



The Dawn

# Savera

September - December 2024 / Vol. 49 / Issue 3

## DIGITAL MISSIONARIES

- **DIGITAL MISSIONARIES: PIONEERS OF FAITH IN THE DIGITAL AGE**
- **ST. FRANCIS XAVIER: MISSIONARY EXTRAORDINAIRE**
- **THE DIGITAL DIVIDE: OVERCOMING BARRIERS IN THE CATHOLIC FAITH**

# PEARLS OF WISDOM

**"do not see who  
it is that is telling you.  
Try to understand  
what he tells you"**

**"It is not the poor  
that need us.  
It is we that need the  
poor to serve the Lord"**

**"Whenever you do  
anything good,  
do not say  
'I did it' but  
'we did it'"**

**"Where there is love,  
there is God,  
and where there is God,  
there is unity"**



**"Thank the one who  
brings to your attention  
your faults"**

**"To avoid temptations,  
be attentive and  
alert and pray more"**

**"Forgive one another  
to experience  
God's forgiveness"**

**"When you  
are  
overburdened  
with work, pray more"**

**"When you consider  
your neighbour as better  
than yourself, there is no  
room for Pride"**

**"If anyone is leading  
a bad life, pray for  
him / her and do not  
keep him / her aloof.  
Think of your  
own weaknesses"**

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Editor : **Sr. Molly Fernandes sfm**

Published by:

**HOLY FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE (HOFCOM)**

All correspondence and contribution may kindly be addressed to:

The Editor

**SAVERA**

Holy Family Communication Centre, Fr. Faustino Road,  
Sancoale, Goa 403710

E-Mail: hofcom2014@gmail.com

**SFN SAVERA - Vol. 49 Issue 3**

**September - December 2024**



From the Editor's Desk



## Digital Missionaries: A New Frontier for Christ's Mission

Rev. Sr. Molly Fernandes sfn



*"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do,  
do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31)*

In today's information age, faith transcends traditional worship spaces. The digital realm has emerged as a powerful platform for spiritual exploration and connection, giving rise to digital missionaries. These individuals influence technology to spread their faith, reaching a global audience and fostering communities of believers.

The Synod on Synodality recognizes that the internet is not just a tool but a culture that we must enculturate with the Gospel. That it is an invitation to the Church to engage with the new digital culture and embracing the digital mission means engaging with, accompanying, forming, and supporting those called to minister in the digital realm.

Digital missionaries utilize websites, blogs, social media, podcasts, and video content to share their teachings and engage with followers. They offer virtual retreats, prayer groups, and counseling sessions, providing spiritual guidance worldwide. Their impact is profound, breaking down geographical barriers and connecting individuals from diverse backgrounds, fostering a global community.

However, digital missionaries face challenges. The online world can be susceptible to misinformation and harmful content, so upholding integrity and ethical behaviour is crucial. Building genuine relationships and fostering a sense of belonging in the virtual realm can be difficult. Thus, it is essential for digital missionaries to create meaningful connections with their followers.

The Apostle to the Gentiles, St. Paul, exemplified becoming "all things to all people" by serving with humility and tears. He invited young missionaries to follow this path, setting aside personal interests and always choosing "communion over distinction."

Digital missionaries play a vital role in shaping the future of faith. They represent the spirit of traditional missionaries, adapting it to the digital age. By embracing technology and using it to spread their message, they are ensuring that faith remains a relevant and accessible part of people's lives and future generations.

Engaging in the digital mission is not merely about adopting new technological tools but about transforming the digital culture with the Gospel. This mission calls us to be present in the digital world, reflecting Christ's love and truth in every interaction. By doing so, digital missionaries can bring hope, faith, and unity to a fragmented world, fulfilling their divine calling in the age of technology.

As we steer this new frontier of communication, let us support and uplift the voices of digital missionaries set to transform the digital realm as a New Frontier for Christ's Mission, and fulfill the desire of founder Fr. Faustino of making of the Master known.



## From the Superior General's Desk

## Message

*Rev. Sr. Berna Rodrigues sfn, Superior General*

**A**s we reflect on our mission in the world today, we find ourselves at a special moment of grace and celebration. This November, we rejoice in a triple blessing: the birthday of our beloved Founder, Fr. Faustino Souza, the celebration of Boarders' Day, and the observance of Communication Day. Each of these events highlights a unique aspect of our Holy Family charism and mission.

Fr. Faustino, in founding our congregation, envisioned a community of Sisters dedicated to the service of God and humanity, particularly through education and nurturing the young. Boarders' Day reminds us of this commitment, as we celebrate the young souls entrusted to our care, a mission that calls us to walk closely with them, forming them in faith, character, and love.

However, as we mark Communication Day, we also recognize that our mission is evolving. Today, our work extends beyond the classrooms, homes, boardings and dispensaries, reaching into a new frontier—the digital world. The younger generations, often referred to as "digital natives," are deeply immersed in online platforms—social media, videos, and various forms of digital communication. To reach them, we, too, need to become digital missionaries. This is not just about using technology, but about understanding and embracing modern communication strategies that resonate with their experiences and worldviews.

It's essential, however, that we use these platforms purposefully. We need to spend less time on social media solely for entertainment and, instead, focus on making it a tool for mission. Imagine the power of using these digital platforms to inspire others not just to "like" or "subscribe" to content, but to like, subscribe, and follow Jesus. Our presence online should be a means of helping others encounter Christ in their daily digital lives. By creating engaging content, fostering meaningful conversations online, and sharing the Gospel in creative, accessible ways, we can touch hearts that may never step into a church or school. The digital world is our new mission ground, and it offers us endless possibilities for evangelization and accompaniment.

Let's boldly use these platforms to share our faith, values, and charism, becoming voices of peace and hope in chaotic spaces. Show Christ's presence where needed, adapting our methods while staying true to the Gospel.

May the Holy Spirit guide us as we embrace new technologies, always remembering our mission to bring Christ's love to the world.

## Youth

## THE SOCIAL MEDIA SAINT: A DIGITAL APOSTLE OF FAITH.

*Abigail Siqueira*



The digital environment or Internet is where young people are spending most of their waking hours. It is filled with people in search of meaning and love, of Truth. They are searching for God, usually without even knowing it: “But how are they going to believe in Him, if they have never heard of him?” (Romans 10:14). The Church can be a beacon of hope in this often dark place, embodying Christ's call to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19).

Born on the 3rd of May 1991 to Parents Andrea Acutis and Antonia Salzano Accutis, was a special boy christened Carlo Accutis. From an early age Carlo found a deep love and connection with Jesus specifically in the Eucharist. He made his First Holy Communion at the age of 7 and henceforth made it a point to attend mass daily. He loved praying the Rosary, going for confessions, bringing his friends closer to Jesus, but there's nothing he loved more than going for mass and receiving the Eucharist.



Infact, his parents were not devout Catholics, and his mother had said that before Carlo was born she had been for mass only 3 times in her life, for her Communion, Confirmation and Wedding, but little did she know that, it would soon change when she had Carlo. Carlo made a point to drag his parents and relatives with him to mass every day.

There was nothing more that pleased the young boy than to lend a helping hand to somebody in need. He would often defend his classmates that were bullied in school, help the poor and the elderly. He spent his time volunteering at a soup kitchen in Milan run by the Capuchins and Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity and used the savings from his weekly

pocket money to help the beggars and those who slept outdoors.

As a young boy, Carlo loved soccer and playing video games but he made it a point to discipline himself and allow himself to play video games for only an hour a week even though he wanted to play much more. He spent his time learning Computer Programming and Graphic Design. Something about the physical presence of Jesus in Eucharistic Miracles fascinated Carlo and he decided to club this interest of his along with computers.

