

Mumbai: There is a sense of worry among city teachers that they could be assigned census duty this coming summer vacation. This is spurred by Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation's recent advice to all teachers not to travel during the break.

While no such circular has been issued to Mumbai teachers, teacher groups have sought exemption from census duty.

"Teachers' hol will be cut from 76 to 30 academic year if we've census duty," says Jesh Pandya of Te Democratic Front. He says the teachers' Shikshak Bharti, Rashtriya Teachers' Samiti and teachers' unions in census duty.

have sought exemption from census duty. "Teachers' holiday will be cut from 76 to 72 days in an academic year if we do not get exemption even census duty," said Jyoti Prakash Pandya of the Teachers' Union, Democratic Front. He said that the union members of teachers' union, Shikshak Bharti, Mumbai, led by Rashmi Zagade, director of the union, are in census operations, but they are not getting exemption in census duty.

MANDATORY ELIGIBILITY TEST

HT Correspondent
■ htmetro@hindustantimes.com

MUMBAI: Nearly 2,000 teachers who are on the strike have returned to their jobs after the Teacher's Union agreed to a new contract.

The Observer

● This article is more than 2 years old

Burned out: why are so many teachers quitting or off sick?

Shedding light on teacher stress

Stress levels among teachers have risen since the start of the pandemic, according to a new survey by the Education Endowment Foundation. The report also found that teachers' mental health has declined since the start of the pandemic.

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● This article is more than 2 years old

Burned out: why are so many teachers quitting or off

By - TIMESOFINDIA.COM

Teacher stress

Christopher Jay McC
October 28, 2019

work. However, the teachers claim that their issues are far from resolved.

The education department has also asked teachers to celebrate Pariksha Parv, an initiative by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR).

The education department has also asked teachers to celebrate Pariksha Parv, an initiative by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR).

As part of the initiative, schools have to organise activities for students to help them cope with exam stress.

Examinations are a stressful period for school students and teachers. Schools attempt to help students in all possible ways before the examinations. But, introducing something like this just adds to the burden," said Jay Nare, a teacher at Hansraj Naraji Public School in And-

Officials from the state education department said that the guidelines from the Central government were passed on to schools by education inspectors.

No Time For Academics, Say Educators

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... severe psychological problems than at any point
... they reveal the school

...suffering from more severe depression than the average. Experts have warned. In an alarming report they are being pushed to "breaking point".

...predicts school standards will...
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...levels among teachers and school leaders have ratcheted up for the...
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STOP PRESS

The Editorial Team decided to make "Teachers' Well-being" the topic of the March 2020 issue well before the coronavirus took over the world. Not only did the Lockdown shelve the publishing plans of our stressbuster **EduFOCUS** issue but it also ushered in additional stressors for Teachers as they moved to online teaching. This stressbuster **EduFOCUS** issue offers a sumptuous table spread of fresh self-care strategies for the Teacher's well-being. We do hope you will enjoy this issue and be able to implement at least a few of these strategies in your daily life.

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We thank you for contributing to this issue of **EduFOCUS** and look forward to your continued support.
- Editor

We look forward to hearing from you.
Do send in your feedback to the Editor at rector@standrewscollege.ac.in

Disclaimer: The views expressed in the articles are solely those of the authors and, not necessarily, those of the Archdiocesan Board of Education, Mumbai.



Fr. Magi Murzello

Editorial

Which is the happiest day in the life of a Teacher? The Teacher's 58th birthday!!

This dark humour joke silently slithers around the staffrooms of many a school. The subtle wit may bring a sardonic smile to your lips, but the undeniable truth is that a school is a highly stressful place. The toxic school climate leads to burnout among Teachers. There are many stressors in the school environment that are perceived as threats to one's well-being. Like a lion on the prowl, even the school leader is a stressor. You may be amused to see a lion instead of my profile photo on this editorial but the stakeholders in my institution may vigorously nod their heads in agreement... my presence increases their stress level.

However, the focus should not be on the stressor but on the stress response. Twin sisters, Amelia and Emily Nagoski, in their book, "Burnout: The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle" write: *"The good news is that stress is not the problem. It is how we deal with stress – not what causes it – that releases the stress, completes the cycle and, ultimately, keeps us from burning out. You cannot control every external stressor that comes your way. The goal is not to live in a state of perpetual balance and peace and calm; the goal is to move through stress to calm, so that you're ready for the next stressor, and to move from effort to rest and back again."*

On sighting a lion in the wild, our early ancestors would run away and find a safe place to rest. This was their natural stress response system that got them ready to take on the next stressful challenge. Unfortunately, a Teacher moves from one stressor to the next without resting, recharging or recalibrating. Burnout is a result of this stress build-up.

Self-care has not yet entered the Teacher's lexicon. A Teacher feels guilty about self-care because society has projected them as selfless people dedicated to the care of others. On an aeroplane, passengers are advised to put on their own oxygen masks before helping others. Likewise, Teachers need to take care of themselves before they can care for others around them.

The Editorial Team decided to make "Teachers' Well-being" the topic of the March 2020 issue. Not only did the Lockdown shelve the publishing plans of our stressbuster **EduFOCUS** issue but it also ushered in additional stressors for Teachers as they charted their paths through the unmarked territory of online teaching. After a year of being in the freezer, the stressbuster **EduFOCUS** issue offers a sumptuous table spread of fresh self-care strategies for the Teacher's well-being. Before serving yourself food for thought, I would recommend the stress quiz on page 6 as an appetizer.

In the Teachers' workshops that I conduct in schools across the country, I encourage Teachers to transform their staffrooms from black holes of negativity into *sunshine staffrooms*. A happy and positive staffroom ensures a *sunshine school*. They must seek to become *Sunshine Teachers* empowering others and avoid the gloomy crew of grouchy *Blackout Teachers*. As part of the Mission Sunshine project, I suggest that every Teacher have an *emotional first-aid box* or *self-care box*. In the box, they could keep notes of appreciation received and positive affirmation/ quote cards prepared by them. Prayer beads, a stress ball, a clickable pen, a gratitude journal, photo albums, refreshing tea bags, scented candles, a pen drive or CD of favourite music, and noise-cancelling earphones could also be added to the box. A "Did List" that lists all the accomplishments instead of a "To-Do List" could be a part of their kit too.

Every lion-hearted school leader must courageously make a paradigm shift from a child-centred institution to a human-centred institution that accommodates the well-being of both – children and Teachers.

Dear Stress, Let's Break Up

Abhishek Banerji



“1 in 5 teachers feel stressed about their job most or all of the time, compared to other similar professionals,” says a report by National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) and yet, when education stakeholders consider ameliorating the school conditions, most of the attention gets deployed to just school safety, school climate, student mental health needs, etc. often overlooking teacher well-being which is a critical parameter in the overall health of the school. Thanks to researchers, there is now a focus on issues like “teacher stress” and the domino and ripple effect it has on the well-being of students and the school as a whole. Teacher stress has been defined as the experience by a teacher of negative, unpleasant emotions (such as tension, anger, or depression) as a result of some aspect of their work as a teacher.

According to Travers and Copper, the main causes of teacher stress can be divided into 6 factors:

1. Stressors intrinsic to the actual job (e.g. poor working conditions, work overload and underload, working long hours)
2. Role in the organisation (e.g. role ambiguity and role conflicts)
3. Relationships at work (e.g. principals, colleagues and students)
4. Career development (e.g. job security)
5. Organisational structure and climate (e.g. participation in decision making and performance appraisal)
6. Home-work interference (e.g. not being able to give time to family)

In this day and age, teachers are suffering from more severe psychological problems than at any point in this century. In an alarming report, they reveal the school workforce is being pushed to “breaking point”. In times like these, when it’s almost a given that stress is inevitable, apart from the school management and education stakeholders promoting teacher well-being, it becomes very essential for a teacher to embrace self-care at a personal level as well and actually pay attention to their stress levels and work on their coping strategies.

Presented here is an instrument called 'The Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers' which is a 36-item self-report stress inventory developed by Dr. C.F. Wilson for teachers. It enables a respondent to check their stress levels.

Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Each of the 36 items is scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = never and 5 = very often). Please indicate how often the following statements apply to you by circling the appropriate number from the scale below on the line.

1. I have difficulty controlling my class.
1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often
2. I become impatient/angry when my students do not do what I ask them to do.
1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often
3. Lack of student motivation to learn affects the progress of my students negatively.
1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often
4. My students make my job stressful.
1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often
5. I have difficulty in my working relationship with my administrator(s).
1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often
6. My administrator makes demands of me that I cannot meet.
1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often
7. I feel I cannot be myself when I am interacting with my administrator.
1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often
8. I feel my administrator does not approve of the job I do.
1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often
9. I feel isolated in my job (and its problems).
1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often
10. I feel my fellow teachers think I am not doing a good job.
1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often
11. Disagreements with my fellow teachers are a problem for me.
1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

12. I get too little support from the teachers with whom I work.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

13. Parents of my students are a source of concern for me.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

14. Parents' disinterest in their child's performance at school concerns me.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

15. I feel my students' parents think I am not doing a satisfactory job of teaching their children.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

16. The home environment of my students concerns me.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

17. I have too much to do and not enough time to do it.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

18. I have to take work home to complete it.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

19. I am unable to keep up with correcting papers and other school work.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

20. I have difficulty organising my time in order to complete tasks.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

21. I put self-imposed demands on myself to meet scheduled deadlines.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

22. I think badly of myself for not meeting the demands of my job.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

23. I am unable to express my stress to those who place demands on me.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

24. Teaching is stressful for me.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

25. The frequency with which I experience one or more of these symptoms (stomachaches, backaches, elevated blood pressure, stiff necks and shoulders) is:

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

26. I find my job tires me out.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

27. I am tense by the end of the day.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

28. I experience headaches.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

29. I find myself complaining to others.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

30. I am frustrated and/ or feel angry.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

31. I worry about my job.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

32. I feel depressed about my job.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

33. I am unable to use an effective method to manage my stress (such as exercise relaxation techniques, etc.)

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

34. Stress management techniques would be useful in helping me cope with the demands of my job.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

35. I am now using one or more of the following to relieve my stress: alcohol, drugs, yelling, blaming, withdrawing, eating, smoking.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

36. I feel powerless to solve my difficulties.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Calculate total score by adding the scores of all 36 questions. And look where you stand in accordance with the scale below:

36 to 72 = Low Stress

73 to 108 = Moderate Stress

109 to 180 = High Stress

Stress, if ignored, is like a snowball: it starts from an initial state of small import and builds upon itself, becoming larger, graver and also perhaps potentially dangerous or disastrous. Therefore, it becomes very essential to keep a check and monitor one's stress levels and indulge in a little self-care regularly.

Here are a few points that will definitely help you to cope with your stress.

- 1. Know your stressors:** Being self-aware and taking cognizance of what or who stresses you out is the first and the most important way of dealing with stress.
- 2. Embrace the stress:** Although this might sound counter-intuitive, but instead of fretting and getting overwhelmed by the idea of potential oncoming stressors and causing oneself to experience “meta-stress” (stress about stress), it helps if one acknowledges the oncoming stressors instead of avoiding them or fretting over them and works towards a strategy for mitigating the effect.
- 3. Know your circle of control:** Although one might have wide range of “concerns”, knowing your circle of “control” enables you to focus your energies on things and concerns you can actually do something about or have some control over.
- 4. Learning to say “no”:** Learning to say “no” can prevent you from taking more things on your plate than you can actually handle. Also, it can open up opportunities for you to say “yes” to the things that really matter as it enables you to be more proactive rather than reactive, eventually evading a burnout.
- 5. Mind full or mindful:** Mindfulness exercises like mindful breathing, loving kindness meditation, five senses exercise, mindful walking, etc. gently builds an inner strength, so that future stressors have less impact on your happiness and physical well-being.



6. **Disconnect:** Unplugging yourself and taking short relaxation breaks from your demanding schedule can boost your efficiency and well-being more than you can imagine. Afterall, as Sydney Harris says, “The time to relax is when you don’t have time for it.”
7. **Emotional first aid:** Just as you would identify which of the many pain relievers on the shelves works best for you, similarly it is essential to identify which coping strategy helps you the best to overcome your stress. Try out various techniques and figure out which are easiest for you to implement and which tend to be most effective for you. But mostly, get into the habit of taking note of your psychological health on a regular basis, especially after a stressful, difficult or emotionally demanding situation.
8. **Chuckle or trouble:** A sense of humour can be an amazing, simple and inexpensive line of defence when it comes to coping with stress. Laughing is a potent antidote to chronic stress and turning on your humour radar and adding some giggles and gurgles to your everyday life can go a long way in making your life less stressful.

In conclusion, I would like to leave you with this dippy yet funny doggerel ‘Prayer of a Stressed Teacher’ by Chris Hall

“Heavenly Father, sincerely I pray
That some of these kids don’t come to school today
Especially that Johnson kid
Of course you know what he did
Stole my pens from my desk
And changed the grades on all my tests
Found my lunch and ate it all up
It was funny when it made him throw up
But it wasn’t funny when he did it
in my favourite cup
Lord, I need this job though, don’t let me give up”



Abhishek Banerji is a psychotherapist with international accreditations in various multi-modal psychotherapies. He is also an actor, keynote speaker and entrepreneur. He has been honoured with Birla Young Indian of the Year 2020, Yuva Ratna 2020 and has been appointed as a Global Goodwill Ambassador from India by Global Goodwill Ambassadors (USA).

Well-being in Teachers Heralds a Better World

usha Pandit



“A teacher’s work is never done” is a truism that can bear repetition. It is a job that is not just confined to planning for multiple classes, preparing and teaching lessons, managing classrooms, setting papers, doing corrections, entering marks and meeting parents. Administrative support, team meetings, monitoring of children, pastoral care, parent reassurances, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, and even government duties can make the job exhausting.

Like a juggler, the teacher finishes a year’s work to be looking at planning for the next. In some cases, there is more correction awaiting him/ her for board examinations where results are due. Like most of us say, ‘It’s a rat race.’ It shouldn’t be.

In this lies the need for “wellness”. Long, arduous, often ill-rewarded, teaching as a profession can potentially cause immense stress. Often overworked, unsupported, underpaid, the teacher lacks personal time, has difficulty in work-life balance and is a victim of burnouts.

The difference between teaching and other professions is that it has to do with the future. Children are the blocks on which the edifice of tomorrows will be built. The responsibility of shaping the individual to bear its burdens, its brunt, and its challenges cannot be circumvented even if we were to assume helplessness. The ghosts in that responsibility haunt us.

How then can we create well-being? There is much that has been said about body connects, work-life balances, of good eating and exercise regimens that many before me have elaborated on and which hold true for all times and indeed for all professions. I am going to turn the problem on its head and attempt to think of how the work itself can be made enjoyable, rewarding and exciting. Is that possible at all? Yes, it is. But not without the audacity to make a change.

Analogously, a large obese body is prone to illnesses and one can wish its woes away by alluding to political correctness, or blaming size zero advertising, or cultural norms of the community. Its size will simply kill it. We, therefore, need to shed the yoke of

the flab of tradition, custom, comfort zones, whatabouteries of our own journeys and accept that it is a changed world we live in and, more importantly, a radically transformed world that our students will inhabit given the speed of artificial intelligence and robotics looming over the scientific horizon. Like Khalil Gibran said, they will dwell in “the house of tomorrow which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams”.

We have already seen the lack of human connects with the increase of digital connectivity and witnessed its trauma and woes. We have experienced the stress of speed and its urgency and roller coaster rides to nowhere. Our children have suffered and are suffering the ambitions built by this speed so much so that they have lost their childhood to burgeoning work, more tuition and extra activities structured in. The blessings of nature, of daydreaming, ruminations, the laughter of friends, the silences of company are a thing of the past. There is an injustice in it that escapes us. When we speak of change, it must come from the minds of these children that we are nourishing today.

So, first is a realistic view of where these children are headed. Second is what they need to survive, excel professionally and, finally, what they need to be happy, content and emotionally successful. We need to think about what sort of societies they will live in and how much healing mechanisms they will have to be trained in to be psychologically whole and fit. We need to ask ourselves where we are in our pedagogical processes that are outdated. Will they be relevant and how much work are we putting into those silos? This will help to reduce the drudgery substantially. So, are children doing the same kind of work we did? Have we moved into technology in reasonable proportions? Have we changed the nature of our testing and assessing without losing the essence of knowledge and application for collaborative and creative purposes? Have we geared up to put in more wisdom into a privileged population that will take for granted a lot like we did with our parents? The answers to these questions should direct us.

The role of the teacher is changing from knowledge-giver to facilitator, co-learner and mentor. The

speed of technology and our own unfamiliarity with it does not allow us to participate equally with children. Harnessing them to textbook content, especially if it does not engender thinking but needs to be regurgitated by the letter, is wasteful. The ability to loosen the reins is critical to our well-being. Otherwise, we are swimming against the tide. As co-learners, we have the happy circumstance of creating journeys in learning that are no longer a burden on us. We share the burden and the learning. We allow our experience to guide them.

Keeping abreast, reading and finding out should not be seen as more work but as the joy of learning. It is all in the mind and in our perspectives. If we build a culture of seeing new learning as “work” then it will seem like a mountain to be climbed. If we see it as an adventure, the same work will appear to be an opportunity for self-actualisation. The impact of that on wellness is tremendous. To skirt that would be to feel incompetent. When we stick to the known and trodden path and it is criticised in every forum, we feel all the more diminished in our own eyes. It is counterproductive to well-being.

All education is not seated in the academic. There is more to be done with the socio-emotional dilemmas of the child in a complex world. There are questions asked for which there are no right or wrong answers. Learning to be in the grey, to exercise moral honesty, to know that empathy is a virtue that surpasses all and crowns the survival of mankind are lessons that only a human can impart. Fortunately for us, we are the chosen ones.

