

Mangalorean Catholic Association EC, Inc.

2020 Sponsored Edition

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Dr. Nigel Pereira
Reproductive Endocrinologist
255 Greenwich St,
New York, NY 10007
(646) 962-7499

Nigel Pereira, MD, FACOG, ELS/ALS (AAB) was honored as one of the keynote speakers by the All India Institute for Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi at the 3 rd FERTICON Conference. Dr. Pereira was part of an eminent panel of speakers from Australia, Spain, U.K., U.S.A., and India. The conference featured his research on improving fertilization rates in IVF and the success and safety of fresh embryo transfers. He has published over 85 research papers in leading scientific journals, which have received over 250 citations to date.

Dr. Pereira is currently an Assistant Professor of Reproductive Medicine and Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Ronald O. Perelman and Claudia Cohen Center for Reproductive Medicine, Weill Cornell Medicine, New York.

He is ranked as the #1 Reproductive Endocrinologist in New York by ratemds.com based on patient reviews and testimonials. Dr. Pereira sees patients at the Tribeca office in Lower Manhattan (255 Greenwich Street).



Best Wishes MCA-EC!

**Dr. Nigel and Sarah
Pereira**



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ACTIVITIES to keep your parents active and busy include:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| . Religious | . Social | . Television |
| . Games | . Magazines | . Newspaper |
| . Discussions to exercise their mind | | |

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- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------------------|
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Best Wishes MCA-EC!

From Ajay Patel



Gratitude to our GOLD Sponsors:

Jennifer & Adolphus Fernandes



It was a pleasure and honor to serve on the executive board 2019-2020. I learned a lot and gave a lot with joy. I wish the new board all the very best. I hope and pray more members will come forward and share their unique talents, time and treasures with the organizations.

Jennifer Fernandes, Regional Coordinator 2019-2020





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Kanara Entrepreneurs - US Chapter



You will be judged by the “difference you have made” and not by “the money you have made”

1. What is the strategic mission of Kanara entrepreneurs (KE)?
KE is a Global Not-for-profit (NFP) created to promote, encourage, support and nurture entrepreneurship
2. Type of Organization and Chapters – KE (USA) is a 501 c(3) Approved Not for profit (NFP) in the U.S. Donations to this organization are Tax-deductible. Founding Members and Current Chapters – Dubai in UAE, Bangalore in India and proposed new chapter in USA
3. What are the categories of membership and fee structure?
 - The Global chapter does not dictate the fee structure. It is up to the local chapter to define these fees based on their requirements for sustainability and growth. Recommended fees for US Chapter are
 - Leadership category - \$3000 joining fees, \$1000 annual fees
 - Regular Member category \$200 annual fees
4. What is the Membership value equation?
 - Access to successful people and opportunity to help people less fortunate than you
 - Networking with successful entrepreneurs
 - Access to a Global network of professionals and businesses
 - Development programs
 - Mentoring
5. What is the organization structure?
The organization is run by its own Board of Directors elected from eligible nominations from Lead Members. The Board consists of President, President Elect or Past President, Directors for Finance, Membership, Events, Mentoring and Marketing & Sponsorship.
6. How does the U.S. entity interact with the other chapters in other countries?
The US Chapter is part of the Global charter just like any other chapter. Two of its directors represent the US chapter on the Global board.
7. How are the Funds utilized?
All funds are used for development of the members and member value creation except for a royalty to be paid to the Global chapter for its responsibilities on executing global initiatives and providing centralized support on technology etc.
“Much more is expected from those who have been given a lot” John F. Kennedy



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**Best Wishes
MCA-EC!
Vinod Menezes and Family**



BEST WISHES TO MCA-EC & ITS
MEMBERS ON COMPLETING
10 GLORIOUS YEARS !

FROM ARUMUGAM FAMILY





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ISSUE: 33

WWW.MCA-EC.ORG

June 2020

MCA-EC

Quarterly

Mangalorean Catholic Association of East Coast, USA

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

Our President



Hello Friends,

What an unusual and challenging year this is turning out to be!

Given the Coronavirus devastation across the United States and all over the world, the first thoughts that come to our minds are the lives lost to Covid-19. We pray for their souls and also pray for the families who have lost these loved ones.

As we continue to deal with this situation in ways that have been recommended by experts and authorities, we collectively pray that this unfortunate event has a quick & miraculous end with no additional loss of lives.

We also pray for the safety, good health and well being of the health care workers on the front lines of this pandemic, especially members of our community and association who are in the health care profession or essential workers and thank you on behalf of our community.

In an age where social distancing is the norm we are more connected emotionally. Though attending mass at our church was not a possibility, we attended the virtual mass with our Pope for Easter and even attended a mass in my hometown of Kalina, Mumbai. While physically there is no mass at Church, I definitely feel the peace and love of our risen Christ even more this year.

On the social front, like most of you, we have spoken to extended family and cousins that I haven't seen in years and played charades and jeopardy with family and friends from all over the world.

Last year (2019) was the 10th anniversary for the association and it culminated with our Decennial event during the Monthi Fest (September). Being one of the Emcees for the event that day, I was in awe at the coordination and the tremendous hard work put in by the Decennial committee, the Executive Board and all the volunteers. The event was flawless and what a grand stage to exhibit the association's achievements and the talent from the many vados. The icing for the evening was the musical night and performances by renowned artists.

Now that we are 10 years in, I wish and pray for the continued growth of this association. We look forward to our youth to provide new leadership, such that this association can cater to the needs of younger members. A prime example was our ex-President, Clayton Monis.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the ex-board members (2019-2020) for their assistance to us, the new board, as we learn our way to navigate the processes and functions required to fulfil our obligations to this association. Also, a big shout out of appreciation to the founders and all ex office bearers (board, council, vados, committees) and the numerous volunteers who have nurtured this organization from its infancy and adolescence and now maturing into a young adult.

We appreciate your continued support for these past years via your membership and your active volunteerism. The association is built and supported by you. As usual, please ensure that you fulfill your membership dues (you should have or will get email reminders). Please reach out to us and your Gurkarn/Gurkar for any specific vado activities. Our spiritual director, Fr. Ron has made himself available to pray with you, If you would like him to help you in your spiritual needs during this period.

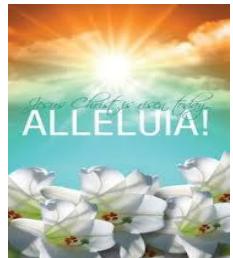
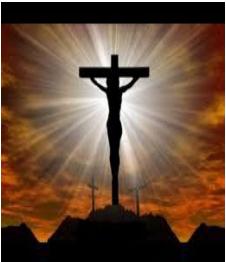
This is a challenging year to be in and along with my colleagues in the Executive Board, the Advisory Council and Gurkarns and Gurkars, we will make best attempts at what we have at the moment and then look forward to a post recovery period from a congregation perspective.

As I look at the executive board team, I am honored to work alongside some of the most hardworking people with the biggest heart.

While we have a few ideas on how to further our mission of promoting our culture and connecting people, we would love to hear back from you and what you would like from the organization.

In closing, I wish you and your families and friends the best of health and most of all, peace during this time.

Best Regards,
Kenneth Monteiro, President 2020-21



Our Spiritual Director

"Peace be with you" - these were the first words from the Resurrected Jesus to his disciples, who were then hiding in the inner room for the fear of Jews.

Jesus, Our risen Lord greets us every morning with the same greeting, while we are still worried and scared about all the things in our life. Are we still hiding with fear in our hearts? Or do we adhere to "Do not be afraid, I am with you always"?

Friends, Let us rejoice and be glad because Our Savior, Our King is with us today and always as promised, Let us remember, "where two or three are gathered in my name, I am in their midst". Let us share the good news of strength and hope to all our brothers and sisters, especially to those whom we have not heard from in a long time. Let us call them to ask about their well-being, and to ask if they need any help in any way. Let our actions speak louder than our words. While we proudly call ourselves Catholic, let us be one and follow his footsteps by serving the poor, helping the ones in need, showing love and kindness. Let us be a ray of hope in someone's life. Try to read the gospel for at least 15 minutes a day.

If you or someone you know is sick, pray for them and please call me, I will add the person to our Prayer List. There are nuns in the community praying for us.

Do not be afraid, I am with you always

God Bless
Fr. Ron

...You are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9

***Rev. Fr. Ron Machado,
St. Josephs Catholic Church,
North Plainfield,
NJ 07060***

frronhfc@gmail.com
Cell: 575 420 5645
Office: 908 756 3383

Office Bearers for 2020-2021

Congratulations

Kenneth Monteiro - President

Jeevan Lobo - Vice President

Anitha Pais - General Secretary

Sharlet Misquith - Treasurer

Josline Pinto - Regional Coordinator

Fr. Ron - Spiritual Director

Kevin D'costa - Advisory Council

Tina Colaco - Advisory Council

Steven Aranha - Advisory Council

Neeta Mascarenhas - Gurkarn - Bhagevonth Kutam Vado

Anita Waghmare - Gurkarn - Divine Mercy Vado

Anita Pinto - Asst. Gurkarn - Divine Mercy Vado

Chris Furtado - Gurkar -Fatima Vado

Simantini Eddy - Asst. Gurkan - Fatima Vado

Ramona Lasrado - Gurkarn - Infant Jesus Vado

Philip Colaco - Gurkar - Kursa Vado

Lavina Aranha - Asst. Gurkarn - Kursa Vado

Diana Lewis - Gurkarn - Moriye Vado

Amberine Saldanha - Gurkarn - Sacred Heart Vado

Sharon Sequeira - Asst. Gurkarn - Sacred Heart Vado

Siprian Rodrigues - Gurkar - Sangatha Vado

MCA-EC BOARD 2020-21: WELCOME

Dear Friends,

My name is Ken and it is indeed an honor and a great privilege to serve as the President of this wonderful association.

