



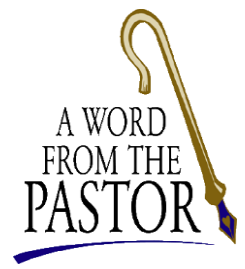
*From Dark to Light*



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## Presbyter's Letter



My Beloveds in Christ,

Warm Greetings to you in Jesus' precious name!

We are living in the midst of the realities of the COVID-19. We are living in uncertain and difficult times. We have never been in the situation we now find ourselves. Our world is turned upside down. Fear, insecurity, and anxiety concerning how COVID-19 will affect us, those we love, and our communities -including the church - consume us. Overwhelmed by a plethora of information coming at us on social media, television, radio and newspapers, we seem to be awash, confused, and paralyzed by not knowing what to do.

During these times of unprecedented crisis *throughout* the world, it is heartening that our Cathedral Magazine Committee is bringing out the online issue of '**Remarkable**' on the theme of "**From Darkness to Light**". This is the right time to go to the people and share that Jesus is the light of the world.

We need not be consumed by fear, insecurity, and anxiety. As followers of Jesus, let us put our trust in God who raised Jesus from the dead and who, in the power of the Holy Spirit, sends us to be about God's mission of restoration, reconciliation and wholeness in the face of brokenness, alienation, and illness. Now is the time for us to be the light of the world as God wants us and needs us to be.

Jesus in Mathew 5:14 asks us to be 'the light of the world.' Light is God's most beautiful and unique creation. It's very powerful and awesome. It is the source of life. For us, who live on earth, the source of light is Sun.

Scientists have discovered that, the Sunlight travels at the speed of light. Photons emitted from the surface of the Sun need to travel across the vacuum of space to reach our earth. They have estimated that it takes sunlight an average of **8 minutes and 20 seconds** to travel from the Sun to the Earth. The Scientists also have discovered that the Sunlight travels through a process called **diffusion of light**. As the Sun emits light, the photons emitted from Sun perform a miracle; it works on each particle of matter in the air, in the clouds and on earth and makes each particle to become a miniature Sun reflecting the rays of the sun. If there was no diffusion of light, the Scientists say, there would be only Sun and darkness.

It is the process of diffusion of light that enlivens everything and the light becomes the source of life on earth.

Jesus, likewise, points out that each one of us are like 'light' - God's most beautiful and unique creation, powerful and awesome. For us, God is the source of light and life. Each one of us have to receive our life and light from God, walk in that light and reflect that light. Jesus desires that each of us should function like light. Light through the process of diffusion becomes an agent of transformation. As it works on each particle of matter it encounters and makes each particle to become a miniature Sun, Jesus wants us to be agents of transformation. Like light, Jesus wants us to transform our reality namely the realities of the COVID-19.

As members of St. Mark's Cathedral, we have received enlightenment from God through exhortation and edification in this esteemed Church, we are expected to walk according to the knowledge and wisdom we have received and be a beacon of light for those whose lives have become dark.

How to be a beacon of light? Simple, we can be a beacon of light by imbibing the qualities of the light. What are the qualities of the light? Some of the qualities of light are: it dispels darkness, it guides and it warns.

First, as the Light illuminates darkness and allows people to find the way, the truth and the life, likewise, we are expected to illuminate peoples' life where ever we are, with whomever we interact or transact. The world in which we live is covered with darkness of ignorance, superstitious beliefs, illiteracy and spiritual darkness; we are expected to be the light that dispels such darkness.

Second, as the light guides us in the correct path in darkness, we are expected to be a guide to those who are standing in the cross roads, who do not know which side to turn, who do not know which is the right path. In the lives of such people, like light, we are expected to play the role of a guide.

Thirdly, as the Light serves to warn the wrong doers and trespassers and gives warning about the dangers. Light exposes what many would prefer to remain hidden. Likewise, we are expected to warn the wrong doers and trespassers with love and concern. Warn everyone about the impending dangers and expose what many wicked people prefer to keep it hidden. We are children of God, children of light; we are expected to be agents of transformation. Fight for justice, peace and right relationship with God and fellow being. In other words, we are expected to use our learning, knowledge and wisdom to stand up for those who can't stand and speak for those who can't speak. Fight for all that is noble and laudable. We need to be a part of all that is good and welfare of all. We are called to be an ambassador for the kind of world we want to live in.

Due to realities of the COVID-19, we are going through pathetic condition, pain and polarization. Pathetic condition because each one of us are threatened of an unprecedented virus invasion. We are facing economic hardship, the capacities of our healthcare systems are under severe test and we are looking at a grim reality. Pain because millions of people have lost their livelihood, due to diversion, repression and authoritarianism practiced, suffering and pain is inflicted to the common citizen. With nowhere to go, common citizens are panicking and going under depression. Polarization because we are deprived, excluded, and made to feel vulnerable due to the divisive politics that is played during this pandemic situation.

It is in this critical time, we are called to be the light of the world and dispel darkness around us by reflecting Christ the true light of the world and bring people of all races, cultures and background into a personal relationship with Christ. Through enlightenment from Christ, we can overcome our pathetic condition, pain and polarization. We can brave realities of the COVID-19 because Christ the light of the world is with us.

