



FAMILY

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EMMANUEL GOD WITH US



To us a child is born to us, a son is given. (Is 9:5) Along with Mary, every year we approach the crib with an emotion that we are meeting the Redeemer of humanity. We contemplate the face of Christ who brings salvation to the world and for all the families of our time. God himself visits us at this time, in the form of a child, wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger (cf Lk 2:7)

Christmas is a mystery of joy and love. "A great joy for all the people" (cf Lk 2:10). Joy that the Church shares, even though we find ourselves far from home it still illuminates even the darkest places and darkness has no power over it. The love of the Father, who has sent into the world his only – begotten Son, to bestow on us the gift of his own life (cf 1Jn 4:8-9). Love that manifests itself in Emmanuel – "God with us" – and culminates on the Cross. All this is seen in the crib – in Christ who is born on Christmas.

With Mary let us reflect on the mystery of the Incarnate Word. Let us ponder on the seeming frailty of the child Jesus that reminds us of the children all over our country, of different cultures and walks of life. Let us become credible witnesses to his love and truly yearn for the source of love that every heart desires.

COUNTRY SERVANT - A.V. JOSE

THE NATIVITY ICON EXPLAINED

The icon of the Nativity is very rich in meaning. Its central depiction is of Christ lying in a feeding trough (the "manger") of animals. It is located in a cave, which has a black background.

The **background** represents an inhospitable world, the earth since man's expulsion from Paradise.

The earth provides its gift to God: the cave-stable and in it are two animals: a **cow** and a **donkey**. These represent the prophetic words of Isaiah: "The ox knows its owner and the donkey its master's crib; but Israel does not know, My people do not consider" (Isaiah 1:3).

Shepherds are shown, watching over their flocks as it was the lambing season for the ewes. Mary gave birth to her Son Who is the true "Lamb of God."

The **Magi** brought gifts: gold for a King, incense for a Priest, and myrrh for One to be placed in the grave.

The **tree** represents the "root of Jesse (the father of King David) from which the promised Messiah, or Christ, will come: "There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots" (Isaiah 11:1).

The **angels** are glorifying God, tending to the action, and ministering. They announce the Good News to the shepherds, singing "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, to men of good will."



Jesus is shown wrapped in swaddling clothes. These signify His submission to human flesh, and also presage His death and burial for the sins of the world. Jesus will embrace every aspect of the human condition, from conception to death and even resurrection. The helpless figure in swaddling clothes represents the complete submission of Christ to the conditions governing the human race. The crib resembles an altar, for He is the Living Sacrifice for the sins of the world. The manger, a feeding trough for dumb animals, represents His crib, His church, and His tomb.

In the center of the icon is **Mary**, resting in a cave upon, and surrounded by, a red bedroll. This represents her seedless conception and her painless birth-giving. She looks upon her newborn Child, contemplating the great mystery wrought through her by the Holy Spirit. She prays for Him as His mother, and she prays to Him as the Mother of the human race.

The Righteous **Joseph** is depicted away from Jesus and the Theotokos, at the bottom of the icon because he was not involved in the miracle of the Incarnation of the Son of God, but he was the protector of Mary and Jesus. The old man speaking to him represents the devil bringing new doubts to Joseph. The devil suggests that if the infant were truly divine He would not have been born in the human way. In the person of Joseph, the icon discloses not only his personal doubt, but the dilemma of all mankind, the difficulty of accepting that which is beyond reason: the Incarnation of God.



BUILDING CHRISTIAN FAMILIES

The family is a creation of God. From the very start, as we read in Genesis, God created mankind male and female, and told them to be fertile and multiply. God also told them to take care of His creation, to have dominion over the world. The man and woman would become one body, a new reality that is mysterious and reflective of the relationship of Christ and His Church. The family is the basic unit of society and of the Church.

As with everything of God, the evil one opposes and tries to destroy. Unfortunately, the devil has been successful. Instead of fidelity between spouses, there is extramarital relations as well as divorce. Instead of having children, spouses have resorted to contraception and abortion. Instead of marriage between a man and a woman, the world has accepted same-sex unions.

No wonder there is deep darkness over the whole world. No wonder that there is attendant disorder, with poverty, criminality, corruption, strife, environmental degradation. As the family has disintegrated, so has society.

There is a dire need to restore, renew and strengthen families, especially Christian families. They must be brought back to the plan of God. They must know their place in the whole scheme of things, that Christians are to be light and leaven in the world. What needs to happen?

First, Christians must be renewed in their faith. Many today are cultural or nominal Christians. They must meet Christ anew, undergo transformation, and begin to live their lives in Him.

This means striving for holiness and Christian perfection. This means engaging in daily prayer and daily reading of the Bible.

Second, Christian spouses must understand the relationship they are called to. It is a relationship of love that is unilateral, unconditional and self-sacrificial. The relationship of the husband to his wife is akin to the relationship of Christ to His Church. Christ must always be at the center of their marriage and family life. They should also look to God-given roles, with the man as head of the family and the woman subordinate to him as to the Lord. Such roles are intended for unity in this one body.

