



In the
Shadow
of the
Cross



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Congratulations !!!!

to the New General Team



May God Bless the New Team and the Society

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(for private circulation only)

Editorial

"If you are willing and obedient you will eat the good things of the Lord, But if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword," (Isaiah 1: 19-20).



Fr. Alex SDS

The goodness of the heart could be in our context; namely prosperity, harmony, commitment, peace, joy, sense of contentment and above all enjoying the blessings of God every day. These goodness of the heart should enflame the hearts of many in our lives and missions especially in the new 2019. Even a small act of appreciation, honor, acceptance, being-polite, welcoming and available to others always pay a rich assets for us.

St. Teresa of Kolkata says, "Give till it hurts" we will experience the effect of our giving not necessarily in the world but the next too. I hope that in giving we also receive. She also said. "Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies." The consequence of being faithful, obedient

and disciplined as well being ready to be of service to others is amazing and enthusing. It brings sweet results and innovations. It yields a sense of worth and thus our life becomes worthwhile. It is a great lesson to be learned from all that is happening around us for the growth and mission of the society.

Venerable Founder Francis Jordan says, "You need only be thoroughly imbued with true humility, true zeal for souls, with love for the society than you will find work enough, more than you can handle." Every Salvatorian has chosen to be the close follower of our FOUNDER, who urges all to be "humble and love the society as our mother", "Ama Societatem, et fac quod vis! Love the Society and do what you wish!!!!

BAPTISM AND THE NAMING CEREMONY OF THE KHASIS: KA JER KA THOH



Fr. Starlight Khongsit SDS

Since time immemorial of the Khasis, the Ka Jer Ka Thoh (naming ceremony) has been one of the most important stages in human life. The underlying wisdom is that human being must be known by a proper name agreeable before man and pleased by God. A name stands for a person herself or himself. Person's name is equivalent to the whole person. He/she is different from other creatures. He/she is unique. He/she is an individual, sacred and mysterious. Therefore one can be known by proper name not just any how. For that reason so significant it is! As soon as the baby is born it has to be given a name so that it can be known to everyone right from the Dawiing (family reason) to the society at large. Also since name has

power to bestow dignity on a person, it has to be sought, invoking the consent of God and the family reason (Dawiing) so that the name is sanctified by them. With the sanctified name bestowed on a person the evil spirit has no power over a person, because God and the ancestors protect the baby through the power of the name blessed and sanctified by them. The Khasis have understood this. Hence they keep the ceremony of Ka Jer Ka Thoh holds a significant place in the life of the Khasis. Without this ceremony a baby's rngiew (inner spirit) is bleak. It will weaken the person's self and may become sickly. The strong inner spirit keeps the evil influence from outside away. Hence a sanctified name is always sought for through the ritual ceremony.

Christian baptism in general is understood as the initiation to Christian life. It lays a foundation to every Christian life. It is the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sins and reborn as children of God. It is necessary for salvation. This baptism has two aspects: a cleansing aspect; in which the original sin is being washed away; and its integrating aspect, by which it becomes a means of incorporating the neophytes in the Church, making him/her a member of the communion of saints. The minister for this Sacrament is the Church. But the Church has defined and categorized ministers into ordinary ministers and extraordinary ministers. The Church has entrusted this task to baptize primarily to the ordinary ministers. They therefore have a bounden responsibility to ensure that it is done with great care and dignity and to ensure the person baptized continues in faith and receives faith formation throughout his/her life.

Baptism upholds the importance of name. God is known as Yahweh. God gave new names to some prominent people in the Old Testament. By name he calls those whom he has chosen. In the New Testament, Jesus is given a name by God Himself. As his name so he is. Jesus gave new name to Simon son of Jonah, Saul changed his name to Paul. These all signify a transformation coming along with name. If name is so important to a person, baptism definitely cannot bypass this truth. Baptism in fact,

names a person in God. Through God's holy name the name of the person being baptized is made holy and sacred. Not just mere name but the entire person is being sanctified because name stands for a person. At the conferring of name the person becomes new; a new outlook altogether. Truer is this, in baptism where a person turns into a new creation because God dwells immanently in a person. God transforms a person. He/she becomes the child of God because a person lives by the life of the Son of God, the Holy Spirit. And this Spirit impresses in the person His hallmark. Thus a person becomes permanently God's. If Baptism makes one child of God, it makes also member of the body of Christ the Church because if we have and live with his life who is the Divine Spirit, we eventually are his members. So baptism makes one who once was not, members of the body of Christ.