He built a website to document Eucharistic Miracles around the world. He begged his parents to take vacations to 17 different countries and journaled and took copious notes on everything he witnessed. Over a span of two-and-a-half years, he documented 187 Eucharistic miracles. In the midst of his travels, he and his family prayed before hosts that have turned into blood.

He catalogued as many Eucharistic Miracles as he could, around the world, listing them by country and date in nearly 20 different languages. For each miracle he created a web page that could be downloaded and printed; he also included maps, videos, and a virtual museum on the site. The website became a helpful tool of religious instruction for many parishes around the world. It was also regarded by the church as an example of how technology and the Internet can be used for spiritual good and to spread the gospel.

In October of 2006, in the midst of his research on Eucharistic Miracles, he was diagnosed with advanced leukaemia at the tender age of 15. Following which he died on October 12, 2006.

On July 5, 2018, he was declared “Venerable” by Pope Francis. The first miracle attributed to him was in early 2020, in response to a Brazilian boy born with malformed pancreas having been healed after interceding to Jesus through Acutis and receiving one of his relics. Acutis was beatified, by Pope Francis on October 10, 2020. In May 2024 Pope Francis recognized a second miracle that was attributed to Acutis's intercession, paving the way for his likely canonization in 2025.

Friends, Carlo Acutis, has a powerful message for the youth: "Be digital missionaries! Use technology to spread God's love and connect with others. Just as I created websites and videos to share my faith, you too can use your digital skills to evangelize and make a difference. Don't be afraid to be a light in the digital darkness! Be a digital apostle! Share your faith online, just as the apostles shared the Good News. Create content, engage in discussions, and connect with others. Use social media, blogs, and videos to spread love, hope, and truth. Be brave, creative, and authentic. Inspire others to follow Jesus!"



## Family

**'DIGITAL' SONVSARANT 'DIGITAL'  
MISIONARI KUTTUMB***Pio Esteves*

Amchie eke somudhayechie zomatint vantto ghetanam ani tornatteamcho vixoy hataltanam, thoimsor zomlolea kaim avoi-bapainim aple udgar ani kallzantlim bhav'nam soglleank ugttim kelim.

Ek avoi uloili: “Bhurgeam-tornatteamchea hatant aiz mobail poddlolo astanam, tankam Dev-dhorm ani magnnem naka. Tancheant magnneachem vattavoronn nirman korunk khup kotthinn zata. To mobail tanchem jevonnnkhann ani sogllenach zalolem asa.”

Dusri avoi udgarli: “Amchea kuttumbant bhurgim koxim vaddtanam, sogllem vella-vellar zatalem. Avoi-bapai udexim amchea kallzant Dev bhirant asli ani xistin ami vaddunk xikleant. Vellachem ani vostonchem mhotv ami vollkhunk pavleant. Tondantlean utram ucharunk goroz nasli. Avoi-bapaichi ekuch nodor puro asli ani bhurgim kortat tem vankddem mhoon rokddinch somzotalim. Punn atanchea bhurgeamchea kallzant Devachi, avoi-bapaichi ani vho ddilamchi bhirant nam. Tim apleak zai tench kortat. Ani maglolem tea-tea vellar mellonam tednam, avoi-bapaik dhomki diunk fattim soronant.”



Ek bapui uloilo: “Atamchi pillga veglich, hem ami monant dovrunk zai. Ani vankddea rostear pavleant zalear, tankam xiddkavche poilim, amchea bhurgeam-tornatteam pasot magunk khup gorjechem. Magnneantlean, kuttumbik ani khasgi magnneantlean, tancheant bodol yeunk xeokta. Choddui opeokxa korche bodol, avoi-bapainim aplea bhurgeam khatir magunk khup gorjechem. Tednanch, tancheant bodol yeunk xeokta.”

Mon'xeachem ginean vaddlolean, torekvar yontram aichea sonvsarant utponn zaleant. Ani team-team yontrank lagon mon'xeachem jivit sompem zalam. Sompork korche khatir, adhunik mon'xeak hanga-thoim dhanvchi goroz nam. Asa thoinch ravun, soglleam thaim sompeponnim uloum ieta ani sogllem korum ieta.

Kaim vorsam fattim tim-tim yontram mon'xeachea hatant naslim. Punn tednam tancha unnavak lagon sogllem vevostit choltalem. Vella-vellar ghorant bhitor sorop, magnnem ani jevonnn sangatan korop ani oxie toren ghorabeanim to kuttumbik ekvott ani ekchar soroll disun ietalo.

Aiz toslem vattavoronn amchea kuttumbanim anink uronk nam. Disonam. Magnneank ani eka-meka thaim ulouk, bhasabhas korunk, dukh-sukh

vanttunk konn-konnank velluch nam karann sogllo vell 'digital' sonvsarant chorun vhela.

Punn vellachem mhotv ani tachi vanttnni korunk ami zonn eklean xiklear, sogllem porot vevostitponnim fuddem vochunk xeokta. Ani soglleant poilim ti ap-domavnni (self-control) amchea kuttumbanim, avoi-bapai ani bhurgeam sovem, asop khup gorjechem.

Toxem nam korit, vellacho ani kuttumbacho idvas zaunk vell naka. Iskolak, kolejik vo vaur-dhondeak thaun porot ghora ietoch, sogllem soddun ani mobailak hat ghaltanv. Tea vellar chaie, nhavop, kuttumbik magnnem ani uprant jevonn korunk zai mhonn ami visortanv.

Kaim pavtti nhidpachem bolidan korun, ami modiam ratri porian to mobail, Internet-ar astanv ani vellacho, bholaichecho idvas korun soddtanv. Gorjechench tem kelear, soglleank bhov faideachem zaum ieta.

Kaim pavtti gorjechem tem soddun diun, nam faideachem ani be-upeogi gheun avoi-bapui ani tanchim bhurgim-ballam bostat ani oxie toren aplo moladik vell vibaddtat. Tie bangoddent apli bholaiki bhi ogddaun ghetat.

Tia mobail ani 'Internet'-ak lagon aiz amchea kuttumbannim ani somazant porian xezar-samaream, soiream-daiream modem to mhotvacho sompork sanddla. Nattak zala. Konn khoim asa, kitem korta, tachi zanniv amkam asonam. Ani oxie toren to lagxil'lo sombond ani bandpas tutt'la.

Zo meren amchea jivitant amkam kitem gorjechem, tem ami vollkhun ghenanv, to meren 'digital' sonvsarak ami sogllim chikton urtoleanv ani mhotvachem tem sogllem sanddun ghetoleanv. Tednam chodd uxir zaum iet. Tia khatir paulam atanch marlear koxim? Kuttumbant ani tia uprant somazant sogllem hata bhair pavche poilim atanch amche khoxiecher il'lo tori dobhav haddlear koso?

Yontram gorjechim ani soglleamchea faideachim. Punn zonn eklean ekuch lokxeant gheunk goroz. Yontram mon'xea khatir ani munis yontram khatir nhoi. Hem sot vollkhun ami purn'ponnim mandhun ghetlem zalear, tia-tia vellar sogllem vevostitponnim tharear poddtolem. Nam tor...

Hoi, hia 'digital' sonvsarant amchean 'digital' misionari kuttumbam koxim jieum ietat? Nhoinch potramcher, durdixnnecher, punn 'Internet' ani mobailacho boro upeog korun, sonvsarbhor misionari vaurachi amchea poili vollokh gheum ieta. Ani pois aslolea karannan artik adar diunk xeokonanv zalearui, amchea dispot'tea magnnea ani teagi jivita udexim amchean misionari kuttumbam zaum ietat.

