കാരിക പ്രകടനങ്ങൾ സംരംഭിച്ചു. പ്രവാചകന്മാരുടെ സംസ്കാരിക പ്രകടനങ്ങള്‍ അവരുടെ കാലാന്തരിക അംഗങ്ങളുടെ സേവനത്തിന് പ്രതിഫലിക്കുന്നു. എങ്കിലും പ്രവാചകന്മാരുടെ സംസ്കാരിക പ്രകടനങ്ങള്‍ അവരുടെ കാലാന്തരിക അംഗങ്ങളുടെ സേവനത്തിന് പ്രതിഫലിക്കുന്നു.

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Abortion

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A REFLECTION ON GIVING

Proverbs 22: 9 "those who are generous are blessed, for they share their bread with the poor".

The first question that strikes our mind when we think about charity is "Should we give everything that belongs to us or should we foresee the needs and comfort of ourselves and our loved ones before giving. The answer to the question is not simple, as the answer is not worldly but it could be only understood and accepted by experiencing the love and generosity of God.

What is Generosity According to the Holy Bible?

Generosity, for us Christians is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. It can be practised and made an integral part of our lives only when we truly believe that all we own is given to us for a purpose. Our faith is based on the very fact that whatever we have received is the precious gift of God and all of it has to be used in the service of the Heavenly Kingdom. For we can never separate the generosity of God towards us from our responsibility to share his gifts with others.

What is the Significance of Generosity?

Many times we have read in the Bible that those who are blessed with prosperity are given the opportunity by Jesus to give away their wealth and follow Christ. But because of greed, they are unable to cherish the spiritual joy of giving. For many, their prosperity becomes a barrier to enter heaven, just as Jesus mentions in Matthew 19:24 "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

According to Proverbs 19:17 "whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and will be repaid in full". Imagine being
repaid by God. He is the same God who gave his only son to the world. So how much more we will receive when God is in our debt.

**What Will Be the Reward for the Generous?**

The smallest act of generosity will never go unnoticed by Jesus just like He couldn't overlook the two copper coins offered by the widow in the temple treasury. Jesus saw something in that poor woman's action which the casual observer never would. Of all the contributors to the treasury that day, Jesus found the widow worthy of adulation because the jingles of her mite were the only ones which were heard in Heaven. Here was a woman who was actually in need of charity, yet was willing to sacrifice her all. She exhibited profound trust in God and had no fear of the consequences.

In the same vein, Jesus has promised that "whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple - truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward (Mathew 10:42)".

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**The Science Behind Generosity**

Generosity promotes compassion. According to science, it elevates good hormones which make us happy and also reduces stress. Its practice not only makes our inner self rejoice but also serves the purpose of serving mankind. Most of the books on children's etiquette talk about teaching kids to be kind and generous. As we grow up, we start forgetting our basic perspectives and get lost in the rat race.

**Jesus - A Gift Beyond Measure**

God gave his only son Jesus to mankind, who in turn sacrificed his life on the cross for our sins. This alone makes Jesus the most generous person who lived on earth. Christ's death on the cross is a display of the plenitude of divine charity. This is a kind of divine donation that God made, portraying his prodigality.

**Mary - The Generous Mother**

Throughout her life on earth, Mary showed limitless generosity. Mother Mary had put herself at God's disposal. She made no excuses and did everything God wanted her to do. In Mary, we get the confirmation that generosity is the hallmark of a great soul. From her, we learn that we have to first be generous to GOD and then the people.

**Generosity Transforming the World During the Pandemic**

The current Covid-19 pandemic teaches us that everybody in this world is equal and no amount of wealth and power will help us. It also gives us the chance to help the less privileged. Moreover, it is creating tremendous opportunities for the church to grow and the religious to devote their time in prayer, as more and more people are getting involved in spreading the word of God through their talents for online spirituality.