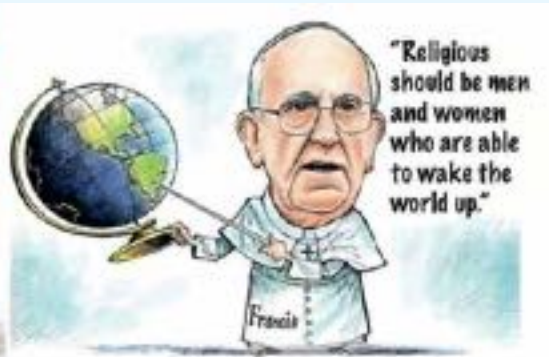
The sacrament of baptism has the ability to purify or sanctify and contribute to Ka Jer Ka Thoh by adopting and corroborating the rites and rituals, signs and symbols and the sacred duty of parents and elders in the name of Christ and of the Church, for Christ is the fullness of everything; he is the Alpha and the Omega.

Although Ka Jer Ka Thoh is very good, so similar to Christian baptism, yet it still lacks the fullness of sacredness and sanctity because it only acts as a pointer towards that fullness who is Jesus Christ himself. Further, the discovery of points of resemblance and agreement between

Ka Jer Ka Thohand Baptism can further the opportunity to dialogue between Christianity and the Khasi religion. And to show them that Jesus Christ is the one of whom their religion expected for and now he has come directly no longer in signs and mediation but in his own person to communicate with them. The Ka Jer Ka Thoh in the light of the Gospel prepares ground for Christian baptism. In Ka Jer Ka Thoh, the relationship between God and humans is much of Creator-creature, and human waits for God's communication, seeking it in signs. However, baptism does not deny this, but raising it to the height of not only just humans as creatures of God who always wait for His word but giving it the privilege to become God's own children and heirs in God's kingdom. Baptism gives it more meaning to the already founded faith and meaningful practice. Thus baptism enriches Ka Jer Ka Thoh.

Christianity introduces wholeness in Jesus Christ. It shows to the world that believing in Jesus Christ one can attain salvation or wholeness; not only in the afterlife but even right here and now. To believe in Jesus requires a prerequisite of faith. And this faith is concretely expressed in baptism. Baptism thus, is the culminating act of expressing externally our faith. With the onset of Christianity among the Khasis, Khasi traditional religion witnesses an ocean of hope for its fulfillment as it is the religion of jingapjingong/ap-jingong (that which still awaits with expectation for the communication or say of God) which in

Christian interpretation would be the Word of God; the LOGOS. Christianity arrives at a high time when the precious religious customs and practices are gradually at the verge of being ignored. The Church especially the Catholic Church in particular, exists not as something to substitute the natural religion but as an entity which continues from where the natural religion ceases. Thus we see this that one of those aspects is the naming ceremony of the Khasis. The meaningful rite of Ka Jer Ka Thoh in the traditional religion which is at the danger of being forgotten finds its revival and newness in Baptism. By acculturating this traditional wisdom and make it a sacrament, baptism raises it to a higher level; from just a mere function of making an infant known to God and to the ancestors by conferring a name approved by them, to the honor of giving them the status of being children of God, the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ. From being just a ceremony done privately within the clan family, to the profound ceremony done in a universal way in a universal Church of God. Ka Jer Ka Thoh thus receives a new status in Christianity. It is transformed to a baptism as it can be considered by the Khasi Christians from the Khasi Christians perspective. In this way the sacrament of baptism enriches Ka Jer Ka Thoh. No less, Ka Jer Ka Thoh too contributes to the richer meaning of Christian baptism among the Khasi Christians; where this ceremony acts as a fore shadow of baptism during the pre-Christian period in the land of the seven huts.