May Christ 'the light of the world', through us, dispel darkness, guide and fight all injustice due to COVID-19. My prayer for you is that you should be a beacon of light.

In His grip,

Yours in Christ,

**Rev. Dr. Vincent Vinod Kumar**

Presbyter in charge

## Editorial



Greetings All,

Hoping everyone is staying safe during these very difficult and trying times

As we go into the 9<sup>th</sup> month of the new life the world is facing, the cry really goes up, how long.” We are all waiting for the time when we can freely walk into the light without a fear or worry. Definitely, we all prefer the light to darkness, and want to be the torchbearers and not the torch-needers.

As it says in our Scriptures,

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way let your light shine before others so they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven” (Mathew 5:14-16).

In this time of darkness, we need to be the shining beacons full of hope and full of light shining bright as witnesses for our Master.

Our world seems dark and gloomy right now. When we move around, we see people performing their daily routines but very guarded and careful, keeping a watch and taking care more than before. Some people are still in the dark and need the light. We can be a light in this darkness by receiving the light from Jesus. Once we do that, we can be assured that He is with us in our isolation, our loneliness, our fear, and our grief. Because Jesus died and rose again, he is with us today. We need to fix our eyes upon him. There is so much that we cannot control right now, but we can control what we look at. Let us all draw near to Him, and he will draw near to us.

When I look back personally over the last 9 months and its uncertainties and coping with a new life, the central essence has been that God has been the pivotal focus leading us and guiding us. We would not have come this far if not for His grace. Every day is a new beginning and a gift from God for which we are all grateful.

As we make preparations to celebrate Christmas next month, we know it will be different from many Christmases we have celebrated in the past. But the underlying fact is that our Lord has not changed, He continues to be the same, guiding and protecting us.

May God continue to protect us and lead us into the light as we journey with Him.

“Light of the World,

You stepped down into darkness,

Opened my eyes, let me see.....”

**Anjana Samuel**

## Darkness to Light

Let us look into the fact that God reveals himself in the night of desolation. Frequently, God teaches us in the night of desolation what he did not teach us in the splendour of the day of consolation. Is it possible that we do not know which of the two is more useful for us?

The spiritual transformation of humans leads to holiness and perfection of persons and a vital relationship with God. The concept of the 'new man' as against the 'old man' caught in sin comes to the forefront. It is the spiritual and moral transformation that takes one from 'darkness to light.'

A relationship God, is at work in all of us. We are not a finished product. From the beginning to the end, man is Christocentric and Trinitarian. In the world, the human being is the centre and summit of everything created, because the whole world was created for him/her to be their palace on earth. Out of self-conceit and selfishness, they fell from the noble end and became victim to great suffering. In this existential condition on earth, people are 'tortured' by the world, the devil, and the flesh.

For new life, divine knowledge and love is needed. The paradox here is that while faith and love have to be exercised by us, it is also a self-donation by God. We need to learn to face desolation to consolation. God is love and he/she who wants to share in God's life and love must share His love and be united with him in love. What is needed is desolation that brings in suffering love for God which is spiritual love which makes one positively active in one's response to God. Moved by the initial call of divine love, a person sees the futility of earthly attachments and one embarks on the pursuit of divine love. A detachment to the earthly and an attachment to the divine way of life. All sacrifices one makes and all suffering one undergoes in this pursuit of love is motivated by love. Love is not only the goal but it is also the very energy and strength that urges one to this goal. From the beginning to the end, new life is characterized by love. In order to become a new creation, the practice of love is absolutely necessary.

In desolation the doors are open for contemplation that are not opened in consolation. The grace of God provides light in the night of anguish for expansion of the spirit to move out and pass on and not out. Thus one learns that there are advantages in the darkness of night that are not there in the day and light. The whole process of renewal is characterized by pain. One senses pain both in one's sensory life and also in spiritual life. Joys due to attachment are contrary to the divine love. So detachment is necessary



from the three great enemies the world, the devil, and the flesh which is the cause of suffering due to imperfection.

Perfect faith, hope, and charity must be rooted in a life of a person, in order to make one 'new' in our existential situation on earth, the endurance of pain is a condition, *sin qua non*, for the practice of love. The process involves, darkness suffered in the intellect, the void in the memory, and the affliction of the will. One cannot bear them, unless supported by God. As God takes up the work of renewing, He prunes us of all that is unworthy of His own sanctity. If God does not help, we will die. The necessity of enduring pain is a condition for practice of theological values. Few only achieve moving from darkness to light because people are not prepared to endure pain. New life and pain is a necessary condition for the practice of that love which is spiritual and divine. Craving and passion of this earth darkens our minds and weakens the flesh. Thus many lose their eternal destiny and land in another destination. As one grows in love, the pain is eradicated gradually. One experiences the intensity of love even in the experience of pain. Character is built, one is free from this mortal body by death to self and one follows the light and sees the glorious vision of God and partakes in a fuller life, here and later beyond with God. By living for self we die and by dying to self we live forever.

