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Mangalorean Catholic Association of East Coast, USA

Editor-in-Chief: *Diana M. Lewis (mca.eastcoast@gmail.com)*



From Our President

From Our Priest

As you know, my term as president has ended and I hope that during my term, I have been able to make a positive impact on both the present and future of MCA-EC. Thank you for the opportunity to lead and for your patience as I grew in this position. This is definitely one experience I will never forget!

My journey in leading the Association wasn't done alone. I was accompanied by a team of dynamic individuals, who shared in our successes and learned from our failures. So, I would like to take this time to thank a number of people for their hard work and dedication, without whom running the Association wouldn't have been possible. In particular, I'd like to thank my Executive board for all their dedication in serving with me.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize the true heroes this past year, Vado Gurkarn/Gurkars. There are not enough words to express the thanks and appreciation of these great leaders. For without their passion and undying commitment to devote hours of volunteer service, we would not have begun this journey of transformation or achieved any of our 2012-13 goals. Embracing change is difficult and these Gurkarn/Gurkars never lost sight of the Association's strategic direction. I am certain that we can continue to count on their valuable support for the Association in our coming years.

But most importantly, my thanks go out to you, the members, for all your support during this year. For without you, the Association would not exist. It has been my pleasure to serve you.

So, in closing, I do have one final request, I ask that each of you pledge your continued support to MCA-EC and help our new Association leaders continue our journey to deliver the success our Association deserves.

As you know, we can do this, but only together.

Steven Aranha
President MCA-EC, 2012-2013

Dear Friends, Summer comes along with unique energy all around; it is the season to celebrate. It brings long sunny days, green trees, lawns, colorful flowers, parties, picnics and vacations which are the reasons to celebrate. It's the nature's cycle, ecologically distributed as different seasons in a calendar year. When I was graduating from Bachelor of Theology, I remember my Professor saying that we all pass through two types of years, first is the calendar year whether we like it or not, we flip the calendar every month and change it every year. The second one is the personal year which has no leaf to flip or pages to throw. Personal year is related to my growth and achievements within the academic year and I carry this along my life. Looking back at my stay in New York, I carry a feeling of achievement and fulfillment. The reason is not just my academic completion but I have made my stay more useful and meaningful. Many a people have contributed to make my life happier in this place. I acknowledge the lion's share belongs to MCA-EC in giving me my hometown experience and love of my family here in New York. I have played little role as a spiritual director but received a huge amount of care and support from all the families. The Konkani families kept alive in me the memories of my home and family. I wonder how I would have coped without your families around.

As I leave New York to continue my work in India, I cherish the sweet memories of all the families I have met and events I attended. I wish MCA-EC the best in the future. Though I say I have no plans to come back for any reason, my friends say, you never know. God wish if I happen to come, I believe MCA-EC would grow far and wide with several vados. If you need new names for the vados I can suggest some. I pray for God's choicest blessings on each one of you, the families and especially the little children who are always close to God. Finally I conclude with these verses of Hilaire Belloc...

*"From humble homes and faint beginnings
Out to the undiscovered ends
There is nothing worth the wear of winning
But laughter and the love of Friends"*

Fr. Arun Lobo
1 **Capuchin, Spiritual Director MCA-EC, 2012-2013**

HONORING OUR PARENTS: THE MEMBERSHIP BOARD

My parents didn't have a credit card or the option of interest free loans or the buy-now- pay later option, they didn't have the luxury of internet, spiritual teachers, or weekend retreats or the luxuries we experience today.

Meal times consisted of simple homemade rice, fish curry, chicken or home grown vegetables. Life was hard, yet somehow they still lived well, achieved their goals and brought us up well. The sweetness in life for my parents came from watching their children succeed at school and later in life.

It has taught me to live life simple, respect others and live within my means.

-John D'Souza, VP of Finance, 2012-2013



At work we often do a deep dive analysis on lessons learnt after a major project. It is an important exercise that helps us analyze the past. Subsequently we then challenge ourselves on what could have been done better so that we implement it for the future. Parenting is no different. We analyze what is best for our children, we strive hard to provide all they need, sometimes over and beyond and sometimes we fall just short.

Most of our parental qualities are inherited from our parents. They don't carry a price tag on them but they are the most valuable possession we may have inherited . Here are a few examples- The meaning of love, affection, kindness, determining right versus wrong. They all come to us with neither a user guide nor a set instruction manual.

As parents we never stop worrying about our children. They are an integral part of us that we always want protected with an invisible blanket of armor.

Lucky are the children who were blessed to have parents around to provide them everything under the roof and guiding them in every way. Some unfortunately will grow up never knowing the meaning of a Dad's love or Mom's affection

So besides the yearly Father and Mother's day celebration. Let us all celebrate daily and be thankful to God in our prayers for our parents wherever they may be still praying and wishing us the very best. Nothing in the world can replace them as some valuables are irreplaceable.

-Roshan D'Mello, VP of Public Relations, 2012-2013



Mother's Day is a celebration of honoring mothers and their motherhood. It is celebrated on second Sunday of May every year. On this particular day, many people treat their mom by giving flowers, jewelry, clothing, candy, or by taking her to a special restaurant or by preparing a special meal for her. It feels great to get pampered on that special day. I came to know about mother's day and father's day only after coming to the USA. Even though we never celebrated it in India, after coming to the US on that particular day I call my mom and wish her. We honor and crown our greatest mother Virgin Mary in this particular month.