CONSECRATED LIFE

A CALL TO GREATER AUTHENTICITY



Fr. Vyakula Vara Prasad Rao SDS

Being continued

Poverty for the Kingdom of God: The concept of Poverty today has undergone a considerable change. Consumerism has crept into the Society like never before. As a result, there is a huge disparity between the rich and the poor. There seems to be no end to man's greed and selfishness. As once Gandhi remarked that the world has enough to meet man's need but not his greed is true now. The vow of Poverty calls the consecrated that the gifts of

God are to be shared by all, concern for the creation, value of relationships over material goods and most importantly concern and solidarity with the poor. It reminds them to trust always on God's providence like our Founder Fr. Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan and it is indeed can be called as a vow of gratitude, to share in the community and the people in and around.

Joyful Celibacy: The vow of Chastity is the difficult vow, given the fact that the mass media has posed fresh challenges for the consecrated. The modern gadgets such as the mobile, T.V., Video, abuse of internet are addictive and destructive. They can rob the self-respect and of a sense of the beauties of life. They can tear one down and lead to evil thoughts and abusive conduct. This vow enables

one to offer whole hearted loving service to God's affairs with total commitment and to be genuinely caretakers for the world. Since, consecrated do not marry and engage in any sexual relationships, they are authentically called and sent into the world to be open like Jesus to love all freely. A vow of chastity is not "anti-marriage, anti sex or anti-family"! Rather it recognizes the gift and beauty of all of these and so the loving value of letting these go for the sake of a different way of loving. Professing a vow of celibate chastity, as Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI has so beautifully put it cannot mean "remaining empty in love, but rather must mean allowing oneself to be overcome by passion for God." It means that one dedicates one's own energies to God in the service of his neighbour.

Loving Surrender: The vow of Obedience that the consecrated make is to listen to God's will manifested through human instruments i.e. superiors. Jesus is the par excellent model who discerned his Father's will in prayer. He found time in quiet places despite his busy ministry both early in the morning and at night, united with His Father in prayer. It is extremely becoming hard to listen to God's voice in hustle and bustle of our noisy world. The consecrated are called to read the signs of the times by listening to God's gentle voice wrapped in prayer, faithful to the charism of their founders who discerned the will of God in their

hearts and responded accordingly. The concerted mutual decision of the community is what needs to be followed.

This means that they will enter into mutual discernment with their community, offering their gifts in service for others. Obedience honours both the personal gifts of the individual members and the commitments of the community. Consecrated are called to obey, knowingly who they are, place themselves under the guidance of the Spirit and contribute significantly

The early Christian community lived under the leadership of the apostles through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Despite the rosy picture painted in the section of Acts, all was not milk and honey in Jerusalem's good old days. Most of the Jewish-Christians were "of one heart and soul." They shared all their property and gave anything extra to the poor. The example and the story of Ananias and Sapphira who sold a piece of property but turned in a fraction of the money is an eye-opener for those who cheat and lie. They lied to the apostles, to their community, and to the Holy Spirit about it. The two were not living community life well. They were holding back because they didn't trust the community. The deception caused all of them horrible suffering. In living together, we come across different people with diverse temperaments and attitudes.

Individualism is breaking up communities in society including religious communities

¹: Pope Benedict XVI, " Religious Vow: Committing to Life and Love"

on account of race, caste gender and culture. Religious live sometimes because of survival rather than witness. Many a time we attract people towards us by organizing programmes by our intellectual capabilities. True, there will be differences of opinions, views and ideas. There will be days of Good Fridays and so will be the days of Resurrection in the community. Mutual understanding, patience coupled with love can erase any storm that may threaten community life. Generous offering of oneself in the community without expecting any reward seems to be the success for the community life. The theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Love are the surest foundation stones for an authentic community life. Sometimes we can get stuck in a rut. But we need to see where the Spirit is inviting us. Vatican II states that we're called to "carry forward the work of Christ under the leadership of the befriending Spirit."The consecrated need to see what the world around them is longing for and what their community's spirit is asking for. The enhancement of consecrated life consists in living Chastity as total availability, poverty as total reliability, obedience as total responsibility for love manifests itself in sharing, caring, bearing and daring.