The meaning of darkness to light is to experience this death to self which is one of the most painful experiences. Love of God and faith in Him makes pain the most welcome guest. All suffering is eclipsed by the delight of love, and pain becomes a delightful pain. This state of life is a movement from darkness to light. This "new life" is a state of spiritual marriage with the divine..even God through Jesus the Christ....the light of the world. If we follow this path, we will discover the truth about this life. One is regenerated and rejuvenated in the Holy Spirit and becomes a new person who is mature and adult in Christ, the new Adam.

Let us walk in the light with faith and become channels of love.

**Acharya Rev. Dr. Thomas Ninan Ph. D**

## Darkness to Light

The story of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus is told by Luke in three places in the Acts of the Apostles -- in chapters nine, twenty-two and twenty-six. In Acts twenty-six, Paul, a prisoner awaiting to be sent to Rome for trial looks back on his life and ministry and tells King Agrippa, "And so, King Agrippa, I did not disobey the heavenly vision". The heavenly vision on the road to Damascus influenced his whole life and ministry. Throughout Paul's life, this heavenly vision remained with him, guiding him, sustaining him and strengthening him. It remained with him as a permanent and dynamic force in his life. He faced a lot of difficulties and trials in his ministry. He had been beaten, imprisoned, shipwrecked, hungry and thirsty and gone without sleep. But in the midst of all these, he could say, "When I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. 12:10).

The vision of God and his call are not temporary things or passing phenomena in the life of a Christian. The vision of the crucified and risen Christ brought about a crisis of faith for Paul. It shook the very foundation of his religious life. Paul's conversion was not the conversion of a penitent sinner. He was not like Martin Luther who failed to please God even by the strict observance of the monastic rules. In later life, Martin Luther said that if ever a monk could go to heaven by his monkery, he would have been there twenty-five years ago.

Paul was a religious man, a proud Pharisee, who was proud of his Jewish background, proud in the membership of the people of God. He was circumcised on the eighth day, Israelite by the tribe of Benjamin, born and bred a Hebrew. In attitude to the law he was a Pharisee, in zeal for his religion he was persecutor of the Christian church, in righteousness of the law faultless. He loved his nation; he loved his race. He sincerely believed that the way of salvation for the whole world is in and through Israel, the elect of God, the covenanted community. Hence, he defended the Jewish law and Jewish religion. He persecuted the Christians, not because they were bad people, but because they claimed that Christians were the true people of God, the election and covenant belonged to them and not to the Jews. Who would tolerate such a blasphemy? Paul burned with zeal for his religion.

Thus, Paul was journeying to Damascus to persecute the Christians. Then came the shattering experience on the way. He heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" Paul asked, "Tell me Lord, who are you?" "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting" came the reply. It shattered the very

ground on which he stood. His belief that the clue to God's dealing with his creation was the Jewish nation, crumbled to pieces. There was another way, faith in Jesus.

Religion and religious enthusiasm need not be always good. We live in a time when religions have become great problems, a real threat to peace and community. Paul was a religious enthusiast. So was Moses in his early days. In his zeal for his race, he went and killed an Egyptian. This was so with the Zealots of the time of Jesus. This is so with the sectarianism of our time. My country, my race, my language, and my denomination have become an obsession with many of us. We often mistake loyalty to God with religious fanaticism.

The vision of Christ crucified and risen liberated Paul from his religion. From that day he wrote off all his religious assets for the sake of Christ. He was one who had believed in the unique place of Israel in salvation history. It was only in and through Israel that God would deal with other nations. His encounter with the risen Lord had opened his eyes to the fact that the salvation of Israel, as well as the salvation of the whole world, was to be appropriated through faith in Christ. Before the cross of Christ, both the Jew and the Gentile were equal and nobody could make any special claim for salvation: Jesus the Messiah was not the Messiah of the Jews alone who had come to deliver them from the hands of the Romans, but he was the saviour of all people, including the Romans. It was an unbelievable discovery. Paul saw the cross of Jesus Christ as the place where the salvation of both the Jew and the Gentile took place. Later he could write that there was neither Jew nor Gentile, neither free or bond, neither male nor female in Jesus Christ. On his cross, he had broken down the middle wall of partition between peoples and nations.

The purpose of God was not to save Jews alone but to sum up all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth. It was this cosmic vision of the Lordship of Christ and the election and salvation of all people in him that separated Paul from Judaism. It was a cosmic vision, an Ecumenical vision. Its horizon was the outer boundary of the universe. It was this vision which made Paul an apostle. The Lord told him: I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and bear witness ... to whom I send you to open their eyes, ***that they may turn from darkness to light*** and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me. (Acts 26: 16-18).

God is letting us realize just how vulnerable we humans are in a broken world. Indeed, were it not for God's mercies, we would experience even more

deadly threats than the pandemic to our existence. The world is not what God intended it to be; it is broken, because of our sin, and we, apart from his mercies, so very vulnerable. **But there can be light in the midst of darkness.** It is this message,” This too will pass”, “Darkness will pass and the Light will shine through”, Paul was called by God to proclaim. Let that be our conviction and affirmation too!