I am originally from the locality of Kalina in Mumbai (formerly Bombay) in India. I completed my studies in Mumbai and immigrated to the United States in 1997 and have called New Jersey my home for about 23 years now.

In my life journey for the past 20 years, I am accompanied by my lovely wife Vandana and blessed with two amazing children, Gerard and Mia.

I have been associated with MCA-EC since Monthi Fest of 2009 and immediately bonded with so many of you.



For the past few years, I have had the honor to be the Emcee for many MCA-EC events and especially enjoyed the (a bit of) rambunctious Monthi Fest auctions.

I look forward to when we can all meet in person and strengthen the bonds that we have with each other and the association at large.

**~ Kenneth Monteiro
President MCA EC Board 2020-21**



Hello All, Trust all of you are doing well. My name is Jeevan Lobo, privileged to represent the MCA-EC Board of 2020-2021 as Vice President. I am an IT Professional and reside in Bridgewater, New Jersey with my wife, Nisha Lobo and two adorable kids, Joanne and Nathan.

I have enjoyed participating and being a member of the MCA-EC since 2016. We, as a family have particularly enjoyed the Monti Fest celebrations. Would like to continue the legacy of our former boards and contribute to the success of the MCA EC organization.

**~Jeevan Lobo
Vice President MCA EC Board 2020-21**

Hello MCA-EC family, my name is Sharlet Misquith. It is my honor to be serving as Treasurer on the MCA-EC executive board for 2020-21. We are a part of Moriyade's loving family.

Currently, I live in Freehold, New Jersey with my husband Terry, three sons - Sean, Jaden, Travis and our pet beagle - Astro. Around twenty years ago, I migrated to the US to pursue an Engineering degree in Syracuse, New York.

Since 2009, it has been an incredibly beautiful journey with so many of you, Mangalorean Catholic community members; especially for my children who have found a sense of cultural identity and belonging in it. I hope to grow this community by engaging more of our next-gen members. Mog Asundi !!

~Sharlet Misquith, Treasurer MCA EC Board 2020-21



Hi everyone, I hope you are all healthy and doing well. My name is Anitha Pais and I am happy to serve as the General Secretary for 2020-21.

I live in Metuchen with my husband Avith and 2 children Tasha and Keith. I grew up in Bangalore and moved to New York in 2006. I work as an IT Professional for a bank.

Our family has been a part of Moriy Vado since 2013 when we moved to New Jersey from Singapore. The MCA-EC family has always made us feel home and various events have helped our kids grow closer to our Mangalorean Catholic culture.

The past 2 months have been different for all of us as we find our unique way of navigating these times. Our vado friends have helped us stay connected together in prayer, help, and support. As a part of the board, I wish to give it my best and so that others also feel the same sense of belonging as I've come to appreciate.

~Anitha Pais

General Secretary MCA EC Board 2020-21



Hello All,

I pray that you all are doing well and am glad to represent the Executive board this year as its Regional Coordinator. My name is Josline Pinto and I live in Edison, NJ with my Husband Donzil Pinto and teenage son Jadon. On the professional front I work for an Indian based Air Cargo Company and I am also involved with Civil Air Patrol (US air force auxiliary) as its Recruiting and Retention officer.



My family and I have been part of MCA-EC ever since we moved to the USA in 2014 and cherish all the fond memories and opportunities to mingle with our fellow Mangalorean folk out here. I've served as Gurkar for Moriy Vado in 2016-17 and 2017-18 and hope this experience can help me serve well as the Regional Coordinator.

Take Care, be Safe and stay Connected.

**~Josline Pinto
Regional Coordinator MCA EC Board 2020-21**

Fr. Ron, our spiritual director completed his 24 years as a priest on April 26,2020. Please join us in congratulating him for his work as he continues to pray for all of us and support our community throughout these years.





John 2:5 "Do whatever he tells you"; this is the command, Mary, the Mother of Jesus, our heavenly mother has given us consistently over the centuries. She has promised that she will intercede for us unceasingly, "Now and at the Hour of our death". These words are as relevant today as they were when she gave them to the servants at the Wedding of Cana. And even though Jesus in John 2:4 told Mary, "My hour has still not come"; he remained obedient to his mother.

Given this promise in the Bible and the many times Our Lady has appeared all over the world pleading with us to recite the Rosary, it only seems appropriate for us to turn to the Rosary in times of need. There was a time in India, when most Mangalorean families would pray the rosary every night. Sadly, this tradition has passed due to the very busy lives we lead.

The amazing thing though is that our Faith in this devotion has not been affected, it has remained resilient through the times. On December 22nd 2019, the MCA received a request for prayers for Peter Fernandes (Jessie's husband), who was going to undergo stem cell transplant and a 12-hour Rosary Rally, seemed the best way to reach out. An email was sent to the whole MCA-EC, looking for volunteers to fill 15-minute slots and pray the rosary. More than 40% of the grid got filled within minutes, the list was also shared with the OITS prayer group. The response from all sides was tremendous. Our charitable spirits came to the forefront and overnight many of us transformed ourselves into prayer warriors.

Peter Fernandes, a long-time member of the MCA-EC had been diagnosed with cancer about a year ago and was advised stem cell transplant. The procedure was scheduled on the 27th of December 2019. As Peter began the transplant on December 27th, our Rosary Rally began at 9 AM and ended at 9 PM. Even though MCA members and OITS members were in the throes of Christmas festivities many made time to pray for Peter and his family during the transplant. As a community we all stepped up to the plate and gave the Fernandes' the one thing we could give without reserve and with lasting effects.

The Fernandes family was extremely touched and remain gratefully jubilant that Peter did not suffer any of the adverse reactions despite the aggressive chemo he received. Peter's wife Jessie resumed work in January, they have left everything in the very capable hands of our Lord. Their trust in our Lord, the Healer and Protector of all, is a great example for all of us to follow in times of adversity and in times of peace.

So MCA-EC members as you begin this decade, Numbers 6:24-26 "May the Lord bless and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace".

Yours in Christ,

Tina Colaco, Advisory Council 2020-21

Can We Help?: 43 year old Netherlands Adoptee Still Searching for Her Mangalorean Family

By Diana M. Lewis

CAN WE HELP?



In this post COVID-19 world, many people have found themselves reassessing what matters most. The majority of us have taken for granted certain blessings and birthrights, just as an example, the simple knowledge of who our parents are and what our Mangalorean identity means. However, for Mirjam Bina (Mirjam was the name given to her after adoption), it was only in her fourth decade of life, after DNA testing on multiple websites that she realized that she shares DNA with the Mangalorean community. The main evidence she has from her past is a note from Shree Manav Seva Sangh, the Mumbai orphanage that watched over as a baby. The note simply states: "**Found on 1 March 1978 at 11:30 AM at Victoria Station*. Found alone without a guardian. Estimated age then to be about 1.5 years.**" (*now Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus)

The orphanage name along with this sole note are among the few clues Mirjam has to link her to her past. Mirjam visited the orphanage in 1998, 2015 and 2018. It was only in 2015 that Mirjam had found out that she was found on Victoria station and was brought to a remand home in Dongri, Umerkholi, after which she was later sent to Shree Manav Seva Sangh on Sion Road. "The note established that I was a foundling. I have not been able to stop thinking of my biological family and how hard it must be on them considering that they don't know what happened to me or that I am still alive," Mirjam lamented. Mirjam's wish is to find her family and her true identity before she leaves this world.

Mirjam has completed DNA testing on multiple websites, including FamilyTreeDNA, MyHeritage and 23andMe.org. Her ancestry tests revealed links to third cousin relationships, but nothing closer.

Fortunately, she has led a happy life, with wonderful adopted parents and an adopted older sister. She arrived in Holland on June 1979. Her adopted father sadly passed away when she was 14; however, her mother has given Mirjam her blessing to search for her roots. Mirjam Bina is happily married and is a proud mother of two sons and has a great career as a manager. It was only after the birth of her second son that she felt a strong need to trace her ancestry "I began to yearn for my biological family. I always felt that during the high and low points of my life, (the birth of our children and the loss of beloved ones), not knowing my real identity had and continues to make it difficult for me to cope."

She clearly declares that her only intention is to know about her origin and to bring closure in her life; she wishes to be able to tell her children more about where she comes from. "I am not interested in property and don't expect anything from my biological family. I just hope to find my roots," Mirjam plainly stated.