The true spirit of giving consists in doing so without any expectation of gain, because whoever gives manipulatively i.e. anticipating something in return is merely a 'user' and not a real giver. Generosity goes beyond giving financially. It isn't something that happens only after you 'have arrived', rather it is something you practise irrespective of your current station in life. It doesn't "show up" one fine day- it has to be cultivated i.e. ingrained. It's good to remember that all the blessings of giving will be realised only when we give with a heart full of love and with no sense of compulsion.

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**How Can We Invest in Heaven?**

Jesus wanted us to know that when we give, we are investing in heavenly treasures which we will be able to enjoy for all eternity. As mentioned in Mathew 6:20 "but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal". No amount of wealth or riches accumulated here on earth by man can ever be taken with him into the hereafter. But each of us has an account in heaven; every time we share or do a good deed on earth we are making deposits into that heavenly account which is ours to enjoy forever.
Teaching the Significance of Generosity to the Young

Be a gift to everyone who enters your life, and to everyone whose life you enter. Be careful not to enter another's life if you cannot be a gift.

These are the words of Neale Donald Walsh in his book “Conversations with God”. Receiving a gift is exciting at any age - be it to a small child or a 90-year-old. I believe that the excitement and sense of fulfilment are even more for the giver of the gift than the receiver. A gift is given from the generosity of the giver. Whether one's gift is a
material item or cash or an experience or a supportive service, the motivation for giving it is what matters. Motivation is something that comes from the heart.

Young children are usually taught the virtue of sharing right in their homes and also as a part of their value education curriculum in school. Any habit which is stressed upon in the formative years becomes second nature to the person in most cases, though there may be exceptions. In this pandemic, however, though sharing of things might not be such a good idea, generosity can certainly go a long way.

- Talk about generosity to your young teens and point out when you see others being generous.
- Practice giving: When there's a gift to give, have your child help select, wrap, and give it.
- Encourage it – Look for opportunities to help your children practise being generous and doing things for others
- If you support charities or missionaries, explain this to your teens, and involve them.

And the last and the most important aspect of teaching generosity is to be generous yourself. That's hard to do if you are grasping tightly to your righteousness, your belief system, your superiority, your assumptions about others and your definition of normal.

Young adults, since they have lesser exposure to the vagaries of life, should be made to understand that kindness cannot wait because one never knows when it can become ‘too late’.

During the Kerala floods, we saw many of our youth being extremely active in the collection drive for flood relief. Some of these youth had never been seen in catechism classes or during Sunday mass. They suddenly cropped up to help by coming out on the roads with the rest of the parishioners. It was indeed heartwarming to see them approach absolute strangers and request help for the people of Kerala. It was even more touching to see the generosity of such strangers who without thinking twice, donated for the cause then and there. People from the poorer sections of society also put coins in the collection box. Maybe those coins did not amount to much but the love and care they represented were beyond measure. I truly believe that such unexpected acts of generosity turned many youth’s hearts when they realised that money is just an avenue for generosity; kindness is an even more valuable currency.

Youngsters are usually 'hard up' and so the idea that monetary charity is the only way to be generous should be removed from their minds. Generosity rarely happens by chance. Instead, it’s a conscious decision that we make in our lives. However, it does need to be as difficult as many people tend to think, because “in gratitude we are human and in generosity we are divine”. Mathew 10:8 tells us that “You received without pay, so give without pay” Sometimes starting with simple steps is the best step that we can take.
“For the person who has something will be given more, so that he will have more than enough; but the person who has nothing will have taken away from him even the little he has.” Mathew 13:12

What you give, you get back, that's the law of the universe. So why not make generosity a way of life. Looking back at life today I have realized that what I am is all because of the generous community around me.

We were five siblings and Dad was the breadwinner of our family. He had the added responsibility of helping his native relatives too. During my childhood, we lived in Manikpur, Vasai. It was a Christian dominated locality at that time and the houses were mostly rented apartments. We had Christian landlords who were very humble, loving and God-fearing people. They treated us like their own children and also let us play in their front yard. They distributed their produce from farms among the tenants and I don't remember a single incident where my Dad spoke ill about them.