Ballka Jezuchi bhagivont Tereza aiz misionaranchi askarin mhonn Igorz Mata mandhun gheta. Kiteak? Ti ganvam-ganvamnim bhonvun, bhorpur misionari vaur kelo, tia khatir? Nam. Aplea konventant bhitoruch ravun, misionaram pasot ti sodankal aplea magnneant magtali. Tanchi vaur sufoll zaunk ti Devak porat'thali ani aplo kirkoll vaur tankam bhettoitali. Sant Terezachi dekh gheun, hia 'digital' sonvsarant amcheanui kuttumbant ani somazant misionari vaur fuddem vhoronk zata ani folladik korum ieta. Asanv ami toyar?

Faith

# FUTURE OF FAITH: ROLE OF DIGITAL MISSIONARIES

*Rev. Fr. Sony Anthony*



Jesus had explicitly expressed his fear and doubt about the future of faith. In Luke 18:8, Jesus asks, "*When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?*" Jesus' second coming is certain and without a doubt. He assured His followers in John 14:3, "*And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.*"



But the concern is that as time goes on, true faith is diminishing and people question in various ways *the surety of his second coming*. Therefore, I request you to journey with me through this article to know what is the true faith, why should we have it at all, and who has the capacity in its fullness to guide the present generation to be faithful until he comes again.

## WHAT IS FAITH?

*Faith is a fundamental element of the Christian journey.* It is the foundation of spiritual life, offering guidance, strength, and purpose. Faith is the invisible yet powerful force that anchors believers in God's love, promises, and salvation, even when circumstances challenge that belief.



Hebrews 11:1 defines faith as *"the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."* Saint Augustine eloquently explained, *"Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe."* St. Thomas Aquinas says, *"To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible."*

*Faith is a gift of God.* 1 Corinthians 12:9: *"To another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit."* Indeed, we should cling to Jesus the founder and perfecter of our faith, that we may enjoy this everlasting gift. We read in Hebrews 12:2: *"Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith...."*

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH**

*Faith is the cornerstone of a Christian's life*, guiding them through life's trials and uncertainties. In Ephesians 2:8-9, Paul writes, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith."* Faith is a gift from God that saves and sustains. It transforms lives by offering purpose, resilience, and peace, even in the face of challenges.

*Faith leads us to a deeper understanding of ourselves, the world, and God's divine plan.* Saint John Paul II beautifully captured the centrality of faith when he said, *"Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth."*

## **GROW IN FAITH**

Faith is not static; it requires nurturing and growth. To cultivate a robust faith, consider the following practices:

1. *Engage with Scripture:* Romans 10:17 *"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."* Regular reading and meditation on the Bible can strengthen one's understanding and conviction, as faith is built upon the Word of God.

2. *Reflect on Sainly Teachings:* The writings and sayings of saints offer diverse perspectives and insights, providing practical advice on living a life of faith.

3. *Practice Faith in Action:* Demonstrating one's faith through acts of service and love as well as sharing experiences and insights with fellow believers reinforces belief and inspires others.

## **'THE MISSIONARY' WHO ENHANCES THE FAITH**

A missionary, in essence, is someone sent to share the Gospel and bring others to Christ. Jesus commanded His disciples to *"go and make disciples of all nations"* (Matt 28:19). Traditionally, missionaries would travel to distant lands to preach the Good News. Saint Francis of Assisi's

famous quote, “*Preach the Gospel at all times. When necessary, use words.*”

*Missionaries are those who travel with and travel into the life of those who wish to grow in faith. Missionaries themselves are trained in the sufferings and challenges of life, that they may strengthen the fellow brethren to grow and flourish in faith until they reach eternal life.*

## THE ROLE OF DIGITAL MISSIONARIES

The present age is deeply immersed in digitalization, where most things are shared and received through various online platforms. Thus, with this digital revolution, a new breed of missionaries has emerged—*digital missionaries*, which is an utter necessity of the era. These digital missionaries expertise their talents through social media, websites, and digital tools to reach the modern person where they are: online. Saint John Chrysostom said, “*Faith is the key of the treasures of God,*” and digital missionaries make this treasure available to millions by spreading faith-based content worldwide.

In the ever-evolving landscape of technology, digital missionaries *help nurture faith* by offering spiritual guidance in an accessible and convenient format through videos and posters. In this way, digital missionaries are the modern equivalents of the early church missionaries, creating spaces where the Gospel can be shared and where faith can grow.

*The role of digital missionaries has become essential in spreading and growing faith.* Thus, they help individuals tap into this powerful truth by offering resources that engage both the heart and the mind, drawing them closer to God.

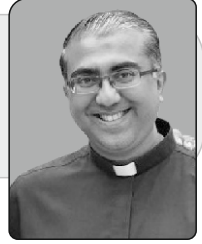
## CONCLUSION

The future of faith in the digital age depends on the creativity, dedication, and adaptability of digital missionaries. Just as Saint Paul used letters to spread the Gospel, today's missionaries use digital tools to reach a global audience. Their work ensures that the message of Christ remains accessible, relevant, and transformative in an increasingly interconnected world. As Saint Pope John Paul II said, “Do not be afraid. Open wide the doors to Christ.” Digital missionaries are doing just that, using the doors of the internet to welcome people into a deeper, more profound relationship with God. Through their efforts, faith will continue to grow, evolve, and inspire future generations. If Digital missionaries are actively spreading the Gospel through online platforms, the present generation as well as generations to come may not go astray, rather they will be convinced of the fact Jesus is coming again.

## Feature

## DIGITAL MISSIONARIES: PIONEERS OF FAITH IN THE DIGITAL AGE

*Rev. Fr. Joshan Rodrigues*

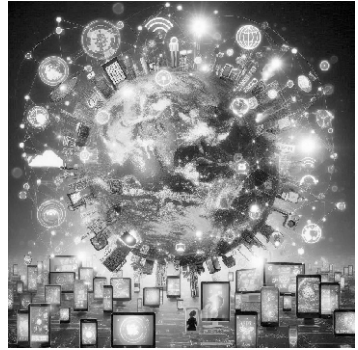


The digital age has transformed human interaction, reshaping how we communicate, learn, and even practice our faith. As Catholics, this era presents both an unprecedented challenge and an immense opportunity to evangelize in ways never before imagined. The Church, long a bastion of tradition, is now called to embrace digital tools and spaces to continue its mission: spreading the Good News of the Gospel. In this respect, the faithful are called to become **digital missionaries**, pioneers of Catholic faith in an increasingly interconnected and online world.

### The Call to Evangelize in a New Era

Since its inception, the Catholic Church has embraced new forms of communication to evangelize, from Paul's letters to the early Christian communities to the printing press that allowed the Bible to be shared with the masses. In the same spirit, today's digital tools are not merely an option but a necessary medium for sharing the faith.

Pope Francis has been a vocal advocate of this shift. He understands that while technology often brings challenges—such as information overload and the danger of superficial connections—it also offers a new frontier for evangelization. As he wisely remarked in his message for the 48th World Communications Day, “The revolution taking place in communications media and in information technologies represents a great and thrilling challenge; may we respond to that challenge with fresh energy and imagination” (Francis, 2014).



Indeed, the digital landscape, with its social media platforms, blogs, videos, and podcasts, has become the “public square” of the modern world. For Catholics, this offers a chance to bring the message of Christ into the daily lives of people who might never set foot in a physical church. The digital space can be used to answer questions, provide support, and share the beauty of Catholic teaching, from theological reflections to acts of mercy.