Mirjam has received help from a famous genealogist in Mangalore, Michael Lobo, along with a Mangalorean resident, Blossom Mascarenhas, and archaeologist Dr. Niraj Rai, who all reached out to her to help after hearing her story. Mirjam is currently awaiting the results of an Indian DNA test. In Holland there are approximately 6000 Indian adoptees. A lot of the adult adoptees are searching or struggling because of the loss of their identity.

Admirably, Mirjam has used her experience to help other adoptees. Even as she herself is still looking for answers, she has put others' needs first by helping in the interadoption arena as a consultant, adoption coach and also by overseeing a private Facebook group to support other Indian adoptees. In her group, there are 475 members in the Netherlands and other parts of Europe who are also seeking their roots, identity, family and culture.

On June 16th, I had come across old online articles about Mirjam from March 2019. Within five minutes of learning about her story, I reached out to Mirjam by email. I had prayed for a happy ending, that she had indeed found her family. Hours later, she returned my email, stating that she was still searching. In my email, I had let her know that I was part of a large Mangalorean Association in the US and could utilize our newsletter to re-publicize her story. She was grateful for the opportunity after what has so far been a long fruitless search. Mirjam said "If meeting my biological family doesn't materialize, I hope that I will be able to gather peace and say to myself that I did everything in my power to find them."

This is where you come in. Can you help? First, as Mangalorean Catholics, let us come together to pray for Mirjam. We are all so blessed to not only know where we come from but also have an association that allows us to celebrate that identity. Let us pray that Mirjam quickly finds the answers that she deserves. May she be blessed to learn her true origin, so that she can celebrate her beautiful roots with her children.

If anyone in our association has any information that could be of aid to Mirjam, please reach out to her. Kindly be sensitive to her story. She has been through many avenues that have so far been in vain. Only if you have information or resources or connections that could genuinely shed light on her past, please contact her with your leads (bina597@gmail.com).

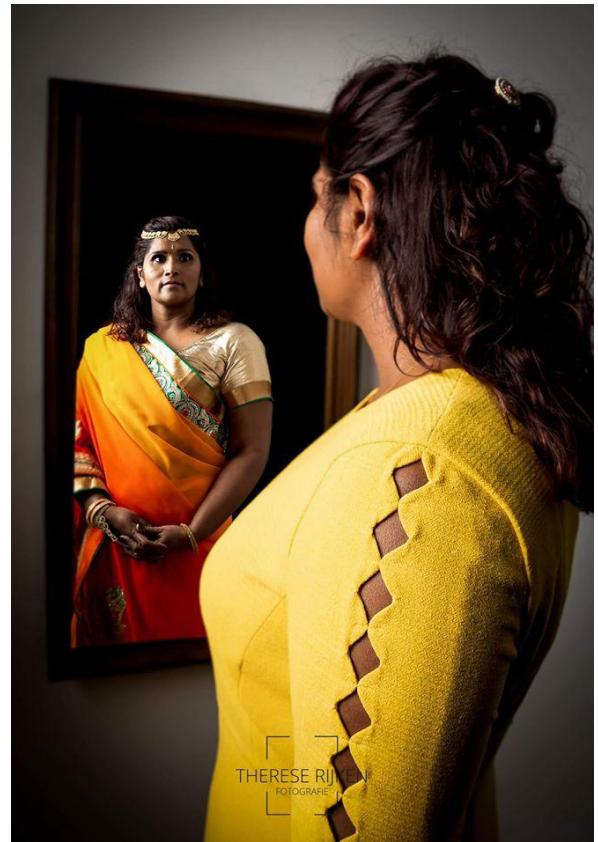
Feel free to share this story along with the below photos with Mangalorean friends and family on social media. Mirjam's Facebook profile: <https://www.facebook.com/mirjam.deboer.3>

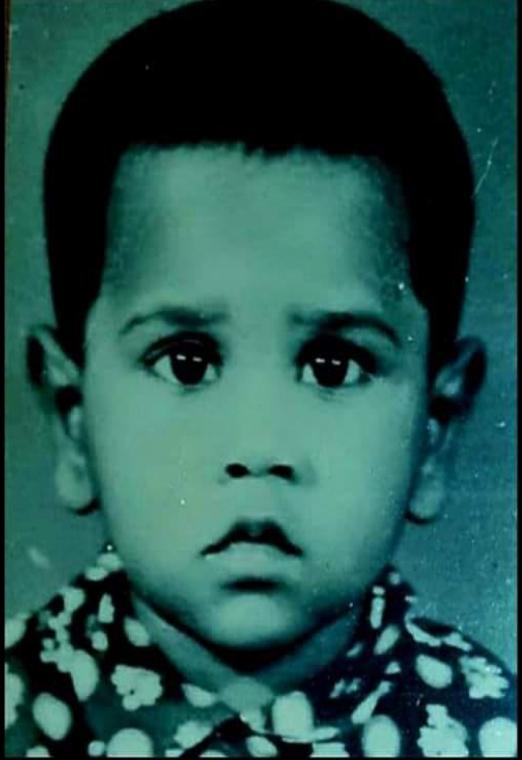


Above Left and Bottom Right: Current photos of Mirjam Bina

Above Right: Mirjam Bina with a friend and genealogist Michael Lobo in Mangalore

Below Left: Mirjam Bina with her husband and two sons outside a church in India





My name is Mirjam Bina. I am an adoptee looking for my biological family.

I was found on March 1st 1978 at 11:30 AM at Victoria Station (VT Station/Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus) Mumbai, India.

My age was estimated at 1.5 years old. I was brought to an orphanage and was put up for adoption. On June 2, 1979, I arrived in the Netherlands.

I did a DNA test and the results match 5 generations of Mangalorean Catholics.

**If you recognize me or have information, please contact me at
bina597@gmail.com**



Seasonal Vado News

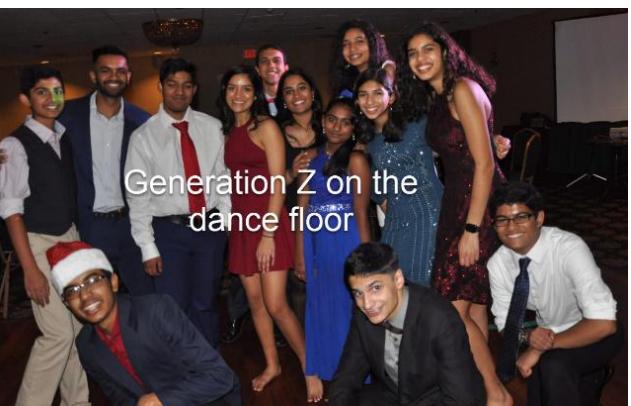
Bhagevonth Kutam Vado of PA & DE-Wishes you a Happy and Healthy 2020

"It's Christmas in the heart that puts Christmas in the air". We at the Bhagevonth Kutam vado had a blissful Christmas season this past year. Our annual Christmas Yuletide ball took place on the 7th of December at Clarion Hotel and conference center. Months of planning culminated into a successful, and much enjoyed evening for all our guests. The event was a full house with guests travelling from: Boston, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia and of course Pennsylvania. Over 150 members came together to celebrate the upcoming holiday season as one big happy family.

The evening started with emcee Ernest Dsouza working his magic and getting the crowd in the mood for a fun time. The delicious appetizers, catered by Mangalorean Kitchen, was enjoyed by all. We then had our vado youth talk about the activities they participated in during the year and a lively performance of the kids Christmas choir—"A Pentatonix Christmas Medley". The choir instantly put everyone in the spirit of Christmas. The evening continued with a visit from a very special guest "Mr. and Mrs. St Nicholas" all the way from the North Pole bearing gifts for all young kids.



The evening went on with lots of dancing to the foot tapping music of DJ-Gladson. The crowd enjoyed a wide variety of music from mangy bailas, to western popular, romantic blues and slow waltzes. It was an evening to remember with lots of spot prizes and incredible raffle gift baskets



Our Christmas yuletide ball was a roaring success. We had guests stay right until the end catching up with family, friends, enjoying the lovely music, delicious dinner and desserts.

We had great feedback from our guests after the event and some of our guests felt they were able to relive the nostalgia of their childhood Christmas moments that night. We thank our sponsors for their generosity and the volunteers from our organizing committee for their tireless efforts who made this event a grand success.

Milestone Moments of 2019

The year 2019 saw a lot of happy milestones. Roseline and Gladdy celebrated their silver wedding anniversary on January 23rd. We all joined to wish them the best in the year ahead and we cheered for them as they will be looking forward to celebrating their 26th anniversary very soon.

Terence and Kishori celebrated their 20th anniversary on November 29th, 2019. We wish them the best in the year ahead. May their love grow stronger with every passing day.



A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person. Rose and Gladdy, Kishori and Terence, your love for each other inspires us all. We pray that you will be blessed with many more happy years of togetherness.