My schooling at St. Anthony's convent was completed because of the generous nature of the nuns. Since my dad couldn't afford our yearly academic fees, the nuns would often waive off our three months worth of fees. This was an act of generosity that helped us a lot.

Today, I am almost 60 yrs old. At each and every step of my life, the people around me gave from what they had. They made generosity a way of life. You can't wait for another day or time, start sharing from what you have. This is what I have learned. Generosity does not always mean money, one can be generous with their time. For instance, when my mother had to be in Kerala, it was our next-door aunt who braided my hair every day for school. The neighbors always took care of us even when our mother had other errands to run.

What we have is all given by God, so be generous with your words and speak positively. Be generous with your possession and learn to share with people who need it. Open your home, be generous to say that my home is also yours. We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.
People generally aren't used to kindness from strangers. Most of us are busy wrapped in our own lives to pay attention to anyone's else. That's why it's so striking when strangers do something unexpected. The act may be as simple as advising you to eat when you're miles away from home!

It was a gloomy morning since it had been pouring incessantly. I went to the mess and ordered a cup of coffee as I didn't feel like having anything in the morning. Also, it was getting late to attend my clinical posting in the hospital. I was wearing my white coat while I hurriedly sipped the coffee. The maushi serving at the mess, who was usually grumpy, came to my table and placed a plateful of poha topped with lemon slice, sev and cut onions. I told her that I didn't want to eat but she just nodded her head and smiled. It was almost as though she knew but wouldn’t allow that. I realised that in all these days she had remembered my order. I had picturised her as someone who was always irritated and not like someone who paid a lot of attention.

A thought struck me - even if it seemed like I had a problem, she knew that I wasn't going to share it with her. She also wasn't going to know what advice to give me. But like a mother far away from home, she made sure that I didn't skip breakfast. This time, she refused to accept my money, perhaps thinking that it was she who compelled me to eat. She scolded me with a smile saying, “Kay doctor madam, Tumhi ajari padle tar aamhala kon baghnar, amche kay honar? Kalji ghelte pahiye aani samayoar jevan karaycha”, which means – What is this, doctor madam? If you fall ill, who will look after us? Take care of yourself and eat on time. I obeyed her instantly as if it was my mother screaming at me for skipping food.

Maybe that's all it takes. A random act of attention. No questions, no prodding but just a little concern. Kolhapur has an unspoken tradition where people don't ask you how you are, but they unfailingly ask you – jevan kela ka, bala? (Did you have food, my child? ) It indirectly means – we don't know what you're going through and we don't know how we can help you, but don't think you're alone because we will be there. These are all ways of not knowing what to say but still reminding us to not skip meals.
Our lives would have no meaning if we had to live only for ourselves. It’s only when each one of us makes a difference to another’s life that the purpose of our life is fulfilled. We had been married for 3 years and my daughter was just six months old. Our life came crashing down when we learnt that both the kidneys of my husband were not functioning properly.

His blood pressure had gone very high, he had Diabetes, kidney stones, varicose veins, and he even contracted a Tuberculosis called Pleurisy. In the last 30 years, he had to be admitted more than 30 times in different hospitals for complications and has undergone 7 surgeries till date.

It was a very tough time for us, yet we pulled through with prayers and medicines. At last, both his kidneys stopped working completely. He had to be on dialysis continuously. It was painful. Our life during the dialysis was very tough. For four hours, he had to lie down on the hospital bed. There were times when he dozed off during dialysis, and once, when he turned in his sleep, the needle got stuck deep in his muscles.

I could no longer bear the pain and suffering of all the three of us, and I decided to donate one of my kidneys to my husband. As my husband’s blood group was ‘B positive’ and my blood group was ‘A positive’, my kidney could not be given directly to him.

We had a swap transplant; my kidney was transplanted on a young boy and that boy’s father’s kidney was transplanted on my husband. By the grace of God, all four of us are safe today and doing well.