## **Witnessing in a Digital World**

To be effective in this new mission field, Catholics must be genuine witnesses to the faith, both in content and in behavior. Being a digital missionary is not about being a loud or aggressive presence but about embodying the love, compassion, and truth of Christ in online interactions. As Pope Francis emphasized, "Communication is a human rather than a technological achievement. The digital environment is not a parallel or purely virtual world, but is part of the daily experience of many people, especially the young" (Francis, 2016). This statement serves as a reminder that online engagement must remain deeply personal, driven by a sincere desire to connect and share God's love.

In this sense, the Church is called to offer authentic content—whether through the lives of saints, theological teachings, or pastoral support—that resonates with the needs of today's digital users. Blogs, podcasts, and videos can become modern tools of catechesis, inviting people into deeper engagement with their faith. Similarly, digital missionaries must model respectful and civil dialogue, countering the toxicity that often dominates online discourse with kindness, understanding, and empathy.

## **Building Digital Communities**

In the digital sphere, one of the most important roles for Catholics is to foster authentic communities. The Church is, after all, a communion of believers, and this sense of community can and should extend online. Virtual prayer groups, Bible studies, and discussion forums can offer spaces where people come together to grow in faith, share their experiences, and support one another.

The pandemic accelerated this trend, as millions turned to online masses, prayers, and spiritual resources when physical gatherings were not possible. Pope Francis, recognizing the potential of these efforts, encouraged the faithful to remain connected to their communities despite the challenges, noting that "we need to be physically distant but spiritually close" (Francis, 2020).

## **Conclusion: Embracing the Mission**

Being a digital missionary requires creativity, discernment, and a deep love for Christ and His Church. It is a calling that involves sharing the faith with others, not just in words but through actions and attitudes that reflect the Gospel. As Pope Francis encourages, "Let us boldly become citizens of the digital world" (Francis, 2014). By engaging with this new frontier, Catholics can ensure that the message of the Gospel continues to be heard and lived in the digital age, transforming lives and bringing hope to a world that desperately needs it.

In embracing this mission, digital missionaries become true pioneers, carrying the light of Christ into the virtual spaces where millions seek meaning, connection, and truth.

## "DILEXIT NOS": REDISCOVERING CHRIST'S LOVE

*Rev. Sr. Molly Fernandes sfm*



In his new encyclical *Dilexit Nos* ("He Loved Us"), released on 24 October 2024, Pope Francis invites Catholics to rediscover the love and compassion at the heart of Jesus Christ, which he describes as a source of healing for a fractured world. The encyclical builds on the Catholic devotion to the Sacred Heart, calling it a profound inspiration for saints, theologians, and believers throughout history.

Here are seven takeaways from *Dilexit Nos*:

1. **Nothing Can Separate Us from the Love of Christ** - The title *Dilexit Nos* comes from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans (Rom 8:35, 37-39), emphasizing that no force can separate us from the love of Christ.
2. **The Power of the Heart in a Fragmented World** - Pope Francis critiques the superficiality and "liquid" culture of consumerism of contemporary life, urging people to find solace in the Eucharist and the heart of Christ, he writes, is "the beating of a trustworthy presence" that guides us through life.
3. **The Cross as the Ultimate Expression of Christ's Love** - The encyclical highlights the pierced heart of Christ as embodying God's declarations of love. Pope Francis finds great consolation in contemplating Christ's suffering and self-surrender for our salvation.
4. **Love as a Missionary Impulse** – Pope Francis writes about the social and missionary dimensions of devotion to the heart of Christ, encouraging Catholics to spread goodness and serve others, inspired by figures like St. Thérèse and St. Charles de Foucauld.
5. **Acts of Reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus** – The Pope discusses the Catholic tradition of making acts of reparation to the Sacred Heart, emphasizing the importance of love and sacrifice in nourishing Christ's love and serving others.
6. **Saints and the Sacred Heart** - The encyclical reflects on the lives of saints like St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, whose visions of Christ's heart inspired widespread devotion. Pope Francis draws

*Cont. on page 17*

## THE VIRTUAL VICAR: A SHEPHERD OF THE FLOCK

*Rev. Sr. Jennifer Fernandes sfm*

**Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. – 1 Peter 5:2-3**

Fr. Faustino, after gathering from many people I encountered, is a man who walks in the footsteps of the Master. He was not self-oriented but other-oriented and broke himself so that others live. His life motto was how he could break himself for others and be a leaven for them. This not only was towards the sheep that he ministered as a Parish Priest, but he was this beacon of hope to everyone who needed him. He was there for him. He 'wombed' humanity with the love of God that he encountered. People fondly called him, "Amcho Patiu" encapsulating the love that enveloped his presence wherever and whomever he came in contact with. In a word, affectionately we can call him as 'the disciple after the heart of the Master'.

Fr. Faustino's main preoccupation was salvation of souls. As a pastor, his mindset was to usher sinners back to the love of God, in keeping with the words of the Lord. "Set your hearts on His Kingdom first, and other things will be given you as well" (Mk2: 33). His focus was always on the person and not the sinner.

The appointment of Fr. Faustino as the Parish Priest of Sancoale lent new impetus to the development of the village and to the advancement of the cause of beatification of St. Joseph Vaz. He intended the sister along with other pilgrims to embark on the pilgrimage to encounter St. Joseph Vaz as a person knowing fully well that St. Joseph Vaz was a Saint who touched people in umpteenth ways while restoring their filial trust in God who loves every human being. The zealous priest had set himself on discovering the spiritual values and devoted himself, soul and body for the cause so dear to the heart of every Goan.

The activity of this priest saw no limits. He embraced everyone in the love of his Master. People of other faiths gave witness of their affection for him. He would see that sisters regularly visit each family especially give





great importance to adult catechism, which was the need of the hour. This in turn made the sisters feel connected with the families and thus knitting them together in the redeeming love of God. He taught the sisters to replicate the divine intervention of God in human form and thus be the extended hands of God. In keeping with the social teachings of the Church, Fr. Faustino's heart would go out to the educationally and economically backward villagers.

The forty years that he was the parish priest of Sancoale make him feel the pulse of the people and thus he intuitively encountered the realistic problem of environment pollution caused by affluent from the fertilizer factory that was seeping into the ground water and causing damage to the health of human beings, animal life and vegetation. This agitated his mind and he, in his own ways that a 'saint' can do, helped his parishioners to face this malaise.

The material as well as the spiritual welfare of his parishioners whom he had served for four decades, was of equal concern to Fr. Faustino. He encouraged Sisters to involve themselves in social problems and thus bring to life the Gospel of Jesus who called everyone to be a missionary in the 'sit im leben'.

Fr. Faustino's heart which was sensitive to the woes of the poor, could not restrict itself to only spiritual matters. Word like 'liberation theology' were not known, nor were slogans like "option for the poor" or "action at grass root level" being used. Thus Fr. Faustino was a man who was ahead of his times and in the heart of the Masters' prompting. Today, Fr. Faustino stands tall with his words and calling all of us to be a beacon of hope and the light which lights the heart of every person who is heavily burdened.

## "DILEXIT NOS": REDISCOVERING CHRIST'S LOVE

*Cont. on from 15*

on their examples to encourage Catholics to embrace the Sacred Heart as a source of renewal and grace.

7. **The Wounded Heart of Christ as a Wellspring of Peace and Unity** - In response to secularization and division, Francis sees the heart as a source of unity. He urges communities to reconcile and unite through the heart of Christ, promoting peace and justice.

Lastly, the Pontiff, calls on the faithful to return to the heart of Christ, which offers the healing, peace, and love needed to address the world's challenges. Pope Francis in no. 220, concludes with a prayer that the wounded world may regain its heart, asking for God's mercy and love to heal the divisions and challenges we face.