Our vado kids had milestone birthdays too. Ethan Saldanha turned five, while Rohit Lobo and Leah Fernandes officially became teenagers. Miguel Mascarenhas, Athira Menezes and Lara Fernandes celebrated their sweet 16. May God bless our precious kids and keep them happy always.



For 2020, we wish all our members and readers many beautiful moments, treasured memories and all the blessings a heart can know.

The year 2020 has arrived with many challenges. There has been heart break and sadness, but we have supported each other in every way we can. During the holy season of Lent, our vado members met every day on zoom to recite the way of the cross and the holy rosary. This time of spiritual reflection and the fellowship after, helped us get through the dark days at the beginning of the Covid 19 lockdown.

We continue to meet every day at 8:30 pm on zoom to recite the holy rosary together. The moms on the group discuss various recipes and kids' activities

while the dads speculate on the economy and the stock market. We look forward to 8:30 every evening to connect spiritually and socially.



Standing in Solidarity with our Black brothers and sisters: As Martin Luther King said, "Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly". It was encouraging to see our youth and their families participate in the #BLM movement happening in Pennsylvania.



**I see
you.**

**I hear
you.**

**I stand
with you.**

Congratulations to our recent graduate, Arlene Sequeira, daughter of Victor and Rajani Sequeira on graduating from high school. We wish her the very best on her new adventure.



Sad Moments in Our Vado Member Lives

Losing a mother is one of the deepest sorrows a heart can know. We express our deepest sympathies to our dear Geoffrey & Flavian Serrao on the passing of his beloved mom, Magdaline Serrao and to Victor & Rajani Sequeira on the passing of his beloved mom Izabella Sequeira.

Eternal rest grant unto them dear Lord and let your perpetual light shine on them. May their soul rest in peace. Amen.



Magdaline Serrao (81), wife of the late Maurice Serrao, mother of Eddie / Jacintha, Helen / Felix and Geoffrey / Flavian, grandmother of Froila, Praful, Hency, Elrid and Elwin, passed away on September 30, 2019.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF



LATE IZABELLA SEQUEIRA

BORN: 02.04.1935

DIED: 20.04.2020

Eternal rest grant unto her Oh Lord,
and let Your perpetual light shine on her,
May her Soul Rest in Peace.

Amen



"I am the Resurrection and the life....

Anyone who lives and believes in me, will not die"

A loving tribute from
Sorrowing Family

Compiled with love by Amrith Rodrigues-Lewis and Aaron Lewis





FATIMA VADO NEWS

If you have been reduced to God being your only hope, you are in a good place.
~Jim Laffoon

I'm sure 2020 started off with many expectations and plans. We moved about with not a cloud in sight and before we knew it, our lives, and those of the people all over the world were upended. The COVID-19 crisis took us through all the levels of change -- denial, resistance, exploration and finally acceptance. Through it all, our Vado family connected and made sure we were there for each other in the early days of uncertainty and anxiousness. From the start of the lockdown until the end of May, we got together to gather virtually and pray the daily rosary; on weekends we had Bible study. We celebrated birthdays, prayed for the sick, and shared in the grief for deceased loved ones. The strength and grace of God was evident during this time!



We had some mid-year leadership changes last year with Avril Fernandes' departure. Sunitha Rego graciously took on the reins as Gurkarn and with Geethanjali D'souza continuing as Assistant Gurkarn they made sure everything was right back on track as you will read in the events listed in this edition.



At the end of their very successful year, they handed over the reins to the new leaders nominated by the Vado. **Chris Furtado** has been selected as our new Gurkar and will be supported very ably by **Simantini Eddy**.

We thank Sunitha Rego and Geethanjali for their hard work in pulling off wonderful activities and events for the Vadowe can't appreciate their efforts enough!.





2019 Events

OCTOBER ROSARIES

Vado families came together to pray the Holy Rosary together in the month of October and ask for the Blessed Virgin's protection and intercessions for various needs. The prayers were followed by fellowship and young and old had a good time during the gatherings.



THANKSGIVING

Once again, Fatima Vado's Thanksgiving this year was a celebration of grateful hearts and spirits. The entire Vado family participated to make the mass a joyful time of praise and thanks with beautiful music and liturgy. Fr. Dennis and Fr. Aro said mass and the choir, led by Brian Barretto with accompanied by young Vado musicians. Gurkarn Sunitha and Assistant Gurkarn Geetha made sure the event was executed flawlessly from the mass to the food to the entertainment. The décor, giveaways, games and music was creative and festive. May God continue to bless our Vado with many such happy celebrations.



CAROL SINGING

Michelle Fernandes coordinated a Vado carol singing event for the veterans and seniors in assisted living facilities.



Families with children dressed in their cheeriest holiday outfits, visited three centers to sing and bring good tidings of the season to the sick and the elderly. The smiles on their faces was proof that the reason for the season is Jesus and a giving heart.



MICHELLE AND JOHN D'SOUZA CELEBRATED THEIR
20TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY LAST YEAR.

CONGRATULATIONS!



SARITHA AND MANOJ PINTO CELEBRATED
THEIR **25TH** WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.

CONGRATULATIONS!





A very special shout-out to all those who celebrated special milestones this year - birthdays, wedding anniversaries, graduations... here are just a few of those important moments.....



AMELIA D'SOUZA
Sweet Sixteen



CALEB KASI



SAHANAH SAHAY

Graduated from Montgomery High School
and will be attending Rutgers Business



JORDAN DOSS

Graduated from East Brunswick High School
and will be attending Baruch College.



MACUALAY PINTO

Graduated from Rutgers University
in Computer Science



Dr. KEVIN BARRETO

Graduated from
Philadelphia College of
Osteopathic Medicine. He
will do his residency in
family medicine at the
Hackensack Meridian
Ocean Medical Center in
Brick, NJ.



May the road rise to meet you, may the wind be at your back
And until we meet again, may you keep safe in the gentle loving arms of God
From our Vado families to yours....happy summer!



Easter as we know it is the greatest and the most important feast in our Catholic Church. It marks the birthday of our eternal hope. The exact translation of Easter is "the feast of fresh flowers." This is very interesting as it coincides with the time as we come out of darkness both physically and metaphorically with winter and lent and make our way into brightness with spring and the Easter season.

The feast of Easter is very significant for three main reasons:

First, it is a reminder for us all of Christ's death and resurrection. This is the basis for our Christian faith as it literally proves that Jesus is God. As it is stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church: "The Resurrection of Jesus is the crowning truth of our Faith in Christ, a faith believed and lived as the central truth by the first Christian community; handed on as fundamental by Tradition; established by the documents of the New Testament, and preached as an essential part of the Paschal mystery along with the cross..." (CCC #638). If it wasn't for his resurrection our faith would be a sham.

Secondly, Easter is the guarantee of our own resurrection. Jesus states, "I am the Resurrection and the Life, whoever believes in me will live even though he dies." Christ died for our sins and will raise us up on the last day to live eternally with him.

Lastly, Easter gives us hope and encouragement in this world of pain, sorrow, and tears. This is very relevant right now in our world considering what is going on with COVID-19. Kursa Vado has taken this message of hope and encouragement during these times when all churches are closed and masses are not being celebrated publicly. The physical church building is not what defines the Church of Christ. We the people are what constitutes the church.

With the help of Fr. Vinod, SJ., we have continued to have Mass on Zoom with our vado every Sunday. The children read the readings and myself and Luke play the violin during the Mass. This is a small way we can continue keep our faith alive during these difficult times. Furthermore, Kursa Vado has been praying rosary using conference call for the past seven years and we continue doing so especially praying for the victims of this pandemic.

We use Zoom aap and celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, music nights, treasure hunts, and talent shows.

I truly feel KursaVado has completely grasped the message of the Easter Season, despite the pandemic and the hardships that everyone facess.



Easter Celebration 2020



Shyna Quadras



"A golden heart
stopped beating,
hard working hands at
rest. God broke our
hearts to prove to us
He only takes
the best."



In Loving
memory
of
Thomas Menezes
From: Kursa Vado
Families.





"Christmas will always be as long as we stand heart to heart and hand in hand." Most Christmas stories start with the joy of waking up on Christmas morning. However, unlike most Mangaloreans, my Christmas begins in the first week of December. The day my dad brings the Christmas tree is when I realize Christmas is coming. When Christmas music plays in the background, I feel like my home is full of Christmas cheer. My sister and I decorated the Christmas tree and my parents beautified the walls.

Just a few days before Christmas, the whole family gathered to make Christmas cookies. We spend hours in the kitchen kneading flour in the dough and preparing kuswar in different kind. This united our family in the true spirit of sharing the joy of Christmas that is truly incredible.

This wonderful Christmas vacation brought so much laughter and I haven't mentioned it until now. Christmas Eve marks the midnight mass. We all went to church in new dresses and got together with friends and people, and it was so beautiful. Christmas Mass was the most special part of the day as it reminded us of what Christmas is all about: the birth of Jesus Christ.