I am very grateful to God for making me an instrument in his plan to save my husband and the young youth with this swap transplant. That youth got married and he is blessed with a son and all of us are leading blessed, normal lives now.

After four years of transplant, due to the use of steroids, my husband’s hips had to be replaced and he had Cataract in both eyes, which was also corrected. Later, he had a heart-attack and an Angioplasty was done. In spite of these frequent hospitalizations, God always allowed us to overcome situations each time.

Normally up to 70 years old healthy people can donate one of their kidneys. Anybody related or unrelated can donate a kidney. Since each and every one of us can live with one kidney, why don’t we donate organs while we are alive, or pledge to donate after our death? As Christians we are called to help one another. What better way of helping than giving a part of ourselves to others?
When it pours heavily, it is so pleasant to observe the raindrops falling on the tree tops. It was a day of incessant rain. I was immersed in delivering lectures at Kalina Campus, University of Mumbai. In the middle of the lecture, a peon came and told me that someone was waiting to meet me urgently.

Generally at Post Graduate Departments of the University, when a lecture is in progress, the tradition of someone coming and disturbing is unusual. I was slightly shocked. Out of curiosity, I sneaked out of the classroom to see a middle aged man in anguish. “Saumya's dad”, the peon whispered. He was holding the marksheet of his daughter. Without uttering a word, he handed over the marksheet to me. Against two columns, there was a marking of absentia. The girl had scored maximum marks in the

"This incident always comes to me as a regret. I always think about how this could have been avoided if I had checked in on her more regularly."
Microeconomics paper. He began narrating the story. Saumya, his daughter, used to talk about me often at her home. Incidentally, she got maximum marks in Microeconomics which I taught, a paper with a lot of mathematical applications.

Nostalgic memories of some loving faces rushed through my mind. They all have passed out. Saumya was a final year student who often visited me during lunch break. I had observed her as being very sensitive. When the first year PG results were declared by the University, students got access to it via their mobiles. This was in the midst of my lecture in their class. Probably, unable to verbally convey her anguish, Saumya rushed and set out to the ladies restroom. She did not come out even after a long time. After some time, I too followed her. She was bitterly weeping in the privacy of the ladies washroom. She was not shy in sharing her disappointment. I consoled her and brought her back to the classroom. I made it a point to ensure that she often comes and meets me. I tried to ensure that the door of communication was always open for her.

Once during a conversation with His Excellency, Mar Thomas Elavanal, he told me that teaching and research should be observed as something which one can do in an almost supernatural way by devoting more time to students, by ensuring that along with teaching, we also generously give them our time.

This has always motivated me to establish a good rapport with students in general. I do not work to impress my students but rather, I used my skills and time in the fulfilment of my duties. Every student in this world deserves enthusiastic reciprocity of knowledge along with guidance, diligence, patience and care. Their lives aren't as perfect as mistakenly indicated through their gestures and colourful attires. I even went on to the extent of suggesting Saumya to meet me regularly during the summer vacations. I do remember on the last day, she met me and left with a smile assuring “Promise, I will study well”. However she had never visited me during that summer vacation. I ignored it assuming that she was totally immersed in studies.

Holding her marksheet, Saumya's father narrated to me that she was seriously preparing for her final year exams that were ongoing. Only two papers were left to be appeared for. The family happened to leave her alone at home on such an ill-fated day. They left her alone at home, to attend a wedding by assuring her that they would return before midnight. After the marriage, they hurriedly reached home to see that she had died of suicide. Her life ended on four yards of her dupatta. She was rushed to Bhagawati hospital and declared dead before arrival.

Despite putting in best efforts to simplify mathematical applications to students of Economics and to assuage their concerns to the best of my abilities, this unfortunate event transpired. Intrinsic fear of failure must have gripped her. The basic cause of her suicide was not the poor performance in her papers as the marks will testify to but rather her fear of failure. It was these invisible demons that terrorised her and forced her to put an end to her life. This incident always comes to me as a regret. I always think about this could have been avoided if I had checked in on her more regularly.