Third, Christian parents must bring their children up in the fear and instruction of the Lord. Many young people today are being influenced by the world, by peers and by the Internet, all offering a secular worldview antagonistic to Christian values. The Christian home, being a small church, must be a place of spiritual formation.

Fourth, the Christian family should look to serving Christ and the Church. Family members are first of all to participate in the work of evangelization, proclaiming the gospel of salvation in Jesus, with their friends, relatives, neighbors, co-workers. They bring the light of Christ into a world steeped in darkness.

Pope Francis has said that Christian families are missionary families. No wonder the enemy has done its best to try to weaken or even destroy them. But we need to go back to the plan of God. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, strengthened by the Eucharist, covered by the intercession of our Blessed Mother Mary, Christian families are to go forth and bring Christ into the world.

SERVANT GENERAL - FRANK PADILLA



"When the man and his wife made the mistake and distanced themselves from God, God did not leave them alone. There was so much love, so much love that He began to walk with humanity. He began to walk with His people, until the fullness of time arrived, and He gave the greatest sign of His love, His Son.

And His Son, where did He send Him? To a palace? To a city, to start a business? He sent Him to a family! God came into the world in a family. And he was able to do this because this family was a family that had its heart open to love, that had the doors open to love."

REFLECTING GOD'S FAMILY

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is name, that according to the riches of his glory... [that you may] know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. ~Eph 3:14, 15 & 19

Marriage and Family were created by God (Gen 1:27-28, Gen 2:22-24), so that we His people could live as he does, in love and unity and reflect His presence in the world by the way we live as a family. Through this, we see that God has a clear vision and purpose for Christian families.

Psalms 128 depicts the ideal Christian family as it brings us to the threshold of a peaceful and tranquil home, its family sitting around a festive table enjoying the blessings of the Lord.

However, the reality of our family life is often far from blissful and tranquil as we struggle against the forces at work in the world which create chaos and confusion in our families thus causing our families to move away from the plan of God. But we are still called to align ourselves with God's vision and purpose for our families.

When looking at vision and purpose God has for our family we need to begin by taking a long careful look at God Himself since God created the family so that we as a family may reflect Him, The Trinity - The Divine Family. The very nature of God is family. The Father of the family loves the Son and the Holy Spirit so totally that He gives Himself completely to them and the Son and Holy Spirit do the same. They are so unconditional in their love for each other, giving themselves to each other with an infinite generosity which makes three distinct persons our one true God. The fact that God is family has implications for every man, woman and child. Why? Because we are all made in the image and likeness of God. We must allow ourselves to be made one through the binding power of true and divine love that God pours into our hearts through the Holy Spirit {Rom 5:5}.



It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of selfless love in the plan of God for marriage and family. This love is first of all to be a unitive love. This love leads a man and a woman to communicate their love for each other through various means like gifts and words of endearment leading to the highest form of communication in marriage – a complete giving of one to the beloved so the two become one flesh.

This oneness between the spouses is possible only by grace that God bestows through the Sacrament of Matrimony and which a couple needs to sustain through prayer and the Sacraments. Their oneness is not the only purpose of the love they share. The purpose of marriage is also to foster PROCREATIVE LOVE. As it is with God the nature of this human love is also to bear fruit, rich and abundant. God intended that the love of the husband and wife would not only produce unity but would bring forth children through their mutual self-giving and surrender to each other. When this happens, they become one in a deeper way. The parents grow in unity as they selflessly lay down their lives to work together to protect and raise their children in the ways of the Lord.



There is now a three-way giving and a true trinity to their love; so any selfishness and individualistic tendencies would damage their relationships. The man must now share his wife's love with his children and the wife has to do likewise. The children are called to love their parents by honouring and respecting their parents and thus give themselves to the parents and do their bit to bring about unity. In doing so, through these intertwining relationships each one does their part in building the oneness of their family life.

If our families are called to reflect God then the love and unity we share must be seen in the nitty-gritty of our day to day life as a family. Our families must be Christ-centered and built on the Word and the teachings of Jesus Christ. We need to believe that children are a reward of God (Ps 127:4) and live out the culture of life. We need to train our children in the ways of the Lord (Prv 22:6) and prepare them to withstand the onslaught of a culture bent on indoctrinating young people with secular values. Our homes must be places where we uphold the culture of lives and live out the values that Christ lived out on earth, values that reflect the nature of God. We need to live out the values of charity, compassion, tender mercies, loving-kindness, forgiveness, sharing and caring.

BEARING WITNESS

Two couples share their experiences, lessons learnt and how life has changed after encountering the Lord.

Ehrlich de Sousa and Suzette de Sousa have been married for 31 years. They have been a part of CFCI, in Porvorim Goa for 24 years

Jayan and Sigi Paul have been married for 12 years and are members of the Gurgaon CFCI community. They joined the community 3½ years ago.