IN SHORT, GREATER AUTHENTICITY IN CONSECRATED LIFE COULD BE ACHIEVED ONLY WHEN THE CONSECRATED PERSONS ARE ABLE TO INCARNATE CHRIST TO THE SISTERS AND BROTHERS AROUND THEM IN THEIR EVERYDAY LIFE SITUATIONS.



“It is my most ardent wish that you all seek to penetrate deeply into the mystery of the cross, into the love of the cross, so that you may love suffering.”

Fr. Francis Jordan



LAY MINISTRY AND THE ROLE OF CATECHIST IN EVANGELIZATION



Fr. Donbosco Kharmawlong SDS

The Church is one but has diverse ministries to witness the Gospel message. Vatican II has given a new outlook and meaning to the church, that is, church is not a mere building but essentially the 'people of God'. This new understanding has helped the faithful to accept the fact that they are the church and responsible for her growth. While all are expected to contribute their share, some are called for specific ministries.

Earlier different ministries of the church were carried out mostly by the ordained ministers but slowly the laity were included and they had made great contribution to the church. Since ministries are many, they should not be limited to the ordained ministers alone. In some areas, the ordained ministers are not able to enter the field easily because of some restrictions, while in some it is totally prohibited and abandoned. These are the fields that the laity can enter in.

There are various dimensions of ministry and variety of ministries that are carried out by the church accordingly. Since, there are varieties of ministry there are also different groups of people involved in them like the ordained, the consecrated and the laity. One of the groups among the laity who have made great contribution to the church for many centuries, are the catechists. They play a vital role in the work of evangelization through different means of ministry. They render tremendous services to the church in term of pastoral care, administration of the sacraments, worship and service of the word. Thus, they become the back-bone of the ordained ministers in the care for the souls especially in places where priests are few. They also render services to the world in different ways, especially by being witnesses of Christ through their life. In spite of various problems, the ministry of catechists in the church

today is very much needed. Christian life becomes more Christ-centered with the presence of catechists who do a lot of works in bringing the faithful closer to God. Their role not only brings great effect for the Christians or the church but the society itself benefits through their ministry, rendered in the name of the church. Therefore, they become effective instruments of evangelization especially in today's world with so many challenges. This assistance has brought great effects in the ministry. Now the church is enlarged and grows faster with the involvement of the catechists in the ministry of the church. The church becomes more vibrant, active and alive with the works of the catechists. Christian faith is enriched and the Gospel message is reached everywhere.

We have to understand that Catechists are not substitutes to ordained ministers or consecrated people. They have a ministry of their own; their ministry should not be seen due to the lack of vocation to priesthood and Religious life. At the same time, in today's world with less and less ordained ministers and religious, pastoral activity would be handicapped without the assistance of catechists. When we observe keenly, we see many activities the church wants to promote for the faith of the people to serve them to the best but it faces the scarcity of the ministers and in many cases, for the vast areas

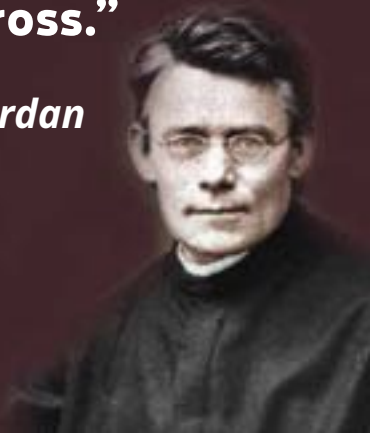
only two or three ordained ministers to take care of the souls. Therefore, unless the laity are given chance to join hands to work together, it would not be possible for the church to move according to the time. Thus, catechist's role is important in evangelization work, whether it is in the service of the word, sacraments, worship or the service to the society. Thus, the church needs to pay attention, encourage and promote catechists. There are many areas also where only the catechist can have an access, especially in places where Christianity is prohibited. In the area of religious-dialogue, catechist would be the best person who will have many opportunities in different ways, may not be the official way but he can evangelize the people and make use of the opportunity to spread the good news. He can also bring a change in the church, knowing the mind and culture of the people in which he lives, through variety of activities involving the people to play their role. It is not enough to employ catechists for the ministry of the Church; the church has also to give ear to the problems faced by the catechists especially with regard to the economic status because most of the catechists have a family, so the financial help should be sufficient for the family as well. The church also should avoid any kind of prejudices with regard to the selection of catechists, especially in intellectual levels because the catechists especially in villages are of