During this pandemic induced shutdown, when students are in a sort of solitary confinement, thoughts about Saumya often come to my mind. Thinking of those moments still brings tears to my eyes. So I make it a point to remain in touch with those who are noted to be isolated, even if it is through social media, to ensure that they are not left alone. Generous act of kindness, of course, is expected to be showered by teachers and professors even among grown up students.
Generosity and the Pandemic

**Susan Joe**
belongs to Carmel Parish, Vadgaonsheri, Pune

COVID-19, in the age of machines
Spreading everywhere
Nonplussed, we practise hygiene
To stay alive in this world pristine
Thrown out of gear, one and all - living in fear
For that little glimpse of our near and dear
With the complete shutdown of every sphere
Uncertainty lingering far and near
It's time to share all that we can spare
To show our brethren that we care
Let's open our fists to do our bit
For its due to them that we co-exist
Not an opportunity is to be missed
To show our gratefulness for His gifts
Be generous with your hands, mind and time
For everywhere there is the need, love
For we sail through and yet are not at par
It doesn't matter what we have
It's time to join hands and express our gratefulness
To our Lord and Saviour, in all humbleness
For he has spared us from the clutches
Of a calamity of this magnitude
For us to remember, and share gratitude.

Wake Up and Give

**Sally Mathew**
belongs to St. Alphonsa Forane Shrine, Kalewadi, Pune

Wake up from your slumber
Wake up from your sleep
Remember the world
In the grip of a deadlock
Has come to a pause
Many are waiting for a morsel
For a few scraps of crumble
Did we ever ponder?
Did we ever wonder?
The Lazarus' of the Earth
Are giving us a chance
To that promised land
For those who do
To the least of our brethren
That we do unto him
Wake up from your lethargy
Wake up from your langour
Stop burying your head in sand
Stop living in denial
All the riches of the Earth
Do not matter
Store treasures in heaven
Store for the life above
End this facade of caring
Actions speak louder
A small window of hope
For a short time is opened
A shortcut to Paradise
Like the penitent thief
At the right of the cross
Don't miss the chance
Wake up dear friends
Wake up and give
And you shall receive
Gifts unmeasurable
From the heavens above
ഉന്മൂല്യ പഠനത്തിന്

കർണ്ണൻ അച്ചടയിൽ

ക്ഷേത്രത്തിൽ സ്ഥാനം നേടുന്നതിനുള്ള സാധ്യതയും സാംസാരിക പ്രവൃത്തികളും മൂലം ഭട്ടിക്കുന്നിട്ടുണ്ട്.
All four gehantha cycles of this anaphora are concluded with ‘Kanona’ or praise of God. So too here it is concluded in these words. “We offer glory and honour, thanksgiving and worship to your living, holy and life giving name, now, always and for ever”. The whole anaphora is concluded with this prayer.

As we have already seen, this form of concluding the prayers is seen also in Jewish worship. Praise of God which is very similar to the one in our Qurbana is seen in the book of Revelation ‘Praise, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honour power and might belong to our God for ever and ever. Amen’ (7:12). These Kanona prayers of our Qurbana are sublime form of prayer. Four important elements of our prayer are included in this prayer: they are, praise, honour, thanksgiving and adoration.