How has your family life changed after joining CFCI?

After joining CFCI, God has become the focus of everything. Prayer - both personal and family prayer - occupies a central place in our lives. We do not make any decision without taking it to the Lord in prayer, asking for his guidance and direction.

Our perspective towards the basic aspect of respecting each other changed upon joining CFCI. The basic concept we learnt is that our own individual salvation is through our spouse. We also changed our outlook towards the sexual relationship between husband and wife, realized the sacredness.

What are your attitudes about your children ?

Parental attitudes are the main social influence which the child experiences during their childhood. As we joined CFCI when our kids (a son and a daughter) were very small, we were able to mold them in a way different from the worldly way. After my encounter with the Lord, I was able to let go of performance anxiety. Learning to trust that God has a plan for each one translated into different behavior towards the kids.

I want them to grow in faith. I respect my parents for playing an important role in my upbringing and my faith. I would to inculcate the same discipline when it comes to prayer for my children.

We laid great emphasis on prayer and building a relationship with Jesus. Regular reading out loud, stories from the Bible and lives of saints was another way we nurtured them. They would sometimes accompany us for our Household meetings. Now, both of them were very regular and prompt in attending their respective prayer meetings. I personally shared a good relationship with the Holy Spirit and I would often talk about the guidance and direction received from the Holy Spirit thus inculcating a hunger in them to want to experience the same.

Once when my 5 year old son and his friends were talking about other Gods in class, my son spoke out and said "I believe in Jesus" without any hesitation. I pray that he continues to grow up with the same boldness.

And I regularly asked fathers if they played with their children; if they had the courage to have the love to waste time with their children. The answer wasn't good, eh! The majority would say: 'But, I can't because I have so much work to do...' And the father was absent from that child that was growing up and didn't play with him, he didn't waste time with him."

~ Pope Francis

What are the usual elements of your family prayer time?

Our family prayer time comprises of free praise, then reading of Psalms - never missing out Psalm 91. We then dedicate our day to Mother Mary and finally call on our Guardian Angels to be by our side during the day. As the occasion demands we also ask intercession of our favorite saints. Besides this we also have the family rosary.

We try to pray the rosary regularly, if not at least an Our Father, Three Hail Marys along with other traditional prayers. We follow this by individually thanking the Lord for the day and raising petitions - both common and individual.

What are the challenges you faced as a couple, and how did you resolve them?

As a couple we faced many challenges. Our marriage in the initial years was rather difficult. Lack of communication, money issues, inability to forgive, lack of appreciation were some of the issues that rocked our boat. But with the help of brothers and sisters in the community, through much prayer, attending marriage enrichment retreats as well as the Marriage Encounter weekend, we were able to carry on, believing that through it all God had a great plan for us.

We would have regular day-to-day disagreements, but now we make it point to speak about it with each other - not in an argumentative sense but with an intention to sort it out - keeping our ego aside even though it is at times difficult to do.

***What can you do to promote world peace?
Go home and love your family***

~ St. Teresa of Calcutta

What do you think are the problems affecting couples today?

Excessive use of technology, chasing after money, stress, exhausting work schedules.

There is a lack of good communication which includes both sharing and listening. Quality time between spouses is also lacking. People get too busy with other things.

How have you'll been serving God as a family?

"But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

(Josh. 24:15, NKJV)

This verse is apt to describe what we as a family are doing. Right from the time of our commitment we have taken an active role in the CFCI community, serving first as household servants and later as chapter servants. For nearly 7 years we worked with Singles and currently we're nurturing the young couples from our chapter.

Both our children are also actively involved in the work of building God's kingdom.

Our son and his wife are household servants in the Singles ministry as also is our daughter. Additionally, our son is also on the Core team of Singles and our daughter is in the music ministry.



We serve primarily in Gurgaon itself. Whenever the community needs us we are always ready to serve. We involve ourselves in the parish activities and my husband, Jayan, is a parish council member. If not for CFCI, we probably wouldn't have even thought about it.



We too can be saints in our family, in our neighborhood, wherever we live and work. Be a person who listens to what people need, communication not only to grieve or tell others about your own problems. Listen in order to intercede and help out.

~Pope Francis

What do you love most about the relationship you share with your children since coming to the Lord?

The very open and free relationship I share with the kids, their willingness to correct me when I'm wrong but above all their obedience is to be really admired.

It has helped us be aware of times especially when we get angry, to not react or harm our child.

Families, become what you are.

"Spouses are therefore the permanent reminder to the Church of what happened on the Cross; they are for one another and for the children witnesses to the salvation in which the sacrament makes them sharers.

Also to be able to ask forgiveness and communicate with the child with love and affection, and to accept our mistakes is what we have learnt in these years of being in the community, and we constantly work towards building a relationship with our child the way the Lord wants us to.