After returning from the church, we were excited to open the gifts placed under the tree. Fast forward to the evening - this year's Christmas was different because the party was held in our house. When my mother finished cooking different dishes, the guests began to arrive. They all had secret gifts and delicious food in their hands. Soon it was time for the Christmas carol; we sang all the Christmas songs by heart. Although our voices weren't worthy of five stars, we had fun singing like the Kursa Vado family's choral. As we sang jingle bells, it was time for the man we were all waiting for: Santa Claus. He entered dancing, throwing chocolates at the children. The presence of Santa Clause brought screams and laughter. He called our names and we sat on his lap waiting for our gifts. Soon everyone had their gift and we had to say goodbye to Santa. Time passed while we played many different games and winners received prizes. Without dancing, the Kursa Vado party would not be complete. Everyone enjoyed dancing until they couldn't do it anymore. This party may not be like everyone else's, but it was special, it's our own special Kursa Vado Christmas.

Seanna Lobo



It was December 31 my favorite day of the year. I like it for two reasons, firstly, it is my birthday and secondly, it is the New Year celebration. This year the New Year was celebrated at Serravo's house. I helped my mother decorate the house while anxiously waiting for my friends to arrive. Finally, everyone came and then my friends and I played various games. We had a shared dinner and everyone prepared a delicious meal. After dinner, all the adults and children danced, we all took many photos. All the children were playing until around 11:45 and then we all waited until the New Year ball drop. We cut the New Year cake and enter the New Year with champagne and apple cider for the kids. I had the opportunity to be a DJ and we had a lot of fun and we also had a game for everyone for New Year's resolution.

Joevin Serravo.



Congratulations!

Happy Sweet 16!
Hope you enjoy all the freedoms and opportunities that come with reaching this big milestone!





Congratulations

Celebrated their 20th anniversary on
Nov 25th 2019

Congratulations

Celebrated 15th anniversary on
Dec 11 2019



Congratulations

Celebrated their 10th anniversary
on 10th January 2020

Happy Birthday
Ethan celebrated his 10th birthday
on 3rd Nov 2019.



South Africa Trip by Shanessa Aranha



After taking a 16hour flight I was so happy when the flight attendant announced our impending arrival in Johannesburg.

This was on Dec23-2019. I peeked out the window and was rewarded with the most beautiful scenery I've ever encountered.

I went with my family and the Colaco family which made the trip way more exciting, just knowing that we got to experience this together made the trip 10 times better. When we arrived at Knysna we stayed in this lovely log cabin hotel, it wasn't very modern which made it so amazing the room keys were not cards which surprised me they were actual keys this was awesome given the fact that all modern hotels had cards as the room key. That night we tried all the national foods. It was interesting to taste some of Africa's national dishes knowing that we have never tried them before. During Christmas we went on a safari it was super hot on the Sarifi as we were going through the jungle we had to play a game where we had to find what was called the big fives, the five national animals of Africa the, Lion, Rhino, Elephant, leopard, and the buffalo. Luckily we saw four which was the closest we could get to see all of them. This Journey was so much more than anything I ever could have imagined it was the trip of a lifetime, one that I will cherish.

Abigail and Emma's south Africa trip experience



South Africa is considered "the rainbow nation." I was curious as to what it meant as I bought a sweatshirt with the title plastered across the front. I soon learned from a local that the saying captured the diverse cultures and languages present in South Africa. When I thought about it more, it all made sense. Over the span of the whole trip along with the countless places and villages we visited, I heard many languages being spoken and tasted a variety of different cuisine all accompanied by vastly different environments. There were beaches and mountains and safaris and plain terrains and oceans. It was both magnificent and breathtaking.

I would say that the most enriching experience was a little detour we took into a village to celebrate Christmas. We went looking for a church mass to pray and we landed up in a village where a girl only a year younger than me opened her doors to us. The people here were so kind and welcoming to a group of tourists and the girl, Renate, spent time with us to talk about her lifestyle and her studies. It was eye-opening and awe-inspiring to see how others lived and experienced life with what resources they have. Her kindness struck me and as she gave me a hug as I left I reveled in how many good people there are in the world regardless of any of the labels and prejudices we employ. I remember at the beginning of the trip, we came across the wild game being served right on our table: impala, springbok, kudu. All the kids turned away, shying away from the thought of an animal we saw on our journeys being part of the main course on our table. Yet towards the end of the trip, I saw a change in all these kids, as we ate dinner at another restaurant. Here we ordered crocodile and wild game amongst other dishes.

This time the kids who shied away the unknown and the unfamiliar gravitated towards it and gave it a try. Whether they liked it or not truly did not matter, it was the willingness to open up to new cultures and traditions. In our current world, it is of the utmost importance that individuals carry a sense of understanding and thoughtfulness. With the spontaneous decisions and countless experiences I had traveling on planes, boats, safari vehicles, and cable cars and trekking across plains, dirt roads, rocky terrains, and bridges, I know my worldview has expanded and my blessings have been counted.

Abby



The South Africa Trip was very enjoyable. All the guides were excellent and explained everything in detail as well as just made the whole trip come to life. I had many unique experiences such as the Cheetah Encounter. The service at the hotels was great and the hotels themselves were absolutely beautiful and were extremely enjoyable to spend in. These once in a lifetime experiences were memorable and the trip to South Africa was not only a learning journey about a different country, but it was also such a great time spent with my family and friends.

Emma



My trip to South Africa

I went to South Africa in the winter. My experience of South Africa was extraordinary. We saw and got to touch so many cool animals. For example, lion cubs and ostriches. And the best part was that we even got to feed them and they even gave us a massage. We also went to so many cool places in South Africa like Capetown and Johannesburg. My favorite part was that we got to go on a safari in the Kruger National park and we got to play this game called spot the big 5 but sadly we only found 4. We got to see so many animals up close! Like coyotes, wilddogs, lions and elephants. Not only did we get to touch animals we also got to try so many exquisite foods that we've never had before like crocodile. It might sound disgusting but it tasted good. We also went with our friends the Colaco family. I loved the trip to South Africa. I had a blast with everyone who came with us and I was sad when we left but I still remember that South Africa was an experience of a lifetime.

Sanya



Moriye Vado

The latest news, views and announcements



May is the Month of Mary

*Be with us Mary along the way,
Guide every step we pray,
Lead us to Jesus your loving son,
Come with us Mary come.*

Holy Mary help those in need,
Give strength to the weak,
Comfort the sorrowful and pray for God's people.
Assist the clerics, intercede for the religious.
May all who seek your help experience your unfailing
protections

2019



2019

MESSAGE FROM THE GURKARN

I enjoy being a member of the MCA-EC since 2013 and a member of Moriy Vado ever since. Having lived in the US for a decade, in the beginning I wondered how I would make friends in a new place. Thanks to MCA, I met amazing people and today I feel I have a family away from home. I feel more deeply connected to my roots and I'm glad my daughter is growing up understanding our culture and traditions.

It is a tough year for all of us in these present challenging times where social distancing is the new norm, we need to connect and support each other virtually. As a Gurkarn, I remain focused to our goal of connecting people, staying in touch, organizing events, finding ways and means to help the community in big and small ways.

I am a finance professional working for a Health Care company in New York. I reside in Springfield New Jersey with my husband Don and daughter Caroline

~Diana Lewis



IN RESPONSE TO COVID -19

COVID-19 is spreading rapidly around the world and healthcare workers are working very hard to take care of an increasing number of patients every day. As the numbers

are growing exponentially, doctors and nurses don't have enough protective gear to protect themselves. As a cadet in the Civil Air Patrol, I must follow our four Core Values -one of them being Volunteer Service. FYI, Civil Air Patrol is a non-profit organization that is the Auxiliary of the United States Air Force. New Jersey Wing has partnered up with the state to help in as many ways as they can. Cadets and Senior Members at Civil Air Patrol have been helping out by volunteering at Testing Sites, Food Banks, and Rescue Squads.

During the Holy week, my mom and I volunteered at the River Road Rescue Squad in Piscataway by helping make disposable PPE gear out of Tyvek. Our group of 8 made more than 100 PPE's in a 3 hour shift and yes, we did follow the 6 ft social distancing rule at all times.

I am very grateful for this opportunity to volunteer as not only did I learn a new DIY skill, I also got to give back to my community at this time of need, especially to help the front-line heroes during these tough times.

~Jadon Pinto
9th Grade

VOLUNTEERING DURING COVID-19 FACEMASK CRISIS

On March 11th, 2020 WHO characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic. On March 17th I heard about the shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) for healthcare personnel (HCP).

As per CDC guidelines, Health Care personnel can use homemade cloth masks as a last resort in the event of non availability of N95 facemask. As a health professional myself, I can imagine how scary it would be to serve patients without PPE specially because of the nature of the virus as it is very contagious.

Therefore, I came up with an idea to sew some face masks and hand them to the HCP's in need. I thought of utilizing Melanie, my daughter's talent, she took fashion as an elective in her Freshman and Sophomore year. I shared my idea and she was excited to help those in need. I checked with one of the doctor's for the requirements of the filter to be used in between the pockets and purchased the required material. This served as the best option to protect medical professionals in the absence of N95 masks.