Praise and Honour

We have four Kanona prayers in our Qurbana. The first one began with the words “we offer you praise and honour...” This was primarily addressed God the Father and the previous gehantha too was a praise of God the Father. ‘Praising you with a loud voice unceasingly they proclaim in one voice’ is considered as the second Kanona. This is considered as a praise to the Holy Trinity. The previous gehantha prayer was addressed to the Trinity and the following ‘Koosappa’ or silent prayer of the priest too is addressed to the Trinity. In the third Kanona we pray “We give you glory and honour, thanksgiving and adoration for all your favours and graces”. This is a thanksgiving prayer addressed to the Son. The previous gehantha prayer too was addressed the Son. The fourth Kanona is “We offer glory and honour, thanksgiving and worship to your living, holy and life giving name”. In the previous two Kanona, glory was offered to ‘You’. Here glory is offered to ‘the life giving Name’. When we understand this Kanona in relation to the previous prayer of Epiclesis this Kanona can be considered as addressed to the Holy Spirit. At the same time let us bear in mind that in the second gehantha the term ‘Name’ was attributed to the Trinity. In our Qurbana several times praise and honour is offered to the Name of God. So this Kanona can be considered also as addressed to the Trinity.

Here in the third Kanona three attributes are given to the Name of God, they are: living, holy, life giving. The same attributes are given the Name of God and the divine mysteries.

Sign of the Cross

At the time of reciting this Kanona the celebrant makes the sign of the cross on the mysteries. As Narsai, in his commentary on the Holy Qurbana, says “Now the sign of the cross (Rusma) is made on the mysteries not for its sanctification but to show that the mystery is completed” (Liturigical Homilies XVII, 22). Altogether, the celebrant makes the sign of the cross three times on the mysteries. The sign of the cross helps us to remember the cross and the Paschal mystery of Christ. With this Kanona the anaphora part of the Holy Qurbana is concluded.
Mother Mary is the fragrant lily gifted to humankind by Abba Father. How blessed is the one who knows her and more blessed is the one who loves her! There is a vast difference between knowing her and loving her. Usually, we flock to Mother Mary whenever we face hardships, troubles, pain etc. Once our prayers are answered through her powerful intercession, many of us forget her. Before you read ahead, kindly pause for a while and think about your relationship with Mamma Mary.

Let us ponder

• Do I pray to Mother Mary just to fulfil an obligation?
• Do I make it a point to PRAY the Rosary or do I just recite it mindlessly?
• Do I turn to her only during difficult times?
• Have I ever had a filial relationship with her?

St. Alphonsus de Liguori once remarked - There is no one, after God, who loves us as much as this most loving Mother does. Put together all the love of mothers for their children, all the love of husbands for their wives, and all the love of the Angels and Saints for the people under their care, it could never equal Mary's love for us.

Incredible! Isn't it? She loves you as if you are the only child in this world. Imagine what a joy it is to have the same mother that Jesus had. Your mother and Jesus' mother is one and the same. Let us therefore honour her and love her for she is YOUR MOTHER, she is MY MOTHER, she is OUR MOTHER.

I would like to highlight five ways by which we can love our Heavenly Mamma a little more with every passing day.

1. START AND END THE DAY THROUGH HER: When you wake up, offer your eyes, your ears, your mind, your body, your soul to the sacred heart of Jesus through the most immaculate heart of Mary. Speak to her throughout the day. During the day, share your thoughts and feelings and simply say, “I love you, Mamma.” Nothing is more pleasing to a mother than her child engaging in a heart-to-heart conversation with her.

2. PRAY THE ROSARY: The Rosary is not only about praying to our heavenly mother but also about holding her hand and walking with her to reach Jesus. Whenever you recite the 'Hail Mary,' you are greeting your heavenly mother and she answers you right away. Once St. Bernard said to her, “I salute
you, Mary,” to which she replied, “I salute you my son, Bernard.”

3. SET AN ANGELUS ALARM EACH DAY: The angelus prayer celebrates the heroic moment when Mary said ‘YES’ to the Divine Will that led to the salvation of mankind. This prayer is recited worldwide at 6am, 12pm and 6pm. You may set your alarm as per any of the above convenient timings. Through this practice, we will be strengthened to say YES to the will of God in our lives too.

4. KNOW ABOUT YOUR MOTHER: You cannot love someone without knowing about them. I would like to recommend the following books to grow more into a personal relationship with Mother Mary.