These lessons are universal and surpass time and eras. They are the stuff that our souls are made of and are found abundantly in the literature of great thinkers and philosophers. In the technological meshes of our times where confusion reigns, this manna is what will save our children from mutual annihilation or mutilation of self. Who but we can offer that lesson? Integration, wholeness, differentiation, respect and compassion are goals that cannot be reiterated enough in a world where we no longer seem to distinguish ‘cunning’ from ‘competence’. In that roar of giant masses for revenge on nebulous historic and mythical figures, we stand often



overwhelmed. How easy is it then for our children to be tarnished, influenced and brainwashed? Their need is not in the academic, unless we have kept them chained to the shackles of the predigital world of the twentieth century, it is humanitarian and spiritual.

Stress is a silent killer. It causes physical and psychological damage. Psychosomatic illnesses are often related to the mind and body not being in sync. It is therefore necessary for teachers to take care to eat a healthy diet. Schools are famous for “celebrations” and binge eating on a daily basis. This is very harmful and it is important schools become aware of this as a serious health hazard for its staff and restrain its unchecked prevalence.

Stress is often created by the organisation that creates workloads that are based on quantity and time. Often, the need is for teachers to be on duty for a certain number of hours. What we need to focus on is quality and outputs that are marked for its value and worth.

Workload for teachers is not just a time-table or experiences. There is another world at home of personal routines, family responsibilities, family pressures and financial circumstances, personal fatigue and worries about one’s own children. Classroom and student responses, school’s political climate and administrative work can add to the mind’s pressures.

How does one lift the teacher from this morass and move him/ her towards motivation to live joyfully? First of all, the teacher needs to acknowledge the massive role played in doing a job that is remarkably responsible for building a better society in the future in the upliftment of children. This awareness needs to be reaffirmed often. It is important for the teacher to be a learner and share the journey of discovery with children. It is an absolute burden for anyone to aspire to know everything or to have the onus of being the giver of knowledge at all times.

Classrooms should be flipped and children be given thinking questions to ponder on and find answers to rather than gather information from the net to cut-paste as research. Pedagogical shifts to discussions, ideation, differentiation of children will help the teacher work at different levels, have realistic expectations and celebrate the success of children where work is not geared to achieve an unachievable 'one size fits all' goal.

Lack of transparency and lack of sharing are twin burdens that the fraternity languishes under despite it being shouted from every conference, conclave and seminar rooftop. Unless the entire community of teachers and all schools in the country are able to lift themselves to function well, the wellness we seek will be flawed. Internally, encourage team teaching, collective planning, question paper banks and resource banks. A determined effort in this direction needs to be made by all of us.

When we aim for autonomy in children as far as skills are concerned, we make their learning independent, productive, progressive and sustained. Otherwise, we are regularly in the "giver" mode where they "receive" our largesse in the name of teaching. This is a burden on the teachers. Teaching "how" to learn is easier than telling them "what" to learn. It frees them from our apron strings and lets them fly.

If the syllabus could be dealt with differently, it would take away most of the pain. If planning could be done for one year and revisited for remarks on improvement or reflections on successes, we would actually be an evolving and learning institution. If children could be engaged in participatory activities as opposed to constant lectures, the interest factor would keep them occupied and learning. Often, marking can be done through a peer mark before it reaches the teacher marking. If you give them rubrics, the marking itself becomes a learning exercise in reinforcing all the success criteria they need for getting better marks. Pain points need to be addressed by thinking outside the box.

We are labouring under a rigid structure where subjects are not integrated. The teacher has little

freedom to innovate or digress. With a steadily burgeoning knowledge base, these subject silos create a massive burden when they could easily have been linked to other subjects and the work halved. We need to take a little time to step back and find solutions.

Often, the teacher does not have the skills or the training to create resources that will make learning more competent and time-efficient. Often, he/ she is torn between the management, the parents and the students. It is a hard life.

Added to this, we are indoctrinated with the narratives of "finishing the syllabus", blindly following "board pattern of questions" and "explaining" everything in the name of qualities or duties of being a good teacher. Instead, we need to unravel the syllabus and allow children to discover themes and skills, correlate it to earlier or parallel learning and link it to life situations and applications. We need to understand the broad philosophies of boards and use the developmental years to see beyond an exam to life that requires a lot more to succeed. We need to get children to think critically, debate and discuss points as opposed to telling them what to think. Breaking these boundaries is necessary to escape the traps we have laid for ourselves. We need to redeem our thinking hats.

A sensitive school will create esteem. It comes from group learning in a fixed time. It could be discussions, reading aloud, learning English structures, talking of current affairs in subject areas. We badly need to reclaim school as an intellectual space and not merely a social one. Small acts of support and collegiality can go a long way. A word of praise, mentoring in teaching areas that are weak and team teaching can help.

Parent tensions can be lessened by just a little act of making a phone call and talking about the child. It creates a lot of happiness and reduces any hostility instantly. It is a good idea to establish that the child is the centre and we are all working towards his/ her well-being. A transparent and participatory syllabus where parents are partners will help everyone be on the same page. Use technology effectively to be in touch with all parents. If parents could celebrate the

work of their children in a common WhatsApp group, it would stop them speculating on the work done in private chats. Technology would then bridge the gaps constructively.

Teachers suffer from many anxieties and one among them is the reluctance to seek help actively. An anonymous box of questions can be kept where answers can be provided by any other teacher. Teachers observing teachers is a wonderful learning enterprise that is free and in-house. A bank of back-up resources will help teachers feel secure. Avoid school

political cliques which are often gossip beds and can create a lot of negative energy on which egos thrive. Managements must be alert to this malaise and encourage greater collegiality.

Finally, time with the warmth of family, the laughter of friends, the comradery of new relationships at work and joyous smiles of children are rewards the teacher must consciously acknowledge and be grateful for. Reward yourself often with small gifts, shopping and trinkets. Take pleasure in the ordinary free blessings of life. The staffroom is a place to learn





a lot. You are surrounded by knowledgeable, talented people who are colleagues and friends. There is so much to learn from them. From time to time, collectively reconnect to the actual purpose of being a teacher and feel proud that you are building character.

A teacher, who is strong, sound of mind and joyous, energises and galvanises the children by example. Wellness is infectious like a warm smile. It invites an automatic response. It uplifts. It heralds a better world.



Usha Pandit has 3 decades of teaching experience in K-12 in 4 countries. She is the Founder-CEO of Mindsprings and the author of 40 textbooks for English from Pre-primary to Grade VIII. She is also a curriculum expert, an educational consultant, an inspirational speaker at conferences and a champion of gifted education. Usha runs a seminal, award-winning academic enrichment programme for children with cancer at the Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai. The Mindsprings website www.mindsprings.in showcases her work.

A Teacher's Well-Being

Johnson George



Teaching, as a profession, is a noble profession – no doubt about it. A cultured, skilled society cannot arise without proper and effective learning. Teachers play a huge role in shaping a student's life – academically, socially and emotionally. However, the teacher-student relationship has taken a toll over the years and is sadly a declining trend. Simultaneously, the health of teachers is also on the decline. When I talk of health of a teacher, I am mainly focusing on the emotional and physical health.

What are some of the occupational hazards that teachers are exposed to today? The top 4 reported issues that teachers are exposed to are voice problems, stress, aching legs and viral infections. How can teachers avoid these health threats?

Voice Problems: We see complaints of laryngitis; an inflammation of the voice box (larynx) from overuse, irritation or infection. In most cases, laryngitis symptoms last less than a couple of weeks and are caused by something minor such as a virus. Laryngitis signs and symptoms can include hoarseness, weak voice or voice loss, tickling sensation and rawness in the throat, sore throat, dry throat and dry cough. Some precautions include:

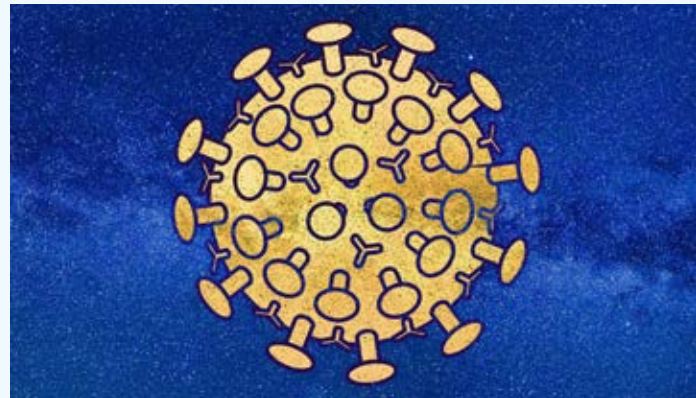
- Taking rest periods during the day to give your voice a break
- Reducing shouting efforts
- Staying hydrated – drink lots of water
- Gargling your throat at least twice a day with warm water





Aching legs: Aching legs are a health hazard for a teacher who is standing in a classroom all-day long. This can lead to long term chronic health problems. Teachers could:

- Exercise focussing on lower leg blood circulation, light manual muscle relaxation and lying down with legs elevated to let gravity drain the fluid out of the legs back to the body
- Find time to sit in-between without disturbing the lecture flow
- Move around the class sometime instead of standing in one position



Viral Infections: Some ways of preventing these are by taking the flu shot each season (especially in schools where children come from low healthcare facility areas or infected families). Wash your hands regularly and go for regular health check-ups.

The other health issues include shoulder pain due to writing on blackboard, continuous correction of exam papers and acidity due to long breaks between meals.

It is important to note that the teachers play a pivotal role in the lives of the students. Therefore,

Stress: Teaching is becoming a high-stress occupation. This high stress is causing teachers to burn out, disengage with the students and become dissatisfied with the profession. Studies show that between 30 – 40% of the teachers will leave within their 5th year of service. Many teachers report that job satisfaction is at an all-time low; pressuring of high stakes testing and managing difficult students have dramatically increased the cognitive and emotional demands of teaching leaving them feeling overwhelmed. They cite that they often lack effective and inclusive leadership. They also feel powerless because they don't have much say in how the school is run. Some ways to reduce stress would be to:

- Spend time in personal meditation
- Introduce mindfulness programmes and stress management programmes – these programmes can help teachers manage emotions and find joy in teaching
- Run mentoring programmes that can help new teachers and thereby reduce stress
- Empower them to bring out their own creativity
- Have reward and recognition programmes for teachers. Recognise individual achievements
- Find your own way of managing stress. Let's keep a tight security on the gate of our mind so that only positive thoughts are allowed to enter and only words of wisdom are allowed to exit.

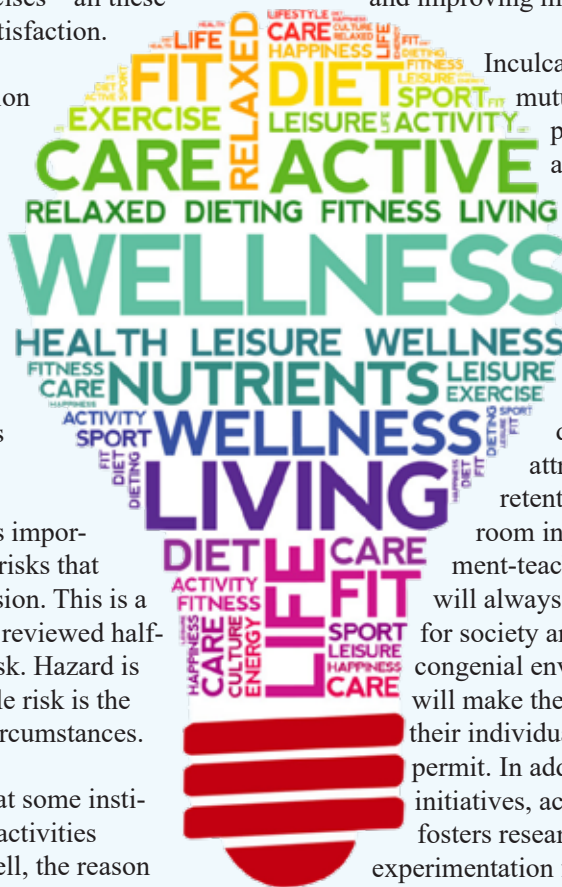
the management/ trustees must always consider and respect this relationship. Also, workplace wellness programmes can improve teacher health, lower medical costs and reduce absenteeism. I have listed some of the ways these can be achieved:

1. Consider reducing teacher-student ratio, wherever possible. An ideal ratio is 1:20.
2. Switch to edu-com, audio-visual and experiential learning combinations to get some rest from continuously speaking and also reduce stress.
3. Where the teacher-student ratio is greater than 1:30, a collar mic will help the teacher lessen the strain on the vocal cords.
4. Well-balanced snack/ meal breaks for teachers are a must.
5. Hygienic washrooms and refreshment areas can be provided.
6. The management must avoid correcting/ reprimanding teachers in front of students. Such activity must be done in private and emphatically.
7. Avoid combining extra-curricular activities with teaching activities while scheduling teachers as this causes extra stress. The teachers' competency and willingness, their attitude and behavioural aspects may be mapped. Care must be taken to ensure that the mapping is followed while assigning task responsibility. This ensures that besides being done in an organised and professional manner, the intended task is accomplished with willingness, enthusiasm and passion.
8. Have an experienced HR personnel who can handle staff grievances in the form of a friend, counsellor and guide.
9. Have mentoring programmes to help new teachers accomplish the objectives.
10. Although teachers are trained in education imparting skills, it is important to have refresher workshops that can help them cope with newer challenges, generational mindset shifts and current technologies. Grooming the teachers and training them in chosen domain areas enhance the teachers' strengths. The teachers must be made aware of the education challenges that lie in front of the teaching fraternity. The adaptation of new teaching strategies, shedding off the orthodox methodology, coming out of "comfort zone" of teaching the "secured" content will make the teachers willing to give their best. These practices will ultimately prove beneficial for the teachers themselves. A systemic approach may be adopted towards understanding the challenges and meeting them in an organised manner. The teaching staff of the institution will become distinctly better than any other workforce in terms of content delivery using modern methodologies and doing assessment and evaluation using latest methodologies.
11. The management must be aware of special health needs of its teachers (e.g. an existing infirmity, differently-abled, pregnancy, mental trauma, etc.). An emphatic approach must be adopted, rather than being critical of the same.
12. Besides the staffroom, a healthcare room may be introduced (with a few beds) in case of emergency. The institution may arrange to collaborate with a general physician and a local hospital to be used in case of emergency. A group medical insurance facility will also help the teachers to manage expenses related to hospitalisation.
13. Appropriate safety equipment and practices (like CCTV cameras, fire extinguishers, fire drills, emergency drills, anti-abuse policies, grievance redressal policies, etc.) will not only help the staff feel secure but also allow them to manage an emergency.
14. If there is a school bus facility, teachers coming from those areas may be offered a seat (subsidised/ gratis) to make their travel comfortable.
15. Have a structured and transparent performance analysis of the teachers. Performance analysis should enable identification of issues such as:
 - Insufficient/ Ineffective resources, competencies, organisational knowledge and inappropriate behaviour
 - Risks and opportunities that are not being sufficiently addressed
 - Weakness in leadership activities
 - Potential strengths that might need to be fostered with respect to leadership activities
 - Outstanding processes and activities that could be used as a model to improve other processes

Some of the key factors motivating the teachers are professional enrichment, caring atmosphere at

Have we wondered why is it that some institutions are already doing these activities while others are yet to start? Well, the reason is we do not collaborate to learn from one another. We need to have a best-practice sharing between institutions. When faced with a challenge, we must brainstorm within our team for solutions through a

A conscious effort in this direction will help reduce attrition, thereby increasing retention and improving classroom instruction. A healthy management-teacher-student relationship will always be a win-win situation for society and the nation at large. A congenial environment in the institution will make the teachers do more than their individual capacity would otherwise permit. In addition, teacher-supportive initiatives, academic ambience that fosters research, interesting academic experimentation for improvement in the content delivery and encouraging individual or group research opportunities ensure that teachers continue to perform



21

Hi-5: Burnin' the Burnout

Suzie D'Silva



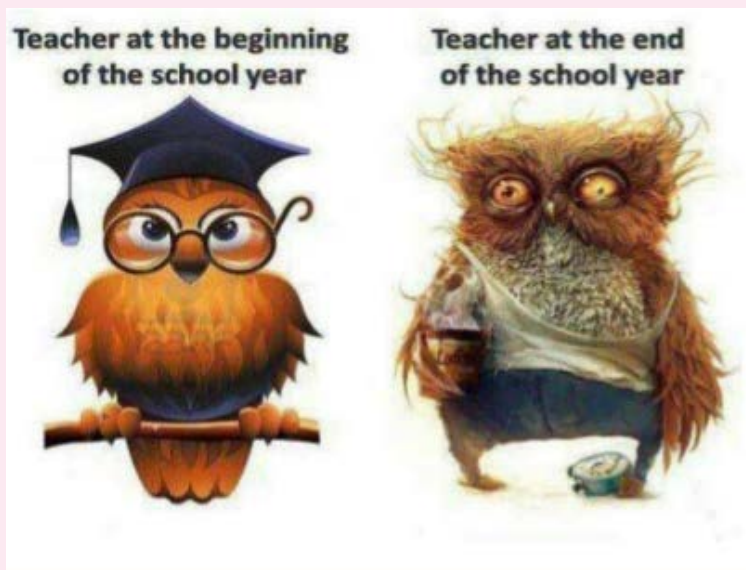
Build-in the 5 B's

- ✓ **Believe in growth:** People that believe in personal, academic and professional development hold onto the hope that things can get better if perseverant. So, if we feel we are stuck and not getting stronger or more capable, it can make us feel hopeless.
- ✓ **Believe in making a difference:** We need to feel like what we do matters and makes a difference. Celebrate little successes and know we are making things better.
- ✓ **Believe in a strong sense of purpose:** We need to feel like our work is connected to an important cause. Burnouts occur when we focus on the problems instead of the purpose.
- ✓ **Believe in sharing and connecting with other passionate educators:** The people you share with and connect with most will have a big influence on your outlook. On the other hand, if you are consistently around people who are negative and who lack energy, you will start to feel that way too.
- ✓ **Believe in controlling your mindset:** We burn out when we feel we cannot make decisions or take the action needed to create change. You cannot control the environment of your school or the children who are placed in your class, but you can control what is in your control only. Most importantly, you can control your mindset.