low intellectual standard. The primary consideration the church should be to take into account both the spiritual and the intellectual aptitudes. They should be given proper training and formations because the fruits of their functions not only depend on their personal commitment to the task but also to the formations and trainings they get.

So the role of a catechist in evangelization is a great treasure the church should look at, especially at this era, where the ordained ministers are going down in numbers and the church is facing with many issues, problems and challenges due to the development of science and technology which endanger the faith of the people. Catechists can be the protagonist of Christian faith.

**“If you wish to be
happy, if you wish to
save many souls, then
become lovers of
the cross.”**

Fr. Francis Jordan





FR. Ksankupar Khongwar SDS

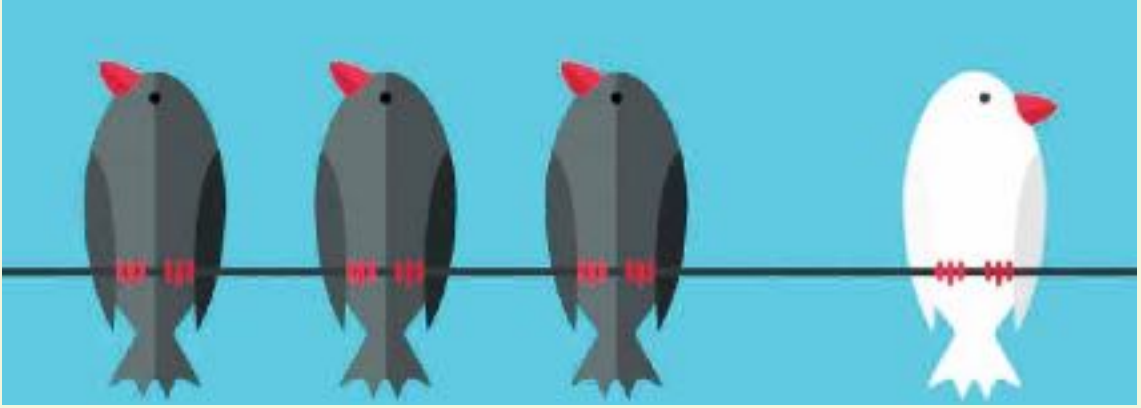
CONTEXTUALISATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN NORTHEAST INDIA IN

THE LIGHT OF THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

Social Justice is a concept of fair relation between individual and society. In the North East context it is understood in a spirit of tolerance and respect for each other. But over the time we witness the regression in these values. Marginalization of the region is in the increase and tends to be ignored by everyone including the central government. Marginalization within the state happens due to leaders self interest and corruption which give rise to revolutionary movement and militant group.

The culture of North East India is guided by moral ethical principles of justice, equality, liberty and charity. For them religion is not about dogmas but something that touches their lives and the core of their existence. On the other hand the emergence of crisis within the culture is a great threat due to the influence of science and technology that make the people especially the youth to withdraw them from the knowledge of tradition and cultures.

Gender sensitivity is the issue at the national and international level. Women



in the North East especially the Naga and the Khasi have a privileged place in the society. However, the customary laws as well as the system of ownership and inheritance is clearly controlled and in favor of men. Women are considered as incapable and they are not encouraged to exercise and participate in all decision-making bodies. On the other side we have women who are being discriminated and are treated like slaves within the household and society. They are overloaded with work. Most of them are victims of domestic violence coerce sex and rape even by their spouses.

Land alienation is another conflicting issue which can be identified critically due to immigration with 60%, development projects with 70%. These deprived many families of their livelihood. Land monopolization by the tribal elite is another prevalent issue where few rich individual controls the land and they exploit the poor gradually even the community land and they capture as their private property.