## Spirituality

## ST. FRANCIS XAVIER: MISSIONARY EXTRAORDINAIRE

*Rev. Fr. Pedro Rodrigues S.J*



St Francis Xavier, one of the most celebrated Christian missionaries of all time, is remembered for his unwavering dedication to spreading the Gospel across vast and foreign lands. Born on April 7, 1506, in the Kingdom of Navarre (modern-day Spain), he was raised in a noble family and destined for a prestigious life. However, his path would drastically shift after he met St. Ignatius of Loyola at the University of Paris, a meeting that would ignite his passion for missionary work and ultimately lead him to become one of the founders of the Society of Jesus. (Jesuits)

### Early Life and call to mission

Francis Xavier's early life was marked by privilege and intellectual pursuit. He was educated at the best schools, excelling in academic and other extracurricular activities. By the time he was in Paris, he was known for his sharp mind and ambition. But everything changed when he encountered Ignatius of Loyola, who was forming a small group of men committed to living lives of radical service to God. Despite Xavier's initial reluctance, Ignatius's fervour and commitment to the cause slowly won him over. He joined this small group, taking vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and became one of the first seven Jesuits in 1534.

Ignatius's influence pushed Xavier to look beyond personal ambition and consider a life of service to others. Xavier, inspired by Ignatius's spiritual exercises, came to embrace the Jesuits mission to travel wherever they were needed to spread the Gospel.

### A bold missionary Spirit

In 1541, after a request from King John III of Portugal for missionaries to accompany his expeditions to the East Indies, Francis Xavier was chosen to embark on this journey. He set sail from Lisbon, leaving Europe behind, and arrived in Goa, India, in 1542. This marked the beginning of his extraordinary missionary work, which would take him across Asia to places few Europeans had ever ventured.

Xavier's missionary efforts were characterized by his deep love for the people he served and his ability to adapt to the cultures he encountered. He realized that learning the local languages and understanding the customs were essential to effective evangelization. In India, he tirelessly preached to the coastal communities, ministering to the poor, sick and marginalized. He travelled widely, from the southern India coast to Sir Lanka, spreading

Christianity through his preaching and his care for the most vulnerable.

One of his most remarkable journeys was to Japan in 1549. Arriving in a land with a complex and highly structured culture, Xavier struggled at first but quickly understood that to communicate with the Japanese, he had to approach them with deep respect for their way of life. He learned their language and presented the Christian message in a way that resonated with their world view. Though his time in Japan was brief, it laid the foundation for the growth of Christianity there.

### **Passion and persistence in Spreading the Gospel:**

St. Francis Xavier's work wasn't without challenges. He faced opposition from local ruler, linguistic barriers, and sometimes the indifference of the people. But his zeal never wavered. His letters to his Jesuit brothers in Europe detail both the difficulties and the triumphs of his missionary work. They speak of his exhaustion, yet also his profound joy at bringing the message of Christ to those who had never heard it.

Xavier was known for his boundless energy and relentless missionary spirit. He believed that every soul, no matter how distant or foreign, deserve the chance to hear the Gospel.

His compassion for the poor and his willingness to ensure hardship for the sake of his mission earned him the title *"Missionary to the East."*

### **Final Mission and Legacy**

Francis Xavier's final mission was to China, a country he longed to enter to continue spreading the faith. However, he never made it. In 1552 on an island off the coast of China,

exhausted from his travels and weakened by illness, Xavier passed away at the age of 46. Though his earthly life ended his legacy lived on.

The missionary spirit of St. Francis Xavier continues to inspire generations of Christians. His life exemplifies the Jesuit motto, "For the Greater Glory of God", as he gave everything he had for the Gospel. His canonization in 1622, alongside his friend St. Ignatius of Loyola, was a recognition of his extraordinary contribution to the spread of Christianity across the globe.

To this day, St. Francis Xavier is a symbol of the power of faith, resilience, and the willingness to embrace the unknown in service to a higher calling. He remains a model for all who seek to share their beliefs with love, respect, and tireless dedication.



Global

## THE DIGITAL DIVIDE: OVERCOMING BARRIERS IN THE CATHOLIC FAITH



*Rev. Sr. Joeyanna D'Souza FSP*

### Introduction:

In a world where technology seems to connect everyone, it is easy to assume that people everywhere can access information, support, and community through digital means. But this is far from the truth. The digital divide remains a pressing issue worldwide, even within the global Catholic community. This gap affects people's ability to engage fully with their faith, stay connected to the Church, and find resources to deepen their spiritual lives. Overcoming these barriers requires creativity, compassion, and a commitment to inclusivity, as well as active support from Catholic leaders and laypeople alike.

### 1. What is the Digital Divide?

The digital divide refers to the uneven distribution of information technology across different regions, economic classes, and demographic groups. The divide exists on a global scale, with many third world countries still struggling with inadequate internet infrastructure and expensive internet services. Even in



wealthier countries, some rural areas lack reliable high-speed internet, and many families can't afford multiple digital devices. Within the Catholic faith, the digital divide restricts access to online resources that many of us take for granted.

### 2. How the Digital Divide Affects Catholic Faith Practice

For Catholics around the world, the digital divide limits participation in various aspects of faith and practice. Some of the most noticeable areas impacted include:

**2.1. Mass Attendance and Livestreaming:** During the COVID-19 pandemic, parishes globally adapted to virtual Masses, allowing those unable to attend physically to still participate. Even today, as many churches continue offering livestreamed Masses, those lacking access to the internet miss out on this alternative to physical attendance.

**2.2. Religious Education and Faith Formation:** Many Catholic dioceses provide online classes, e-books, and videos on their Youtube or Vimeo or other platforms to support young Catholics and adults in their faith journey. But without internet access, individuals are often cut off from these opportunities to deepen their understanding of the Catholic faith. These

resources remain inaccessible, limiting their spiritual growth and connection with the broader Catholic tradition.

**2.3. Social Connection within the Catholic Community:** Faith communities thrive on connection, support, and shared experiences. Online platforms like social media, forums, and video calls enable Catholics to build and sustain relationships across geographic boundaries. Unfortunately, the digital divide prevents some Catholics from participating in these communities, especially those in remote or underserved areas.

### **3. Initiatives and Solutions for Bridging the Digital Divide**

Addressing the digital divide within the Catholic community requires multifaceted solutions that consider local contexts and available resources. Various initiatives are already helping to bridge this gap:

**3.1. Investing in Infrastructure and Affordable Access:** Some Catholic organizations and dioceses have partnered with tech companies to improve internet infrastructure in remote or underserved areas. These efforts aim to make internet access more affordable and reliable, allowing parishioners to stay connected to their local Church community and the global Catholic network.

**3.2. Using Alternative Media:** Where digital access remains limited, Catholic leaders have turned to more accessible media, like radio, print publications and SMS. Catholic radio stations broadcast daily Mass, religious programs, and teachings, reaching those who may not have internet access. By creatively utilizing multiple media channels, the Church continues reaching out to all believers, even without digital access.

**3.3. Promoting Digital Literacy and Device Sharing:** In some communities, lay volunteers are promoting digital literacy programs, teaching people how to use digital devices. Additionally, parish initiatives encourage device-sharing practices among families and friends, maximizing the limited digital resources available in the community. Young tech-savvy parishioners are being encouraged to act as "digital missionaries." They help those in their community to access online faith resources, offer technical support, and guide others in navigating the digital space safely.