Calm the 5 C's

- ✓ **Calm the stress:** Take 2 minutes to breathe deeply before falling asleep and first thing in the morning. Place one hand on your chest and the other on your forehead. As you inhale, feel the pressure of your hands, and then exhale out a worry or concern that has recently taken up space in your brain. Each time you inhale and exhale, try to extend the exhale by 2 – 3 seconds. Reflecting on these 2 minutes, ask yourself: Can you personally change this worry or concern? How much of it is in your control? How much of it is out of your control?
- ✓ **Calm the breath:** Inhale for 4 counts, hold for 4, and exhale slowly for 4 counts. You can increase the holding of breath by a few seconds once you find the rhythm of the exercise. As you rhythmically find this breath, each time you inhale imagine diving deeper into a pool of blue water. As you complete your last breath and exhale, imagine yourself floating to the surface, renewed and weightless.
- ✓ **Calm the sound:** The right sound can be very powerful for engaging a calm response. Close your eyes for a minute or two, listen to the soothing sound of Tibetan bowls, chimes, running water, nature or whatever sound you associate with a calm state of mind. Imagine all your stress draining out of the palms of your hands and the soles of your feet.

- ✓ **Calm your space:** Create an area that's just right for you to regularly relax for a few minutes in the staffroom or classroom or at home. Intentionally calm yourself over 30 seconds or one minute of quiet breathing or focusing on a stimulus.
- ✓ **Calm your unwanted thoughts:** Try a few minutes of deep breathing and repeat a mantra/ chant/ hymn/ prayer which will soothe your frayed nerves. Deep inhaling and exhaling will allow you to reframe your thoughts and prevent unwanted reminders from creeping in. In fact, this is the ultimate goal because your thoughts create your emotions. If you want to feel better, feel less stressed, less anxious, less overwhelmed; you have to stop choosing thoughts which create those feelings.



about school. Leave the classroom on Friday/ Saturday planned and prepared for the next week.

Leverage the 5 L's

- ✓ **Leave all schoolwork at school:** A teacher's list of tasks never really ceases and can often lead to a burnout. Unwind at home with your family and hey, don't forget to tend to yourself too!
- ✓ **Lessen the cumulative workload:** Share the workload with a co-worker by planning lessons together, assigning the same homework and troubleshooting areas of concern.
- ✓ **Learn to take a break:** Take time off to get refreshed as it may even positively impact students/ family by giving them a more refreshed teacher/ family member.
- ✓ **Land at school early:** Quiet mornings in the classroom before the first bell is rung is the best time to plan/ complete the schoolwork and remain focused for the day.
- ✓ **Lockout the Sunday blues:** A teacher frantically scrambles to strategise for the coming week, plan lessons, grade papers, etc. It is so important to be able to enjoy a weekend without having to worry

Rejuvenate the 5 R's

- ✓ **Rest from your labour** – Remember, even God rested on the 7th day!
- ✓ **Reset your workload** – Re-evaluate and categorise everything you do into what is Urgent, Important and Nice-to-do.
- ✓ **Regulate your schedule** – Handle one day at a time. You cannot master your 'Future' if you fail in mastering your 'Today'.
- ✓ **Refuel your spirit:** There is no harm in reaching out. Seek help and support from your peers and family when you find your energy reserves depleted.
- ✓ **Renew your vision:** If you are stuck in 2nd gear, try changing your perspective towards achieving your goal. You will be motivated out of inspiration rather than out of desperation. *'Where there is no vision, the people perish.'* (Prov. 29:18 KJV).



Suzie D'Silva is an Event Conceptualiser and Deliverer as well as a Compere/ Anchor for various kinds of events. She is a self-directed person with good interpersonal skills and a multi-tasker. She is also a passionate culinarian who loves to experiment with different cuisines and methods of cooking. She is the founder of @flirting_with_flavours, a home-based food and dessert venture which caters to weekend, festive, party and daily menus.

Combating Stress as a Teacher

Stress, in my opinion, is self-imposed. Being a teacher for more than 20 years, I have realised that teachers go through innumerable stress-related issues. Each day could bring an endless list of tasks that could cause stress with the students, colleagues, management or meeting deadlines. However, stress is usually handled differently by different people. Some people allow stress to affect their mental, physical and spiritual health, while others appear stress-free most of the time. I suggest these 3 P's that could be helpful.



1. **Prayer:** Prayer is an effective means to combat stressful situations. Most of us generally do not resort to prayer. However, I have experienced that whenever I have prayed to my Lord Jesus, He has not only helped me cope with the problem but has taken the problem away. So, I would encourage you to try praying.
2. **Positivity:** Another effective tool is to be positive in the midst of a stressful situation. Try to think of ways that will help change the source of the stress. Avoid mingling and talking to people who are negative. This can add to the stress. A regular habit of exposing oneself to inspirational literature and media brings positivity into stressful situations.
3. **Perspective:** It is always helpful to train ourselves to look at a challenge with the right perspective; looking at it with a fresh pair of eyes. In other words, I recommend trying to be solution-minded. Often, we tend to look at a challenge as a problem, grumble and worry about it, thus giving ourselves unwanted stress. Try looking for solutions to the problem instead. If you find it hard to think at that time, try talking to people who are solution-minded.

These 3 P's have worked tremendously and brought me through several high-pressure situations. I hope you are encouraged to try them out too.

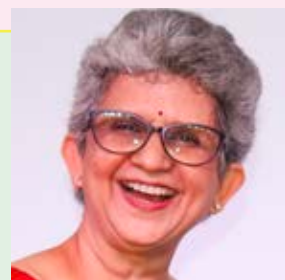
Dagmar D'Cruz,

Ex-teacher, Jamnabai Narsee School,
Co-founder, The Triune Academy of Learning

Most of you would have experienced a sudden burst of temper over a seemingly trivial issue. Stress could be the underlying factor for this outburst. Each individual has an optimal stress level. Each person responds differently to stress.

How do you reduce stress:

- Prioritise.
- Organise your time. Remember everybody has only 24 hours to a day.
- Learn to relax – If you have to wait in a queue occupy your time in a pleasurable way. These days, mobile phones are available for the purpose.
- Develop a hobby.
- Maintain a balanced diet.
- Avoid too much caffeine, tobacco or alcohol.
- Learn to enjoy what you are doing rather than looking at it as a job.
- Try not to play your role to perfection. Mere mortals cannot be perfect every time.
- Try practicing yoga which has been used as a therapy to alleviate stress.
- Laughter therapy is a good antidote too.



Dr. Pramila Kudva,

Principal, Pawar Public School, Kandivali (West)

“Go for a walk to find yourself”

Dr. Omkar Bhatkar



Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog by Caspar David Friedrich

“At last he went back to his old habit of spending most of his time at his office in Jesse Hall. He told himself that he should be grateful for the chance of reading on his own, free from the pressures of preparing for particular classes, free from the predetermined directions of his learning. He tried to read at random, for his own pleasure and indulgence, many of the things that he had been waiting for years to read. But his mind would not be led where he wished it to go; his attention wandered from the pages he held before him, and more and more often he found himself staring dully in front of him, at nothing.”

This is an excerpt from *Stoner* written by John Williams in 1973; one of my favourite novels and it tells the story of William Stoner who enters the University of Missouri at 19 years of age to study agriculture. Later, he becomes a teacher. He marries the wrong woman. His life is quiet and, after his death, his colleagues at the University remember him rarely. William Stoner's life is the story of most passionate teachers around. Stoner spent an immoderate amount of time in planning for his class, scrutinising his students' assignments and guiding them in every way possible; he was a dedicated teacher. He was so much of a teacher that very soon he forgot about his existence beyond that. His likes, dislikes, inclinations, pain or glories beyond being a teacher were hardly remembered. But does Stoner realise that he is also something beyond being a teacher?

In this essay, I have attempted to put down my thoughts on 'the well-being of a teacher' and how it could be taken care of by going out for a walk. I have put together some of my favourite authors and painters who have also expressed it in their works.

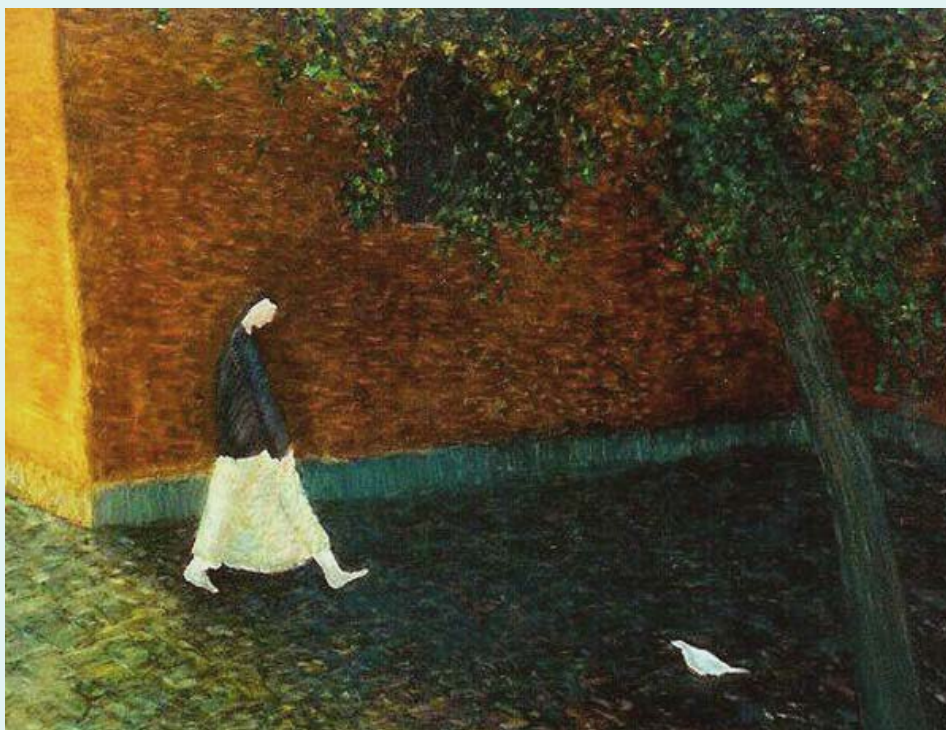
It is noticeable that an accountant does not bring his accountancy home nor does a labourer from the industry bring his blue uniform home; the security does not guard his own home and the painter does not paint the dinner table. But a teacher will carry home assignments to check, question papers to set, answer sheets to assess, a pile of books to prepare for the class, the student's attendance sheet to tally and what not! More often than not, this ends up on the dining table if there is no separate space to do school work at home. The term 'school work at home' itself sounds like a paradox. One might argue over what is new about it, even the CEO of the office carries work home and sometimes even the manager. If that's the case, then the teaching job is not the 5-hour job as it appears to be, it is much more than that. A teacher remains a teacher even out of school or college often carrying the burdens of school work on their head and soon drowning themselves under this burden.

Teachers love teaching and are passionate about it but being a teacher is not only about teaching a 1-hour class on Buddhist ethics or quadratic expressions. There is much more that goes into teaching. Along

with good moments of teaching, there are several moments which require an understanding of oneself to be able to deal with it. There are students we get attached to, there are divisions which do not inspire us; at times, there are subjects forced upon us to teach, syllabi that change without giving us enough time to prepare and, most often, the realisation that what we have to teach in the new syllabus is utterly impractical, unnecessary and drab. (A sincere teacher here goes out of the way to make it practical, necessary and interesting.)

As if this is not enough, there are administrative duties, pressure from parents and most often from the management and the system at large, following strange rules made without the consent of all, odd roles to be played such as planning a farewell along with preparing for a class on ecosystem, to teach and hold the attention of the students whose attention span is reducing every day, to be punctual, to dress well, to speak politely, to have manners, etiquettes, political stands and, above all, be generous. To be a teacher demands a kind of perfection that we think is possible. More often than not, we are fooling ourselves when we strive to achieve perfection. And in this race to be the perfect role model, we are constantly trying to be someone else. In this rat race to be the perfect teacher, we often spend long hours preparing a PowerPoint on the history of the Mauryan dynasty or designing cue cards for the geography class or checking assignments rigorously so that our red pen does not make mistakes in marking or even talking to students during breaks and then not eating lunch in order to be on time for the following class.

Amidst all this, do we ignore ourselves? Do we really make time to read what we want to read? Do we make time to cook a meal we have been planning to make? Do we take assignments home to check and end up ignoring our loved ones or even taking them for granted? Do we dress for perfection? Do we go for a walk or do we come running to prepare for next class? And when we are home drinking our cup of tea, do we think about why our class is so careless? And when on our way back, are we discussing with our colleague how our supervisor is implementing new policies which we think are unnecessary? Even when we wake up early for school, very often we



Walking Alone by Joseph Lee HonKong

Most teachers sacrifice themselves too much under the weight of teaching being a noble profession. If teachers sacrifice too much, then there is nothing they would be able to give to the world. Needless to mention, this is often a thankless job in modern times. At such times, one has to replenish themselves. Disconnect from the world to connect to yourself. Once again, make an attempt to discover your heart. Once you discover your heart, it is like discovering a fire torch and you can light the way for yourself and others

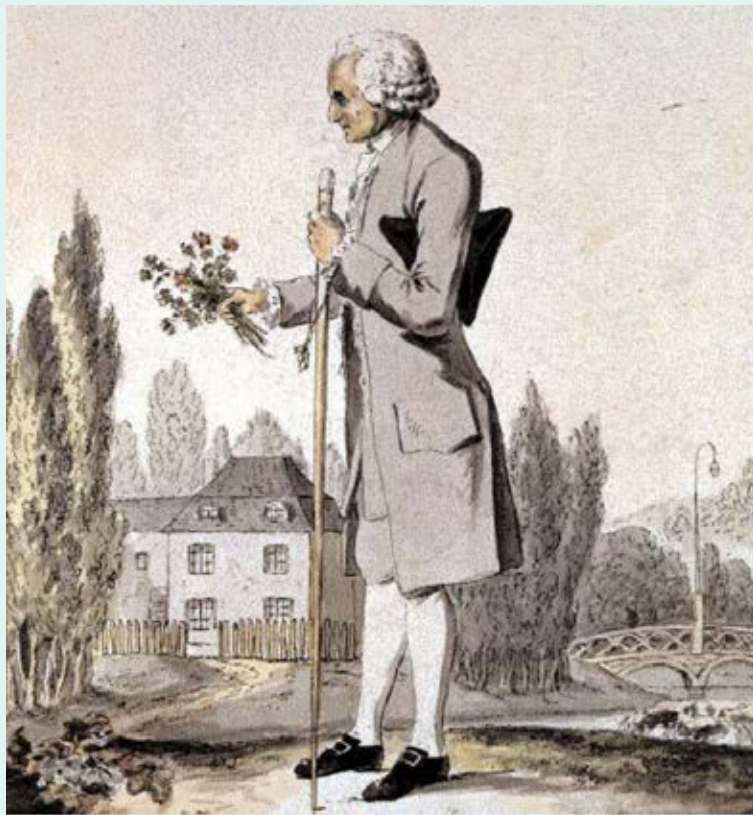
have to miss breakfast so that we do not miss the train or bus and reach on time for the assembly. In fact, in the morning, we have no time to even choose our dress, which is why we keep it ready the previous night. This is how busy we are that we do not even get to see the blue skies and feel the warmth of the morning sun. This schedule distances us from enjoying the blissful mornings and, in no time, we stop observing the little joys of life and nature. Like Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*, even the teacher's life has become nothing but a conveyor belt. There can be situational solutions to this. But everybody is different and different things work on different bodies. Yes, it is also about the body as much, it is of the mind, an amalgamation of the 'self'.

This self needs to be cared for so that one is able to care about others. The need of the hour in times of crisis is to discover oneself. But during stressful times, finding oneself is not easy. It is like finding the way in the storm. Finding your way in a storm, you will always end up losing the path you have. One has to wait for the storm to subside and then choose a path to find your way.

who follow you. This light is found by you but, on your path, you share it with many others so that they can take some light with themselves for their own paths. After walking for some time giving this light to others, one realises that the light is gone and now the only way is to pause and think about whether you can create light there or walk a little to find or to create another light. A teacher's life is about continually renewing and finding yourself so that you help others find themselves. A teacher cannot be just a teacher, a teacher has to be a learner first and teacher second. Lessons of life are learnt until we die and therefore we should never cease to be a student of the school called life. As Maya Angelou puts it, *"As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands, one for helping yourself, the other for helping others."*

Often, what has helped me as a quick fix is a walk. Walking is a remedy that often works in times of stress. Walking aimlessly when one is stressed calms the mind, body and the soul. Like Hippocrates puts it, *"If you are in a bad mood, go for a walk. If you are still in a bad mood, go for another walk."*

Les Rêveries du Promeneur Solitaire (Meditations of a Solitary Walker), an unfinished manuscript composed between 1776 and 1778, is one of the last works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. He died 3 months short of completing the 10 “walks” that comprise Rêveries. “I am devoting my last days to studying myself,” he wrote. The result is remarkable, the work of a man who felt himself rejected by society turned in on himself. The work is a powerful meditation on the quest for self-care. Rousseau felt rejected by society or you could say that he reached his mid-life crisis. But reaching the 40’s milestone, he analysed



PENGUIN CLASSICS

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

Reveries of the Solitary Walker

the stock of his life while taking walks in isolation. On his 3rd walk, he writes:

“Since the days of my youth I had fixed on the age of 40 as the end of my efforts to succeed, the final term of my various ambitions. I had the firm intention, when I reached this age, of making no further effort to climb out of whatever situation I was in and of spending the rest of my life living from day to day with no thought for the future. When the time came, I carried out my plan without difficulty and, although my fortune at that time seemed to be on the point of changing permanently for the better, it was not only without regret but with real pleasure that I gave up these prospects.