Mother is the greatest teacher of all. May be educated or not but, she is the best teacher from whom we can learn how to show care & affection. I remember as a kid in India, I used to go for rosary every evening along with my mom & friends for the whole month of May. We used to lead the rosary. My mother thought me to join hands and close my eyes while praying. My mom used to wake us up early in the morning during summer holidays & asked us to go for daily mass. My two brothers & I used to go, even though we did not want to wake up that early. Every Saturday morning we used to have Novena in the Church. After the mass was done we used to kiss mother Mary's picture & come home. My mom always encouraged to be active in the church activities. She taught me how to dress well & to donate clothing or money to the poor. Thanks mom for laying the foundation of faith, love & charity in me.

Father's Day is a celebration of honoring fathers and their fatherhood. It is celebrated on third Sunday of June. People treat their fathers by giving cards, electronic gadgets, and tools for household maintenance. I wrote letters for three years wishing my dad on that day when I came to the US. I was not fortunate to continue the tradition as my father passed away in year 2000. I miss him a lot on that particular day specially when I see others wishing their father. Fathers are great role models for their children. Even though my father was not around when I was small, he was with me when I was in high school up to college. He taught me how to say prayers in English and the importance of reading the Bible. He always said "cleanliness is next to God," taught me gardening, cooking, and how to eat use a fork, spoon and knife. He loved plants, animals & people. He was a great artist. Any parties he went to, he made them lively by singing Suryacha Kirnani. I have learnt a lot from him and inherited some of his qualities, which I am proud of. Miss you Papa. Wishing all the fathers a very happy father's day!

-Merlin Mendonca, VP of Programs, 2012-2013



Amazing opportunity was provided to me by our editor-in-chief, to write about the lessons learnt from my parents, growing up.

My mom is an ultimate positive thinker. She always sees the glass half full and that's how she teaches me to look at life in an optimistic view, along with a touch of prayer. She teaches me to be grateful for what I have today and look on the brighter side and think all will come through at the right time. **Lesson learnt: Just chill (prayerfully) and be patient.**

My dad was very knowledgeable and an expert in the field he was in as a fabricator. He trained many and about 30+ folks of those ended up starting their own fabrication shop. One thing those 30+ had in common was the respect for my dad for all the years after their departure from my dad's workshop, till he died in 93. **Lesson learnt: Give respect and take respect.**

I hope and pray that I as a father of 2 growing boys would also have the opportunity to continue to teach these lessons to them.

-Arun Menezes, VP of Membership, 2012-2013



My Experience as a Mentor

Happy 4th Birthday MCA-EC!

It has been an amazing journey to watch you grow. Just like a 4 year old, you have given us so many memories that we can cherish as we move forward.

Last year has been very special year for MCA-EC. The strategy session on 11 Feb, 2012 laid the foundation to the hectic year ahead. One of the major accomplishments of the strategy session was the formation of vado, which became the cornerstone to advance our vision of connecting people and promoting culture. The six vados and their Gurkar/Gurkarns with their energy and passion kept the vado members active at the grassroots level. This really formed the foundation to thrive – be it in prayers (Lenten Kursa Vaat), be it in challenging times (boarding provided during Hurricane Sandy) or be it during happiness (family events like first Holy Communion, bridal shower etc). In my opinion, it is this unity and the bond that propelled MCA-EC to the next level.

The three major events of the year – Monti Fesh, Christmas Gala and the Summer picnic were absolutely amazing. Members saw an impressive difference in the scale, quality and creativity in these events. Those in the know, can vouch that the Executive board did a stupendous job in bringing all this to life. Many said that the seamless event registration using the portal is really a technological marvel.

Prayer and spirituality are equally important for Mangaloreans. The two retreats in NY and NJ, lead by Fr. Walter helped many of us advance through our spiritual journey. The testimonies revealed that members who attended the retreat have been witnessing God's amazing grace in their life today.

It has been a trend that every outgoing board has raised the bar higher every year and this board is no different. Their passion and commitment to serve fellow Mangaloreans have been beyond our imagination.

Let's all hope and pray that we will continue to have an energetic Executive board to carry this torch further. Let's all give the support they need. I noticed this billboard as I was traveling on this past Memorial Day – "All gave some, some gave all." While many of us can not give all, let's continue to give whatever small we have to MCA-EC– be it in time or in creative ideas for next year.

Together, we can make the difference.

Long live MCA-EC!

-Mark Mendonca, Mentor, Past President



MCA-EC Mangalorean Stars



MCA-EC Stars: Bob and Olivia Vaz

Bob and I have strong bonds with Mangalore. After becoming members of MCA-EC, we developed a close rapport with many of the members. We love that MCA-EC is not only involved in cultural activities, but is Jesus centered, arranging spiritual activities such as Rosary during the month of May, Stations of the Cross during Lent, various retreats etc. When one of the members called us regarding the picnic predicament, we felt as if a part of our family was in difficulty. It is our basic nature to reach out to those in difficulty. So, without second thoughts, we offered our business premises, knowing well that it would take a lot to make a space in the warehouse and make the premises ready for the picnic.