   † True Devotion to Mary by St. Louis de Montfort
   † The Glories of Mary by St. Alphonsus Liguori
   † The World’s First Love by Venerable Fulton Sheen
   † See How She Loves Us: 50 Approved Apparitions of Our Lady - Joan Carroll Cruz
   † 33 Days to Morning Glory by Father Michael Gaitley

5. IMITATE HER: All of the above methods will ultimately help you to grow in virtues like humility, obedience, angelic kindness and deep love, just to name a few. Due to your love towards your heavenly mother, you will develop an extraordinary grace and immense joy in doing that difficult work, sacrificing your time, helping someone in need, being gentle with an irritating person, washing the dishes, cleaning the toilet, obeying your parents and above all, forgiving those who hurt you and accepting people with their weaknesses.

ACTIVITY

A BIRTHDAY GIFT TO HEAVEN, WITH LOVE

Dear friends, we celebrate the Birthday of our Blessed Virgin Mary on 8th September. If you were to give her a birthday gift, what would it be? And why?

Kindly Note: You answer must not exceed 100 words.

Please use the following format for sending your entries:

Name:
Catechism Section:
Parish:
Your photograph (optional):
Your Answer:
Send your answers to - lanternkidsroom@gmail.com

WINNERS OF THE FAMILY FUN TIME QUIZ

The Top 10 winners of the Kids' Corner: Family Fun time Quiz on Kalyan Lantern (June issue) and Saints:

1. Denzil James
2. Arunima Johnson, Dombivili
3. Annie Vincent
4. Vilina Philip, Kalewadi
5. Ligy Chalishery
6. Sonia Denzil
7. Paulson Paul, Mira Road
8. Gabriel Paul, Kalyan West
9. Lini Bijoy, Kalyan West
10. Ann Jose

Congratulations to all those who participated in the online Quiz!

Kids Corner prepared by Suja Johny
belongs to St. Joseph's Church, Airoli
Question:
Should we take tithing seriously?

Answer:

Tithing is offering back to God:

Giving tithe is a response to the Biblical call of returning to God ten percent of His gifts – for all that we have in this life is His gift (1 Corinthians 4:7). Each of us is called to give without any compulsion, “for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Tithe is not about Wealth alone:

‘Tithe’ is not about the material wealth alone. Its scope is wider: one should return a certain quantum of all that one has received – life, intelligence, knowledge, health, wealth, time, space, happiness, love, and so forth to God and His people. In the book of Genesis Jacob makes a vow, saying, “If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, … And of all that you give me, I will give a full tenth to you.” (Genesis 28: 20-22). That is why it is said in the Bible: “Every tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or the fruit of the trees, is the Lord’s; it is holy to the Lord” (Leviticus 27: 30).

The New Testament on Tithe:

There are two views in the Catholic church on tithing. One view upholds tithing as mandatory, while another advocates that tithe is not Christian practice as it does not have any New Testament references, except the exhortation to “give cheerfully.” The Old Testament references are about Jewish customs. The three references in the New Testament on tithe (Matthew 23: 23, Luke 11: 42 and Hebrews 7: 8-10) have a different take. In Matthew and Luke, Jesus’ reference was to the Scribes and Pharisees, while the reference in the Letter to the Hebrews was on the priesthood of Jesus Christ which is higher than the Levitical priesthood of the Old Testament.

Catholic Church on Tithe:

In the Catholic Church, giving generously, without compulsion, has been the norm. Giving generously like the poor widow who gave all she had to live on - her two coins (Luke 21: 1-4) has been extolled. Giving to the Church is purely a free act. Giving is a personal and private matter, and our “Father who sees what is done in secret will reward” us (Matthew 6: 1-4).
The Kalyan Lantern Team heartily thanks all the participants who responded to our Call for Submissions.

We hereby, with gratitude, mention all those who participated in the contest:

Congratulations

Selected Participants

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Lijya Pullan, Ambernath
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Aleesha Joycutty, Nerul
Molly John, Borivli
Dolly Sunny, Kalina
Susan Joe, Pune
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