In shaking off all these lures and vain hopes, I abandoned myself entirely to the nonchalant tranquillity which has always been my dominant taste and more lasting inclination. I quit the world and its vanities, I gave up all finery—no more sword, no more watch, no more white stockings, gilt trimmings and powder, but a simple wig and a good solid coat of broad cloth—and what is more than all the rest, I uprooted from my heart the greed and covetousness which gave value to all I was leaving behind. I did not confine my reformation to outward things. Indeed, I became aware that this change called for a revision of my opinions, which although undoubtedly more painful was also more necessary, and resolving to get it all over at once, I set about a strict self-examination which was to order my inner life for the rest of my days as I would wish it to be at the time of my death.”

Thus, it is a walk that provides the mind with an understanding of the self. We are living in a culture of workaholism to which there is no full stop. Like a conveyor belt, everything is interconnected and interdependent. While teachers are busy teaching Semester I and trying hard to make a connect with the students, the exam sets in and, post-exams, when there is a break for all, the break is for namesake before we

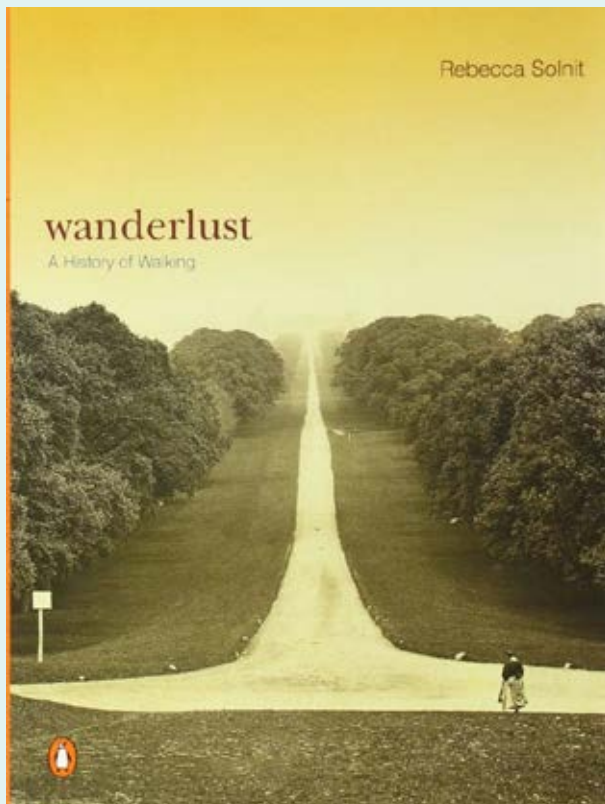
begin preparation for Semester II. It is already there, growing all around us like acrid air. The teaching culture does not provide us enough breaks and work continues to multiply like that of a worker bee.

Also, Rebecca Solnit describes what walking brings to her in her book *Wanderlust* (2000): *"The multiplication of technologies in the name of efficiency is actually eradicating free time by making it possible to maximise the time and place for production and minimise the unstructured travel time in between. New timesaving technologies make most workers more productive, not more free, in a world that seems to be accelerating around them. Too, the rhetoric of efficiency around these technologies suggests that what cannot be quantified cannot be valued — that that vast array of pleasures which fall into the category of doing nothing in particular, of wool-gathering, cloud-gazing, wandering, window-shopping, are nothing but voids to be filled by something more definite, more productive, or faster paced... As a member of the self-employed whose time saved by technology can be lavished on daydreams and meanders, I know*

these things have their uses, and use them — a truck, a computer, a modem — myself, but I fear their false urgency, their call to speed, their insistence that travel is less important than arrival. I like walking because it is slow, and I suspect that the mind, like the feet, works at about 3 miles an hour. If this is so, then modern life is moving faster than the speed of thought, or thoughtfulness."



Kierkegaard illustration, Philosophie magazine



On contemplating our greatest source of unhappiness, Søren Kierkegaard writes, *"Of all ridiculous things, the most ridiculous seems to me, to be busy — to be a man who is brisk about his food and his work... What, I wonder, do these busy folks get done."* Kierkegaard, the 19th-century Danish philosopher, felt that people who are constantly busy doing something are actually doing nothing in particular but only running away from their 'self'. Being busy is escapism from discovering yourself. It is only in moments of solitude that one tries to meet his/her own 'self'. Every teacher has a responsibility to know themselves in order to make the path for others. Therefore, selfcare is necessary for an individual, for every teacher to be able to care for others. If teachers

feel that the situation around them is stressful and it is burning them inside out, then better than trying to fight the situation without enough protection to their 'self', they should walk out for some time and keep walking till they feel alright to resume. This will not be considered 'escapism', 'egoist' or simply 'self-love'; rather, it is love of self and it is

highly important for every teacher to be able to love themselves.

Rousseau was one of the first philosophers to make the clear distinction between *amour de soi*, love of self or innate self-esteem, and *amour-propre*, self-love or egotistical pride. Having reached a state of contentment, he remarks in his 8th Walk: "... alone with myself, contented with myself and already enjoying the happiness, which I feel I have deserved ... Love of self alone is active in all of this, self-love has no part." Therefore, Rousseau had distinguished ego from self-esteem very early, before the birth of psychological understandings on the subject.

In short, walking cleans the soul of the weight of the burden that we carry, purifies the body with the sweat of unnecessary trivialities, clears our vision with clean air and cleanses the throat of words stuck in limbo, those said and unsaid. Walk, more than a preparation for the future, is an aimless meandering of thoughts which, by the end, resolve themselves in one way or another. Every teacher, every soul needs to walk every day be it with the sunrise or the sunset and observe how everything around them moves by.

To conclude, I would echo the words of the Swiss modernist writer Robert Walser, from his short story "The Walk (1917)": *"With the utmost love and attention, the man who walks must study and observe every smallest living thing, be it a child, a dog, a fly, a butterfly, a sparrow, a worm, a flower, a man, a house, a tree, a hedge, a snail, a mouse, a cloud, a hill, a leaf, or no more than a poor discarded scrap of paper on which, perhaps, a dear good child at school has written his first clumsy letters."*



Dr. Omkar Bhatkar is a poet, playwright, painter and professor. He has taught sociology courses for London School of Economics' international programmes and presently heads St. Andrew's Centre for Philosophy and Performing Arts (SAPP). He has written and directed over 20 plays with most of them making exclusive use of poetry. He has also published his book on poetry, 'Desires Blue'.

Global Compact on Education Nirmala Carvalho



Pope Francis is inviting world leaders and young people to come together at the Vatican on 14th May, 2020, for an event called ‘Reinventing the Global Educational Alliance’. “Never before has there been such need to unite our efforts in a broad educational alliance, to form mature individuals capable of overcoming division and antagonism and to restore the fabric of relationships for the sake of a more fraternal humanity,” Francis wrote in the message announcing the initiative, in September last.

According to Pope Francis, education today clashes with a process of “rapidification” that traps human existence in a “whirlwind of high-speed technology and computerisation, continually altering our points of reference.” As a result, human identity loses “its solidity”.

According to an African proverb, ‘it takes a whole village to educate a child’. When it comes to education, that village still needs to be created, beginning by clearing the ground of “discrimination,” and fraternity “must be allowed to flourish.” According to the Pope, this not only includes teachers, students and their families but wider civil society including science, sports, politics and charitable organisations.

“An alliance, in other words, between the earth’s inhabitants and our ‘common home’, which we are bound to care for and respect,” Francis wrote. “An alliance that generates peace, justice and hospitality among all peoples of the human family as well as dialogue between religions.”

In addition to the 14th May meeting in the Vatican’s Paul VI Audience Hall, the Holy Father said that a

number of seminars on related topics will take place in other locations to prepare for the event. “I invite everyone to work for this alliance and to be committed, individually and within our communities, to nurturing the dream of a humanism rooted in solidarity and responsive both to humanity’s aspirations and to God’s plan,” Francis wrote.

According to a statement from the Congregation for Catholic Education, the initiative is a response to a request that came during several meetings Francis had with different personalities of “various cultures and religious affiliations”. The 5th anniversary of the environmental encyclical ‘Laudato Si’ was an “ideal platform” to launch the event. The statement continues, “The most significant personalities in the world are invited to take part in the proposed initiative, political, cultural and religious, and, in particular, the young people to whom the future belongs. The goal is to arouse an awareness and a wave of responsibility for the common good of humanity, starting from the young and reaching all people of goodwill.”



The statement from the Congregation also said that the new educational pact will aim to heal 3 “fractures” affecting the world. The first is that which separates reality from transcendence. According to the Vatican, children should be introduced to “total reality”, including openness to the transcendent, healing a “vertical rift between man and the Absolute”. The second fracture the pact should heal is “horizontal”, between generations, cultures, and



within the family, with people who bring different cultural visions and religions, and with those who face financial, social and moral difficulties. The third fracture is that between humanity and the environment, with an urgent need to “create the conditions for ecological citizenship” that educates in “responsible austerity, grateful contemplation of the world, and care for the fragility of the poor and the environment”.

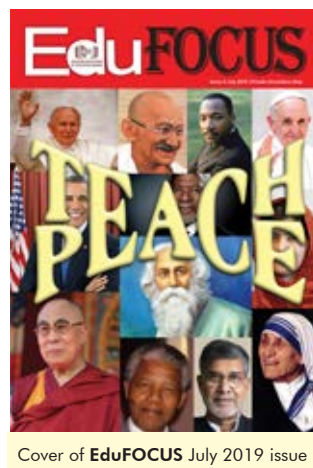


Nirmala Carvalho with Msgr. Indunil Kodithuwakku, Secretary, Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, who thanked her for disseminating the document on Human Fraternity through **EduFOCUS**, July 2019.

It is matter of immense pride, that this global pact has been underway in the Archdiocesan Board of Education (ABE) since its inception. Faithful to its vision, “Vita in plenitudine”, the ABE, through its intense and extensive apostolate of education in the Catholic institutions in Mumbai and the districts of Thane and Raigad under the Archdiocese of Bombay, has been imparting quality and value-based education without discrimination of caste, creed, language, gender or religion with preferential option for the poor and marginalised with emphasis on respect for each one’s human dignity and human rights.



Nirmala Carvalho has been a Crux correspondent since 2004, and, in 2006, won the Communications Award from the Catholic Bishops Conference of India for “exceptional sensitivity to the Church and minority-related issues”. She holds a bachelor’s degree in Philosophy and a master’s degree in Sociology, both from the University of Mumbai.



Cover of **EduFOCUS** July 2019 issue

The objectives of the ABE synchronise with the path of the “Global Village” envisioned by Pope Francis. Full involvement in the process of social change, reaching out especially to the poor and the marginalised and committing to the work of justice, and enlightening the consciences of human beings with the message of fellowship and love are all objectives of the ABE.

Pope Francis has invited everyone who cares about the education of the young generation to sign a Global Pact to create a global change of mentality by educating young people to the fraternity to learn to overcome divisions and conflicts, and promote hospitality, justice and peace.

The ABE is encouraged that our selfless service and commitment in the apostolate of education has already begun ‘deepening the anthropological, communicative, cultural, economic, generational, interreligious, pedagogic and social dimension of this Global Pact’.

NB: The signing of the pact for Global Compact on Education took place on 15th October, 2020.

CISCE – A Future Perspective



Vanessa D'Cruz

“Develop a passion for learning, if you do, you will never cease to grow.” I was fortunate to meet an educationist who exudes tremendous passion in all that he does, Mr. Gerry Arathoon – Chief Executive and Secretary, Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CICSE), New Delhi. Mr. Arathoon was in Mumbai to review and explore the collaboration with the Government of Maharashtra and the BMC. He also met His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay, in this regard.

A driving force behind an environment-friendly (paperless) association with the CISCE, Mr. Gerry Arathoon speaks to **EduFOCUS** about education policies, learning outcomes and how the CISCE is helping students prepare for the future.

How is the Council for Indian School Certificate Examinations different from other boards? How is your pedagogy, techniques, curriculum design unique?

Firstly, I would like to point out that we believe in an environment-friendly method of functioning and, hence, have all our facilities online; right from registering the candidate, the affiliation process, the payment gateway, the answers, the mark sheets, results, etc. everything is online. Hence, you see that we are moving with times.



Fr. Norbert D'Souza (Principal, Holy Cross High School, Kurla), Ms. Vanessa D'Cruz (Reporter, **EduFOCUS**), His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Mr. Gerry Arathoon and Mr. Francis Joseph (SLN Global Network)



Mr. Francis Joseph (SLN Global Network), Mr. Gerry Arathoon, Mr. Aditya Thackeray (Cabinet Minister for Environment and Tourism, Govt. of Maharashtra) and Mr. Sainath Durge (Member, BMC Education Committee)

Mr. Arathoon completed his senior Cambridge in the early 70's. He followed this up with an Integrated course i.e. graduation + B.Ed (which is finding its way back into the system) from the Regional College of Education, Bhubaneshwar and then a post-graduation in English. In 1976, he started his career as a teacher at St Thomas' Boys' School, Kolkata where he taught for 23 years. In 1997, he was appointed the Principal of St. Thomas Church School, Howrah, West Bengal. He took over as the Deputy Secretary of the East Zone office and Management Skills Centre of the Council at Kolkata in 2002. Thereafter, he was transferred to the Head Office in Delhi in 2006 under the management of Mr. Neil O'Brien.

Where the curriculum is concerned, it is a very child-friendly curriculum. Our research team introduced a new curriculum from Pre-school to Std. VIII about 4 years ago which has been much appreciated. Our core strength is English. We stress on reading and communication and are proud of the fluency that our children possess in both speech and the written form. That doesn't mean we neglect the regional

languages. Mr. Aditya Thackeray, Honourable Minister of Tourism and Environment, Government of Maharashtra, is a fine example. He displays such confidence while speaking in English as well as his own mother tongue Marathi and I feel really proud that he is a by-product of the CISCE.

What is special about the CISCE is that we offer a basketful of subjects. The student need not choose a stream which is rigid rather he can opt for different subjects. For example, a Science student taking Physics and Mathematics can even opt for Psychology, Accounts or Commerce. We also exhibit great flexibility. We even allow the child to take the exam, if he/she wishes to, from a nursing home. We have even made arrangements in the past when one of our students was travelling abroad, representing the state for a sporting event, to take the exams in the country's embassy. Hence, the child isn't deprived and strikes a balance between work and play.

We also organise several training programmes for the teachers to keep themselves updated with the changing times. Since we are a flexible body, if the teachers are unable to visit our venue for the training sessions, we make it feasible for them to attend it in their own cities by sending our master trainers there.

Hence, you can see that the Board itself is very futuristic in nature.

Many of our readers would like to know if this Board is tough.

It is not tough. It is the way you approach the subject. Our syllabus has scope for itself. The teacher studies the scope and teaches the relevant content and portion as per the age group. For example, The Merchant of Venice can be taught at different levels – Stds. IX and X, Stds. XI and XII and then again at graduate and post-graduate level, understanding its scope. Hence, the training of teachers to this effect is very important. Students can avail of a lot of aid online. They can check past papers and the pupil's performance, the answers that were expected and what the students have written, the marking scheme, etc.... all good reference material for the students. Videos for various subjects for Stds. XI and XII are made available too. This puts the parents as well as the students at ease.

What about the preparation of students for competitive exams?

The CISCE does its bit, just like all the other boards, to meet the needs of the students to attempt competitive examinations. The mindset that one should join the CBSE to crack competitive exams is now overruled as the exams are now conducted by the National Testing Agency and not CBSE who used to conduct the examinations earlier.

Why should the ABE schools look at transitioning or opting for the CISCE Board?

We have had a long association with missionary schools across India and have them not only in the cities but also in the suburbs. Thanks to the priests and religious sisters, we have ICSE schools in Punjab where students are first-generation learners and we are very happy to have them on board.

The CISCE has been in existence for decades in India. Post-Independence, the first Prime Minister of India requested the Chairman, Mr. Frank Anthony, to open an English-medium board since there existed only CBSE and the medium of instruction was Hindi. So, the Cambridge was converted into a local examination that was ICSE and ISC.

What we offer:

1. We are an autonomous, private organisation.
2. It already has the flavour of an international board.
3. All students who complete the course are well-placed across the world in important portfolios.
4. The fees for the IB Board are much higher but the features are the same. It all depends on the child's performance.
5. We provide great flexibility in the choice of subjects as well as in the functioning.
6. We organise regular workshops for teachers which, in turn, benefit the child. Our students thus display great fluency in speaking and expression in writing.
7. Lastly, and most importantly, we are a child-friendly and management-friendly board. We are very accessible, thus making us a very viable option.

I was very humbled to meet with His Eminence Cardinal Gracias and apprise him about the functioning of CISCE.

What do you think of the BMC school transitioning to the CISCE Board?

I was extremely pleased to know about this venture of the BMC and thanks to Mr. Francis Joseph of SLN Global Network, I was able to meet Honourable Minister, Mr. Aditya Thackeray, and with Ms. Vandana Krishna (Additional Chief Secretary, Department of School Education and Sports, Government of Maharashtra) who recognise the Council and have requested me to review the curriculum and books of the SSC Board. I am honoured to be a part of their venture and I am looking forward to many more schools opting for the same.



Mr. Francis Joseph (SLN Global Network), Ms. Vandana Krishna (Additional Chief Secretary, Dept. of School Education and Sports, Govt. of Maharashtra) and Mr. Gerry Arathoon

What is the procedure for transitioning or opting for the CISCE Board?

The process is not very rigid. All you have to do is the following:

1. Procure a No-Objection Certificate from the Government.
2. Have the land papers in order. We need you to have a minimum of half an acre land.

3. Have a separate/ independent structure.
4. Start the affiliation process.

What is the strength of the CISCE board?

I am proud to say that we have more than 2,500 schools in India and overseas, namely in Dubai, Sharjah, Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand. I am overjoyed to let you know that we have our very first European school in Rome, Italy run by Indians. European education is expensive and not affordable by all Asians, hence the Council was approached. The advantage for Indians would be that if they ever wanted to return to India, their kids could be admitted in any of our schools here with ease.