In the face of existential problems the Church is called upon to theologize more meaningfully to liberate the

people who are subject to exploitation and injustice. Having underlined the social justice condition in Northeast India, the Bible has something to offer us on the concept of justice. The reflection on the notion of 'justice' from the book of Isaiah gives a clear concept and understanding, that it is the covenant between God and man. In the New Testament, this concept of justice transcends the peripheral human understanding; it is the establishment of the right relationship on the basis of forgiveness, compassion and understanding in the form of narrated parables.

The prominent theme in first Isaiah is social justice. We find Isaiah lashes out at the hollow rituals of his fellow beings that have no regard for justice or other ethical values and the priests and prophets who are enjoying filthy lifestyle. Zion, as YHWH's temple city is to be a city filled with justice where righteousness dwells but the city of Zion becomes a whore because she has abandoned the Lord. Isaiah also critically describes how Yahweh will punish the people especially the leaders who do not lead but who are erroneous

Discrimination



and guiltiest. As a correction, their incompetent leadership will be replaced when YHWH gives a spirit of justice to the one who sits over the judgment.

Second Isaiah does not speak much about justice and righteousness but Yahweh's salvation and redemption. Here the 'path of justice' is a key expression in the form of God's sovereignty. He is the path of justice who shows how to exercise the authority to the leaders in order to 'establish justice on the earth. He describes *mišpāt* in terms of giving sight to the blind and liberation to the imprisoned. God will bring justice through non-violent means in a non-violent way.

Third Isaiah deals in gist on how to maintain justice and it also deals with how the Lord loves justice. The justice that the Lord loves is one that is to be manifesting both in ethical relationships in society. It recapitulates YHWH's role as the Divine warrior who is the champion of justice and who will battle against the enemies, injustice, wrongdoers and oppressors, and against Israel's foreign enemies. In exile, Israel had been mistreated and oppressed but all these injustices would be righted.

Social justice according to the understanding of the Church is given by some of the Fathers of the church and they speak critically in their own views and ideas. The teachings of the Church from its documents give supplement and concrete supports on social justice. The early Fathers speak on the virtue of charity which is the foundation stone of social action which makes everyone feel the importance of the love of God and the love of neighbor. Clement of Alexandria of the third century writes that 'God has directed the human race toward community of goods'. He said riches are not obstacle for salvation if riches are use for the work of mercy.

The Augustinian notion of justice is "giving every man his due." His ground is Christian philosophical. Augustine says that "where there is no justice there is no commonwealth". Thomas Aquinas of the thirteenth century writes that man should not consider his material possessions as his own, but as common to all, so as to share them without hesitation when others are in need and for the common good

Teachings of the Church on justice find its roots in the scripture as a solid foundation for the rights of human beings and social justice. 'Rerum Novarum' or on the condition of Labour, (1891) emphasized and declared the individual's right as well as right to private property. It focused on the



rights to a just wage that would support the worker's families and the right to join unions. *Quadragesimo Anno* or on *Reconstructing the Social Order* (1931) aimed at pleading for a system based on an organic understanding of the human and Christian community and thereby the concrete solution to the social evils of the time with continuing oppression of the working class and the tyranny of dictatorships.

Gaudium Et Spes shows a special concern for the society and the social problems existing in the world and also inspired many Catholics to play an active role in the various liberation movements. The Pastoral Constitution says that all men in equality enjoy the same divine calling and destiny and equality between them, must be given ever greater recognition. *Evangelii Gaudium* or *The Gospel of Joy* focuses on right to life which is foundation of social justice. Pope Francis emphasizes on fundamental right of the most vulnerable people: the right to life of

the children in the womb. He exhorts vividly of the protection of life which is fundamental for human rights.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines social justice as that which provides the conditions that allow associations or individuals to obtain what is their due. Justice toward men, is to respect the rights of each and to establish human relationships in harmony that promotes equity with regard to persons and to the common good. Theology challenges all men and women to bring God's love to the people, to know the pressing demands and needs of the people around us especially in the field of justly acquiring equal rights and justice. The priests within the Catholic Church are to remind the people, especially the responsible persons of good moral life and also to maintain justice and equity in the society.