**Rev. Dr. M. Mani Chacko**  
**General Secretary**  
**Bible Society of India**

## **A Mission at a time like this- From darkness to light**

These days all of us talking about a time like this, which has engulfed humanity with the pandemic fear on Covid-19. The world will never forget what came as a pandemic in our times. History has been written and re-written. It is a time of hopelessness all around. Such an experience of crisis cannot be ignored and overlooked as it has inflicted uneasiness and anxiety on all of us. Often in such times, God intervenes and helps us see a breakthrough. A creative theology of life emerges and offers hope in Christ for people. We expound this context from the passage **Esther 4:13-14**.

<sup>14</sup> For if you keep silence at such a time as this, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another quarter, but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this."

This passage raises 3 pertinent questions which might offer insight and hope to endure the pandemic crisis.

### **1. Understanding the signs of the time**

Esther's episode reflects of an extraordinary time and Mordechai reminded Esther about the urgency in this time'. The capacity to read the signs of the times is significant; Luke 12.54-56 defines it as Kairos moment. Mordecai uses the Greek expression Semeion' meaning study the times, understand the context. In our times today, fighting the context of corona, virus represents a rare window for the church.

With the global context corona spared no one, and both rich and poor, south and north, all continents and race of all kinds. A true equality and ecumenical infection.

But the theology of infection in India, over people, who are culturally a community, rubbing shoulders by characters even in yoga postures while sitting one touch each other's knee. Indians culturally believe in fatalism that all good comes from God and all bad comes from God too, they blame God and lament. The leaders assured people that with prayer and sacrifice corona could be chased away. This is a helpless situation which will shoot India to be a number one country of infection soon in the world soon.

It is in this helpless times, I want to ask God to open my inner eyes to see this Kairos moment, an act of Judgement 'Paratiritikos' to investigate the context and signs in this corona pandemic time. When the pride of institutional and denominational churches crashed, Churches began worshiping outside. Today we have cyber theology misplacing Praxis

theology and engagement theology, when all are controlled by time, space and speed. God who answers prayers where 2 or 3 are gathered is now not visible and many ask is God present in the internet? We break bread saying we all partake of one bread. Corona killed fellowship and theology of practice. God is no more bread of life. We share the breath of God Ruha' but our breaths are controlled by machine. Many ask where is God.

Online churches emerged amidst institutional denominations and worship took priority over location and replaced by house fellowships like ancient times.

The idea that church is not a building but people became true, as per Jesus prayer –That they be one.'John.17.21

In this Kairos time, human life has become vulnerable, we have lost control of our lives, and today corona is not far away, but infecting our own families, children and close friends and lives lost. The vanity of life. The Kairos time.

## **2. What does the Help and deliverance mean?**

It is in such times like this we see God's protection and care for all. In God is hope and he shares this hope through church and mission. We also recognise that in this context of fear and chaos, God delivers an inside-out mission for the church. Just as Esther heard the voice of Mordecai, we need to hear God speaking to us as a church. We cannot be silent, but seek to stand in partnership with those who suffer through this difficult time. We are to facilitate risk at this moment, into Kenosis, an act of self-emptying ourselves for a new normal of inclusion.

The salvation and help is understood deliverance for church and communities. In this context, Mordechai's faith is very encouraging, even in the midst of difficult times, he had great confidence that deliverance Sotiria will come from a channel God chooses, and he sees Esther at this time for that task. It is here that Mordecai brings the challenge to Esther to take advantage of her position and placing in this time. Esther recognises the value of the opportunity she has at hand. As a privileged church, how do we take control of the opportunity to minister and to become inter-connected and draw solidarity from one another as north and south, south-North and south-south church and partners to bring this deliverance of help?

I invited a friend for a dinner and he quickly responded wonderful but I do not like eating in Indian and oriental restaurants, these restaurants have corona. I was appalled to hear these condescending and discriminating comments. Today church and pastors have a prophetic role to remind people to practice, peace, courage, hope and encourage the church to empathise and sympathise with those who are hurt and in pain. Die hilfe und errtung heute.

### **3. Esther stepped up to save the Jewish community and what do we see as our task in our pandemic context.**

In this text, we see Mordechai challenging Esther on her self-indulgent, self-preserving, and palace identity, which we could call as survival instincts. Mordechai reproved Esther for selfish survival and embracing royalty over righteousness and self over an opportunity to be a prophetic voice. This is an opportunity of Kairos time to respond.

Nelson Mandela said, every minute you spend wishing you had someone's life is a minute spent wasting your life 'How significant is this message today. Prophet Micah summoned God's people to show justice, constant love and to live life worthy of providence. (Mic.6:8) It is in these times of pandemic chaos we hear the voice of God reminding us like Mordechai, to live justice, mercy, humility and stretch hands to care for families and partner churches affected by covid-19. The church is God's family called to engage at the times of tribulations and suffering to pray, plan and participate to extend care, support and our mission is 'Enactig Diakonia'

In this context, many raise the question. Is Corona Virus God's Plan? In my personal belief, I do not believe corona is God's plan. God that I experience is not one causing pandemic to kill people and infection. I cannot believe a loving God would construct such a plan. If that is what God's love is like, then I hold nothing to do with that God.

In the expression of Thomas Jae Oord -The God whom I worship is a God who cannot control, because God neither causes nor permits the pandemic as well God could stop it singlehandedly. *But* God is working to overcome corona with love -Agape. The controlling God of love is the most potent force in the world because love does not force its own way (1 cor.13.5) God cannot defeat the corona a virus singlehandedly but with our help. God needs the best of medicines, best of engagement and ministry to the infected with respect.