We lived in Muscat (Oman) for over 25 years. Bob was a senior Divisional Manager for a large group of Companies and I was a Credit Officer for HSBC Group. When we received our 'Green Cards' in 1999, we took a decision to move to the United States. It was not an easy process to uproot our well settled life in Muscat and move to the United States to start all over again. While I found a lucrative job in the banking sector in NJ, Bob was undecided as to how to proceed. As they say, behind every successful man, there is a woman, it was my support, motivation and prodding that gave sufficient courage to Bob to utilize his vast experience in Sales and Marketing to start up a new business. In June 2003, we formed Babco Foods International LLC in New Jersey. Bob noticed that in the Indian Market in USA, there were no quality South Indian products to cater to the vast South Indian Community, including Mangaloreans. He decided to fill this void, and contacted several South Indian Suppliers in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Mumbai, Andhra Pradesh and Pune to supply ethnic and quality food products to their kin in the USA. Bob had to make several trips to India to educate the manufacturers with regard to hygiene, packing and quality to ensure that the product passes the FDA examination, when it entered USA.

It was our sheer determination, hard work and commitment that made this project a success. There were times that we had to crush our ego, work 16 hours a day and drive long distances each week ends to establish customers. Every difficulty we took as a challenge, every set back we took as a stepping stone to success and every hurdle we placed at the feet of Jesus who helped us to cross over. Our expertise in Sales and Finance was a great combination. Most of all, we realized that this business was a gift from God and we had to give their very best, which we did. At the time, our two children were in college and living on campus, which also helped them to focus entirely on our business. During our long distance drives, we discussed strategies, future developments and prayed the Rosary. While all this was going on, I was still working in the Bank in NJ as Vice President. Many times we had discussed about me resigning from my job and joining Babco Foods full time. We both were hesitant of working together and being together 24 hours of the day. This decision was postponed for over a year, but one fine day I decided to resign from my job. It is now about 3 years since we have been working together. We smile when people say we work well together and we hardly have any differences in running the company. In October of last year, we opened a Branch office in San Francisco, CA. Recently, we launched our Frozen Foods Division. We currently have a 20,000 sf warehouse in Piscataway, 10,000 sf warehouse in California, 5 trucks and 21 staff. We supply our products to Indian grocery stores in 45 States in the USA. In addition to ANAND which is our own brand name, Babco Foods exclusively represents 23 companies from India, Spain and England.

America is a land of opportunities. There are ample opportunities for anyone who is willing to work hard. Most of all, we say that when one makes Jesus as the center of your life, He will provide you in full measure and overflowing.

Quarterly Vado News

Bhagevonth Kutam (Holy Family) Vado of PA - Heading Onwards and Upwards! *by Amrith Rodrigues-Lewis*

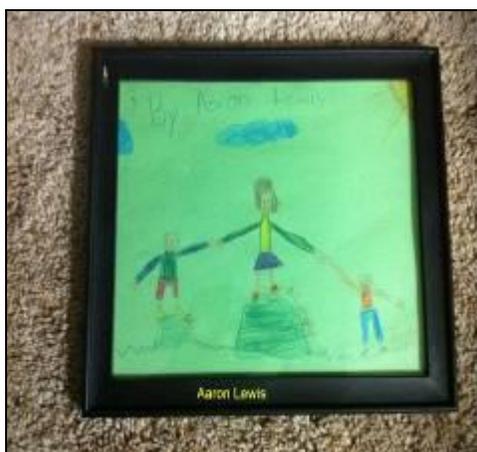
“No man can live as an island, journeying through life alone.”

We are created as social beings. Being part of a group makes us happy. It fulfills one of our basic human needs of belongingness. We build a support system to fall back on. We educate our kids about their roots. The joy of being part of a group is synonymous to sipping cool lemonade on a hot summer day. That’s what we are trying to achieve.....one step at a time.

Our first activity for this quarter was to hold an art exhibition for the kids of our Vado: ***In honor of Mary, Queen of May, we decided on the theme Mother& Child.*** The kids were free to use any form of art to express themselves. See below the small wonders created by the kids :



Athira Menezes



Aaron Lewis



Rohit Lobo

Each picture speaks a thousand words! Kids, you deserve a pat on your back. We are proud of you.

Rosary & prayer service at the home of Neeta and Manoj Mascarenhas: In keeping with our catholic tradition of honoring Mary in the month of May, Neeta and Manoj hosted a rosary and prayer service at their home. We started the service singing hymns accompanied by Archie on the guitar. The music lifted our mood, enlightening us and soothing us at the same time. We recited the glorious mystery, the adults and kids taking turns leading and responding. A special prayer intention was put forward before each decade. By the end of the service our hearts were lighter and our spirits merrier.

We then attacked a round of zesty and flavorful appetizers. While the ladies got busy in the kitchen, the men gathered in a circle, booze in hand, socializing and an idea emerged to hold a ‘Mangalorean

Night' for our next get-together. The evening passed merrily as we enjoyed the delicious potluck meal followed by a "surprise" orchestrated by the Dad's of the group to honor us Mom's on the eve of Mother's day.