What are the innovations and plans of the CISCE for the future?

We are a pan-India national private board. The Council would like to have a flavour of a foreign board or university. We are in collaborative talks with countries like United Kingdom, Australia, Finland and Singapore for a bridge course working within the framework of the National Education Policy. We want to reduce rote learning and move to a practical approach to learning.

“Gaining knowledge is the first step to wisdom, sharing it is the first step to humanity.” I was glad to meet Mr. Arathoon who was so generous with his time and helped us gain knowledge about the CISCE and its functioning. We wish him and his team all the very best in their dedication towards serving the nation’s children through high quality educational endeavours empowering them to contribute towards a humane, just and pluralistic society by creating exciting learning opportunities with a commitment to excellence.

(This article appeared in The Examiner dated 28th March, 2020)



Vanessa D'Cruz has been associated with education for the past 18 years and finds teaching to be a very enriching experience. She currently works as a Senior Co-ordinator at Rose Manor International School. She is happy to be a member of the **EduFOCUS** Editorial Team as it gives her a preview into the latest trends in the field of education, the lives of teachers and students and allows her to interact with different Intellectuals and Educationists who work to meet the challenges of an ever-advancing knowledge-based society and a dynamically changing environment.

Basic Skills in Counselling – A Course for ABE Teachers

Shalu Mehrotra



16th January, 2020 saw a batch of 42 teachers proudly receiving their certificates for successfully completing the 100-hour course in ‘Basic Skills in Counselling’. This is an ABE (Archdiocesan Board of Education) training programme which Prafula has been conducting for the past 15 years.

Prafula started this ‘Counsellor Teacher Course’, as it is lovingly called, way back in 2005 and, since then, it has trained 777 teachers from 133 ABE schools. On the day of the convocation ceremony, Fr. Godfrey D’Sa SDB, the Director of Prafula, took us down memory lane and described how this course started with the vision of transforming every school into a home where the environment becomes more child-friendly. In 2005, the then-Secretary of the ABE, Fr. Gregory Lobo, had this beautiful vision of making the school an oasis for every child. This

dream was further encouraged and supported by Fr. George Athaide, the Secretary of the ABE for the last 6 years.

On 16th January, 2020, the ‘beautiful’ convocation ceremony for the Batch of 2019 was held at St. Andrew’s Conference Hall, Bandra, where the course was held from June to November, 2019. The teachers of this batch made the programme special with their chosen theme – **RAINBOW!** It began with **Reverence** - lighting of the lamp by the dignitaries, Fr. Dennis Gonsalves, Fr. Godfrey D’Sa SDB, Fr. Magi Murzello, Ms. Shalu Mehrotra and Mrs. Rachna Jog. This was followed by **Aloha** – a welcome song sung by a group of teachers in perfect harmony. We then had **Invoking** God’s presence in the form of a well-synchronised prayer dance. The next letter of rainbow was represented by **Nostalgia** – a well-crafted PowerPoint presentation on the many



learnings from the course. **Blissful** was the manner in which the teachers felicitated the guests with hand-made cards and beautiful key chains. **Ode** to magical memories was the enriching experiences shared by 2 teachers of their journey through this course. And finally, **Wow** was the experience of receiving the certificates from the Chief Guest, Fr. Dennis Gonsalves, the present Secretary of the ABE.

A few quotes from the teachers' feedback – "I would call these 100 hours, a journey within. More than anything, this course has empowered me to understand feelings of others and, at the same time, scrutinise my own thought processes. It has helped

me to grow and become a better individual, teacher and mother." Another teacher said: "More than ever, our children today need our emotional support and understanding. This course has helped me accept and understand the variety of children I encounter in my all-inclusive classroom and be present for each of them."

Ms. Shalu Mehrotra, coordinator and facilitator of the course since its inception, shared a follow-up study conducted among teachers who had earlier completed the course. This study revealed that even after several years of completing the course, there was an attitudinal change in many teachers and they were



definitely more empathetic towards their students. As shared by one of the teachers in the follow-up study – “Nazariya hi badal jata hai (the entire perspective changes)”. Teachers begin to have a very different relationship with the children. The classroom environment improves. Teachers reported that they were also able to conduct sessions, when required, with children and help them with issues pertaining to relationships, stress, self-esteem, conflict with parents and peers, etc.

At this year’s convocation, we also had a few school principals witness their teachers proudly receiving their certificates. The principals too acknowledged

the important role these teachers were playing in the lives of the children especially those that needed the extra attention and care. Also present was Sr. Ann Henrietta who was the facilitator from inception to her retirement in 2017. Other faculty for the course were present too to congratulate the participants.

Fr. Dennis Gonsalves emphasised that training in counselling skills for teachers is the need of the hour and promised his total support to trainings such as this. The Counsellor Teacher Course aims to support the well-being of a child which is very much a part of Education!

As rightly said by Albert Einstein, “Intellectual growth should begin at birth and cease only at death”. We, as teachers, are called to be lifelong learners. So, the very reason that each one of the 42 teachers from ABE schools embarked upon this journey was to learn and to grow. And what a journey it has been! I would call these hours I learnt, a journey within. More than anything, it has empowered us to understand the feelings of the other person and, at the same time, scrutinise our own thought processes. It has helped us to grow and become better individuals, teachers and mothers; not forgetting the skills of counselling that we imbibed throughout the course.

The two spearheads of this course, Ms. Shalu Mehrotra and Mrs. Rachna Jog, are like the sails of a ship that direct the journey on the right way. Their personal touch and unconditional goodwill towards all the participants is what brings a completely new dynamic to this module. The content of the course, the specialist guest speakers taking sessions and Fr. Godfrey at the helm of organising everything are the best ingredients to create a world where the heart is given more importance than the head. In this world that is strife-ridden, we, as teachers and educators, are going out as rays of hope to the little children who are the future of the world.

I take this opportunity to thank all those connected to Prafula and to this course in every little way because you have dared to make a difference to our society. Special thanks to Fr. Magi and his team especially Mrs. Sarita Manchanda for making everything so comfortable and homely throughout these months at St. Andrew’s Conference Hall, Bandra.

THANK YOU !

Clare Victoria,
Our Lady Of Nazareth High School, Bhayandar



Ms. Shalu Mehrotra has been a psychotherapist for the last 24 years and has been associated with Prafula – Centre for Psychological Wellness, Andheri since 2001. Along with meeting clients for various issues like anxiety, search for identity, parenting, relationship issues, her passion is to inculcate emotional well-being in a preventive manner, which she does through her association with the Teacher Counsellor Course.

SHE-Links – Past, Present, Future

Vanessa D'Cruz

SHE-LINKS - PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

SHE-lympics



Friday, 6th March, 2020
Venue: St. Andrew High School quadrangle and Turf Park, Bandra (W)
4.30 pm onwards | Open to all

SHE-roes Conclave



Saturday, 7th March, 2020
Venue: St. Andrew's Conference Hall, St. Dominic Road, Bandra (W)
8 am onwards | Open to women only | Prior registration necessary

SHE-nanigans



Sunday, 8th March, 2020
Venue: St. Andrew High School quadrangle, Bandra (W)
6 pm onwards | Open to all

Presented by

Andrean Network of Dynamic and Inspired Educators (ANDIE), Grand Academic Portal (GAP) and Indian Association of Secretaries and Administrative Professionals (IASAP)



"Feminism isn't about making women strong. Women are already strong. It is about changing the way the world perceives that strength." – G. D. Anderson

To make an attempt to change this perception of a woman's strength, the Andrean Network of Dynamic and Inspired Educators (ANDIE), Grand Academic Portal (GAP) and Indian Association of Secretaries and Administrative Professionals (IASAP) partnered by St. Andrew's Centre for Philosophy and Performing Arts (SAPP) and the Women's Cell of St. Andrew Parish, Bandra proudly presented **SHE-Links – Past, Present, Future** on 6th, 7th and 8th March, 2020. The 3-day programme was beautifully planned and very well executed.

Just as the Bandra-Worli Sea Link connects Bandra to Worli, **SHE-links** aims to link the women of the present and future to 'she-roes' of the past who have overcome obstacles and have triumphed. It is important to raise awareness about the issues they have faced





(environmental issues, gender discrimination, domestic violence, human trafficking, honour killings, etc.) as well as embrace the spirit of these women who carry on despite the odds. The Project, with the tagline 'Built to Inspire', was inaugurated by Bishop Barthol Barretto on 8th March, 2018 at St. Andrew Church, Bandra (West).

On Day 1 (Friday, 6th March), we had the **SHE-lympics** organised. 13-member all-girls' teams (the future of women) from schools affiliated to the Archdiocesan Board of Education (ABE) participated in a fun evening of tele-games spread across St. Andrew High School quadrangle and St. Andrew's Turf Park from 5 pm onwards. The new basketball court (on the School quadrangle), conceptualised



and designed by Adidas and curated by a Delhi-based artist, was transformed with an innovative typographic design that embedded the message of equality '*Girls = Boys*' and '*Sport doesn't care*' and was inaugurated by Bishop Barthol Barretto. The brain behind the games, Ms. Suzie D'Silva, was also the compere for the evening and brought the whole crowd alive as she took the teams and their mascots dancing through the quadrangle. The mascots, who were teachers or the students' parents, presented their perception of a woman. The entire place looked colourful and the crowd danced to the foot-tapping music of DJ Delon D'Souza. The girls enjoyed themselves and gave it their best. Apostolic Carmel High





School, Bandra (West) was the winner for the day. St Anne's High School, Bandra (West) was the first runner-up while Auxilium Convent High School, Bandra (West) won second runner-up. The Auxilium team was also the winner of the 'Best Mascot'. The teams were awarded trophies, cash prizes as well as certificates and tons of give-aways that were sponsored by **ColorBar**, our gifting partner for all 3 days. The highlight of the day was the smile on the faces of every participant who left with her hands filled with a goodie bag and a snack box.

The **SHE-roes Conclave** on Day 2 (Saturday, 7th March) brought together women from different walks of life and different strata of society who have fought or continue to fight for change in the status quo of women. We had a room filled with women across different age groups who were present to witness

the she-roes of the present, past and the future. It was amazing to watch the young and budding future - Ms. Licypriya Kangujam, an 8-year old social activist who spoke with such confidence on being instruments of climate change, Ms. Zen Sadavarte – a 12-year old who was presented a National Bravery Award by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for saving the lives of 17 people, including her parents, when her building caught fire in August 2018. She is well-read and very vocal with her opinions concerning various social causes. She wants to be a lawyer representing India at the International Court of Justice. We also had Captain Keithair Misquitta, one of the first women pilots to circumnavigate the globe in an ultra-light motor glider. She wants the number of Indian women pilots to be equal to that of men, she also advised aspiring female pilots about the hard work that needs to go into getting those three stripes. We





wish our '*hope of the future*' all the very best in their endeavours to make a change.

In the next segment, we had our present she-roes: Dr. Snehal Pinto – Director, Ryan International Group



of Institutions, Dr. Uma Rele – Principal, Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya, Ms. Anna Bredemeyer – India's 'original' supermodel, Dr. Jasmine Gujarathi – Ayurveda doctor and advocate for women's health issues and Ms. Shibani Sachdeva – Director



of Empower India, Art of Living teacher and a sailing champion. These powerful women shared their experiences about making their stance in this challenging world. There was not a dry eye in the room as Dr. Pinto spoke about her passion as an educator. Ms. Bredemeyer had the audience in splits of laughter as she took them through her journey as a supermodel while Ms. Sachdeva gave the audience a 3-minute taste of a meditation technique. One could feel the difference instantaneously.



Our last segment showcased *'the glory of the past'*; our she-ros who with their vast experience have laid a foundation for our present and future superwomen. We had Dr. (Maj.) Anuradha – India's first lady army officer to drive and fire from Arjun tank and the Managing Trustee of Aasthagram Trust, an NGO for inclusive education among tribal children in Madhya Pradesh who was present along with a few children from the school, Dr. Kanak Rele – a Padmashri recipient, Founder-Director of Nalanda Dance Research Centre and Founder-Principal of Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya in Mumbai, Ms. Zelma Lazarus, the Founder-Director and Chief Executive Officer of Impact India which started the Lifeline Express project, a special rake of 5 railway coaches specially adapted to serve as a mobile hospital, and thus reach anywhere on the railway map of India and Dr. Ketna Mehta – a paraplegic because of a paragliding accident and Founder-Trustee of Nina Foundation, an NGO involved in rehabilitating friends with spinal cord injuries. These stalwarts shared their experiences and their struggles to get to where they are today.



The Conclave took place at St. Andrew's Conference Hall. It was a great experience for all those who attended as they got to hear these wonderful women speak and also interact with them at the end of each session. The participants were treated to a sumptuous meal and exciting takeaways from Phoenix MarketCity, Kurla as well as a participation certificate.

Sunday, 8th March was International Women's Day and the final day of SHE-links. **SHE-nanigans** was an evening of masti and entertainment focused on the celebration of womanhood. The venue – St. Andrew High School quadrangle was lit up with bright lights and colourful stalls wherein the women showcased their talents by selling their creations – food, jewellery, clothing, etc. The evening opened up with a few women representatives releasing the balloons and Sr. Suchitra Furtado AC, Principal, Apostolic Carmel High School declaring it open. There was much entertainment lined up for the evening thanks to our



entertainment partner – Infrared who got the crowd rolling with its talented performers. Ms. Daniella Gomes got the crowd tapping to a fitness mode with a power packed Zumba session. We were also entertained by some professional dancers who mesmerised us with their performances. Attractive prizes were won by the crowd. For those who witnessed the dhol and dance, the music and the masti, it was an evening well-spent.

Even though a woman is a paradox, she is a gradual paradox. Just like the waxing and waning of the moon – a constant process of change – she plays multiple roles in life; keeps shedding one skin for another.

In the season of fall, she stands leafless. In the spring, the birds lay their nest in her arms of shade and care. From tender love care to standing upright with all her might, she endures it all. She grows like the tree of life; upwards as well as downwards, watching the seasons change and becoming wiser. Going through the norms in life, burning and bruised, she rises like a phoenix from the ashes.

Then who is this woman really? Is she the one who nurtures a child for 9 months in her belly, or the one who drives down the road with a carton of books for children not her own, or the one who has given her life in the service of God, or the one who waits patiently for her husband to return home? Is she the one who works 24x7 in front of a screen making presentations, or is she the one who awaits Prince Charming, or who no longer believes in Cinderella's fairy tale and rides her own horse? Only she knows who she really is.

She is Satyavati, she is Shabari, she is Sita as well as Draupadi, she is Mariam and Menaka, she is Holika as well as Hidamba, she is the mother of Moses and wife of Buddha, she is Athena and Ayesha – the prophet's daughter. She is ever-changing, accommodating and breaking barriers while flowing like an eternal river.

This painting is an attempt to look for that woman – the only person who knows who she really is.

Kudos to Fr. Magi Murzello and his team for putting up this wonderful 3-day event, Glenn Dodd for capturing the beautiful moments of the events, DJ Delon D'Souza and all the women who worked behind the scenes to make the event a grand success.



**An artistic attempt by Dr. Omkar Bhatkar
SHE-links 2020**

SHE-lympics, an evening of tele-games, invited teams from all over Mumbai with 13 participants (4 from Primary, 8 from Secondary section and 1 mascot) to let the girl students showcase their nimble athletic skills. We had decided **Moana** (Disney character), a vibrant, tenacious and optimistic young lady, would be our mascot and, though initially hesitant, I relented to dress as the team mascot. On our arrival, we were amazed at the extraordinary turnout. Stepping into a familiar surrounding brought back memories of almost 2 decades ago where a young me used to scuttle around as a student in the adjacent St. Andrew's College building.



Though it was a warm sultry day, it did little to dampen the spirits of the excited participants. All one could see around was a sea of gleeful painted faces, colourful flags and fancy costumes. After being issued groups, group co-ordinator and instructions, we headed out to display our talent as a group in form of a team impromptu dance and march. This was one of the best moments for me as I juggled around my oar prop hoping not to knock off the team captain and other participants in a desperate attempt to win the prize for the Best Team March. Though the attempt was in vain, I had loads of fun swaying to the music. After all the teams finished their customary team march, we walked to the newly-built hockey turf for the games to begin.

It began with a game testing the Group A participants' nimbleness and endurance by making them balance on bricks to a game testing the strength of Group B participants where they had to fan paper cut-outs of fish to the finish line. As the evening progressed, the games became more fun and challenging. Unfortunately, though we stood 3rd in our Group, we did not make it to the semis. The games were well-thought, unique and well-executed. The evening was a whole lot of fun and a great time to bond with students and teachers from other schools. Though rivals at the games, we cheered and applauded for each other to boost our participants' confidence. The SHE-lympics did achieve what it set out to do – 'link'. It linked us all – students, teachers, young and old no matter which part of Mumbai we hailed from or what educational board we followed or if we were winners or runners-up. It was one rewarding evening with amazing gifts from Colorbar for all participants.

This was an unique experience for me in many ways; one, both my daughters were participants and I their team mascot; two, meeting Fr. Magi Murzello who served as a young priest in Our Lady of Immaculate Conception parish, Borivali (West) when I was a teen and Bishop Barthol who was Parish Priest at the same parish a few years ago; then, of course, the nostalgic memories of my college days at St. Andrew's; and lastly, but the best, was the exciting magical evening we had at SHE-lympics 2020. Till next time... Cheers!