Northeast India stands out as one of the most volatile regions of the world. The existence of the class system makes the situation even more fragile. The most dangerous challenge posing against the indigenous people of North East is economic underdevelopment. The need of the hour is to focus on those areas which would lead to growth of the economy, develop the sense of participation and can extinguish the social and political gap. Looking at the present scenario of its politics we

witness flaws in democracy in Northeast India. The closely related political phenomena are the endemic demands for separate Statehood. Governance becomes sheer mis-governance due to critical level of corruption. Pathetically women have not been able to get into politics in the region particularly in Nagaland.

In the last two decades, violence and bloodshed have been perpetrated in the Northeast region because of the in-fighting between the states over the issues of ethnicity, inadequate resources and inaccessibility. These factors adversely affected the marginalized group. The North Eastern region of India is facing with the problem of influx which is noticeable in every state. On the other hand this has led to the deprivation of rights by many genuine citizens, and land owner become landless and strangers in their own land. However, people of the region have an ambitious vision by 2020 to see their region emerge peaceful, strong, confident, and ready to engage with the global economy. They would like to march on the path of economic, social and cultural progress towards prosperity and well-being, to participate in governance and determine the allocation of public resources and public services they receive.

Governmental and Non-Governmental institutions initiate a lot of program in creating awareness among the masses

of North Eastern region through a right base approach in knowing their rights to ensure access to facilities and preserving the dignity of human being especially the marginalized and people affected by conflict. Every step has been launched for strengthening life skills of young people and exploring their creativity. Using indigenous art and culture are also tools for creating and promoting awareness and social transformation for larger audiences.

It is the need of the hour for all to be an agent of social justice, to bring awareness among the people whose needs, interests and perspectives are neglected and help them to come out of themselves in knowing their rights and justice. It is the urgent need for the government, the society, the Church, the families and individuals to harkens to the cry of the poor and the oppressed who are facing unjust and unfair treatment and simultaneously be the catalyst of change to bring transformation to the society to a just and humane family. While understanding the concept of justice let us remember that 'Justice delayed is justice denied'.



Congratulations!!



Fr. Kankaya Khongwar SDS

Fr. Perikala Anil Kumar SDS

Fr. Durbasco Kharmaulang SDS

Fr. Starlight Khongsil SDS





HEALTHY JOURNEY



Fr. Vinoy Joseph SDS

To remain in a state of well-being is perhaps the desire of everyone. This is certainly a process and is the result of a complex interplay between many individuals and environment factors. So understanding and to maintain every aspect of health is significant for our well being. Studies suggest feeling good about ourselves and being emotionally well is linked to make better and healthier choices in day to day life. In 1947, the World Health Organization defined health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well being”. Though many of us desires to maintain a balanced health

between the realms of physical, mental, spiritual etc., often times we experience the drift and perhaps we give more prioritized attention to the physical than other areas. A kind of favoritism towards body over the other.

All of us most likely have greater knowledge on how to maintain our physical health and practice exercise regimes which sustain the physical health. One may tend to think, why or how that our physical health becomes more important than psychological or spiritual health. Interestingly, a watchful look into ourselves tell us we sustain more psychological or spiritual injuries like, loneliness, rejection, failures, setbacks and lack of enthusiasm than the physical injuries. In case we ignore or not treating them in a timely manner, studies inform us that they dramatically impact our lives negatively. The usual comments towards those who share their concern

on emotional disturbance like depression or loneliness is that, it's just the matter of your mind, not a big deal; but do we have the similar style of comments towards those who have any physical injuries, saying it's not a big deal...?

Staying in a prolonged unhealthy state without settling the emotional injuries might end up in distorting our perception and scrambles our thinking. It makes us believe that those around us care much less, makes us really afraid to reach out, lose our energy and enthusiasm and finally emotionally and socially getting disconnected. A fear that controls every situation and taking away our trust. The researchers say, it has the danger of even suppressing the immune system and vulnerable to all kinds of illness.