### **Conclusion**

The digital divide remains a significant challenge for the Catholic Church in a rapidly changing world. By continuing to invest in infrastructure, promote digital literacy, and encourage inclusive practices, Catholics can help bring the faith to everyone, regardless of their access to technology. Catholic leaders, including Pope Francis, have emphasized the importance of addressing the digital divide as part of the Church's mission. In his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, he encourages inclusivity and solidarity, reminding Catholics that they must work toward a society where everyone has equal opportunities. As Catholics work to close the digital divide, they ensure that everyone has access to resources for spiritual growth and connection, they embody the universal message of love and support that lies at the core of the Church's mission.



Health page:

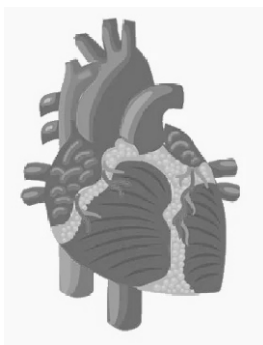
## CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES AND ITS PREVENTION

*Aleeza Noronha*



**Cardiovascular Diseases(CVD) also known as heart diseases are a group of disorders of the heart and blood vessels. They include:**

- Coronary heart disease: A disease of the blood vessels supplying the heart muscle.
- Cerebrovascular disease: A disease of the blood vessels supplying the brain.
- Peripheral arterial disease: A disease of blood vessels supplying upper and lower limbs.
- Rheumatic heart disease: Damage to the heart muscle and heart valves from rheumatic fever caused by streptococcal bacteria.
- Congenital heart disease: Birth defects that affect the normal development and functioning of the heart.
- Deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism: Blood clots in the leg veins, which can dislodge and move to the heart and lungs.



According to World Health Organisation (WHO) cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death globally, taking an estimated 17.9 million lives each year. Coronary heart disease prevalence rates in India have been estimated over the past several decades and have ranged from 1.6% to 7.4% in rural populations and from 1% to 13.2% in urban population.

**Some of the risk factors leading to CVD are:**

Age, family history, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes mellitus, smoking, alcoholism, environmental pollutions and most importantly sedentary lifestyle and unhealthy diet.

We need to focus on inculcating healthy habits to have a healthy lifestyle in order to prevent health problems especially that of heart like heart attacks and strokes.

**On the way to acquiring a healthy heart one must:**

- Quit smoking and alcohol
- Try to have a healthy diet such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains and limit saturated fats, sodium and sugars. Eating healthy will help prevent conditions like high blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes. Along with healthy food, about 3-4Litres of water intake is a must for

*Cont. on page 23*

## Mission

# RESOURCES FOR DIGITAL MISSIONARIES

*Andrew Amsan*



As per a study conducted by the Christian research group Barna, most people who are either cold or lukewarm in their faith seek answers to their spiritual questions online. Whether it be YouTube or a simple Google search, the trend points out the fact that people are more willing to seek a digital source than a religious leader. This underlines the importance of Digital Missionaries and if you have a calling to serve the Lord in this capacity here are some tools and resources that will help:

## A course

There is a lot of information on the internet but discerning what is useful for your calling can be challenging. A formal education under the guidance of learned religious leaders can help one form a solid foundation necessary to understand the spread of the gospel as it was intended to be. Look for a leadership course or Bible study program at your nearest church.

## Youtube/Social media

Want to set up an Instagram account to share daily meditation/ verses but aren't sure how to get it done? YouTube is undoubtedly one of the best resources to learn about social media. There are enough resources to guide on every aspect of producing digital content.

## Newsletters

Nothing like a crisply written newsletter in the mailbox. With so much audio and video content out there, a beautifully crafted article could help those who want to avoid going through the digital clutter out there. Newsletters are also a good way to keep in touch with your subscribers and listeners.

## Online Bibles

There is no doubt that a physical copy of the bible is a must for every Christian and even so more for a missionary. But there is no harm in taking help from online resources like Biblestudytools.com or Bible Hub. Online resources like these are an easier way of going through Bible verses and seeing cross references. You also have the option of reading the same verse in different languages and translations.

## Books/E-books

Digital Missionaries should be open to learning more about the scripture. Read commentaries on them written by respected theologians and Christian Philosophers. Imitation of Christ is a book highly recommended by theologians.

These are a few of the resources readily available to better equip digital missionaries but there is no substitute for Bible reading and praying.

## Jubilee Vibes

## JUBILEE: A SPIRITUAL MILESTONE

*Rev. Sr. Joanita Dias S.F.N.*



“**Jubilee**” is the name given to a “holy year” celebrated by the Universal Church, uniting hearts and minds for the sake of the Renewal in the Church and can be considered as Spiritual milestone, a “**great symphony of prayer**”. It is a time of Grace, spiritual renewal, forgiveness, pilgrimage, reconciliation, liberation and a moment of genuine, personal encounter with the Lord.

In special cases, the Pope has called for extraordinary years of Jubilee. It is a time to re-establish a proper relationship with God, with one another and the Creation. Jubilee year is set aside to encourage the faithful for the remission of sins. It is about seeking and giving forgiveness - asking God and one another for forgiveness, and offering forgiveness to the people we need to forgive.

Pope Francis has announced that 2025 will be a Jubilee Year, something which happens every 25 years. The theme for Jubilee 2025 is “**Pilgrims of Hope,**” and it will be a year of hope for a world suffering the impacts of war, the ongoing effects of COVID-19 pandemic, and the climate crisis.

The practice of a jubilee year has ancient roots in the Jewish tradition and evidence for it can be found in the Old Testament (Cf. Leviticus 25) which was marked by the forgiveness of debts, liberation of slaves, and the return of land to its original owners. It is a reminder of God's providence and mercy.

The first Jubilee was declared by Pope Boniface VIII on 22nd February 1300 (Feast of the Chair of St. Peter) and since then the Church has designated each new Jubilee as a special year of grace, forgiveness, reconciliation and offering the faithful an opportunity to obtain a plenary indulgence.

Pope Francis officially declared 2025 a Year of Jubilee with a papal bull, titled “*Spes Non Confudit*,” meaning “*Hope Does Not Disappoint*.” His Holiness said that “The four Constitutions of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, together with the Magisterium of these recent decades, will continue to provide direction and guidance to God's people, so that it can press forward in its mission of bringing the joyful proclamation of the Gospel to everyone.”

In this year of prayer in preparation for the Jubilee, let us unite in prayer for the outpouring of graces for belief, love and adoration of the Eucharist and join



the Holy Father in this "event of great spiritual, ecclesial, and social significance in the life of the Church." Unitedly, let us "fan the flame of hope that has been given us, and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision.... **(Pope Francis)**"

The Jubilee Year will begin with the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica on Christmas Eve 2024. Pope Francis: "In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring...." Jubilee is an opportunity to be renewed in hope - a significant celebration that commemorates a spiritual milestone or an anniversary. God's Word helps us find reasons for the Hope.

Let us use these providential moments to renew and deepen our love for Jesus Christ and our dedication to living our Catholic faith.

I pray that we will open our hearts to God's Spirit and that we may hear again our baptismal calling to be saints and missionary disciples. May the Jubilee year awaken in all of us, a new awareness of our great dignity as children of God and our responsibility to spread the Gospel and build up God's kingdom through our daily lives.

Let us pray that the Jubilee Year will be a special time to rediscover the Divine Will of God - a time of renewal and especially a time of new enthusiasm in our commitment to love God and one another.

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## **CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES AND ITS PREVENTION**

*Cont. from 20*

- every individual. Water keeps humans hydrated and free of infections.
- Good quality sleep is also important for every individual. Required hours of sleep for an adult is 7-9 hours per day. Resting allows body to repair heart and blood vessels and also prevents comorbidities.
- Being physically active is of grave importance. Routine physical exercises help to keep the heart and body healthy. Everyday 10minute walk should be followed religiously which will not only keep the person active but will also help to get the weight under control.
- There is no life without stress. We need to overcome it by doing what we like and what is best for us such as spending some quality time with the environment. Relaxing and meditating will improve emotional, mental and physical health.
- Medications prescribed by doctors should be taken on time and no dose shall be missed. Proper medical and hospital care must be taken in mere health emergencies.