Of this salvation event, marriage, like every sacrament, is a memorial, actuation, and prophecy. As a memorial, the sacrament gives them the grace and duty of commemorating the great works of God and of bearing witness to them before their children. As actuation, it gives them the grace and duty of putting into practice in the present, towards each other and their children, the demands of a love which forgives and redeems. As prophecy, it gives them the grace and duty of living and bearing witness to the hope of the future encounter with Christ."

~Pope St. John Paul II, Familiaris Consortio. 1981.

In conclusion...

We give all glory to God for all that he is doing through the Couples ministry to strengthen families and bring them into the light of his love.

SINGLES' CONFERENCE REFRESH

The National Singles Conference was held at St. Joseph Vaz Spiritual Renewal Retreat Center, Goa from July 27th – 29th 2018.

This year, the Conference was themed "Refresh" based on the Bible verse from Matthew 11:28-30

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

270 Singles from Bangalore North, Bangalore South, Gurgaon, Mangalore, Mumbai, Porvorim, Pune, Assam, West Bengal, Caranzalem, Margao, Calangute, and Chennai were present at the Conference.

Day One began with the first competition of the Conference, "Walkin' Loud". This Competition required each delegation to focus their energy, vibrancy and creativity in a manner that best brought out the pulse of their area, with a twist to it – each delegation had to depict this as a human flag. Every delegation showcased skill, creativity and originality in the uniqueness of their depiction.



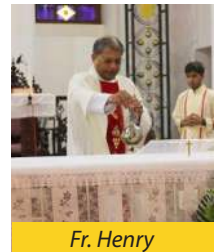
North Bangalore's entry for **Walkin' Loud**

Following this competition, we had our first session which spoke about "**The Invitation**" that God gives to each of us. It was a great reminder that Jesus is the invitation to God and that we each receive a personal invitation to come as we are. It is when we accept this invitation that the Lord fulfils His promise in giving us rest, where fears are done away with and forgiveness becomes easy for us.

The session also pointed out the struggles that most of us are faced with when we attempt to rest in the Lord; the 3 D's – **Distraction, Discouragement** and **Doubt**. However, the participants were reminded of the reassurance that Jesus gives us and that we on our part need to truly realign our priorities and put God first so that our lives are aligned to His will for us.

In the afternoon, everyone took this opportunity to rekindle friendships made in the past and create new ones. Post lunch was the second competition of the Conference – "**Showdown**" which focussed on bringing out talents among the participants.

This was followed by Mass, where Fr. Henry gave a good sermon about how we must try and be in silence with the Lord in order to allow our spiritual ears to hear. And Day 1 ended with a Fete that had a carnival-like atmosphere and a great time bonding with people of different chapters.



Fr. Henry

Day 2 started off with worship with the Band – Throne of Praise, leading praise & worship. The first talk of the day was about being "**Yoked for Freedom**". The session talked about the invitation that God sends to each of us and explained what being yoked to Christ really means. It also touched on the lies that we often fall prey to which prevents us from being yoked to Christ and the truths to believe in. The session concluded by saying that in order to be yoked to Christ, practising the acts that Jesus did to build His relationship with His Father ought to be done.

This inspiring talk was then followed by a session on "**Worship**". The participants were reminded to come with their full being and self when coming to worship God. They were encouraged to learn more about Jesus, which will help them to know how to surrender burdens to Him, thus enabling Jesus to give them a part of Himself. This will eventually help them bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Post lunch, there was a time of adoration along with confession followed by a workshop on **“Praying with Scriptures through Lectio Divina”**. The session gave much clarity on how to pray with Scripture.



Sheetal Coyne teaches Lectio Divina

The participants were taken through an example of how to carry this exercise out, thereby, enabling them to do it daily during personal prayer time. The session explained that this exercise when done with a true heart and mind, can really transform lives and help truly know the heart of Jesus and eventually become His disciple.

At the end of the workshop, Holy Mass was celebrated in the chapel.

Following this several Singles came forward and testified about how God has touched and continues to work in their lives. It was an inspiring and moving time as it brought upon the realization that the participants are not alone, others go through the same trials, was a reminder that God is always with each one of them, walking with them every step of the way. The evening ended with an amazing concert. The Faith band led a time of worship, and adoration when the Lord made His presence felt. After adoration, the band continued with songs of praise & worship. That concluded Day 2.

The last talk of our Conference on the theme: **“Refresh”** was given on Day 3. As the topics of the past 2 days were recollected, the speaker spoke about what Jesus wants us to learn from Him – meekness, humility, obedience, being led by the Holy Spirit, trust and surrender. The participants learnt that in order to inculcate these areas, they need to first look at themselves with sober judgment and continue to seek Christ in all that they do.