During spring break Melanie stitched masks, some were donated to the nurses at Robert Wood Johnson Hospital at Rahway in collaboration with American Association of Indian Nurses of New Jersey chapter 2 (AAIN-NJ2).

The rest of the masks were donated to the volunteer workers serving the community. Looking at Melanie's contribution in making these masks, one of our family friends donated material so that she can contribute during these crises and help out in making more masks. That is going to be Melanie's future goal!

~ Merlin Mendonca



Moriye Vado Youth FOOD JOURNAL

April 2020



LENTEN TO QUARANTINE 2020



E-SOC BY MORIYE VADO WAS DEDICATED TO PEOPLE AFFECTED BY COVID-19
PARISH PRIEST AT ST. CECILIA'S, ISELIN CELEBRATES PALM SUNDAY WITH
PHOTOS OF HIS PARISHIONER'S



DARREL D'SOUZA WORKING IN HIS
MAKESHIFT LAB ON A GOVT. FUNDED
PROJECT THAT AIMS TO DEVELOP A
DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR THE COVID -19
VACCINATION

PRESENTING TO YOU THE LADIES OF MORIYE
VADO ON YOUTUBE DOING THE TOILET PAPER
CHALLENGE WITH A SPECIAL MESSAGE:
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?
V=3BC6XL_EZUO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BC6XL_EZUO)

MILESTONES



SHAWN & SEAN TURN 13 IN LENT

LUKE TURNS ONE IN QUARANTINE!



CAROLINE LEWIS RECEIVES
SACRAMENT OF
CONFIRMATION
FROM BISHOP CRUZ (2019)

JISELLE D'SOUZA
RECEIVES SACRAMENT OF
CONFIRMATION
(2019)

JADON PINTO
RECEIVES SACRAMENT OF
CONFIRMATION
(2019)



JOSLINE AND DONZIL
CELEBRATE 15 YEARS!
(2019)



TASHA PAIS
GRADUATES HIGH
SCHOOL CLASS OF 2020



OLIVER ARANHA
SURVIVES CDH!
(2019)

Infant Jesus Vado



Infant Jesus Vado - Jersey City and Bayonne county

"Coming Together Is A Beginning; Keeping Together Is Progress; Working Together Is Success."

The Infant Jesus Vado (IJV) is a relatively new vado but has grown to become a big family over time. Our journey as a vado has enriched our friendship and togetherness and has given us many fond memories of being together. The vado came together in preparation for a dance in our Decennial event and Monthi Fest. Weeks of planning, practice and merriment in preparation for the dance competition culminated in the vado winning a first prize for the group dance and solo dance by Melissa Fernandes.





Volunteering at Soup Kitchen

Earlier in the year, members of the vado came together to help run the Missionaries of Charity soup kitchen. This event was spearheaded by the sisters at Missionaries of Charity and the vado was assigned to prepare tantalizing dishes for the less fortunate. Looking back on the event, there were several exciting things geared up even before the main event began.

To start off, preparation was key, and members were instructed to prepare something that was easy to create and distribute the night before. Going above and beyond, the vado brought out an amazing pasta dish and other side dishes for a full course meal which took a lot of time and love to make. Coupled with preparations for dessert, the team was all set for the main day.

On the next day at the church, sister started off with a simple prayer and the team started finalizing the dishes. Combining the cooking, preparation and singing, the IJV was in full swing. Volunteers had to arrange the food in different trays and serve them at a table setup. During the day, the team met with the less fortunate and learned a little more about what community is all about and how the little things like love, care and nourishment make the biggest difference in their lives.

All in all, this experience was a memorable one for the vado and it is sure to inspire future events.

-Shawn D'souza



Way of the cross and Lenten fellowship event

In keeping with our catholic traditions of Lent and being together in these unusual times, the members of our vado got together to pray the Stations of the Cross. The vado members met virtually on Zoom over multiple weekends to pray for our community and especially for those affected by the COVID -19 situation. These prayer meetings were also an opportunity for our vado to connect and be together.



Easter Happy Hour

The vado also got together for an Easter Happy hour, where we had a celebration in acknowledgment of our previous Gurkarn Letitia Dsouza's events and efforts for the year 2019. We handed over and welcomed our new Gurkarn Ramona Lasrado for 2020.





CONGRATULATIONS
- on your -
wedding day

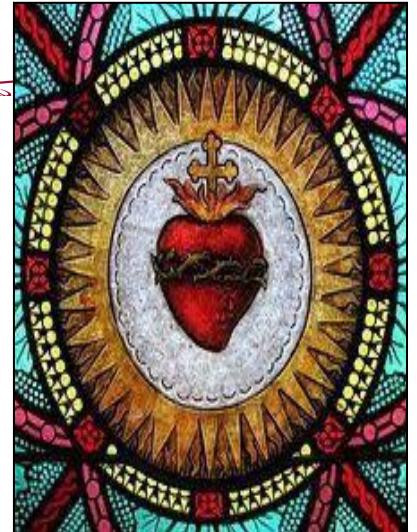
Married on January
02,2020 at Mangalore,
India

Wishing Santanu Baruah and Ruella
Moras a Hearty Congratulations on their
marriage and wishing them a wonderful
life ahead.





Sacred Heart Vado





Baking up
Christmas
memories

a celebration of love!

Every year I bake this
cake, it reminds me of
home

~ Rima D'souza



Fruit Cake

Ingredients:

200g All Purpose Flour
200g Sugar
4 eggs
2 sticks of butter

Process:

- 1) Sieve flour with two level spoons of baking powder three times and keep aside.
- 2) Mix 200g raisins, 100g chopped dates, 100g candied fruit, and 100g chopped orange peels with the flour and keep aside.
- 3) Caramelize 100g sugar. Make it a very thick liquid, as black as possible.
- 4) Beat butter with sugar until creamy. Add egg yolks to the butter sugar mixture one at a time and each time mix well. Add two teaspoons of vanilla essence, half teaspoon almond essence and half cup rum. Mix well.
- 5) Now fold in flour with the fruit and beat in egg white alternately. Fold in caramelized sugar
- 6) Grease a cake dish and bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 40 minutes. Then keep checking every three to five minutes until done.



2020 Vado Get Together



Transition of Gurkarns: (left) Sharon Sequeira (Asst. Gurkarn 2020), Amberine Saldanha (Gurkarn 2020), Flavia D'Souza (2019), Rima D'Souza (2018)



Neil D'Souza
https://youtu.be/3SpTeaM_yYU



Springtime Happenings



Staying busy during lockdown



Ladyfish (Kane) fry

Nancy Castelino



Golibaje
Natasha Lobo



Audrey Rodrigues
Volunteer – Mercer
Mask project



Ajay Kamath
volunteer firefighter



Trisha Saldanha
Volunteer – Mercer Mask project

Shout out to the
health care
workers &

Stuti Fernandes
Physician at OHSU
Portland, Oregon

Sangatha Vado

Sagatha Vado is thankful for the wonderful year we all had, the new families who joined us and for all the fun events that we had to conclude last year.

Some highlights include:

- Our annual picnic at Spruce Run State Park
 - Our first ever overnight camping trip
 - Cooking and volunteering at the Soup Kitchen
- Gayle, Dinesh, Kierra and Kaelyn Dcosta won the Christmas Gala singing competition
 - Two couples celebrated their milestone 25th wedding anniversaries – Anisha/Siprian Rodrigues and Grace/Malcolm Barreto
- Neha (Anisha & Siprian's daughter) will be attending Duke University in Fall 2020!
 - Easter 2020: Raised money for Bridges Homeless Outreach
 - March-Present: Zoom Divine Mercy and Weekly Rosaries

Stay blessed and have a safe summer!





Divine Mercy Vado News

In the last few months, our lives have taken a very unexpected turn. Yet through all of this, the Divine Mercy Vado stuck together as one strong family. During the Christmas season, or as we otherwise call the Season of Giving, our Vado joined their voices together in carol singing at SEVA to bring a smile on the face of those in old age homes and helped them experience the sense of family and joy that we are privileged to experience as a vado. Continuing with the Christmas spirit, we readily participated in Carol singing competition held during Christmas Gala thus increasing the festival's pomp. Just as we enjoyed the Christmas season, the Lenten season brought around prayer and sacrifice as we joined together every Saturday to recite The Divine Mercy chaplet and pray the Stations of the Cross. Each of these were followed by snacks and refreshments along with pleasant chit chat. As we were unfortunately hit by the Covid-19 pandemic, we continued our weekly ritual over Zoom conferences, thus keeping up our prayerful journey while supporting each other in these lonely times. Furthermore, this Mother's Day we sent forth pictures of our mothers and our Spiritual Director Fr. Ron prayed a special prayer for them. Even though we were distanced by these quarantine times, our Vado WhatsApp group was always lively where we came together wishing each other on birthdays, anniversaries and so on. No matter the situation, The Divine Mercy Vado does their best to stay connected and bands together as one loving family.



Birthday Milestones



Dwayne, 13 years old and Sasha, 10 years
(Mendonca Family of Divine mercy)



Spotlight on India's First Saint: Gonsalo Garcia, O.F.M.