Ms. Nisha Lobo,
Mascot – Team Marians,
Mary Immaculate Girls' High School, Borivali (West)

Children's Theatre Festival 2020: Cherishing the Beams of Sunlight from the Infinite and Eternal



Ashmita Sunil



Children are the living messages we send to a time we will never see. In the early years, children's theatre was all about enacting fairy tales and dressing children up. But now, the subjects have matured to issues like gender stereotypes, importance of arts and savouring solitude without suffering loneliness. Childhood is the golden period of life, the first stage of living which we enjoy however we like. It always brings a smile on our face when we think of it. To relive those memories, to cherish all the moments, St. Andrew's Centre for Philosophy and Performing Arts (SAPP) in association with Andean Network of Dynamic and Inspired Educators (ANDIE) brought together local artists and artistes working in the field of children's literature through illustrative books, storytelling, theatre, and object theatre. It focused on diversity ranging from language to art forms and socio-economic spheres. "I wanted to bring together theatre performances based on children's literature, so that we bring meaningful content for children which is not only entertainment-based, rather a form of edutainment", says Dr. Omkar Bhatkar, the director and curator of the Festival.



The Festival included 6 theatre performances and 3 workshops. While all the workshops were conducted in St. Andrew's Studio, the plays were performed at St. Andrew's Conference Hall; except the two productions of Metamorphosis Theatre Inc. which were staged at SAPP. Colourful paper crafts, fairy lights, event posters, festival banners, helium balloons, paper lanterns and even a dummy car and scooter ornamented with images of cartoon characters and vibrant balloons welcomed attendees to the venue. Volunteers wore hats accessorised with paper leaves, flowers and small twigs. Bright yellow benches comprised the seating for children. A combination of many rich and vivid objects pleased the aesthetic sense of the audience.

Children's Theatre Festival marked its position with its beautifully fabricated logo. The logo portrayed a juvenile swan, white in colour, symbolising purity and innocence as that of a child. It made the audience as well as the performers relate to spiritual evolution. A swan's ability to fly makes it reminiscent of angels. The pencil held in its beak depicted the flight of literature, history, culture and narratives.

The Festival opened on 23rd February, 2020 with the staging of ‘She No Princess, He No Hero’, a play directed by Dr. Omkar Bhatkar and presented by Metamorphosis Theatre Inc. The translated work of Magali Mougel was an intimate story told through the voices of 2 children who rebel against gender stereotypes and societal expectations. After the performance, the audience was asked to paint the ‘Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog’, a painting depicting a lone person looking out at an inhospitable expanse demonstrating the sublimity of nature. The children as well as a few adults took the initiative to express themselves as a wanderer, exploring and creating their own perspective of life. The tickets for the show were creatively designed with quotes and illustrations related to gender and its stereotypes. One of the tickets read, “If you don’t have a seat at the table, you’re probably on the menu”. The audience clicked pictures with their tickets and was deeply mesmerised with the setting of the play.

from Ruskin Bond’s ‘The Blue Umbrella’, was staged. The brilliantly-performed act revolved around one umbrella with human attributes. It conveyed the message of “letting go” through the performance.



Children experienced an amalgamation of emotions – joy, surprise, wonder, empathy – which kept them rapt for an hour. The parents were all praise for the play as they watched their little ones engrossed in the creative process during and after the play. “There was laughter gurgling as the magic of the mysterious umbrella unfolded. Though simple in its text, it was profound in the levels of learning,” said a parent from the audience.

On 24th February, Day 2 of the Festival, Frederic Simon conducted a workshop on paper theatre – ‘Théâtre De Papier’, a form of miniature theatre that dates back to the early-19th century in Europe. The workshop was open to all those enthusiastic about paper, theatre, toys and stories.

Day 3, 29th February, started with an interactive storytelling workshop – ‘I Need To Pee’, carried out by Neha Singh, a Mumbai-based theatre practitioner, author and activist. She has authored 3 children’s books, one of them being ‘I Need To Pee’.



That evening, Secret Passages, a Mumbai-based theatre and storytelling group which believes imagination to be more powerful than knowledge, presented a play performance in Hindi. Directed by Geetanjali Kaul, ‘Binya Ki Chatri’, an adaptation





The workshop spoke about taboos. “It was conducted in a lively and engaging manner. My daughter got to learn a lot and I would definitely recommend this workshop to other parents and children,” said one of the parents attending with her daughter.

The next event scheduled for the day was a puppet and shadow theatre – ‘Vikram and Betal’, a Magical Whispers presentation directed by Madhuri Kale. It narrated the spooky tale using handcrafted and shadow puppets. This energetic presentation showcased a life-sized puppet, dance and drama created especially for the young audience. The team of Magical Whispers believes in taking children into a magical world of stories and awakening their creative skills through creative puppets and recycled art.

The play, ‘Captain Coconut and the Case of the Missing Bananas’, was presented by Gillo Repertory, marking an end to the third day of the Festival. Pulling the strings in the most beautiful manner, Shaili Sathyu, the director and scriptwriter of the play, brought alive Anushka Ravishankar’s ‘Captain

Coconut’, a book published in 2015. The play hit the sweet spot for its intended audience. Quirky, nonsensical and fun, the play gave way to absurdist humour. The math used throughout the story added another dimension. Children enjoyed helping Captain Coconut through the slippery trail of peels and numbers. “We look forward to create and contribute towards a body of work that enriches and enlivens children and young people all over the world,” said Shaili, the artist director of Gillo Repertory.

Shaili Sathyu also conducted a workshop for parents on Day 4 (1st March) on how to plan an arts calendar for their child. “Process art is more important than product. The focus should be on open-ended, process-driven projects rather than projects that have a specific outcome in mind. Materials should be presented as an invitation to create with no particular end in mind. Let the child explore the materials in whichever way he or she wants,” she said. At the workshop, the participants were asked to share their childhood cultural experiences through theatre, which included scribbling on the walls, making paper

boats, dancing in rain and dressing up dolls. Shaili also introduced parents to the Charter of Children's Rights to Art and Culture adopted by the UN General Assembly which states 18 principles in 27 languages explaining the right to experience and enjoy the physical and mental spaces that art and culture can offer children.

The next event, Goshtrang, a Quest presentation directed by Geetanjali Kulkarni and Chinmay Kelkar,

presented a set of stories adapted from diverse literature in multilingual formats. Quest is a team of inspired professionals committed to enhancing the quality of education. They aim to enrich the learning experience of underserved children through the professional development of teachers and educators. "We design learning experiences that inspire and empower educators and learners alike," said director Preeti Shenoy. Stories like 'Ka Ka Kumari', 'Kapilene Ghetla Zhoka', 'Vinu Lagali Aiji',



‘Mul Saarya Gaavacha’ and others written by authors including Jane Kowen Fletcher and Mahasweta Devi were staged as part of Goshtarang which largely revolved around the themes of curiosity, acceptance and overcoming fears. The intention of Quest is to take books to children through theatrical performances of children’s stories by trained artists with the aim of creating a ‘culture of reading’. “We have done shows before in Mumbai, Pune and some other cities. Of course, having a show at CTF was a good opportunity to come and perform for a different audience all together,” said Geetanjali, Project Head of Goshtarang.

The closing of Children’s Theatre Festival 2020 was marked by the staging of ‘Bertolt’, a play performance presented by SAPP and Metamorphosis Theatre Inc. Adapted from the book by the same name by Jacques Goldstyn, the story revolves around love, loss, sorrow and acceptance. Directed and adapted to stage by Dr. Omkar Bhatkar, the play uses a brief poetic narration and movements. The stage was designed in a T-shape with the audience on either side to create an intimate space between the actors and the audience. Dry leaves and wood logs scattered in a specific manner across the stage boundaries along with the audio-visual effects gave life to the illusionary world created by the artistes. Breaking the fourth wall existing between the actors on stage and the audience on their seats, the immersive theatre production blurred the lines of reality and fiction. The artists recreated the experience of childhood days by enacting the role of children, trees, bees and even animals. “Usually, when we go for a theatre performance, we see the actors perform on stage, enjoy the show and come back home having learnt something new. But, Bertolt consumed the audience through every aspect of it. We could feel the actors, their emotions, and the environment. It wasn’t a show, it was an experience. An experience worth living and loving,” said a mother who came with her child to see the performance. With no dialogues, the act was for all ages as it is believed that grown-ups still struggle to let some things go. When life does not turn out the way we hope for, plan or expect it to be, we feel extremely disappointed. Brilliantly put up,



Bertolt was a story that taught us to accept the changes in life and believe in ourselves. To give an in-depth insight to the beautiful childhood memories, colourful mittens were given along with the tickets to every individual in the audience. “Do we have to pay a price for being different or labelled as different?” is the question that drove the director to direct this play with such intense insight.

The 4-day festival created a new definition of the world of art, craft and literature. It brought diverse theatre groups together and, if not anything else, the audience indeed took home ideas to ponder upon. “I curated plays which were either based on classic, contemporary, regional or world literature, for children,” says the Festival director, Dr. Omkar Bhatkar. The Children’s Theatre Festival in its first year stood out with its uniqueness and idiosyncrasy. SAPP and ANDIE hope to make this an annual event that all can look forward to.



Ashmita Sunil is a media highbrow who believes in simplicity. For her, art is a continuous learning process. Practicing classical dance for 16 years, she loves to express herself through words, theatre and, of course, dance. She is passionate about exploring various shades of life and living.



Auxilium Bandra Bags Greenest School Award

Yolanda Ferreira

On 29th February, 2020, **Auxilium Convent High School, Bandra (West)** won the Greenest School Award 2020 along with a cash prize of Rs. 1,00,000. The Green Schools Campaign by Greenline is an exciting hands-on programme, open to all schools in Mumbai, that educates children on their responsibility towards the environment and offers them the opportunity to be involved in relevant environmental projects. Currently, 50 schools participate in this campaign.



The topic for the year 2020 was 'Breathe Free'. The activities for the year were carried out by the students of the Eco Club under the guidance of Mrs. Yolanda Ferreira and Sr. Judy Gaikwad.

- These students, from Std. V to X, went around the School identifying different signs of indoor air pollutants like leaking taps, moles in the wall, cobwebs and construction work.
- Tr. Yolanda explained air pollutants and their causes.
- Students wrote letters to their respective housing societies to repair and conduct maintenance of the affected parts.
- They also went to many neighbouring societies to explain Air Spector (pollutants and its effects on human health). The outcome was that the students learnt about various pollutants at home and school.
- Students learnt about phytoremediation, importance of these plant functions and potting saplings.
- Tr. Yolanda Ferreira, along with Sr. Judy Gaikwad and students, conducted a session with DCB Bank and had a hand-on experience of explaining indoor air pollutants and the importance of growing indoor plants.
- The Secondary students also took part in a rally at Carter Road on climate crisis.
- Our students, along with students from different

colleges and important dignitaries from Bandra dealing with climate change, organised a rally at Bandra Reclamation on climate crisis. Our school featured on many TV channels for the same.

- On 8th December, 2019 at 6.30 am, our students participated in the 'Children's Earth Walkathon' starting from Bandra Fort to the end of Bandstand and back. Our School received the 'Most Active School Award'.
- Students made a human chain at Carter Road which started at Joggers' Park and ended at the far end of Carter Road. It was an attraction for early morning joggers. Environmentalists also joined in the human chain.
- The School organised an eco-friendly Diwali Dhamaka and emphasis was on 'breathe free' and 'climate crisis'.
- The students were asked to adopt trees which were uncared for and they started nurturing them. While tree mapping, their knowledge about trees and the sense of responsibility and ownership towards them increased.
- For their school, students also designed and created signages about making eco-friendly choices.
- The students of the Eco Club sat in groups and put down actions that one had to take to make the School campus greener and more sustainable. The green mandate was then written on a chart paper and framed on the noticeboard.

- The teacher took the students to the petrol pump so that they could understand how PUC checks were done on vehicles.
- Students grew outdoor plants and vegetables on the School premises. Vegetables like celery, broccoli, spinach, chillies, ridge gourd, cucumber, white chillies, mango, bore, carrot, beetroot, sabja, rosemary, mint and coriander were grown on the terrace garden.
- Students painted the compound wall with messages on the environment and to grow more trees.
- They also performed a mime on saving our Mother Earth.



All these activities and more were achieved through the enthusiasm and efforts of our teachers, Mrs. Yolanda Ferreira and Sr. Judy Gaikwad, and the support and cooperation of our Principal, Sr. Shiny Alphonse, and our Manager, Sr. Leema Rose Joseph.



India Budget Private School Rankings 2020

On 26th February, 2020, **Auxilium Convent High School, Bandra (West)** was awarded 8th Rank in Mumbai, 12th Rank in the State of Maharashtra and 61st Rank in India during the India Budget Private School Rankings 2020 Awards. Budget Private Schools (BPS) are low-priced affordable primary-secondary schools that offer affordable education to low-income households. “The Centre for Civil Society, Delhi estimates the number of BPS at 400,000 with staggering aggregate enrolment of 60 million children... BPS promoters driven by enlightened self-interest and philanthropy are rendering valuable public service by providing aspirational lower, middle and organised working-class households affordable alternative school education at all price points,” said Dilip Thakore, Publisher/Editor of EducationWorld.

A specially constituted sample database of 2,458 respondents, comprising 2,115 parents with children in BPS and 343 BPS principals and teachers were interviewed to rate 300 BPS in 143 cities and towns countrywide on 11 parameters of school excellence (competence of faculty, academic reputation, co-curricular education, sports education, value for money, leadership, etc.)

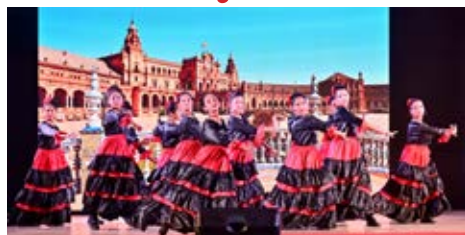
Yolanda Ferreira





Around the World in 80 Days - The Musical Journey

Edina Mascarenhas



As part of their annual day celebrations, **Convent Girls' High School, Prabhadevi** presented Jules Verne's classic story of one of the greatest adventures of all time, 'Around the World in 80 Days'. Trained by their schoolteachers, the students were outstanding in their performance as they portrayed the fearless adventurer Phileas Fogg, his faithful manservant Passepartout, the Indian princess Aouda and detective Fix who circumnavigate the globe.

The story goes back to the year 1872. Great care was taken to depict the songs and folk dances with the costumes of that time period. The dances, choreographed by Mr. Diago Pereira, enthralled the audience. The London Morris dance, Spanish Flamenco dance, Egyptian dance, Chinese Dragon dance with gymnastics, Japanese Fan dance and the Indian Koli and Kali dance left the audience spellbound. LED screens with pictures and videos accompanied the enactment and allowed the audience the grand experience of travel during the Steam Age with the charm of old steamers and steam engines, the hot air balloon, the stampeding elephants and even the Wild West battle. The musical ended with a grand Christmas finale performed by the students with aplomb. Almost 400 students of the Primary and Secondary section participated in the musical. The entire staff worked as a team under the guidance of



Principal Sr. Asha Almeida to make the musical a grand success.

It was a learning experience for the students and their talents of acting, singing and dancing were brought out to the fullest. Moreover, the children enjoyed participating in the musical which was staged for 2 continuous days for the Primary and Secondary parents. The message of the musical 'Take up challenges: You never know what good experiences you may encounter or what opportunities you may lose by continuing to stay in your comfort zone' was apt for students embarking on their life's journey.

The musical left the audience spellbound and was also well appreciated by our Chief Guest Fr. Barthol Machado, Parish Priest, Our Lady of Salvation Church, Dadar.



Bhayandar School wins Interschool Choral Singing Competition

Ellie Victoria(Participant)

Students from Stds. VI to X of **Our Lady of Nazareth High School, Bhayandar** competed against 15 other schools in 'Gloria in Excelsis Deo', an interschool carol singing competition hosted by St. George High School, Malad (East), to emerge winners. The Competition was held on 11th December, 2019. Apart from a trophy, the students also won a cash prize of Rs. 30,000. The Choir was trained by Tr. Clare Victoria and costumes were designed by Mrs. Smita D'Souza. It was indeed a great experience for all the students participating and they were thrilled to bring home the trophy.



Go Green with Clean Environment

Melinda Manorkar

St. Bonaventure High School, Madh arranged a Go Green drive by planting trees and cleaning the beach at Madh Island. Our environment improves when we plan and grow trees. A clean environment also brings about social change. With the help of the Management, the staff and students of our school are focusing on the value of growing plants and keeping the environment clean. The Std. X students planted saplings in the School compound.

It is wisely said that cleanliness is next to godliness. Every human being needs water to keep our environment clean and thus the students also chose to clean the beach. With the help of the teachers, both the activities were done very well and with much enthusiasm on the part of the students.





Healthy Eating Habits

Sarena Antony (Student)

It was during late-November 2018 that I and a bunch of other students were approached by one of our teachers about a certain 'I CAN' Challenge. Hearing about it for the very first time, it did manage to pique my interest and after reading further about the several independent projects undertaken through this challenge by students, I was left astonished and, dare I say, with an uncontrollable urge and zeal to be one of those little masterminds! But, at the same time, I couldn't help but wonder whether this confused group of students sitting in the library in utter silence (including myself) would really be gutsy and determined enough to pull off something like this in such a short amount of time and without any prior experience. Nevertheless, we, at **St. John the Evangelist High School, Marol**, formed a super squad of 5 members as per the rules and set off on what can be called a journey that exposed to each one of us our own unique idea of change all the while working as a team.



there it was – the opportunity of a lifetime right at my doorstep. Knowing that the next academic year would be my final year and that I wouldn't be able to engage myself in an experience as innovative and impactful, I decided to give it my best shot no matter what.

We had several gruelling meetings to finalise an issue to come to grips with and at last we all agreed to tackle 'Canteen hygiene and overcrowding' as part of our plan. No issue is too small if it has a negative impact on a child's schooling experience as a whole. We knew exactly how severe the crowding issue at the canteen was as incidents of injury and cases of having to leave empty-handed from the canteen due to running out of time were rather frequent. We set up barricades to maintain order and discipline, but the time was insufficient and not all could get their eatables. We had to abandon tackling this issue.