UPCOMING EVENT: ALL OUR INVITED!

Bhagevonth Kutam (Holy Family) Vado of Pennsylvania – Delaware
A new Chapter of Mangalorean-Catholic Association of East Coast
presents...

Mangaloreans on the Coast
On Saturday July 27th 2013, 5:30 PM to 11:00 PM
At Royal India Restaurant
55 Lancaster Ave, Malvern, PA 19355 ☎(610) 540-0253
(Free Parking)

*Come dance to the foot tapping music of Gerry Coutinho,
Bring back memories of bombastic bailas (Yo Baile Yo),
Enjoy lip smacking food, Get in High spirits (Soro maka Zai pailo),
Mix and mingle in Mast Mangy style!!
Grab your tickets!!! Entries limited to the first 125 guests only.*

Tickets: (includes Admission, Dinner, and Drinks*)
Adults (13 yrs & over): \$25 per person
Children (5 yrs – 12 yrs): \$15 per person
Dress Code: Smart Casuals

Please RSVP by June 30th 2013
Dilip Lewis (diliplewis@gmail.com), ☎267 240 9213
Sanjay Currie (sanjaycurrie@gmail.com), ☎484 354 0277

Limit 2 per Adult. Please drink and drive responsibly.

Kursa Vado, NY

By Arun Menezes

- As usual, last few months were all about fun at Kursa Vado. We had a great start when key vado members joined hands with LI vado to host their first event - great one. Read LI vado section for more details.
- Birthdays come and go. But not for members of the NY's Kursa vado. We celebrated couple of birthdays as a vado and Dumb Charades took the center stage with few actions from members to stay in our memory for ever(best one was the word "swing").
- Summer in spring was in action with a BBQ at Micheal-Florine's place in the heart of Jackson Heights - Great setup and great food.
- Men in the vado meet for cricket most of the Sundays when ladies do use this time for some window shopping, while the kids are with the men helping them pick the ball at the boundary line.
- Mothers in the vado were surprised with a lunch at a restaurant in the area for mother's day. Men planned this event and kept the secret till the very end and are eagerly waiting for something similar for Father' day - if it's a surprise, let's see if the women can keep the secret.
- Official summer kick-off was hosted by Rennie-Mickey. More cricket, more dance and more fun - along with some Rennie' special mouthwatering chats for snack.
- Planning and preparation continues for a summer camp north of New York in the month of August.
- Finally, it's hard to accept that time has finally come for Fr. Arun's departure to India. The NY's Kursa vado would like to wish him good luck and pray to God that his vision to serve the underserved is fulfilled.
- **Follow us on twitter #nykursavado**



Fatima Vado, Piscataway, New Jersey

June 2013

The arrival of Easter marks the onset of some of the Catholic Church Sacraments, such as Communion and Confirmation. The Fatima Vado family was equally involved in these sacred events. Here are some pictures of the Fatima Vado celebrating these joyous events:



When it comes to celebrations, the Fatima Vado families sure do know how to rock it to the next level. The vado's first "**Vado day**" was celebrated on June 30th in *Donaldson Park*. The summer theme was a delicious mouth watering BBQ lunch and Konkani music. Both kids and adults of the vado were engaged in several games and activities, throughout the day. The kids and teens displayed a wonderful dance and talent show that left the adults cheering and clapping in awe. The weather dampened a bit towards the evening with a few showers, but the spirit of the Vado was shining high to such an extent that every family stayed until closing time. The Vado day helped many families to make new friends and tighten the bonds of unity in the Vado. As a Vado member aptly stated at the end of the day "*We all became a one BIG Vado family*".



The Fatima Vado will continue to plan other events for the Vado families to get together. If you would like to attend or would want to be a part of the Fatima Vado, please send an email to mca.eastcoast@gmail.com

--- Jaison Banji, Gurkar, Fatima Vado

Moriye Vado – Q2 News and Event updates

Easter Celebration:



Description: On Saturday, March 30, Moriye Vado came together to celebrate one of the most important days in the liturgy of the Catholic Church—Easter! As a culmination to our Lenten get-togethers in remembrance of the Stations of the Cross, we planned an Easter party to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus. Everyone pitched in and helped out to make this a fun and exciting event for the entire group.

Highlights of the Event: Our Easter event was really fun and exciting. First, we all went to the Easter Vigil Mass at various churches, celebrating first with Jesus himself his Resurrection. Then, we all got together at Golden Era, where the event was held. Since it was nearing 10 PM, we came in and enjoyed a scrumptious dinner. In addition, many children participated in the Easter egg hunt, looking for eggs with letter combinations to form words. Our community bond grew as eggs were exchanged to form various words. Following the egg hunt came dancing—lots and lots of fun and dancing. People enjoyed the rest of the night, getting together with friends and family both old and new and renewing the community and cultural bond that holds us together. All in all, it was a great celebration.

Vado Day Celebration:

Description: On Sunday, May 19, Moriye Vado celebrated its first annual Vado Day. The members of our vado were really excited to have Vado Day, yet another opportunity to get together and have a great time. We were able to relax and converse with fellow vado members and get up and dance, have fun, and showcase our talents. Despite the rains that poured that day and our plans to host the event in a local park getting cancelled, we were still able to get together thanks to the Mendonca family who volunteered their basement for our use. Everyone did their part to make vado day and a great day, and it ended up just perfect.