Stephanie D'souza

The Country Servant, A.V. Jose, addressed the Singles thereafter. He spoke about how the future of the Church for the next generation is in hands of the participants. They were convicted to go out and share the Word and Love of Christ to others so that they, in turn, may share it with others and eventually more and more people will get to experience the Love and Faithfulness that God is. He then asked the Singles if anyone had the desire to become a priest or a nun and asked them to come forward. Several Singles came forward and all stretched out their arms and prayed for them so that the Spirit of the Lord may descend on them and have their desire come to fullness if it is the will of God for their lives.

This was followed by a time of pray over, where the leaders of the community prayed over everyone who hadn't yet received the gift of tongues. It is at this time that the presence of the Holy Spirit was felt strongly and was a most enriching time for everyone present.

Finally, the participants were led through a praise fest where they sang and danced in praise and thanks for the newfound rest that they discovered in Jesus. They took back memories and guides on how they, as Singles, can grow in knowing Jesus better and learn from Him so that they can always yoke themselves to Him no matter what the circumstance may be.



Faith Band

Lisa Maskell CFCI South Bangalore

Pictures used in this article taken by: Mauvin Menezes Mathew, Trevor Fernandes & Sherwin Pereira

CONFERENCE GALLERY





Testimony

FRUIT OF THE SINGLES CONFERENCE

My personal prayer life was more like an obligation without real intimacy in my relationship with God. The conference theme Matthew 11:28-30 made me realise my one way conversation with God and helped me overcome the unworthiness within me by being yoked to Christ. My prayer life is more fulfilling now.



JOSHUA F

North Bangalore

I am a person who does not talk much to people and it surprised me the way people connect to each other at the conference. It was a great opportunity to bond with my brothers and sisters in Christ.



Secondly I always had a desire to get the gift of tongues. So on the last day during the Release of the Tongues I went forward to receive this gift and I was filled with joy as I received this gift. It was a different experience altogether.

All praise and glory be to God.

FLOVIN VEERAM

Pune



I really felt the Lord telling me throughout the conference from the verse of Mathew 7:7 **"Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you."**

And so I testify today that never give up trusting in the Lord for He is truly faithful in every way and will always be by your side to guide you and to open the right door for you. All we have to do is ask him! I felt truly spiritually refreshed and rested.

TRACY VIEGAS

Goa

On the night of the travel to Goa I had extreme tooth and jaw pain which didn't show signs of subsiding, I didn't let that hinder me. I continued to prepare for the travel and took medication. I didn't let the fear overtake me and was able to attend the sessions without being in pain. I felt God take care of me.



The theme "REFRESH" was meant for me, I completely understood what rest in the Lord signified. Every moment was cherished. I spoke, sang and danced with the Lord, it was just the best feeling.

MELISSA D'COSTA

Mangalore



I learnt about Lectio Divina which completely changed my relationship with my Bible and by extension with the living God. Every praise & worship session was so beautiful it took me away to a place where there was no one but me and my God. My burdens eased as I gave them up to the Lord, I felt his presence, I felt his love and I have grown to love him in the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation.

CECILIA D'MELLO

Chennai



AFRICA MISSION

CFC-FFL has 3 full-time missionaries working in Malawi responsible for the mission work for the continent of Africa - Tony Correia, his wife Maria Correia and Stephanie D'Souza - a consecrated single. The mission in Africa commenced in 2014. Here is a look at their work this year as narrated by Maria:

January brought new challenges with Tony coping with his stroke in Goa and Stephanie coping with her near-fatal accident in Malawi. But God has his own plans which any day overcome the enemy. We had two young able and zealous missionaries from Goa - Aaron Gomes and Reuben Carvalho join Mission Africa.

February saw the return of Stephanie to Goa for her much needed medical treatment. Tony, Reuben and Aaron held fort and got familiarised with schedules and people concerned with the Malawi mission. They were immersed in the supplementary faith formation program for the 140 odd Seminarians in the small St. Paul's community.



Little St. Paul's Apostle Seminary Community

March brought the young missionaries face-to-face with the tough language Chichewa and our newly appointed Fulltime Pastoral Worker (FTPW) for Malawi Mr Julio Jumbe moved in with them, thus mutually helping each other through the conducting of Live Christ Share Christ (LCSC) programs, Live Pure programs for youth and the imbibing of Malawian Culture.



LCSC for street girls reached from prostitution

April saw Tony going totally blind in one eye and we had to rush to India and have his eye surgery. It took a full month for complete recovery. Through this time Reuben and Aaron carried on the programs all by themselves growing in the skills of cooking, housekeeping and maintenance.

May: Tony and Maria made it back and all the scheduled programs were carried out in full swing: youth training, General Assembly, Faith Camp preparations, Seminary interventions besides LCSC sessions.

June bid farewell to our young missionaries who returned to India. Tony and Maria attended the International Core of Seniors meet and took part in the Anniversary celebrations in the Philippines. Thanks to our generous benefactors we were able to introduce the two Country Coordinators: Lucius Mandala and wife Asiatsu Mandala for Malawi, and Benedict Dzreke for Nigeria to the worldwide community.