(1556 - 1597)



Gonsalo Garcia was a Franciscan brother from India who died as a martyr in Japan by crucifixion. He was the first Indian to become a saint. Gonsalo Garcia was born in 1557 in Agashi village in the western coastal town of Baçaim, later Bassein in English (now known as Vasai, 30 miles north of Mumbai). His father was a Portuguese soldier and his mother was a Canarim (the Portuguese name for inhabitants of the Konkan). Garcia studied at the Jesuit school of Fort Bassein and helped in their Igreja do Santo Nome de Jesus (Church of the Holy Name of Jesus), now known as St. Gonsalo Garcia Church. As a child, Garcia met a Jesuit priest named Sebastião Gonsalves who became his mentor. Later in life, Garcia and Gonsalves chose to travel to Japan as missionaries. In Japan, Garcia was appointed as a catechist who travelled throughout the country and became a favorite of the local people. Garcia desperately wished to become a part of the Society of Jesus. However, his Indian ancestry was held against him.

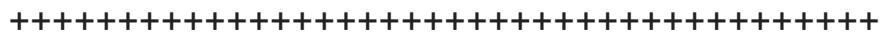
After almost a decade, Garcia gave up on his dream and established himself as a merchant. As a merchant, Garcia was extremely successful, becoming very wealthy over time; however, he still remained devoted to God. He eventually made a petition for admission to the Friars Minor in Manila, a request that was accepted. As a Friar Minor, Garcia started a second phase of missionary activities. Garcia was very much delighted when he was accepted into the Franciscan order. In Manila, he came into contact with the Franciscan missionary, Friar Peter Baptist, who remained his companion until their shared death. Garcia started his career as a catechist in Manila. The main advantage for him was his ability to speak Japanese. From the different parts of Japan, people kept sending him invitations. During this time, the King of Spain wanted to send a delegation to Japan. The Spanish Governor of Manila selected Peter Baptist as the leader of the delegation, and

since he did not know the Japanese language, Garcia was asked to be his translator. In Japan, Garcia became the center of attraction, since he was an expert in Japanese. After facing some initial difficulties, the Franciscans settled in Japan and began their missionary work in Kyoto, Osaka, etc. The Japanese regent Toyotomi Hideyoshi was very friendly with the Franciscans. It was a time when Jesuits were facing lot of opposition in Japan. However, some Japanese appreciated the simple way of life adopted by these Franciscan missionaries. Many Japanese, including their overlords began to accept Christianity. Slowly, Japan became a great center of evangelization for the Franciscan missionaries.

The Franciscans were very successful. In response, traditional religious leaders began to express opposition. The shogun issued an order to arrest to execute all Christian missionaries in Japan. The Franciscans, including Peter Baptist, Garcia and others were arrested on December 8th 1596 and were sentenced to death. On January 4th, the prisoners began their journey from Kyoto. They traveled six hundred miles from Kyoto to Nagasaki through Sakai, Okayama, Hiroshima, Shimonoseki, and Karatsu. They reached Nagasaki on February 4th 1597. The next morning they were taken to a hill known as Nishigaoka where Terazawa Hazaburo, the brother of the Governor of Nagasaki, had planned for the missionary crucifixion to take place. Since Garcia was prominent among the missionaries, he was given the center cross. Before his death, Garcia met one of his friends from Fort Bassein, Francis Rodrigues Pinto, to whom he said: "My good friend, God be with you. I am going to heaven. A hearty hug to Father Sebastião Gonsalves on my behalf".

The execution started at 10 o'clock in the morning. Garcia, Peter Baptist, and the other friars were crucified, along with fifteen teenage boys who were members of the Third Order of Saint Francis, as well as the three Jesuits. After the dramatic crucifixions, the corpses of the victims were neglected by the local authorities thinking that they would be eaten by the vultures, but for nearly forty days they remained intact. This was followed by a series of miracles on the hill in Nagasaki. In 1627, thirty-five years after the crucifixion of the martyrs, Pope Urban VIII declared Garcia and his co-martyrs as 'Blessed Ones' and permitted the Jesuits and the Franciscans to venerate them. In 1629, the same Pope completed the beatification of these martyrs; however, afterwards, the case was neglected for more than two centuries.

It was once again taken up in 1862 and on June 8th 1862 Pope Pius IX competed the canonization of Gonsalo Garcia and his co-martyrs. Brother Gonsalo Garcia became St. Gonsalo Garcia. On that day, he became the first Catholic saint of India. June 8th 2012 marked the 150th anniversary of St. Garcia of Mumbai's canonization. Garcia's memory is kept alive with a college named after him in Vasai. He is the patron saint of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Vasai.



MCAEC Member Contributions

'We Shall Overcome'.. By Roshan D'Mello - Monroe Township (Moriye Vado)



What an eventful three months these have been! Have you ever imagined you would live through a pandemic, well, lo and behold here we are right in the middle of it! For some of us, our lives turned upside down in mid March, and for some others, it's still sinking in that we may not see normal for quite some time and may need to adjust our ways and means moving forward. Who knew the toilet paper rolls, soap & sanitizers would be the hottest commodity flying off the shelves and would vanish for weeks? Probably the next time we hit our bank lockers, we will know a thing or two about what should take the place next to gold as the hottest commodity for times like these! Little did I imagine that in my lifetime I would walk into the bank with a mask on or count the distance in feet to any human as I step out or even that I would call my home an office or school. It's all mayhem and paranoia at its peak!

My last visit to an Indian grocery store was like going into the haunted house at Disney World; you think twice before entering and are relieved when you are out with one shoe on, walking home, doubting whether it was worth the risk to invite Covid-19 for a couple of Kadi Patta curry leaves. It's a surreal feeling that we may end up talking about in the future: how life was during this pandemic.

The silver lining for me in these times is that extra hour of sleep with no commute to work. Enjoying Netflix in between your office work that we hardly call working. Grooming yourself just head to shoulders so that you look fresh for a Zoom office video conference calls with shorts on. While on the other end you find your colleagues who abandoned shaving months ago with grown beards that even beat Baba Ramdev to probably win an audition for the next Game of Thrones. To say the least some of us went over and beyond and invented ways to make bread at home from scratch, then found novel ways to manufacture yeast for cakes and bread and some like me were the first guinea pigs to our kids giving us a hair cut with brand new clippers for the first time. Talk about handing your destiny in your kids hands. It's all happening and if this continues, we may take away many more jobs even before automation was supposed to! On the brighter side, I am intrigued by seniors who embraced technology and taught music remotely, learned that new language, new innovative ways of connecting online, entertaining on Saturday evenings to audiences on Facebook and so on. We as humans do have it in us to adapt. This situation we are in may open more opportunities to learn beyond borders from anyone across the globe as video conferencing technology evolves for the better on a 5G backbone. Probably we may have a next generation of educators online as learning remotely becomes the new norm and as disruption to other industries may still be imminent.

My heart goes out to the heroes on the front lines who risked their lives by working day and night to save countless lives. It underscored that if any job that stood out tall and showcased courage in these testing times, it was the first responders, they proudly served the community and saved countless lives. So for the rest of us, let's enjoy these times as good times, for an opportunity like this may never ever come in our lifetime to stay closely connected and still maintain that social distance. To those brilliant minds working behind the scenes to invent a vaccine, the countless hands keeping things running, and those who valiantly suffer isolation, as well as those who mourn for them...all these remind me I'm part of a beautiful and courageous human race that can overcome any adversity.

A FOCUS on FOCUS...



May 2020

Gina Colaço

A rising junior
at Franciscan
University of
Steubenville.

What has our world come to? These unprecedented times of COVID-19 have shaken my sturdy foundation, which has given me the opportunity to reflect on my life. One constant in my life has been my faith; in God and in the kingdom to come.

When I started college I was introduced to the FOCUS missionaries on my campus. They led me further in forging my personal relationship with Jesus. I attended a life changing conference hosted by FOCUS called SEEK in January of 2019. Gathering in a big convention center in Indianapolis, with 17,000 other passionately catholic college students from around the country made me realize that I am not on this journey alone.

It is awe inspiring to witness young adults straight out of college place their life on hold for a couple of years to serve God full time. Recently, I was overjoyed to find out that my friend and mentor, Angeli Fernandes, joined FOCUS. We've known each other for over 10 years through the OITS prayer group and the MCA-EC. She is currently serving as a FOCUS missionary at Harvard University. Being so proud of her, I thought I would introduce Angeli and her ministry to the MCA-EC.

1. Can you tell us about your background?

I grew up in an Indian Catholic household in New Jersey. My mom in particular was instrumental to my growing in faith, teaching and encouraging me to pray daily from a young age. I attended Seton Hall University to study Business and Biology on the medical track, and during my time there I met a group of faith filled people who encouraged me to grow in my faith and love for God!

2. How did the Steubenville Youth Conference enrich you as a highschooler?

In high school, I had a wonderful opportunity to attend the Steubenville Youth Conference every year. It was there that I was able to learn more about my faith in a group of thousands of teenagers like myself who loved God and wanted to be a witness of faith to those around them. I was particularly able to grow in my desire for the sacraments of the mass and reconciliation, as I saw the way that God was able to so concretely meet us and give us His unending mercy in those places.