Highlights of the Event: Our first annual Vado Day got off to a rocky start, and nature literally rained on our parade. Spending the day at the park would be extremely difficult, if not impossible. After a few quick calls, it was decided that the event would take place at the home of Mark and Merlin Mendonca in Edison, NJ. Within 1 hour of the time the event was scheduled to start, everyone was redirected to the Mendonca residence. We got right into eating some barbequed appetizers as some upbeat music played. After appetizers, we said a prayer led by Fr. Arun, thanking God for the day he had given us. This was followed by Moriye Vado's Got Talent, where members of Moriye Vado, both young and old, showcased their many talents. We played some great summer games, such as the "Barbeque Game" and the "Chicken and the Egg Obstacle Course." Everyone had lots of fun in the process. Then, lunch was served. Hungry after all that activity, everyone enjoyed lunch and the day in general. People socialized with one another. The future of our vado was discussed, Melvin Mendonca was selected to be our new gurkar after our MCA-EC Summer Picnic. Everyone enjoyed the great day and left happy, as the sun had finally come out.



Also, Moriye vado would like to congratulate 2 communicants who received Jesus for the first time this year. Giselle D'souza and Gerard Monteiro:



Gisele D'Souza



Gerard Monteiro

Moriye Vado would like to congratulate two lovely girls who are graduating this year. Juanita Pinto and Wenola Tauro. Juanita will be attending Rutgers University to major in BioChemistry and Wenola will be attending Albany College of Pharmacy to major in Pharmacy. We would like to give them this advice that You are now in the half way. May your graduation from school be the beginning of a bright future for you. Your graduation from high school is certainly an achievement, but there's a lot more to come: goals, challenges, and opportunities! Anything is possible when you just believe in yourself. Best Wishes for a wonderful college years!

Join us:-

If you would like to join Moriye Vado, please email the MCA-EC Board (mca.eastcoast@gmail.com) for further details.

St. Joseph's Vado of Long Island:

St. Joseph's vado, which includes Queens and Long Island, NY, organized a Konkani Gala at Taste of Cochin Bellerose, Queens on the evening of 27th April. Participation by about 45 Mangaloreans was very enthusiastic.

Jawahar set the tone with his opening remarks in aput Konkani, and Eunice led the proceedings as MC. There was a variety of singing – Konkani, Tulu, English – by Oscar, Mithun, guests Stanley D'Souza and family of 'Eka Pakya Pondlin Gayana' fame, the Kamath family and the Rodrigues family.

A lot of fun was generated through games conducted by Alban and Shilpa. There was plenty of dancing, eating, drinking, mingling and loads of fun. Fr. Arun Lobo, the spiritual director of MCA-EC addressed the gathering and talked about the importance of passing on our culture and faith to our younger generation.

To Join, Contact the St. Joseph Vado:

Charles Rodrigues: charles.rodrigues@gmail.com; 212-960-3510

Vivian Kamath: vkamath55@hotmail.com

Jovita Crasta dr_crasta@hotmail.com

Philip Colaco: colacophil@yahoo.com; 516-221-2291



“INCREASE OUR FAITH” Retreat Recap

SPEAKER/EVANGELIST COLIN CALMIANO From SPREAD YOUR WINGS ministry

www.spreadyourwings.in



On 23rd, July 2013, about 20 MCA-EC youth between the age of 13 and 25 gathered at Mendonca’s residence to be part of a 1-day retreat. Youth, along with their parents traveled from various parts of MA, CT, NY and NJ to be part of this special event. Through powerful examples and personal stories as a young adult, Colleen Calamino touched several issues that pertain to modern youth. The fantastic humor at frequent intervals kept the attention of the audience alive throughout the day.

The retreat started with a breakfast followed by an ice breaker. Immediately after the icebreaker, Colleen gave two talks until lunch. After the lunch there were activities of team building followed by the final talk. At the end of the retreat, young youth gave a very positive feedback on the content, relevancy and organization of the retreat. Last but not least, each participant wrote in a piece of paper “one thing that they plan to change” from the next day. We thank all the attendees of this retreat and wish all the best to live the teachings in their life.

Financial Statement



| MANGALOREAN CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION OF EAST COAST (MCA-EC) | |
|---|-------------------|
| STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AS ON 5/31/2013 | |
| DATE: | 5/31/13 |
| MCA-EC BALANCE/RESERVE: | US\$ |
| Net Balance/Reserve as on 5/31/13 | \$9,214.28 |

Member Contributions

Summer Reading Fun - The Mommy n Me Book club

By Amrith Rodrigues-Lewis

I am a mom of 2 boys, ages 9 and 2 who are as unique and different as chalk and cheese. A is the softhearted one, sympathetic and responsive to his younger brothers needs. J is as rambunctious and adorable as a 2 year old could be; having us all wrapped around his little finger. Little wonder then that I used to find myself feeling regretful for not having spent quality time with my older child..... until we founded our very own MOMMY n ME Book club.

It happened quite by accident. Running late for work, I grabbed a book from the bookcase and was surprised to find Ronald Dahl staring at me instead of Jodi Picoult.