Following this, we noticed that children were consuming a heavy amount of oily, unhealthy food which had a high content of fats and salt. Some of the food items sold in the canteen contained food colour which, if consumed on a daily basis, could have adverse effects on a child's health. We also voiced our concerns about the extremely unhealthy menu of the School canteen. If this situation were to be left unaddressed, we thought of how it could directly start affecting the child's health and, at the same time, their interest and fondness for school.



Starting unsteady and fickle, we began to receive immense support from our fellow students in the form of volunteers once news broke that our school was participating for the first time in something as large scale as the 'I Can' challenge. I was now more confident than ever; I was reminded of the golden words I keep telling myself time and again: "A year from now you'll wish you had started today." And



We then came up with the idea of encouraging the students to bring homecooked food. To achieve better results, we decided to close down the canteen for a week. During this period, teachers were instructed to appoint a 'row leader' who was responsible for checking the student's tiffin in the morning and if anyone were to be found with junk food, their tiffin was confiscated. After which we specially saw to it that these students were provided with the healthy and tasty mid-day meal instead. And this wasn't all; we also held a meeting with parents in which every member of the Squad spoke diligently on the ill-effects of unhealthy food and why it was so important to put children on a wholesome and nutritious diet bearing in mind today's lifestyle. And with this, we managed to strike a responsive chord with them as a majority agreed with our motives and plan of action.



On the re-opening of the canteen, a new menu was announced which included items such as chapati and kheema, frankie, pulao among other delights. With the constant support of the School and parents, our team has successfully established a healthy food system. Students now continue to carry only homecooked food and take fair interest in buying the new items sold at the canteen. We did not stop with just our own school but went around promoting and sharing the idea in our neighbouring schools (like Marol Education Academy, St. Lawrence High School).



Finally, came the time when we put together the video which turned out to be quite intense a process but, at the same time, enjoyable. Overall, it has been my greatest pleasure to have participated in something so experimental but fulfilling. Although our challenge may not have been as revolutionary as the ones I'd read about in the library that day, I'm really content knowing that I've contributed to making school life more wholesome than troublesome for students.



Take Your Candle and Light Up the World

Andrea Fernandes



As the SSC students are on the threshold of a new phase in their life, they are called to be beacons of light. **St. John the Evangelist High School, Marol** bid adieu to their batch of SSC students on 31st January, 2020. It was a morning of mixed emotions for all present in the School hall. The day was a fiesta devoted to the years spent together with friends and teachers to reminisce joyous moments.

It was a beautiful morning as the students were dressed in their traditional finery. The young girls were graceful in their coloured saris and Indo-western outfits, and the boys carried themselves like true gentlemen looking smart as ever in their sherwanis and suits.

The event began with a prayer, held in the Church which housed 227 students, and a pep-talk by the Manager, Fr. Clement DeLima. At the end of the prayer, each student was blessed not only by their class teacher but also by the Manager and Principal, Sr. Josefina Albuquerque RJM. They were led into the hall where the programme commenced. It was a fun-filled event with dances by Std. IX, beat-boxing and the amusing sight of students running and skidding towards the compere in order to win spot prizes sending the teachers and the rest of the students into fits of laughter. Soon, it was time to hand over the Best Student of the Year to those who were deserving of the award.

The Head Boy and Head Girl of the School enthralled the audience with their speech which received a round of applause. The students of Std. IX, with the help of the teaching and non-teaching staff, organised the farewell party with great enthusiasm and, of course, endeavoured to leave a trail of nostalgia behind for the tenth graders.



Shrink Plastic, Make it Less Drastic

Alien Rodrigues

Whilst India is striving to become a plastic-free country, at **St. Xavier's High School and Junior College, Vile Parle (West)**, the School Nature Club joined their steady hands with a Mumbai-based NGO, Mumbai Sustainability Centre (MSC), to desist from plastic reaching the city's dumping grounds and landfills. Our club coordinator, Ms. Gretta Machado, along with her team and responsible students initiated an eco-project plan to help segregate plastic waste and to dispose of it in a responsible manner by recycling it or utilising it as a resource. The activities were multi-layered plastic collection, Tetra Pak collection and plastic collection.

The waste amassed at school was sent to 'The Safai Bank of India' who aid in this initiative. From there, it is sent to recycling companies that have collaborated with the Bank. The recycling companies deliver the non-recyclable plastic waste to cement companies to burn these wrappers in the cement kiln in a controlled environment at a temperature greater than 1500 degrees Celsius. This method reduces the chances of air pollution, as at such high temperature, plastic loses its hydrocarbons and other impurities leaving no residues behind.

Our school collected approximately 12,000 plastic wrappers between November, 2019 and January, 2020. The Tetra Pak collection is in progress and the students are determined to accumulate a copious amount so that garden benches could be made from these. The entire team have continued to actively participate in collecting plastic in order to make India a plastic-free community.





Events at St. Jude's High School, JariMari

Rowena D'Souza



Sports day celebrations: Sports day was celebrated on 30th November, 2019. It commenced with the march past of 4 houses with the captains displaying their messages on their banners. This was followed by the sporting events.



Christmas day celebrations and prize distribution day: Christmas was celebrated on 20th December, 2019. The tableau was enacted and the air was filled with good tidings and cheer as the students sang beautiful carols in 3 languages – English, Hindi and Marathi. A crib competition was also held. Those who excelled in various subjects and activities received their prizes for the previous academic year. Indeed, it was a memorable day.

Republic day celebrations: The day was celebrated with great pride on 26th January, 2020 itself. The MCC Judean marched to mark this historic day. The little Judeans dressed as our historical leaders and delivered speeches.





Std. X farewell: The farewell was held on 1st February, 2020. The students of Std. IX and staff bid the students farewell. A special programme of prayer, plays, songs and refreshment was organised. It concluded with the selection of Judean King and Queen. The Head Girl delivered a speech praising her Alma Mater.



Honours day: The Education Department (L Ward) organised Honours Day on 5th February, 2020. A primary student, Miss Shreenithi, received an award for the recitation competition and the Headteacher, Mrs. Sharon Fernandes, was awarded with a trophy for her dedicated service of 32 years.



“Every New Beginning Comes from Some Other Beginning’s End...”

Pearl Frias

St. Mary’s High School and Junior College, Kalina marked the end of 100 glorious years with a spectacular closing ceremony held on 18th January, 2020. In keeping with the values and traditions of this great institution of seeking the Almighty’s blessings before commencing any programme, the festivities began with a Eucharistic celebration at 11 am which was preceded with a procession of our patroness, Mother Mary. The procession included management, staff, students, ex-staff and ex-students who also joined in the Eucharistic celebration. We were fortunate to have more than 10 priests which included our Parish Priest and Manager, priests of the house, ex-principals, ex-managers and ex-assistants to concelebrate the Eucharist. After the Eucharistic celebration, the guests proceeded to the College hall for lunch.



As the rays of the sun began to fade on the portals of St. Mary’s, the staff and students began gearing up for the final ceremony marking the end of a year of festivities and celebrations. To make the evening even more auspicious, the event was blessed and graced with the presence of His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias

who was the Chief Guest. As the drums began to beat and the bugle trilled, disciplined and rhythmic footsteps filled the air with excitement. The Chief Guest, guests of honour, Manager, Principal, and ex-staff proceeded to the School ground along with the band. After the guests were seated and welcomed by the comperes for the day, Mrs. Brenda Fernandes – our very own teacher from the High School – and our students, Master Johanan Lobo and Master Yohaán Rodrigues, the School anthem echoed and every heart present there was filled with pride to be a part of this great institution. As all great things begin with invoking God’s blessings, the students of the primary section gracefully moved to the hymn ‘I Thank God for His Love’



and brought a sense of serenity and heavenly bliss. This was followed by our tiny Marian tots from the Kindergarten who welcomed the guests with their mind-blowing performance, singing songs that complemented the theme which enthralled and brought a smile to everyone present. The Chief Guest,

His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, shared his pearls of wisdom highlighting the importance of being humane, compassionate and benevolent.

A special segment was held to congratulate our Silver Jubilarians who reached a milestone in dedicated service to this institution. They were felicitated by our Chief Guest, Manager and Principal for their commendable work. The highlight of the day was the performance by the entire staff – teaching



and non-teaching – to the Centennial theme song as they gracefully swayed in perfect harmony and synchronisation to the beats of the music. With enthusiasm and energy, all clad in blue, the staff truly demonstrated that in unity there is strength, manifesting the words of the author Helen Keller: “Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much”. After this, the former managers, principals, vice-principals and teachers who served this institution in the past were thanked and felicitated for their loyalty and commitment. The Centennial magazine, encompassing all the memories and history of 100 years was unveiled by His Eminence along with Manager Fr. Rui Comelo and Principal Mrs. Jasmine Lobo.

The much-awaited musical ‘The Power of Love’ was an in-house production right from the script to the lyrics and music to stage direction and production. It captivated the crowd with foot-tapping music and songs. Students right from Std. I to Std. XI participated in it. The musical, right from the title throughout the play, spread the message of love and harmony bringing to mind the words of Saint Teresa of Calcutta: “Love does not measure, it just gives”. Along with vibrancy and conceptualisation of the plot, the students dazzled the audience with a mesmerising and flawless performance. The event came to a close with the national anthem. The entire event was a grand success and was highly appreciated by the audience who also took home the message of “spread love wherever you go”.

A century ago, daring educators dreamed and chalked out a paradigm in education; aspiring to educate young minds to achieve great things. St. Mary’s High School has been inspiring, empowering and educating students for 100 years. As we turn to a new chapter and begin our second century of ground-breaking innovation, bold creativity and world-changing ideas, we are 100 years new.



Indian Tadka

As part of their Centennial celebrations, **St. Mary's High School and Junior College, Kalina** organised an inter-school fashion show for teachers on 19th September, 2019. The theme chosen was 'Indian Tadka' because India is known for its spices – its mirch masala, as well as its amalgamation of different cultures and languages. The judges for the event were Mr. Ajay Chawan (a young entrepreneur, director and choreographer) and Ms. Nishta Das (a fashion designer and visual merchandiser).

The show began with a ramp walk where the teachers displayed their costumes representing their State. It was pure joy to watch how confidently and elegantly they walked and danced. In the 2nd round, the teachers creatively introduced the chosen state to the audience. Talents like singing, dancing and monoacting were the star attractions. Later, the judges shared their feedback and appreciated the event. Ms. Sara Rathod from Michael High School bagged the first prize.

Bonossa Sabastine



Indian Beats

Indian Beats – the interschool dance competition for teachers was hosted by **St. Mary's High School and Junior College, Kalina** on 26th September, 2019. The Competition had 2 categories: solo and group. The event began with a prayer dance by the teachers of St. Mary's itself. The enthusiasm and energy of the participating teachers, their colourful costumes along with the music and graceful dancing, was remarkable proving that teachers never grow old; they are always young at heart.

Sabina D'Souza



The Principals and Vice-Principals of the participating schools were present to cheer and support their teachers. The judges

were Ms. Cheena Dasani and Mr. Saiba. While Ms. Sara Rathod from Michael High School won the solo dance competition, St. Charles High School won the group dance competition. All the participants were awarded with participation certificates and the winners with the trophies. Teamwork, hard work, unity, cooperation and teacher-management rapport was showcased through this competition. Indeed, it was a fun-filled, fruitful and a memorable event.

The Power of Speech

Pearl Frias

St. Mary's High School and Junior College, Kalina held an interschool extempore competition (Std. VIII – X) on 21st November, 2019 to imbue the true spirit of learning and enhance effective communication skills among students. The Competition had 17 talented participants from various schools who were zealous and spoke eloquently on topics such as gender inequality, inclusion of sports in the curriculum, the impact of television and social networking sites on children, along with a few lighter topics such as changes they would bring about if they ruled the world or the subject of a book they would write. The students were judged on various criteria: content, expression, intonation, etc. The judges for the Competition, Dr. Frances Vaidya, Mrs. Philomena Paiva and Mrs. Maria Gonsalves, truly appreciated the resolution and the manner in which the students presented their thoughts and opinions. Master Rohit Dareka of Dr. Antonio Da Silva High School bagged 1st place. The judges applauded the participants and congratulated the winners.



Nature and Me

Reena Mendonza

The interschool fancy dress competition, 'Nature and Me', for Senior KG students was held on Thursday, 21st November 2019, by **St. Mary's High School and Junior College, Kalina** as a part of its Centenary celebration. It was simply

breathhtaking and exciting to see the tiny tots dressed up in their attire depicting nature, its goodness and our contribution towards it. The 20 amazing contestants were just marvellous. They confidently took the mic, expressing themselves with zest and zeal. The judges for the day were Ms. Sherlyn Fernandes, Ms. Freda George and Ms. Filomena Vaz. St. Charles Borromeo Garden, Vakola took 1st place while Apostolic Carmel High School, Bandra stood 2nd. St. Joseph High School, Kurla was in 3rd place. All contestants received participation certificates.





Interschool Sports Meet

Sandeep Alphanso

The much-awaited Centennial interschool sports day of **St. Mary's High School and Junior College, Kalina** was held on 20th December, 2019 with great zeal, fanfare and frolicsome atmosphere. The Chief Guest was Mr. RK Amulraj, Secretary – Physical Education, Bombay YMCA who enriched the event by his presence and persona. For the drill display competition, Mr. Bhushan Chandrakant Mhatre and Mr. Nandkumar Ghadigaonkar, both Police Head Constables in Mumbai Railway, were judges. The drill displays by the various participating schools was a sight to behold as they rhythmically enthralled the spectators. The Chief Guest praised the endeavours and efforts of the students and distributed the prizes to the well-deserving winners. The programme ended with the vote of thanks and the National Anthem.



An Unheard Symphony

Sandeep Alphanso



Disciplined and rhythmic footsteps, drum beats and bugle calls filled the air at **St. Mary's High School and Junior College, Kalina** when bands from 18 schools enthralled the audience on 18th September, 2019. It was the H-Ward School Band Competition. Synchronised movement of the band members, full uniform, use of musical instruments and performance within the limited time given were the criteria used to judge the Competition. Air India Modern School, Kalina took 1st place while St. Teresa Convent High School, Santacruz (West) stood 2nd and Sacred Heart Boys' High School, Santacruz (West) secured 3rd place.

A Science Extravaganza

Cheryl D'Souza

The air was thick with excitement. All waited with bated breath as the results were being announced. And then the results were finally declared – **St. Pius High School, Mulund (West)** had bagged the Best Organised Science Exhibition among all the wards at the district level. The science exhibition is an annual feature among the schools in every ward, where each school vies for the top honours in the field of science and technology. One school from among the several schools in each ward is selected to host the mega event. The lot fell to St. Pius and the staff took up the challenge, highly determined to put their school on the map.

The Exhibition, which took place from 3rd to 5th December, 2019 on 'Science and Technology for Sustainable Development' was inaugurated by Chief Guest Dr. Richard D'Souza, former scientist at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, with Education Inspector Dr. Mushtaq Shaikh, Deputy Asst. Education Inspector Mr. Sharad Bhole, Manager Fr. George Athaide, and Principal Fr. Gavin D'Souza.

The entire school was geared up for the event; from the creative rangoli of the logo which was specially designed for the Exhibition and which adorned the front patio to the huge career tree which was painstakingly prepared leaf by leaf to the impressive models of the mammoth and dinosaurs to the space age to almost every wall of the school which was decked with hundreds of artistic paintings. No effort was spared.

The students of various schools presented innovative experiments and exhibits covering subjects like sustainable agricultural practices, health and cleanliness, resource management, industrial development, future transport and communication, resource management, educational games and mathematical modelling. Projects by nature clubs, science clubs, lab attendants and on population education were also displayed. Innovative teaching aids created by teachers were also showcased.

The exhibits were evaluated by a panel of judges, comprising experts in the field of science, academicians and educationists. Chief Guest Dr. Harold D'Costa, President of Cyber Security Corporation gave away the prizes along with Bishop John Rodrigues, the Auxiliary Bishop, and Fr. Thomson Kinny, Principal of Sacred Heart Boys' High School. Certificates and trophies were presented for T-ward events that had taken place through the course of the year. St. Pius' bagged 2nd place in the senior group project for its Solar Power Water Distillator project, 3rd place in Band, 1st place in English elocution junior group, 3rd place in English elocution senior group and 3rd place in instrumental music senior group at the T-ward level. The education inspector and all who attended were extremely impressed by the meticulous organisation, the warm hospitality as well as the magnificent display of artistic talent.





Sports Day

Charlotte Pinto and Shamy D'Souza

The annual sports days of the Primary and Secondary section of **St. Pius X High School, Mulund (West)** were held on 25th and 30th January, 2020 respectively. The event saw a fantastic turnout of parents cheering as their wards performed. Fr. George Athaide, our Manager, was the Chief Guest. He hoisted the School flag



and took the salute of the march past along with the School Principal as the students marched to some stirring marching music by the band. After the oath taking ceremony, Fr. George declared the meet open. The mascots of the event were astronomers with the spacecraft, Chandrayaan. An energising display of various exercises in different forms set the tone for the day. Once the races began, the air was filled with cheering and tons of encouragement for our young athletes. Medals, certificates, trophies and gifts were awarded to the winners. The Best House trophy was awarded to the Blue house in the Primary section and Yellow house in the Secondary section. These were indeed days filled with sportsmanship, enthusiasm and memories for all to cherish.



Republic Day 2020

Sandhya Marar

St. Pius X High School, Mulund (West) celebrated India's 71st Republic Day on 26th January, 2020. The Principal, teachers and students left no stone unturned in making this monumental day a memorable one. Sourabh Thoraskar who stood 2nd in the School in the previous year's SSC examination was the Chief Guest and was warmly welcomed by Principal Fr. Gavin D'Souza. The National flag was unfurled and a prayer service was conducted. Cultural activities like patriotic songs, speeches and dances were performed. The school echoed with patriotic fervour. The students who won various competitions held during the year were felicitated by our principal. The programme ended with a beautiful message by our Chief Guest to our children, "There is no shortcut to success."