July 2014 Steubenville Youth Conference

Attended by Gina, Angeli and several
MCA-EC members

3. What is FOCUS?

The Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) is an organization made up of over 750 full time missionaries who go onto college campuses to meet students

where they are: in the dorms, on the field, and in every corner of campus. Through outreach events, bible studies, and one-on-one conversations, we share with them the joy of the gospel, and encourage students to grow in knowledge and practice of their Catholic faith. Through bible studies, prayer, sacraments, service opportunities, mission trips, and national conferences, we encourage students to come together and share in an authentic community as well as become missionary disciples to lead others to Christ. As a missionary, my greatest desire is to lead all students to Christ. My life has been transformed by Jesus and I want nothing more than to bring this joy to others and introduce them to the life-changing message of the Gospel.

4. How did your friends and family accept your decision to become a missionary disciple?

Many of my family and friends were very supportive of my decision to follow God's call and live as a missionary. While it was difficult to explain why God was calling me away from the medical field now and into life as a missionary, it was a gift to share how God has turned all of that hard work for his glory. Being a missionary on a campus like Harvard, students are particularly driven by their ability to succeed and perform well. That is something I experienced while studying for acceptance into medical school. God transformed my heart throughout that experience and taught me how to trust Him and find peace in rooting my identity in Him; not in my personal success.

5. Any advice for teenagers and young adults in the MCA-EC?

God desires to give us everything and enter into a deep relationship with us, we just need to give Him the time to do so. Speak to Jesus as though you would your best friend, and

read the scriptures that He has shared with us. Find one person who can remind you to pray every day until you have made it a habit. Seek out community. If you are on a college campus with FOCUS (we're on over 150 campuses in the US), reach out to one of your missionaries! Wherever you are, whether on campus or in your local parish, there will be a community of young adult Catholics who also desire to grow in their faith, and it is so helpful to have those men and women surrounding us that also want to pursue a deeper relationship with God.

6. How can people support you in your ministry with FOCUS?

When I answered the call to join FOCUS, I made the decision to rely on the financial support of mission partners to help me through this mission. I've been blessed with many wonderful people who supported my ministry. If you are interested in partnering with me, please reach out. I'd be honored to share this mission with you. If you would like to learn more about FOCUS, the campuses we are on, and how to get involved please do not hesitate to contact me. God Bless!



Angeli Fernandes:

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www.focus.org/missionaries/angeli-fernandes



Kid's Corner

By: Shawn D'Mello, 13 yrs, Monroe Township, NJ



Being Lonely

We all don't like to be lonely. Especially nowadays, being away from friends and family can be hard for most. But why is this? Most other species seem just fine when they're on their own, so why aren't we? The answer is based on the human psyche and how our society works. Let's slow this down a bit. During the early years of humans when we were still evolving, we were relatively weak compared to other predators. In response to this, early humans began to deter these predators with things like fire. However, maintaining these things takes a lot of work, so humans learned to cooperate to benefit everyone. This also meant that being alone would mean certain death, so we actively try to be with others. And loneliness can take quite a toll on you.

Let's fast forward to the 1800s, a time of exploration, opportunity, and Quakers. Quakers, not the oats, were members of the Religious Society of Friends. They, among other people, thought of a way to reform prisoners instead of punishing them. That invention was solitary confinement. The prisoner would be locked in a small room by themselves and was expected to pray and read the Bible, though the results were horrendous. Reports from the U.S. Supreme Court in 1890 said that "A considerable number of the prisoners fell, after even a short confinement, into a semi-fatuous condition, from which it was next to impossible to arouse them, and others became violently insane; others still, committed suicide; while those who stood the ordeal better were not generally reformed, and in most cases did not recover sufficient mental activity to be of any subsequent service to the community." The practice was then banned until the 1900s when it was brought back to use in Alcatraz and later to other prisons even today.

Now we're back to the 21st century where things seem worse than ever. We have been forced to stay inside due to circumstances beyond our control. Most people are already succumbing to loneliness. Some studies show that even when self-isolation was just put into place, 34% of adults aged 50 to 80 years reported feeling lonely and 28% of people who reported feeling lonely ranked their health as poor. However, we still have a great asset in our fight against loneliness. Surprising to some, the electronics that seem to pull us away from society might help us become closer to it. By using online group chats, games, or meetings like Zoom, we can keep in touch with people who feel like miles away. Together we can once again cooperate to beat something much more powerful than us, just like our predecessors !

A Tale of Two Trenches (Based on True Events)

By: Shawn D'Mello

This story takes place at Christmas during World War II. At the time, most of these soldiers were having their first Christmas away from home. Across the lines, unofficial armistices were being made between former enemies. Isn't that the essence of Christmas? This story takes place in one line with two unnamed soldiers during this time whose perspective shifts throughout the story. I hope you enjoy!

I stand in a thin trench flooded with water. The mud clings to my boots and stains my uniform. In front of us are the Germans, pouring fire day after day. The war was supposed to be over by now, and I long for my home in London. There my wife and son sit by the fire, wishing to have me by their side for Christmas more than any toy or present in the world. The cigarettes and sweets from the queen are no substitute for family. But I must man my post no matter what, for the good of the world.

The cold wind strikes my face. I trudge through the mud with a rifle at my side. Today is December 25th and we must protect Germany from oncoming troops. No man's land is empty except for the corpses of friend and foe. A truly gruesome sight. But we must settle in for the winter. The torrents had once forced both sides out of the trenches. This was no fluke, as both of our armies eat at the same time, becoming a daily ceasefire for both sides. But we use this time well, reinforcing the dugouts, playing cards, and such. The Kaiser had sent pipes to us, cigar boxes for the NCO's and pipes for the ranks. But where does one have a place for 50 cigars in a cramped trench?

As we lie in the dugouts, waiting for potential enemy fire, a white powder falls from the sky. First, a few strands, then more and more until finally the ground is coated in snow. Something we have never seen in this boggy landscape. The once marshy mud becomes a hard floor to walk on, like our home in England.

Once the snowfall fell, the tone began to lighten. Men laughed and smiled, smoked cigars sent from home. It was almost as if we were not in a war, but a Christmas party. As if we were children frolicking outside our houses. We put lit Tannenbaum on the trench parapets. Then, we do something unexpected.

When the Scot's Guard looked over to the German side, we think it is an attack. Then, a soothing voice drifts across no man's land into our lines. Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht, the opening to the original Austrian version of Silent Night. Lieutenant Sir Edward Hulse says we should drown this out with our caroling. We went back in forth but the once competing songs melted into a harmony of Good King Wenceslaus and Auld Lang Syne.

The British started yelling Christmas greetings across the line, and some even walked outside to talk. The same thing was happening across the line, spreading like wildfire. They came to the wire, shaking hands, and smiling like reunited friends. My legs move on their own. Clutching a wrinkled newspaper, I walk across no man's land to the British side.

A German rushes towards us with a white object in hand. I load my rifle until I realize it is a newspaper. Is this a trap? Or a gift a friendship? I hesitate, but eventually, I climb out. It feels good to stand up straight, but in daylight, it's impossible to ignore the bodies of the fallen. We stand there together and grieve the dead, and that is what breaks down the wall for us. Now, we are not enemies, but humans of the same blood.



Congratulations!
Class of
2020



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THANK YOU
DOCTORS AND NURSES
#COVID19

MID-YEAR REFLECTIONS



A Final Word

This newsletter edition covers the period between Christmas to the start of summer. In just a span of a few months, we entered a new decade full of new challenges, but in the midst of it all, community, even a virtual one, has been the silver lining. In the discouraging moments, it has been the virtual gatherings and Whatsapp messages that have helped us still be together in spirit.

Just as an example, a few weeks ago, a fellow vado member lost her father and was unable to travel due to lockdown restrictions. It was heartbreakingly fathom; however, within a couple days, a few supportive members came together to organize a virtual Zoom prayer service complete with Biblical readings and hymns and a beautiful eulogy. The love and togetherness brought meaning to an otherwise sorrowful situation. Based on the detailed updates provided by the vados above, I am certain that each of you have experienced similar moments of beauty generated from your own sense of community spirit. May we all count our many blessings.

We must always remember that the Body of Christ is made up of us individuals. Now more than ever, it is critical that we demonstrate our identity as followers of Christ. We must continually strive to love each other as Christ loved us. As we enter a new phase of reopening, my prayer for each of our families is for our hearts to remain unlocked. May you all be protected and shielded from disease, pain and suffering. May you continue to bring hope, love and joy to every person who you encounter. May our community be synonymous with manifesting all the divine fruits of the Holy Spirit. Stay safe. God bless you always. -Editor-In-Chief, Diana M. Lewis



P.S. Many thanks to all of the sponsors of this sponsored edition. Members, we urge you to patronize these fine local establishments as part of our deep gratitude. Please make it a point to mention that you are a proud MCA-EC member, so, that these businesses are encouraged to sponsor the association in the future!