We here in EMS shared emergency resources with our partner church in Beirut after blast. Soon the Church leader called and asked if they could share, a part of the support received from EMS with the Orthodox Church, which was even seriously, damaged. In the pilgrimage of sharing and journeying in times like this, we see the prophetic role of churches and mission. Similar situation was expressed by the CSI Synod with the missionaries in mission fields, while what they have received is so less yet they wanted to help and support the vulnerable people in the community within the mission field. We see a journeying church and God as a pilgrim with us in times like this.

The Greek word 'Pleroma' meaning to bring it to wholeness reminds us in this task. God challenges us, in pandemic times and invites us to be God's partners facilitating our skills as his for healing the world. Every miracle

happened like, the feeding of the 5000, miracle in Cana, happened in the hands of the disciples and the bearers. For our hands are God's hands, and today's Kairos moment is inviting us to be Pleroma people to complete the fullness of God for his world.

**Rev. Solomon P.Benjamin, Stuttgart, Germany**



## **The Life was the Light of Human beings...**

This title (John 1:4) refers to the relationship of the Logos to human beings. In the Gospel of John, the Greek term Logos ('Word') is used as a title and in an absolute sense it is used in combination, such as 'the Word of God,' which is a name of the exalted Christ, the 'King of kings and Lord of lords.' The 'life' in this title is possessed by the Logos who was the light of all people. Life in this verse does not talk about eternal life, but the life that the Logos shares with the Father. As light, this life is the guiding principle for human life in the world.

In John, 'Light' reveals God and brings salvation and judgement to men and women. It also denotes good ethical behaviour in contrast to darkness, which stands for evil behaviour (John 3:19-21; 8:12; 12:35, 36, 46-48). The 'light of life' possessed by the followers of Jesus Christ (John 8:12), is the same light referred to here.

The pairing of 'life and light' echoes frequently in the Old Testament, in Wisdom literature and in Hellenistic thought in Genesis 1, the first word God spoke was 'Let there be light,' and life has been on earth ever since. The creation story clearly links the Word, light and life (Genesis 1:3-8), just as they are linked in the Johannine prologue. The Psalmist says that God is the fountain of life and that His light has a revelatory effect that makes humans perceive it (Psalm 36:9).

Light and life are used as parallel terms for God's salvation in Psalm 27:1. In Jewish tradition, wisdom and God's law are said to be light and life (Wisdom 7:26, 27; Proverb 6:23; 8:35 compare Psalm 119:105; Sirach 17:11). Light as a metaphor used for eschatological salvation (Isaiah 2:5; 9:1; 51:5; Micah 7:8; Habakkuk 3:4; Baruch 5:9). However, for those who practise wickedness, the same light becomes darkness (Amos 5:18, 20). In Daniel 12:2,3, the phrase 'everlasting life' and the idea of shining like the firmament and like stars refer to the qualities of life given to God's people on the day of great resurrection. All these references suggest that John is presenting the Logos as the bearer of the end-time life and light that was revealed in the incarnate life of Jesus.

John depicts Jesus as the person in whom one can have light and deliverance. Jesus is the 'Light' who leads a person from darkness to light, and from death to life; thus John writes the phrase, 'the life was the light of all people,' implies the availability of salvation for all people and the light's nature is to transform and guide them (John 1:9).

As the believing community, do we affirm the truth delivered by John the Apostle that “the life was the light of human beings”? Are we truly accepting Jesus is the Light, who was and is and will be our deliverer incarnated Logos? God bless you!

**Rev. Sushana Pramanik**

## Light in the Midst of Darkness

Normal life abruptly ended with the lockdown at the end of March. Lockdown – shrouded in darkness, engulfed with fear. Just like God shut Noah in the Ark, we were locked in. A new normal had dawned!

I am the light of the world,’ said the Lord Jesus. We forgot that we are the carriers of His legacy and chose darkness. Fear made us stock up on essentials at home. Food stuffs, snacks and health drinks, not forgetting baking soda, salt, turmeric and sanitizers in plenty; all just to keep the virus at bay. Online classes, work from home, and ordering online became the new normal.

God promised Abraham in Genesis 15:1 that He was a shield and reward. Those promises are ours too, aren’t they? He continues to be our shield and reward, and we came to realise that the pandemic was a blessing in disguise. It reminds us of Romans. 8:28, ‘And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God.’

The pandemic has brought to the surface, God-given talents we never knew existed, or did not pursue because of lack of time. Baking, cooking, gardening, painting, do-it-yourself items and a foray into music and dramatics, we did those and more.

My 12-year-old granddaughter baked a chocolate cheese cake for her birthday. We made exotic dishes and posted them on our family-cooking WhatsApp group. We learned to play the ukulele, sang songs, made a short suspense thriller called ‘Knock, Knock’ and posted them on YouTube.

We revived contacts with long-lost friends and were contacted by others in turn. College mates for whom we earlier had no time became close friends. Finally, we had plenty of family time. We played indoor games and celebrated birthdays with a BBQ on the terrace. Every home became a church and Sunday School was at our doorstep. We attended zoom prayers, also spending private time with our Maker.