Celebrating 'Love' with Love

Cheryl D'Souza

1 Corinthians 16:14 says
'Let all that you do be done with love'

The teachers of **St. Pius X High School, Mulund (West)** put these words into action when they celebrated Valentine's Day in the spirit of togetherness and love. Dressed in outfits of red and pink, the teachers organised a little get-together for all staff members including non-teaching staff by arranging snacks and refreshments. As a token of love and appreciation and to make the day even more memorable, everyone was given gifts in the form of document folders. As always, Principal Fr. Gavin D'Souza and Supervisor Mrs. Ninette Coutinho were extremely supportive of the initiative as it fostered a feeling of friendship and bonhomie in an age of fierce competition and professional rivalry.



Green Day Celebration

Florina Sequeira

Green Day was celebrated at **St. Pius X High School, Mulund (West)** on 18th February, 2020 by Nehru (green) house with a great deal of hard work and enthusiasm. The topic was 'Stay Green'. After precise planning during the weeks leading up, the Green house boys, led by the Asst. Green house leader Master Vinayak Singh, decorated the conference room, staffroom, library, AV room, corridors and classrooms on the eve of D-Day. The day began with the assembly. The introduction was read by a student dressed as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the prayer for creation was read. A skit, focussing on the conservation of greenery by applying the 4 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Restore in our day-to-day lives, was presented. The 4 R's were further elaborated on with the help of a video. A project titled "Smoke Absorber" to clean the air by absorbing polluted smoke was presented. In the end, a poem on the significance of the colour green was recited and the day's news was read.





Innovative Practices in Education – St. Stanislaus Certificate Programme

Sabita Menezes

St. Teresa's Institute of Education celebrated Children's Day with a difference. They invited schools to showcase their innovative practices that help mould our most precious resource of tomorrow – the children of today. So, we showcased our SSCP (St. Stanislaus Certificate Programme) which was started 3 years ago at **St. Stanislaus High School, Bandra (West)** to help bridge the gap between the SSC curriculum and other board curricula. Teachers Sabita Menezes and Dorris Patton presented a paper with the details of the programme and were selected for the finals which were held on 20th November, 2019 at St. Teresa's Institute of Education, Santacruz. There were a total of 9 schools presenting their unique practices. The judges explained that the one important criterion used to judge the school with the most innovative practice was one that made maximum impact with minimum resources. The 1st place was won by the BMC-run school Muktangan, 2nd place winner was St. Stanislaus High School, and 3rd place was secured by Ram Ratna International School.

The St. Stanislaus Certificate Programme is a programme of excellence based on the 4 pillars of Jesuit education which were thought to be vital to a holistic education and in keeping with the vision and mission of the school. The 4 pillars or modules, or as we prefer to call them “transformations”, were based on the acronym SIPS – Social, Intellectual, Personal and Spiritual.

The Social Transformation

focuses on the creation of caring persons – men for others – by giving the students, experiences of disadvantaged people. Each term, every student of the programme, visits an institution which is involved in the education of students who are physically, emotionally and/



or mentally challenged. The students are also sensitised to the needs of the elderly in old age homes and disadvantaged children (REAP). During the visit, both sets of students interact, the Stanislaus boys conduct an activity and then follow it up with a report on their experience. Some community service activities are also included to help the children develop an attitude of giving back to society.

The Intellectual Transformation has a number of components:

The Creative writing module has activities such as writing innovative stories, movie scripts and creating and designing their own advertisements. It focuses on the development of language, listening and oral communication skills. This module uses audio-visual aids like movies, PowerPoint presentations, vocabulary enhancing worksheets, etc.

The Business module in Std. VII teaches analytical and application skills.



The Math and Science module involves graded, experience-based teaching-learning with activities like



‘Green fingers - grow your plant know your plant’, understanding the concepts of fractions and magnets, the area of an irregular surface, the volume of a cylinder and electric currents, etc. through activities and model making. The activity-based instructional methodology used, focuses on global skills like creativity, analysis, application as well as soft skills like making presentations and confidence building.

In the Computer module, students learn several software programmes like Windows, MS-Office, Corel Draw, Coding and how to access the Internet. The Scratch software taught to students helps develop creativity and logic.

The **Personal** Transformation allows for the development of talent: skills like karate, speech and drama, development of mental skills in the form of chess, and dance which helps develop motor skills along with the NCC, Scouts or RSP which instil a civic sense.



The **Spiritual** Transformation involves activities like the AVEC (Archdiocesan Value Education Centre) poster-making competitions, skits and projects on values with an exposure to all religions which aims at helping students explore the ethical and the divine.

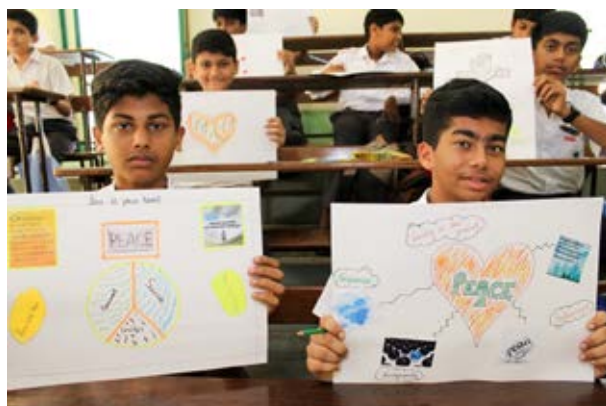
People customise their homes, their clothes, their cars. What we did was to customise an educational curriculum tailored to the needs of our students and fill in the deficiencies in the existing system. SSCP is into its 3rd year now. Keeping true to its goal, we are constantly developing content and fine tuning the methodology to cater to the multiple intelligences and learning styles of the student. We provide the students with wide and varied exposure to different subjects/ topics that they would normally not have access or



exposure to in normal school curricula. The student may not excel in all the activities but it gives him an opportunity to realise where his interest lies, help him to develop it and use it as a base to shape his future.

Parent feedback at open houses has been positive. The Social module which involves a lot of field visits and the Personal module are the most enjoyed. The Intellectual module is a ‘work in progress’ as content is constantly being updated/ modified. Topics that were not well-received by the students or were very challenging to the students were modified. Absenteeism and disinterest were challenges we faced initially. However, it is on the decline as the content is being customised as per their interests and needs.

The Latin word “magis” which translates to “more” has been our rallying battle cry and we will always strive to do more for our students. Often success is a measure decided by others, satisfaction is a measure decided by us. What we are experiencing now is a sense of satisfaction that we are headed in the right direction. There will surely be changes and modifications to be made in the years ahead as change is constant.





Celebrating Differences to Achieve Harmony

Dorris Patton

We, at **St. Stanislaus High School, Bandra (West)**, decided to foster love and fraternity by adopting, 'Stanislites together towards harmony' as the school theme for the year 2019-20. Harmony is essential especially in a multicultural nation like ours and our students need to realise how to foster this value in their lives. So, we decided to celebrate 4 different religious festivals i.e. Id-UI-Adah, Feast of Our Lady of the Mount, Paryushan and Dussehra, which are relatively unknown among the students.



The celebration of Id-UI-Adah kickstarted the festivities with a bang! The Muslim students explained the meaning and reason for this celebration and the difference between the different Ids. This was followed by a 'daawat' of grand proportions in each class arranged by their parents. The next celebration was the Feast of Our Lady of the Mount where the Catholic students explained the devotion to Mother Mary, especially in Bandra, through a beautiful video. The students received blessed rosaries and delicious snacks to celebrate Our Lady's birthday. The end of September



saw the Jain festival of Paryushan being celebrated at St. Stanislaus. Even though there were comparatively fewer students belonging to the Jain community, they presented their beliefs and traditions in a meaningful manner that enlightened the other students. The last of the 4 festivals was Dussehra wherein the Hindu boys brought alive the 'Ram Leela' in the School auditorium, depicting Lord Ram's life and the destruction of Ravana which symbolises the victory of good over evil.



The celebration of these festivals was meant to not only explain the significance and traditions associated with them but to highlight how even in different cultures and religions the message of love and humanity is the same. The objective of this grand exercise spread over the first term and involving all students from Stds. I to X was to foster tolerance and promote unity. The positive response and appreciation from the students and parents validated this endeavour. An old Chinese proverb says, "A family in harmony will prosper in everything". We, the Stanislaus parivar, certainly plan on exemplifying this proverb through our continued efforts in fostering and maintaining harmony.



The Crusade for Peace

Melanie D'Souza

"Pray the Rosary everyday to obtain peace for the world." – Our Lady of Fatima, 11th May, 1917.

The apparitions of our Virgin Mary in the last 200 years have been noteworthy. They have been of great significance as the purpose behind these visits have all been to promote peace and encourage prayer through the Rosary. Today, the world is experiencing violence of all sorts. There is a constant war going on amongst families, churches and nations. During this chaotic time, our heavenly mother calls all of us to resolve this global crisis with a common weapon, more powerful than others – peace.

The Crusade for Peace was initiated by St. Andrew's College campus ministry – Faith on Campus (FoC). It commenced on 11th January, 2020 and concluded on 11th February, 2020 with a healing Mass for the sick. The many activities conducted during the month had Our Lady at the centre of it all. Every morning at 7 am, one could hear the students singing Marian hymns at the College grotto. Later in the day, the Rosary would be recited. The students also undertook to meditatively praying an additional decade of the Rosary before bedtime so that they could offer 1000 Hail Marys to Our Lady before the month ended. The many small sacrifices made by them during the month added to the petition for peace.

On the cards were also visits to 5 Marian Shrines in Mumbai i.e. Basilica of Our Lady of the Mount on 11th January, St. Michael Church (Our Lady of Perpetual Succour), Mahim on 17th January, Our Lady of Velankanni Church, Irla on 24th January, Shrine of Don Bosco's Madonna, Matunga on 31st January (Feast of Don Bosco) and, finally, Our Lady of the



Immaculate Conception Church, Borivali on 7th February. At each shrine, one student took the initiative to brief the group on the origin of that particular devotion to Mary. The students prayed at the grotto and also in the church. The most special time was when the students prayed at the crypt at Don Bosco's where the relics of many saints are enshrined. Fr. Edwin D'Souza SDB, Rector of the Shrine, took time out from his busy schedule to personally give us a tour of the crypt. The entire journey was an amazing spiritual experience for all. In each of the visits, one particular mystery of the Rosary was chosen for prayer and reflection. There were petitions raised and hymns sung intertwined with moments of meditative silence. The intention of every Rosary was peace – in the world, in our country, in the church, in families and in our hearts.



Faith builds through reason. Every Monday afternoon, Fr. Ashlyn Chand conducted 'Mariology' sessions at the FoC Centre. The learnings from these sessions not only made our students' faith stronger but also equipped them with theoretical knowledge base of the Church and the Bible. Some of the insights received from the sessions were on Mary's role at the wedding feast at Cana, at the foot of the Cross and the revelations of her being virgin and heavenly queen. The students also learnt the importance of reflecting on the mysteries while praying the Rosary.



There was also a social media campaign where an FoC podcast was uploaded weekly. The podcast was a summary of each Mariology session. The students also learnt to pray the Rosary in Latin, taught by ex-FoC student Ethel Misquitta.

The entire Crusade for Peace concluded on 11th February, on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. That evening, a healing Mass was celebrated by Fr. Ashlyn Chand. The Mass was attended by young and old numbering more than 400. Snack boxes were distributed to all.



Students and well-wishers who could not be physically present for the sessions or visits to the shrines offered Rosaries and penance to contribute towards the Crusade. Thus, the entire month was a journey undertaken by the students to pray for peace everywhere. They were accompanied on this journey by our Mother Mary through prayer. The experience was a spiritually enriching one for all and encouraged everyone to pray for peace; the Rosary being the greatest weapon one could have.

This Crusade did not end here. It only ignited in the students the fire of prayer and the desire to learn scripture and the teachings of the Church... and the fire continues to burn bright!



CELEBRATING THE FEAST OF

OUR LADY OF LOURDES

TUESDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY, 2020
4:30 PM

ST. ANDREW'S EDUCATIONAL CAMPUS
CELEBRANT: FR. ASHLYN CHAND

MARIAN CRUSADE FOR PEACE

(11th January – 11th February 2020)

MARIAN PILGRIMAGES

Date	Day	Venue
11 th Jan 2020	Sat	Basilica of Our Lady of the Mount, Bandra
17 th Jan 2020	Fri	St. Michael Church, Mahim
24 th Jan 2020	Fri	Our Lady of Velankanni Church, Irla
31 st Jan 2020	Fri	Shrine of Don Bosco's Madonna, Matunga
7 th Feb 2020	Fri	Our Lady of Immaculate Conception Church, Borivali

Group assemblies in College at 1:00 pm on these dates. Rosary (along with reflections) will be prayed at these churches.

MARIOLOGY SIMPLIFIED

Speaker: Fr. Ashlyn Chand

Time: 1:30 – 3:30 pm

Venue: FoC Centre

Date	Day
13 th Jan 2020	Mon
20 th Jan 2020	Mon
27 th Jan 2020	Mon
31 st Jan 2020	Fri

- Open to Youth
- Carry your Bible and a notebook

DEVOTIONS FOR PEACE

- Rosary at 1:30 pm daily at College grotto; except Mondays (11:30 am)
- Reciting an additional decade meditatively before bed
- Making small sacrifices daily to add to the petition for peace
- Marian hymns at 7:00 am daily at College grotto
- Praying 1000 Hail Marys before 11th Feb, 2020



Presented by St. Andrew's College Faith on Campus

Stressbusters

Answers depend on how you read or hear the question and how well you spell. The following questions were set in last year's US GED examination. These are genuine answers (from 16 year olds).

Q. Name the four seasons.

A. Salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar.



Q. How is dew formed?

A. The sun shines down on the leaves and makes them perspire.

Q. What guarantees may a mortgage company insist on?

A. If you are buying a house, they will insist that you are well-endowed.



Q. What are steroids?

A. Things for keeping carpets still on the stairs.

Q. What happens to your body as you age?

A. When you get old, so do your bowels and you get intercontinental.

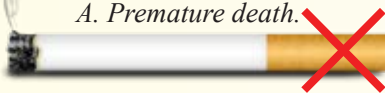


Q. What happens to a boy when he reaches puberty?

A. He says goodbye to his boyhood and looks forward to his adultery.

Q. Name a major disease associated with cigarettes.

A. Premature death.



Q. What is artificial insemination?

A. When the farmer does it to the bull instead of the cow.

Q. How can you delay milk turning sour?

A. Keep it in the cow.



Q. How are the 20 main parts of the body categorised (e.g. The abdomen)?

A. The body is consisted into 3 parts – the brainium, the borax and the abdominal cavity. The brainium contains the brain, the borax contains the heart and lungs and the abdominal cavity contains the five bowels: A, E, I, O, U.



Q. What is the fibula?

A. A small lie.



Q. What does 'varicose' mean?

A. Nearby.



Q. What is the most common form of birth control?

A. Most people prevent contraception by wearing a condominium.

Q. Give the meaning of the term 'Caesarean section'.

A. The Caesarean section is a district in Rome.



Q. What is a seizure?

A. A Roman Emperor.

(Julius Seizure, I came, I saw, I had a fit).

Q. What is a terminal illness?

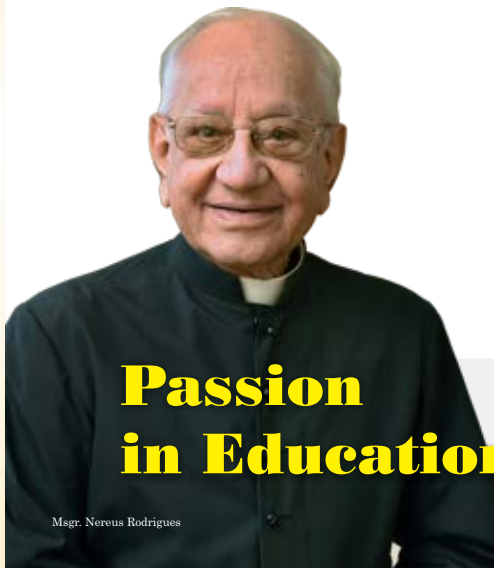
A. When you are sick at the airport.



Q. What does the word 'benign' mean?

A. Benign is what you will be after you be eight.





Msgr. Nereus Rodrigues

Passion in Education

Msgr. Nereus Rodrigues
(1923 – 2020)

A Tribute to a Passionate Educator

Given Msgr. Nereus Rodrigues' immense contribution to the field of education, the Trustees of St. Andrew's Educational Foundation have requested that the chowk at the junction of Hill Road, St. Paul Road and Chimbai Road opposite St. Andrew Church, Bandra (West) be named "**Msgr. Nereus Rodrigues Chowk**".

Mr. Asif Zakaria, Municipal Councillor, Ward 101 – Bandra West submitted the proposal to the Ward Committee where it was approved. As per MCGM rules, the proposal will now be forwarded to the Works Committee (Suburbs) followed by MCGM for final approval.

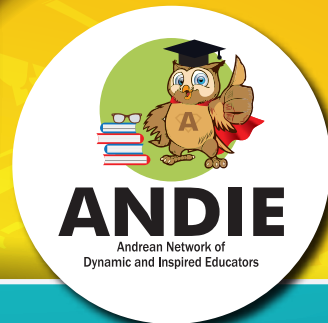
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The Andrian Network of Dynamic and Inspired Educators (ANDIE) inspires Educators to be out-of-the box thinkers – to be creative and ideate – and to then share their passion and enthusiasm with their personal network of co-educators and students. Through seminars and workshops, participants are given the space to freely exchange ideas and new developments in the field and also seek guidance on tackling the various challenges they face. In a nutshell, ANDIE aims to ignite the passion in Educators to take education to a higher level.

ANDIE welcomes membership from all Educators. Contact us on +91-9769296630 (9am – 5pm, Monday – Saturday) or drop us an email at andreannetwork@gmail.com



NEP Symposium



Cerebration



She-roles Conclave



From Zoom to Zoomba

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