And thus, due to this alarming rise in cardiovascular diseases one must focus on its prevention as it is said "PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE".

## Women

**EMBRACING MISSIONARY DISCIPLESHIP:  
THE IMPACT OF AD GENTES***Bro. Senbern Fernandes ofm cap*

The *Ad Gentes* decree was instrumental in transforming the way the Church conducts missions in today's world. The declaration emphasises that “The Church is inherently missionary” (AG 2). This mission primarily targets “the nations” (ad gentes) and also includes evangelising those already baptised but in need of a deeper transformation. The missionary spirit is not limited to priests or religious leaders, but extends to all baptised Christians, encouraging them to embrace missionary discipleship.

**The invitation to join in missions is for all**

*Ad Gentes* gives a universal call for missions. The document highlights that every person who has received baptism is a missionary disciple, with the duty of sharing the Gospel through their daily actions by whatever way possible. This idea aligns with Pope Francis' message in *Evangelii Gaudium*, emphasising that all individuals within the



People of God become missionary disciples through their baptism (EG, 120). Being a missionary follower nowadays means demonstrating the teachings of Christ not only in traditional mission territories, but also in one's own familiar culture and environment. (RM 33). Secularisation, lack of interest in religion, and moral relativism have created opportunities for evangelisation not only in the Western world but also where we are. Missionary discipleship can be found not only in foreign regions but also within households, offices, and community settings where faith and the Gospel may not be fully embraced or understood.

**The core characteristic of the Church is its focus on mission**

*Ad Gentes* also emphasises that the primary duty of the Church is to be



missionary (AG 2). This declaration demonstrates the close connection which exists between the identity of the Church and the mission given to her by Christ. Just as Christ was sent by the Father, the Church is also sent, to share the Gospel with all nations. Mission is not an *optional aspect* for the Church, but rather its *essential purpose*.

Today, the Church is urged to change from a mentality of 'maintenance mode' to 'missionary mode,' emphasising evangelisation and outreach instead of just maintaining what already exists. Pope Francis has been consistently promoting a Church that is active, advising us not to focus on ourselves and being isolated.

### **Mission focused on offering assistance and demonstrating generosity**

Ad Gentes also emphasises the significance of service and gestures of kindness in missionary efforts. Transmitting the Gospel message should always be accompanied by love and justice. Today's missionary disciples not only share the Gospel through words, but also demonstrate it through actions, especially by assisting the underprivileged, marginalised, and suffering individuals. Take for example Sr. Nirmala Joshi, the first successor to Mother Teresa was coming from a Nepali Hindu Brahmin family. The Gospel message reached her through the charitable deeds of Mother Teresa and with it she was able to encounter Christ. Now we are in a period marked by numerous humanitarian crises, inequality, and injustice, being a missionary disciple means advocating for human dignity, peace, and the common good. This method aligns with the contemporary view of mission not just as converting others, but also promoting total transformation.

### **To sum up**

In the rapidly evolving world, missionary discipleship, as outlined in Ad Gentes, remains just as crucial as it has always been. The document looks at a Church that is essentially focused on mission, which is encouraging all the faithful to actively and genuinely share their faith joyfully. In order to share the Gospel, both in traditional mission fields and secularised societies, one must exhibit courage, creativity, and unwavering commitment. Missionary disciples in the present should be ready to communicate the Gospel through speaking and showing compassion in society, assisting the needy, and displaying Christ's love to all.

### **For further reading:**

1. *Ad Gentes*, Vatican II's decree on missionary activity.
2. *Redemptoris missio*, encyclical by Pope John Paul II.
3. *Evangelii Gaudium*, Apostolic Exhortation by Pope Francis

## Formation

## NAVIGATING FAITH IN THE AGE OF TECHNOLOGY



**Rev. Fr. Peter Fernandes, sfx.**

The *Ad Gentes* decree was instrumental in transforming the way the Church conducts missions in today's world. The declaration emphasises that "The Church is inherently missionary" (AG 2). This mission primarily targets "the nations" (*ad gentes*) and also includes evangelising those already baptised but in need of a deeper transformation. The missionary spirit is not limited to priests or religious leaders, but extends to all baptised Christians, encouraging them to embrace missionary discipleship.

### **The invitation to join in missions is for all**

*Ad Gentes* gives a universal call for missions. The document highlights that every believer, have a role in the Church's work of evangelisation. Every person who has received baptism is a missionary disciple, with the duty of sharing the Gospel through their daily actions by whatever way possible. This idea aligns with Pope Francis' message in *Evangelii Gaudium*, emphasising that



all individuals within the People of God become missionary disciples through their baptism (EG, 120). Today's understanding of evangelization has expanded from only clergy and religious being in charge of mission to now including all the faithful.

Being a missionary follower nowadays means demonstrating the teachings of Christ not only in traditional mission territories, but also in one's own familiar culture and environment. (RM 33). Secularisation, lack of interest in religion, and moral relativism have created opportunities for evangelisation not only in the Western world but also where we are. Missionary discipleship can be found not only in foreign regions but also within households, offices, and community settings where faith and the Gospel may not be fully embraced or understood.

### **The core characteristic of the Church is its focus on mission**

*Ad Gentes* also emphasises that the primary duty of the Church is to be missionary (AG 2). This declaration demonstrates the close connection which exists between the identity of the Church and the mission given to her by Christ. Just as Christ was sent by the Father, the Church is also sent, to share the Gospel with all nations. Mission is not an *optional aspect* for the Church, but rather its *essential purpose*.

Today, the Church is urged to change from a mentality of 'maintenance

mode' to 'missionary mode,' emphasising evangelisation and outreach instead of just maintaining what already exists. Pope Francis has been consistently promoting a Church that is active, advising us not to focus on ourselves and being isolated. We are living in a globalised society, the contemporary Church needs to fully accept its missionary essence and engage with marginalised people in a holistic manner, addressing both their physical and spiritual needs.

### **The role is shaped by the significance of context and inculturation**

A key emphasis in *Ad Gentes* is on the concept of inculturation, which involves presenting the Gospel in a way that is one with a particular culture while upholding its core principles. This issue remains particularly relevant today. The world today is marked by cultural diversity and pluralism, the Church should avoid pushing Western versions of Christianity during its missionary efforts. Instead of that, the goal should be to connect with people through dialogue, respect native traditions, and present the Gospel in a way that resonates with the cultural context while also maintaining its core message.

In today's digital world, as cultures become increasingly similar, inculturation provides a means for the Church to demonstrate reverence and gratitude for local cultures while spreading the transformative message of the Gospel. This approach encourages missionary disciples to be conscious of the different social, political, and religious settings they encounter. Today's task goes beyond just conversing, it also involves hearing, understanding, and building relationships.

### **Mission focused on offering assistance and demonstrating generosity**

*Ad Gentes* also emphasises the significance of service and gestures of kindness in missionary efforts. Transmitting the Gospel message should always be accompanied by love and justice. Today's missionary disciples not only share the Gospel through words, but also demonstrate it through actions, especially by assisting the underprivileged, marginalised, and suffering individuals. Take for example Sr. Nirmala Joshi, the first successor to Mother Teresa was coming from a Nepali Hindu Brahmin family. The Gospel message reached her through the charitable deeds of Mother Teresa and with it she was able to encounter Christ. Now we are in a period marked by numerous humanitarian crises, inequality, and injustice, being a missionary disciple means advocating for human dignity, peace, and the common good. This method aligns with the contemporary view of mission not just as converting others, but also promoting total transformation.