Above all, God gave us Hope: Hope for the future, making us realise that what really matters is life and relationships. God showed us what we had missed: the personal touch and not the “likes” in Facebook. Not only humans but even the environment, the birds and the beasts heaved a sigh of relief.

Nothing matters except the breath of life God has breathed into each one of us. Everything else is ‘vanity of vanities’!

**Florence Premkumar**

## Secret to Success



A boy once asked a wise old man what the secret to success is. After listening to the boy's question, the wise man told the boy to meet him at the river in the morning and he would be given the answer there.

In the morning, the wise man and the boy began walking toward the river. They continued on into the river, past the point of the water covering their nose and mouth. At this time, the wise man ducked the boy into the water.

As he struggled to get out, the wise man continued to push him further down. The boy felt a fish slip by his leg and squirmed to get up even harder. The man eventually pulled the boy's head up so he could get air. The boy gasped as he inhaled a deep breath of air.

The wise man said, 'What were you fighting for when you were under water?' The boy replied, 'Air!' The man said, 'There you have the secret to success. When you want to gain success as much as you wanted air when you were under water, you will obtain it. That's the only secret.'

### **The Moral:**

Success starts with the desire to achieve something. If your motivation is weak, your results will follow suit. Think about what you desire the most in life and work towards getting it. Don't allow your environment or other people to influence the things that you truly want. Just because the fish swimming by is comfortable with being under water doesn't mean that you are.

**"The God of heaven will give us success."**

**Nehemiah 2:20**

*Contributed by* **George Philips**

# Darkness and Light

There is darkness and there is light. There is negativity and there is positivity. None of these are intrinsically bad or good. Just as electricity doesn't exist without positive and negative, all experiences of life in this universe have both sides.

If there was only light, I suspect life and existence would be infinite boredom. If there was only one divine being in existence with no diversity, nothing else to interact with, you and I would not exist as separate entities to interact with each other. If all were darkness, we could not see or experience anything either. We would be completely unconscious or non existence. Remember that all the darkness in the world cannot put out the light of a single candle.

We need both light and dark. As any good photographer will tell you, it is the contrast of light and shadows which creates beauty and mystery. It is the interplay of light and darkness and the infinite rainbow of colors and gradations that can be created from the two that give life its richness.

Could it be that life is most harmonious and joyful when we welcome both light and darkness and find a harmonious balance between the two? Could it be that when we learn to transcend duality, to dance in the cracks between and beyond light and darkness, we can have more fun? Remember that between the polarities of dark and light there is an infinite rainbow of fascinating colours and hues.

# **Darkness and Light**

**Beauty is seen only because of ugliness**

**Greatness is known only for its lack**

**Emptiness and fullness are born of each other**

**Difficulty and ease create one another**

**Long and short grow out of each other**

**High and low reflect one another**

**Sound and listening complement each other**

**Front and back follow one another**

**And on it goes...**

**Thus the wise pay no heed**

**Their acts without words showing the way**

**So do all things flow without thought**

**Creating without possessing**

**Acting without attachment**

**Achieving without claiming achievement**

**Existing without laying claim to existence**

**Thus moves all life unto eternity.**

**Contributed by Sheila Swartz**

## What I have learnt from God

God is an amazing teacher. He teaches us very important principles that we can use in our daily life. One thing that I have learnt from God is that all God's promises never fail. Joshua 29:11 says just that. There are so many promises in the Bible we can look upon – Jeremiah 29:11, Hebrews 6:10, Deuteronomy 31:6, John 1:12, John 14:6 and many more. These are some promises we can always trust and believe.

Another thing I have learnt from God is his amazing love for all humanity. Romans 8:38 – 39 says that nothing can separate us from God's love. Psalm 145:9 says that God has compassion on everything he has made. His love is very powerful. We can thank God for his love every day. It is because of his love we are living to this very day.

Philippians 4:19 says God will meet all our needs. God will give us what we need not what we want. We should be thankful and in whatever we do, we must please God.

Philippians 4:13 says that I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. We can do so much only with God's help. This verse helps us overcome anxiety, worries and problems. God is with us, what do we need to fear !

These are some of the lessons God has taught me and stood out to me during this lockdown.



**Roshni Dawson (age 8)**



## **Our Cathedral.....**

### **History – A blast from the past.....**

#### **Chapter 8**



(From the Magazine Committee, for this triennium we will be focusing and highlighting on the cultural and traditional heritage of our great Cathedral. This will help many of us to appreciate our beautiful Cathedral and truly give thanks for His mighty hands and wonders. Each publication will have a different section.

Our previous issues focused on the introduction of the History of our Cathedral, our Pipe Organ, the Stained Glass Windows, Baptismal Font, and the Pulpit, the brass Lectern, the Holy Bible, and the plague in 1898-1899 that hit Bangalore and the impact on our Cathedral.

This issue, we are highlighting on the site and consecration of St. Mark's Cathedral.

#### **Site for St. Mark's**

Bangalore was included in the list of places where the Commander-in-Chief recommended the erection of a place of worship in 1807 as a committee of the East India Company had recommended the appointment of a chaplain at this station as two European regiments were stationed at Bangalore.