LCSC & Intercession Program at Msumi Parish

July brought about the much-awaited realisation of Mission Botswana, besides the regular monthly programs in Malawi. The hunger and thirst of the brothers and sisters in Botswana were palpable. Under the able leadership of Country Servant, Jun Jun Iligan, and his wife, Jing Jing - a living example of Proverbs 31, they had waited in faith and prayed for someone to reach out to them for seven years before our visit to them. When we arrived they eagerly devoured every word of the LCSC, Liturgical Bible Study (LBS), "Prayer Warriors", "Intercessors", "Living as a People of God", and "Household dynamics" sessions. They stayed behind after the daily sessions for their One on one conversations and passed on whatever they received to others around them. A very elderly couple regularised their marriage after we visited and prayed with him as he was supposedly on his deathbed. The priest in charge - now appointed parish priest - Fr. Tony Rebello, from Fatorda Goa, was an epitome of humility attending every session from start to finish, taking notes and inviting people to make the most of the inputs.

Stephanie returned to Mission Malawi abler now to cope with the schedule though still in pain and needing some physiotherapy.

August was the mission to Tanzania. We got this opening through a session we gave to priests of the Missionaries of Mary Immaculate, an Indian congregation working in Africa, who were on retreat in Malawi. Our FTPW Julio Jumbe and his wife Lucia Nkhata formed the team along with Tony and Maria. Together, we visited four different parishes.



LIVE PURE at Canossa Convent

In Dar E Salaam, we gave a variety of programs to different sections of people. LCSC to parishioners, Catechists, Associations and even to a group of fifty kids. Several sessions on "Living our Vocation to

Evangelize" to Religious Sisters, Postulants, Seminarians and School Teachers; "Live Pure" to parish youth, schoolgirls of St. Anne's convent and the Cannosa Convent, and girls and boys from two different Rescue Homes for street children. Besides sessions on Intercession to Parishioners in three different Parishes and the LBS to four different outstations of one parish.

September brought us back to home base Malawi. We were blessed with the visit from our Country Servant A.V. Jose who could personally evaluate our work accomplished since



'Being a Witness' - St Anne's Convent Staff

mission Malawi was established. He visited the Malawi Servant Council and met with the members individually; he saw one of the LCSC local language teams in action at a new LCSC site; he interacted with our Youth leaders, Women's team leaders, and also met with Tony and Stephanie on a one on one basis.



Eucharistic celebration in the community chapel, Mangochi

He was very pleased with our Community Spirituality of daily prayer, intercession and Eucharist besides weekly Adoration.

October schedule had mission Nigeria and Ghana on the cards.

Mission Nigeria is ongoing with our brethren who took part in the LCSC during our last visit in August 2017 clamouring to be trained in the way and life of CFC-FFL.



Tony & Maria Correia

We have been exposing them to Vision and Mission of CFC, an appreciation of the CLS and purpose and dynamics of Households besides a session on "Family Financial Planning" and other sessions on married life. Their zeal is amazing. We left them with instructions on how to conduct the CLS, Household meetings and Chapter meetings. God grant them grace to build His Kingdom in Abuja.



CFC training programs, Nigeria

As this report goes to print, we are on our way to mission Ghana along with our Nigeria Country Servant Dzureke who happens to be a Ghanaian. Hoping to revive the old group that was being looked after by a couple from the Philippines but long since abandoned due to their severe health problems. Healthcare in Africa is a big challenge.

Stephanie holds fort and carries the burden of the programs scheduled for Malawi along with the locally trained teams which carry on with the different LCSC programs in the parish out stations and Live Pure to schools.



Stephanie with a group of college students

Stephanie's presence is much appreciated especially in the Youth activities. She plays a major role in shaping the minds of the organisers so as to transform the

Youth programs to become spiritually enriching.

The recently held Diocesan Youth day celebrated on Oct 13 was just the latest case of her working with the organizers behind the scenes besides her physical presence to conduct Bible quizzes and other games.

Despite, our frailty, God continues to use us and, praise and glory to Him, souls return to His Kingdom!

Maria Correia Malawai



Stephanie D'souza with her parents and Bishop Montfort Stima

TRAINING & EVANGELIZATION

UPCOMING EVENTS

CFCI YOUTH DAY

16th DECEMBER, 2018
TINSUKIA, ASSAM

MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT RETREAT FOR YOUNG COUPLES

25th - 27th JANUARY, 2019
MULKI, MANGALORE

KIDS VILLAGE BANGALORE

3rd FEBRUARY, 2019
BANGALORE

SINGLES' FORMATORS/ HOUSEHOLD SERVANTS TRAINING

23th FEBRUARY - 24th FEBRUARY, 2019
BANGALORE

PRIESTS CONFERENCE BLOCK YOUR DATES

26th FEBRUARY - 28th FEBRUARY, 2019
PATNA



CAMPUS

Campus Retreat

A two-day retreat was conducted by CFCI **Bangalore** at Mount Carmel College for 700 Pre-University students on the 22nd and 23rd of June.