Feeling sheepish, I scanned the train and found everyone engrossed in their respective smart phones, so I settled down comfortably, ready to dive into the world of Matilda, a child prodigy who at five years of age was solving double digit multiplication and reading Charles Dickens. I was surprised at how much I enjoyed the book. When I got home, I could not wait to discuss Matilda with A. Normally mono syllabic, he started talking, his eyes twinkling and hands gesturing. He was thrilled that I was reading the same book that he was. So that's how our book club began with only two members, my nine year old and me.

Since then, we have devoured quite a few books together. The book I remember most was R.J. Palacio's Wonder which is a story of a little boy August who was born with a rare facial deformity and had to attend middle school after being home schooled all his life. As we were discussing the life of August, I gained insight into some events that were unfolding in my son's life which I would not have known otherwise. The book served as a springboard for discussion on topics that are otherwise difficult to bring to the table. We talked in length about the fact that life had indeed played a cruel joke on August but he was able to turn it around with sheer determination and courage.

Some of you may be wondering why I chose to write this article. There is only one reason. Ever since I have found this joy I have wanted to share it with other moms and what better time to start than this summer. Trust me it's hard to find the time and even harder to be patient and listen without interruption but it's worth a try. It may work for you or it may not but if it does, you will be on your way to building some truly wonderful memories.

Youth Corner

Instilled By Rachelle Ann Fernandes

It seems as though
As you grow old
You realize the value,
Of things your Mama taught
you-
And such lessons enthrall
you.
Those fables and those
stories
That elicited such wisdom-
The wondrous sagacity
She shared with all her
children.
And sometimes you
remember
Groaning when she said,
"When I was your age" or
"If you were me"
And grudgingly shaking
your head.
Yet finally-
Maturity-
Has caught up in the race,
And you find Life's many
hardships
Are really quite tough to
face.
You aren't that same
juvenile
That shrugged and stated
carefree,

You can't go on pretending
that you're someone
You can't be.
You find the strength to step
on up
And take Life by the reins,
And come to think of things
you learned
From all those growing
pains.
Your mother's voice
resounds and echoes
Softly in your head,
And with all her life-taught
knowledge,
You wish you were her
instead.
"I'm going to call my
Mama," you say,
"She'll know what to do,"
And you pick up the phone
and find comfort
That your mother can guide
you through.
Eventually,
You'll have to be,
On your own,
Alone,
On this earth-
But your mother will always
linger
Because of her infinite
worth.

Darkness Into Light By Susanna D'Souza

The bees buzz
The birds hum
The child wails
The men race
The world scurries by
Yet you and I remain
Standing tall
Standing strong

I am small yet you are large
I am weak yet you are
strong
I am hopeless but you are
full of hope
I cry out and you help me up
My life is dark and you light
it up
I lose my path and you
guide me right.
I am a wreck but you love
me.
What kind of love is this?

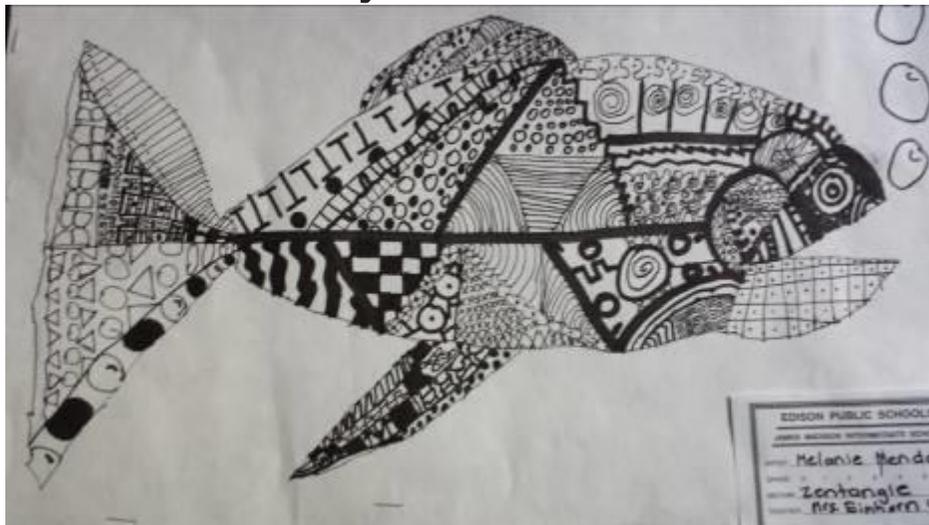
At times I float to the side of
the road
But you are quickly there
with reigns of hope
Guiding my life to the other
side
Where faith and courage
resides.

I was taught at the very
young age to believe in you
But I didn't know what to do
I was young, I was dumb
I was full of childish ways
Ways that were like waves
Waiting to drag me out
Farther into the ocean
where I couldn't stay

Now here you are
Still calling me child
After all is said and done
I laughed with others
I misbehaved
I didn't care what my elders
said
I was a fool but you saw
more than me
You saw my soul and you
saw what I needed

When others laugh and call
me names
I know now who I still can
believe
The one who cares in me
because of me and
not my facade

Art by Melanie Mendonca



SAVE THE DATE

2013 Monti Fest

When:

Saturday, September 7th, 2013

9:30 AM to 3:45 PM

Details:

Mass in Konkani/Showering of flowers by kids/Delicious Lunch/Cultural activities/Skit/Dance/Songs - Complete entertainment for all age groups in an auditorium.