Prior to the existence of St. Mark's, services were held on a stretch of the Parade Ground.

The site for St. Mark's was probably fixed upon soon after the recommendation was made; for the grave of Major Joseph Dickson of the 9<sup>th</sup>

regiment of Native Infantry, who died in April 1808 aged 46, was made with a pyramidal obelisk above in such a position on the site itself as to be just outside the building that was to be erected. The same kind of delay took place in the building of the Church as at Cannanore, Trichinopoly, and other stations.

It was not commenced until two years after Blakiston had left Bangalore. He tells us in his memoirs that before he left India in 1813, he had the satisfaction of displaying his architectural talents in the erection of a Church or two. This was probably one of them.

At the beginning of 1811, the General, in a letter to Government, expressed his opinion that the Church ought to be built. It was thereupon sanctioned and proceeded without waiting for further orders from the Directors. In choosing the site, allowance had to be made for the fact that the Church was intended for the troops in the Fort as well as for those in the new barracks. A place was therefore pitched upon midway between the Fort and the furthest barrack in the cantonment, and about a mile from each. It was therefore known as an infantry church and located within a march of both the Fort and the barracks. This was said to be the highest point in the cantonment at that time and next to the obelisk which was probably part of the baseline of a Trigonometric Survey being undertaken in those days as part of the Survey of India mapping.

The now porch entry of the church in the days soon after construction was said to resemble the entrance of a theatre and was facing paddy and ragi fields, which was fringed on one side with a sparse copse of trees. The trees would later become part of Meade Park (named after Sir Richard Meade) which was renamed as Cubbon Park (named after Sir Mark Cubbon), while the area to the eastern side of the church would later be called St. Mark's Square and be graced with a bandstand and a promenade which is now replaced with Bowring Institute.

When the building was opened for service in 1812, it was a strong but exceedingly plain structure, according to the intention and order of the Government. It measured 110 X 53 X 20 feet and could accommodate about 450 men. To make this accommodation possible, the font was placed in the west verandah, and the pulpit nine feet high brick and mortar construction by the side of the altar rails against the east wall of the nave. The church had plastered walls, holes for windows with wooden shutters. The altar was a common table covered by a red baize cloth. There was a verandah running on the north side and south side of the church to keep out the sun.

The original actual cost of construction was said to be Rs. 28,000-14-6. According to the 1852 Return, the cost of the building was Rs.30, 349. As in other cases, this probably included the total cost of building, repairs, and alterations up to the date of the inquiry; for the original sanctioned estimate was 5000 pagodas or Rs.20,000. Until at least 1828, it was the only church with a chaplain for Europeans in the Cantonment.

**[Photo 1: St. Mark's Church from Cubbon Park]**



**Consecration of St. Mark's**

In 1816, Mysore came under the Bishopric of Calcutta, but when the First Bishop of Calcutta, Thomas Fanshawe Middleton was in 1816 on his visitation via ship he only landed at coastal towns and consecrated St. George's Church (now Cathedral) in Madras when he visited there but consecrated other churches further inland by letters due to the sensitive situation prevailing in the country.

In 1830, it was said that public offices in Mysore were being sold to the highest bidder by the local dynasty and people were being oppressed and had turned in revolt against the dynasty. Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General then transferred the administration of Mysore into the hands of British officers and Sir Mark Cubbon became the Governor of Mysore.

This was when John Mathias Turner the fourth Bishop of Calcutta visited the station in 1830 during his tour overland from Madras to Bombay shortly

before his death in 1831 due to ill health. He consecrated the building of St. Mark's Church on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1830 and two burial-grounds, one at the Bangalore Fort and the other in the cantonment. Before that, the church was the property of the Government of Madras.

**[Photo 2: Linear perspective of the church from the front]**



**Contributed by Sunil Pichamuthu**

## Remembrance Sunday



### **Brief History – Battle of Kohima and Imphal**

One of the greatest battles of the Second World War, the Battle of Kohima was the turning point of the Japanese U-Go offensive into India in 1944. It claimed the lives of thousands of men on both sides, and was fought around the town of Kohima in Nagaland between 4<sup>th</sup> April 1944 and 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1944.

The intense battle, that lasted 64 days, claimed more than 4000 British and Indian soldiers, together with 7000 Japanese forces. The battle ended on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1944, when British and Indian troops from Kohima and Imphal met at Milestone 109, ending the Siege of Imphal. Two Victoria Crosses were awarded for actions during the Battle of Kohima.

The American historians, Alan Millet and Williamson Murray wrote about the fighting between the Japanese vs. the Anglo-Indian troops: “Nowhere in World War 11 – even on the Eastern Front – did the combatants fight with more mindless savagery.”

The battle has been referred to by authors such as Martin Dougherty and Jonathan Ritter as the “Stalingrad of the East.”

In 2013, a poll conducted by the British National Army Museum voted the Battle of Imphal and Kohima, as “Britain’s Greatest Battle.”

The War Cemetery in Kohima, holds 1,420 burials and lies on the slopes of Garrison Hill, in what was once the Deputy Commissioner’s tennis court. The epitaph carved on the memorial of the 2nd British Division in the cemetery has become world famous as the Kohima Epitaph.