Unveiled

CFCI Singles and CFCI Youth of Mangalore conducted a half-day programme for 80 youth of Infant Mary parish, Bajjodi, **Mangalore** on the 1st of July.



CAMPUS

Campus Retreat

Mangalore had their first Campus retreat conducted by CFCI Singles and CFCI Youth at St. Agnes High School, Mangalore on 3rd and 4th July for 130 participants.



CLS

Love, Life and Family

23 married couples of Holy Family Parish, **Bangalore** attended a one day retreat "Love, Life and Family" on the 1st of July.



CLS

Christian Life Seminar

A CLS (Christian Life Seminar) was held for 19 married Couples and 2 Singles at Jivan Jyoti Church, Unai, **Gujarat** from July 4th to July 6th.



Face to Face with Jesus

CFCI Singles North **Bangalore** conducted a one-day Christian Life Seminar (CLS) on the 8th of July. 21 participants attended the retreat.



CAMPUS

Campus Retreat

A two-day retreat was conducted by CFCI **Bangalore** at St. Joseph College of Commerce for 650 students on the 7th and 8th of July.



CAMPUS

Campus Retreat

540 students attended the campus retreat at St. Joseph's PU College, **Bangalore** on the 14th and 15th of July.

TRAINING & EVANGELIZATION



Household Servants Training

34 Couples and 11 Singles attended the Household Leaders training programme held for Household Servants involved in the Daman mission on the 15th of July at Silvassa, **Gujarat**.



Campus Prayer Meeting

'From 4th of August 2018 onwards, a campus prayer meeting is held every Saturday for over 3 hours at St. Joseph Commerce College, Bangalore catering to the students of **Bangalore**.



Christian Life Seminar

A one-day programme was conducted for 13 Couples and 14 Singles at Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Silvassa, **Gujarat** over three Thursdays: 26th of July, 2nd and 9th of September.



Love, Life and Family

8 couples attended the CLS held at Kumarakoam Restaurant, HSR, on July 28th, 2018



Christian Life Seminar

34 Couples and 4 Singles attended the CLS at Our Lady of Redeemer Church, Khanvel, Dadra and Nagar Haveli held on the 11th, 12th and 15th of August.



Intercession Seminar

A one-day Programme was attended by 68 CFCI members, conducted by Bro. Romeo held on the 15th of August at Vinayalaya, **Mumbai**.



Christian Life Seminar

A CLS (Christian Life Seminar) was held for 3 married couples and 15 youth at Mother of Divine Grace Cathedral, **Gulbarga** on the 11th and 12th of August.



Christian Life Seminar

A CLS (Christian Life Seminar) was conducted for 25 couples of the Bazpur Parish, **Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh** from 30th August to 3rd September 2018.

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TRAINING & EVANGELIZATION

CHRISTIAN LIFE SEMINAR

In this time and age, there are many Christians (Catholic and non-Catholic) who can be labeled as nominal since they are engaged in the worship life of their church and yet appear to live lives that are contrary to the principles espoused in the congregations they attend in at least every week. There is a need to bring these Christians into a gradual exposure and yet non-intimidating introduction to Catholic doctrine and into a renewed and personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Apart from bringing these people into a renewed experience of their faith, it is necessary to provide a support environment to sustain the new-found relationship and the gradual discovery of the other facets of their faith. This seminar is meant to be such an initiation. However, more than that, and in a more subtle way, it is a step-by-step living out of the way of life in the Couples for Christ community.

The Christian Life Seminar is the method we use to proclaim and live out the Good News of Jesus.

They are the spiritual exercises of CFCI.

It is a 9 week program that establishes a pattern for living a daily life of repentance, yielding to the Spirit and committing oneself to Christ and His Kingdom.

Members do not merely attend a CLS; they do the CLS and then live it out for the rest of their lives.



Revive 2018

Couples for Christ India, **Managalore** unit celebrated their Family Day 'Revive' on Sunday, September 2, 2018, at The Pastoral Institute, Bajjodi. Around 250 were present to celebrate the day which was made all the more significant by the fact that this year is celebrated as the Crystal jubilee.

The Holy Eucharist celebrated by Most. Rev. Fr. Aloysius Paul D'Souza, Emeritus Bishop of Mangalore with Fr. Victor D'Mello, parish priest of Kirem, Fr. Aquin Noronha, parish priest of St Dominic Church, Ashoknagar and Fr. Anil D'Souza, Spiritual Director of CFCI Mangaluru and Director of Family Life Service Centre joined as concelebrants.



Campus Retreat

The CFCI Singles of the Porvorim Chapter organized their first ever Campus Retreat for the students of Pope John XXII Higher Secondary, **Quepem, Goa** on the 12th and 13th of September.