Where:

Our Lady of Angels RC Church, 7320 4th Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11209

A Final Word

This summer's newsletter theme of parenthood was intentionally brought forth in light of the season (Mother's Day in May, and Father's Day in June) in addition to the changing "parenthood" of MCA-EC's Executive Board. Typically, behind great children are great parents, and as such, we owe a special thanks to the "fathers" of the MCA-EC, from past presidents Manesh, to Mark, to Gladwin to Steven.

I was blessed to be Steven's peer during the 2011-2012 Board, and his passion for this organization was always apparent on every phone call, email and meeting. The interest of MCA-EC and the happiness of its members were always at the forefront of his thoughts. During his tenure, we saw great gains in membership numbers over several geographic areas, thanks to the formation and growth of the vados. By securing a large venue with an auditorium, Steven gave us the opportunity to witness the New Yorkers as hosts, as we all came together to celebrate the common goal of praising Mother Mary. At Christmas, recognizing the need for a larger ballroom after the previous year's function, Steven and his Board secured a new venue, with plenty of space for participation for all. Then, for our June picnic, when disaster seemed imminent, with the original venue ending up being unavailable at the last minute, undeterred, the Board, under Steven's leadership, stood together to triumph over Mother Nature, finding us the perfect location to rescue the day's festivities. These noteworthy accomplishments have all contributed to the growth and pride of MCA-EC, and we are all thankful for these blessings of leadership. Additionally, we are thankful for the spiritual guidance received from Father Lobo during his years with MCA-EC. His homilies were always family-oriented and memorable, and his sense of humor and warmth made him easily approachable and loved by children and adults, alike.

Now, we can look forward to a presidential tenure under Arun Menezes. Arun's role as President for 2013-2014 is a true testimony to the power of volunteerism and leadership. As VP of PR in 2011, I recall sending a final end of the year notice entitled "Achieving Success Together." As a Board, we all hoped and prayed that this letter would encourage volunteers to come forth and help us achieve our lofty dreams. I remember eagerly and perhaps excessively checking the MCA-EC inbox for responses, but to our disappointment, none of the flood of responses that we expected actually came to fruition. Instead, there was just one. The email came from a sender named Arun Menezes, stating that he was moved by the request, and that he wished to help by assisting with the membership database. Later, in February of 2012, Arun came from NY, in spite of the snow that morning, and we all gathered at Mark Mendonca's house to strategize. I was blessed to lead one group, and Arun happened to be in the same group, eagerly contributing and providing ideas to take the organization forward. I was already in a content mood, one month away from delivering my second daughter, and Arun's enthusiasm, as well as the zeal from so many other participants' gave us all a great feeling of awe and wonder, as we all imagined this organization's potential. It is a true blessing to see that the lone person who so eagerly responded to our request for volunteers ended up becoming the VP of Membership in 2012-2013, and now the President for 2013-2014.

I share this anecdote in the hopes of encouraging others to come forth and volunteer. God has given each of us a talent and each of us is capable of contributing in some manner. I will end this summer edition by reprinting the same email that I sent back on Friday, Dec 16, 2011. Though some of the details are outdated, the tenets still hold true. We can all pray and hope that it may encourage another future President. God bless and enjoy your summer!



[MCA-EC:194] MCA-EC: Achieving Success Together (Reprint of E-Letter Sent on Dec 16th, 2011)

We're grateful for the opportunity we've been presented to come together as a team and fulfill our promise to "Connect People, Promote Culture."

We started out as strangers together; however, a friendship was fast forged based on a common purpose to enhance our sense of community as residents of a country thousands of miles away from our homeland. This has unified and strengthened our vision and we feel blessed to be able to serve you all. We are no different from you: we, too, are parents, full-time employees, entrepreneurs, husbands, wives, parishioners, and of course, Mangaloreans. As paying members of the MCA-EC, like you, we expect the best of our membership, and as such, we have worked together to create experiences that provide the most value for our money. As we conclude this year, we have come across several opportunities for continued growth. Since this marks the mid-point of us serving on the MCA-EC Board, we thought it would be appropriate to highlight our wish list for future MCA-EC events:

- **We are very grateful to our sponsors.** 30% of our event support came from sponsorships from various individuals and groups. In the months leading to the Gala, the Board worked tirelessly to secure sponsorships on the MCA-EC's behalf. It is a blessing to have this financial support. If it wasn't for this support, it wouldn't have been feasible for us to raise the bar and host a Christmas Gala at a banquet hall. Hats off to the generous people who came forward to embrace the vision of the MCA-EC. Simultaneously, our prayer is to see more and more generous benefactors rise to the occasion from our own organization. We would love to see our community become more independent by securing sponsorships that come directly from within the MCA-EC.
- **"Connecting People and Promoting Culture," is our primary goal.** As such, we need to increase our membership numbers and connect with people who are unaware of our existence. For this to happen, our membership needs to spread the word to family and friends. A corollary objective is for us to showcase our culture to others. Think about the various cultural parades that happen in the Tri-State Area: St. Patrick's Day Parade, West Indian Day Parade, Italian Heritage Parade, etc. These events are about promoting culture within a group, but also showcasing cultures to others. We should strive for the same. We are blessed to have support from other Indian groups, as we saw from our involvement in the India Day Parade and also, the support from our fellow Goans. There are plenty of opportunities for us to grow by simply supporting others and showcasing our pride in Mangalorean culture. If opportunities such as these arise, we would appreciate your support.
- **Growth cannot occur in isolation.** Although we have five people on our Board, we can only do so much. We would like to see our members come forward with innovative ideas and plans that can be implemented to enhance our growth:
 - o We want to offer classes to our membership in music, dance, Konkani, cooking, leadership, finance, etc. If you have been blessed with a gift in any of these areas, and can commit to a weekend class for 4 weeks, please come forward.
 - o We would love to see more content contributions to our website. If you're a talented writer, cook, artist, please come forward and submit your essay, recipe, artwork, etc.
 - o We would love to secure official non-profit status. If you're an attorney, please come forward to provide legal advice.
 - o We would love to enhance the management of our membership database. If you have expertise to lend in this sphere, please come forward.
 - o We would love to streamline our financial management, if you're an accountant, please come forward.

The above are just sample suggestions for growth. There are far more opportunities for us to grow and multiply. This organization is equally ours, whether we are part of the Board or not, we are all equal stakeholders in our success and for us to prevail, we need to equally contribute.

- **Be a team player!** We've received feedback that some members would like to see new people come to the forefront for competitions, skits, etc. We would like to see the same, but we can't force anyone's participation.

Just as an example, for the Christmas Pageant, we originally had only a handful of participants. In fact, in one category, we had just one entrant. To avoid cancellation, a few Board members stepped up so as to ensure that the show could go on for everyone's enjoyment. Ideally, we would have loved to see ample participation from our entire membership. For future events, including contests, skits, etc, please do your best to be the first to sign-up. We firmly believe that a high level of active participation from our members is critical to our overall organization's success. Also, by participating, you serve as a great role model for the children of our association, who are the true torch bearers of our heritage and culture.

- **As they say: “Prior Planning Precludes Pitiful Performance.”** A key part of ensuring that we have flawless programming and event management is anticipating how many people will be in attendance at a particular event. For Monti Fest, a significant number of our audience came from walk-ins. Unfortunately, this put a strain on our ability to sufficiently serve the needs of our people. We had anticipated a crowd of X, and planned the table set-up and food quantity, accordingly. For the Christmas Gala, to avoid this problem, we had an early bird period, with the primary objective of ensuring that we had a good handle on the number of attendees in advance. For the Gala, this was all the more important since we had to take a financial risk by securing a down payment in advance for the hall and promising the hall a minimum number of attendees. We had to walk on faith that we would get sufficient attendance. Thankfully, this is what transpired, however, we still ended up having the bulk of our sign-ups come in the last several weeks. At that point, we realized we had a record breaking crowd, but it was too late for us to back track from our contract and seek out a larger hall with a larger dance floor and stage. Though we did our best to plan accordingly, we couldn't do much more because we didn't have the big picture until the last week. We realize that everyone has other commitments, but as a courtesy to your peers and to ensure the most seamless planning, please be as early as possible for making decisions related to event attendance. This is a huge help to us and ensures that we make the best decisions on everyone's behalf. Also, besides being on time for event tickets, it also pays to be on time for the actual event. This helps us stay on track with our planned agenda, as none of us are happy with delays.
- **We appreciate your patience.** Though we are all Mangaloreans, we are a very diverse crowd that represents all sorts of age groups from children, to teenagers, to adults to senior citizens. Also, we are from all sorts of professional, educational and regional backgrounds. Though we strive to make each demographic segment happy with our programming, we are not always successful. Please be patient with us as we try our best to satisfy as many of your needs as possible.
- **We have your best interests at heart.** We share the same desires, hopes and dreams as you do, and though we volunteer as Board members, at the end of the day, we're paying members of the community, just as you are. When we take a decision on an event entrance fee, or programming, we are taking a decision that affects our own wallets and enjoyment, too. Our decisions are based on our collective experience and desire to keep things as sensible as possible. We are a non-profit and for events, we seek to primarily ensure that we can cover our expenses. This means, we charge the minimum required for us to stay afloat, and any event purchases are vetted out by the entire team to verify if they are warranted or not. We do our research and seek out the best bargains, because keeping us financially stable is in our best interest. All of our accounts are transparent, since we are collective stakeholders and as paying members, each person has a right to see that our funds are being used properly. This is why we publish our accounts after every fiscal Board year. We feel strongly about this policy, and plan to uphold it at the end of our term.
- **Recommendations are always welcome!** You don't have to wait until survey time to voice your opinion. We are always ready and willing to hear your ideas. If you want to suggest a hall for next year, or a location for our next picnic, please feel free to tell us. We do our best, but having additional information is always appreciated. Remember, this is your organization!

We'd like to end the year by thanking each and every one of you for your support and dedication. So many of you have supported us, and we are so grateful to have this assistance as we march onward with lofty goals for the association's overall success.