It reads:---

**“WHEN YOU GO HOME, TELL THEM OF US AND SAY,  
FOR YOUR TOMORROW, WE GAVE OUR TODAY.” (Repeat)**

**Contributed by Lt. Col. George Matthew**

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## **Kids Corner**

Represented below are drawings from Children of our Sunday School. God bless the little ones and their talents!!



**Veronica Joel**



**Lekha Neorah from Junior 3**



**Rohit Sandesh (Sunday School 10:30 session, Junior)**



**Dixon Daniel class 5<sup>th</sup>**



**Aylin Sarah  
Aditi Duffadar (Primary 1)**



**Aditi Duffadar (Primary 1)**

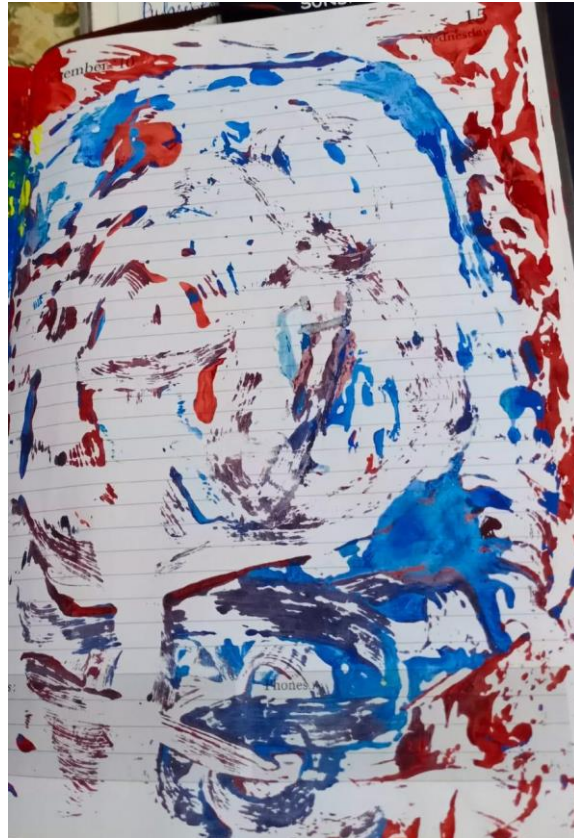




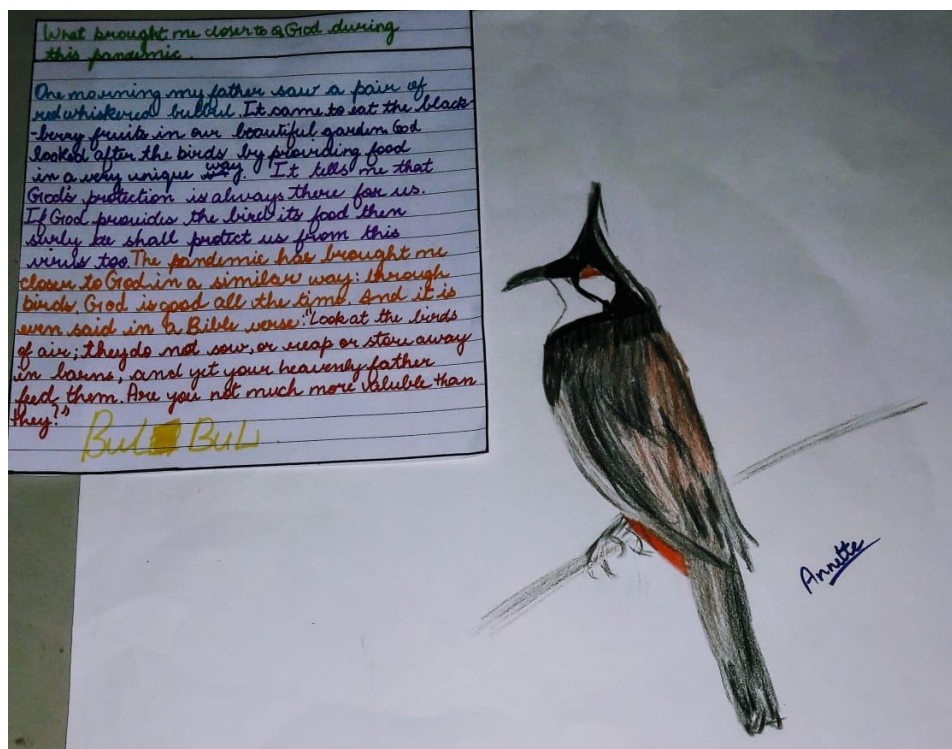
**Rebi from Inter 3 St Mark's Cathedral**



**Natalia's painting and drawing, 5 yrs old**



**Jameya Jaison is 3 and half years old (Beginners 1)**



**Annette Daniel, Junior 2**



**Annette Daniel, Junior 2**



**Renee Gracelyn, 7year old**



**From All of us at the Magazine Committee!**

**STAY  
SAFE!**



## **St. Mark's Cathedral**

**# 1, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bangalore-560 001**

**Phone: (O) 22213633, 22214021, 22215818**

**Email: [saintmarkscath@gmail.com](mailto:saintmarkscath@gmail.com) Website: [www.saintmarks.in](http://www.saintmarks.in)**