Christian Life Seminar

A two day CLS was conducted at St. Anthony's Parish Ajani, **Nashik Diocese, Maharashtra** by Bro Gregory Kadam and team on 18th and 19th of August.



College of Consultors

The College of Consultors team met up with the Bishop of Bagdogra - Most Reverend Vincent Aind on the 31st of August to 2nd of September 2018 at Bishop's House, **Bagdogra**.



Live Pure

14 Singles from **Gurgaon** attended the Live Pure Programme conducted by the Singles of CFCI Goa and Bangalore from the 14th to 16th of September at the Navjivan Retreat Centre, Civil Lines, New Delhi.



Marriage Enrichment Retreat

The Marriage Enrichment Retreat (MER) was held at Loyola's Retreat House, **Pashan, Pune**, from the 21st to 23rd of September. 12 couples attended the retreat.

TRAINING & EVANGELIZATION



CLS

Christian Life Seminar

CFCI-Pune conducted a one day CLS for around 200 participants on the 23rd of September 2018 at Our Lady Consoler of the Afflicted, **Pimpri Church, Pune.**



CLS

Christian Life Seminar

A Christian Life Seminar (CLS) in Kannada was held on 23rd September 2018 at the Shimoga Multipurpose Social Service Society (SMSSS) in the diocese of **Shimoga, Karnataka.** It was a one day programme where about 20 couples along with their children from 3 different parishes attended the programme.



CLS

Christian Life Seminar

A Two-day CLS was conducted at Nirmal Mata Church Parish, **Akalpur in Jammu and Kashmir** diocese from the 22nd of September to 25th of September. 16 couples and 18 handmaids attended the programme.



MP

Marriage Preparation Course

A Diocese based marriage preparation course was given by George, his wife Aruna and team for 25 couples from the 26th to 30th of September at the Maitri Bhawan, Pastoral centre, Jammu.



Marriage Enrichment Retreat

6 Couples from **Gurgaon** attended the Marriage Enrichment Programme conducted by the couples of CFCI Bangalore and Mangalore from the 5th of October to 7th of October at the Navjivan Retreat Centre, Civil line, New Delhi



CLS

Christian Life Seminar

A 2 day CLS was conducted over two weekends at Sacred Heart Church **Dapada, Gujarat** from 29th to 30th September and 6th to 7th of October respectively. 52 Couples and 47 Singles attended the same.



CLS

Face to Face with Jesus

CFCI Singles South **Bangalore** conducted a one day CLS at Yuva Vikas, SG Palya, Bangalore on the 7th of October. 17 participants attended the retreat.



CLS

Christian Life Seminar

A one day CLS was conducted by CFCI Bangalore for 11 couples at the Mother of Divine Grace, Cathedral, **Gulbarga** on the 14th of October 2018.

MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT RETREAT

In response to the need for a better understanding and appreciation of God's plan for marriage and family life, the Marriage enrichment retreat was evolved and is now made part of the program of Couples for Christ. For couples to discover more clearly and intimately God's plan, there is a need to spend time in an atmosphere where God's word can be studied, understood and meditated on; where couples can have an opportunity to come before the Lord and present themselves as a living oblation. A time is needed where couples can take stock and assess themselves, their relationship, their family life and their roles within the context of God's plan. Couples need time to know God's vision and take practical steps in order to attain the goal God is calling them to.

In order to respond to the need of knowing God's vision and to be able to take practical steps to move forward towards God's call. The goals of this program include:

1. To present to the couple-participants some important areas of Christian marriage and family life, which form the foundation for our life together as married couples and as members of CFC.
2. Encourage the couple-participants to commit themselves to living out God's plan.
3. To provide the couples with an effective environment of prayer, learning and Christian fellowship, in which they can begin working on their marriage relationship together so that it may be founded more solidly on Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

TRAINING & EVANGELIZATION

PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



MEMORARE

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided.

Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.



Merely Servants

The community of CFCI Goa and Bangalore conducted a Household servants training for the CFCI Singles community from the 19th to 21st October at Pedro Arrupe Institute, Raia. This programme was conducted for all current Household servants as well as for the potential ones along with the formators from the 4 Singles Chapters of **Goa**.



CLS

Christian Life Seminar

A Parish based CLS was conducted from the 21st to 22nd of October at The St Louis Parish, **Adyar, Chennai**. 7 couples attended the same.



CLS

Christian Life Seminar

Two Christian Life Seminars were conducted in **Chicago**, 28th of July and October 27th, where 3 couples and 2 couples attended the programmes respectively.



Regional Youth Conference 2018

281 participants attended the youth conference from 26th of October to 28th October at the Divine Renewal Retreat Centre, **Margherita, Assam**. Participants were majorly from the States of Assam, West Bengal and Odisha.



CLS

Christian Life Seminar

A CLS in Tamil was conducted for around 40 adults at KR Nagar chapel in Choodasandra, **Bangalore** on Oct 28th.



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