What prevents us succeeding or what default system of feelings, believes and thoughts making us incapable of experiencing the energy and inner peace when we encounter injuries? Our quality of life will dramatically rise if we practice health hygiene, mental health practitioners advocates, imagine a world where people are having less emotional injuries, less loneliness and depression and know how to detach from the setbacks. It is indispensable for us to involve in getting professional accompaniment in any form of directing our emotional energy in achieving goals. It becomes a difficult task as long as we are not convinced of its importance or when we consider it as irrelevant.



So like the care of the body, caring of the mind is essential. As the saying goes; "Normal people have problems. The smart ones get help." Hence the involvement means being smart learning the adoption and adaptation of a set of hygienic principles, directed towards the prevention of serious maladjustments resulting in damaging the mental health. There may not be a single formula to insure complete protection of stress arising from conflicts and frustrations. So learning to detach from setbacks by modifying deep seated feelings, attitudes and action-patterns are important in maintaining the mental health. In other words, this mental health is being at peace with oneself, with others, with nature and with God. By this process, one's strengths and weaknesses are assessed and attitudes that help maintain a balanced perspective on healthful living, mentally and physically are developed.

Characteristics of people with good mental health

- They feel comfortable about themselves.

- They are not carried away by their emotions – by their fears, anger, love, jealousy, guilt, or worries.
- They can take life's disappointments in stride.
- They have a tolerant easy going attitude toward themselves as well as others; they can laugh at themselves.
- They never under estimate nor over estimate their abilities.
- They can accept their short comings.
- They have self respect.
- They feel able to deal with most situations that come their way.
- They get satisfaction from the simple, every day pleasures.
- They are able to develop sensible independence.
- They feel right about other people.
- They are able to give love and consider the interests of others.
- They have personal relationships that are satisfying and lasting.
- They respect the many differences they have with other people.
- They do not push people around, nor do they allow themselves to be pushed around.
- They can feel that they are part of a group.
- They feel a sense of responsibility to their neighbours and fellow human beings.
- They are able to meet the demands of life.
- They do something about their problems.
- They accept their responsibilities.
- They plan ahead but do not fear the future.
- They welcome new experiences and new ideas.
- They see realistic goals for themselves.
- They are able to think for themselves and make their own decisions.
- They put best efforts into what they do and get satisfaction out of doing it.
- They are able to strive for a balanced satisfaction of life's needs.



The general neglect of the mental hygiene is to be taken care as we care the physical injuries when we sustain them. One of the ways is to address psychological injuries and treat it as emotional hygiene which means being mindful of our psychological health and focus daily habits to monitor and address psychological wounds when we sustain them.

One of the main concerns of most people is the difficulty in detaching from the setbacks and have the common habits of ruminating (maladaptive form of self reflection) pattern without reaching new insights over the distressing past. The negative past can haunt and block us from actualizing our true potential and identifying new possibilities. Rumination is a kind of self gossiping, as Pope Francis commented gossip is the worst enemies of harmony and it is a terror destroying everything. Psychologists recommend as the first step in breaking from the past is to declare that it is you, not your history, who is in charge.

A spiritual approach is to revive the faith through scripture; for instance reading the Psalm. It will help us refining our thought pattern. It represents a positive, hopeful faith approach to life. As the author of Psalm, David himself had a black chapter of sin and failures in life. But interestingly he spends no time in useless regret and morbid looking back. Because he possessed the same spirit that St. Paul expresses; 'forgetting what lies behind but sustaining forward to what lies ahead' (Phil. 3: 13).

Our every action and intense emotions are having a starting point. What and how we think about ourselves influences our behavior (Pro.23.7). Therefore, the healthy relationship and transformed behavior originates in our renewed thinking (Rom. 12: 2). How we think about ourselves sets the tone in which we approach life, as the Bible say; the mind

is the root of all conduct (Sir. 37:17). The psychologists inform after the researches that the mind is the seed bed for all that we do and say. Therefore, think about a thought of our life; if our thinking has brought us to a place that we don't like, and then it is a time for a better thought.

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**“Let us not lose courage
and flee from the cross!
There is simply no other
way to God than the
way of the cross.”**

Fr. Francis Jordan



World Youth Day 2019



“Keep God’s love alive” - Pope Francis



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