### **To sum up**

In the rapidly evolving world, missionary discipleship, as outlined in *Ad Gentes*, remains just as crucial as it has always been. The document looks at a Church that is essentially focused on mission, which is encouraging all the faithful to actively and genuinely share their faith joyfully. In order to share the Gospel, both in traditional mission fields and secularised societies, one must exhibit courage, creativity, and unwavering commitment. Missionary disciples in the present should be ready to communicate the Gospel through speaking and showing compassion in society, assisting the needy, and displaying Christ's love to all.

## Nature

## UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

*Rhea Duarte*



Using technology for sustainable solutions involves leveraging innovations like renewable energy, smart grids, precision agriculture, and green buildings to reduce environmental impact, conserve resources, and promote economic and social sustainability.

Digital tools like drones, satellite imagery, and AI are revolutionizing conservation by providing more effective ways to monitor and protect biodiversity and natural resources. Drones enable real-time aerial surveys of wildlife, forests, and ecosystems, capturing high-resolution data in remote areas and detecting poaching or illegal logging activities. They can also monitor changes in vegetation and habitats, allowing for rapid intervention when needed. Satellite imagery offers a broad, long-term view of environmental changes, such as deforestation, land degradation, and climate shifts. This technology can track changes over time, offering critical data for studying habitat loss and guiding conservation strategies. AI plays a vital role in processing large datasets from these tools, identifying species, analysing environmental trends, and predicting the impact of climate change. AI-driven models can assess ecosystem health and detect patterns that may indicate risks to biodiversity, allowing for proactive conservation efforts on a global scale.

Digital initiatives can significantly encourage sustainable consumption, reduce waste, and promote renewable energy. Smart energy management apps help individuals and businesses track and optimize their energy use, providing insights on how to reduce consumption and shift to renewable sources. Eco-conscious e-commerce platforms can highlight sustainable products, provide transparency on sourcing, and encourage ethical consumer choices by offering sustainability ratings and carbon footprint calculators. Digital waste management systems using IoT sensors can monitor recycling bins, track waste levels, and optimize collection routes, reducing emissions from waste disposal. Additionally, platforms like peer-to-peer energy trading supported by blockchain allow users to buy and sell surplus renewable energy, encouraging broader adoption of solar and wind power. Educational apps and virtual sustainability challenges promote awareness and engage users in reducing plastic use, conserving water, and lowering energy consumption. These digital tools collectively foster a culture of sustainability, driving more responsible behaviour and systemic change.

Digital missionaries can collaborate with environmental organizations by using online platforms and digital strategies to amplify their message and engage wider audiences. Social media campaigns are a powerful tool, enabling missionaries to share the organizations' stories, projects, and achievements through engaging content like videos, infographics, and blogs, while utilizing hashtags and influencers to boost visibility. By organizing virtual events, such

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Christmas special

## INCARNATION: THE GREATEST OF ALL MIRACLES



*Rev. Fr. Jason sdb*

In today's contemporary world, we find ourselves navigating a complex landscape marked by rapid technological advancements, the ongoing wars, killing of the innocent in mass scale, refugees, immigrants, social change, and global challenges such as climate change and inequality. Amidst this backdrop, the celebration of Christmas serves as a poignant reminder of hope, love, and renewal. The birth of Jesus, which we commemorate during this season, symbolizes the arrival of peace and compassion in a world often fraught with division and strife. This Christmas, as we reflect on His teachings and the values of kindness and community, we are invited to embrace these principles in our daily lives, fostering a spirit of unity and understanding in our diverse and interconnected world.

### BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

The Mystery of Incarnation is rooted in Scripture, with key passages illuminating its significance. The Gospel of John opens with a powerful declaration: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:1, 14). This passage emphasizes the divine nature of Christ and His willingness to enter human existence. The New Testament provides various accounts that affirm the reality of the Incarnation. The Annunciation, where the angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will conceive the Son of God (Luke 1:26-38), is a pivotal moment that illustrates God's plan for salvation through the Incarnation. Furthermore, the life of Jesus, marked by His teachings, miracles, and ultimately His sacrificial death and resurrection, serves as a testament to His dual nature as fully God and fully man.

**Here are a few suggestions to live out the mystery of Incarnation in our lives this Christmas:**

1. **Embrace Generosity:** Share your resources, whether time, gifts, or support, with those in need. This reflects the spirit of giving that is central to the Christmas message.
2. **Foster Connection:** Spend quality time with family and friends, strengthening relationships and creating a sense of community. This can involve simple acts like sharing meals, engaging in meaningful conversations, or participating in community events.
3. **Practice Forgiveness:** Use this season as an opportunity to mend broken relationships. Forgiveness can be a powerful way to embody the message of reconciliation that Christmas represents.
4. **Promote Kindness:** Engage in acts of kindness within your community. This could be volunteering, helping a neighbor, or simply offering a smile to someone who may be struggling.



5. **Reflect on Spirituality:** Take time for personal reflection and spiritual growth. This could involve attending religious services, confessions, reading scripture, or engaging in prayer and meditation to deepen your understanding of the Christmas message.
6. **Advocate for Justice:** Stand up for those who are marginalized or oppressed in society. Living out the message of Christmas includes advocating for social justice and equality.
7. **Mindful Giving:** Choose gifts that are thoughtful and personal rather than materialistic. Consider handmade gifts or experiences that can be shared.
8. **Reflect and Appreciate:** Take time to reflect on the past year, express gratitude for the positive moments, and set intentions for the year ahead.
9. **Embrace Simplicity:** Focus on the essence of the holiday rather than the commercial aspects. Simplifying decorations and celebrations can help you appreciate the true spirit of Christmas.
10. **Create Traditions:** Establish new traditions that reflect your values and interests. This could include crafting, baking, or storytelling sessions that bring everyone together.

### Conclusion

I recall the words of St. Thomas Aquinas: "*The Incarnation is the greatest of all miracles, for it is the union of the divine and human natures in one person.*" Aquinas articulates the unique and miraculous nature of the Incarnation, underscoring its significance in Christian theology. This mystery is not merely a historical event but a transformative reality that continues to resonate in the lives of believers today, the divine entering into human lives. Let's participate in the ongoing story of God's redemptive work in the world.

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## UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

*Cont. from page 28*

as webinars, fundraisers, or live Q and A sessions with environmental experts, digital missionaries can increase participation and foster community support.

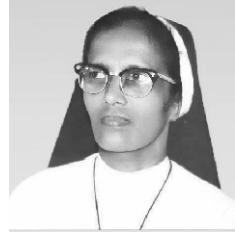
They can also leverage SEO and content marketing to ensure the organizations' causes rank higher on search engines, attracting more visitors and donors. In addition, digital missionaries can use email marketing to send regular updates, calls to action, and success stories, creating stronger connections with supporters. By utilizing data analytics, they can target specific demographics to effectively promote petitions, volunteer opportunities, and sustainable practices, strengthening the organizations' impact and reach.

In conclusion, technology plays a pivotal role in driving sustainable solutions by optimizing resource use, reducing environmental impact, and promoting renewable energy adoption. From renewable energy systems and smart grids to AI-powered conservation tools and digital platforms for responsible consumption, technological innovations are key to addressing global sustainability challenges. By integrating these advancements, societies can create more efficient, eco-friendly systems that support long-term environmental health, economic growth, and social well-being.

## HOFCOM REPORTS

### Death

Rev. Sr. Placida Fernandes sfn, (Fidelis) from Pilerne, Bardez Goa, India, a member of Holy Family Sisters(SFN), left for heavenly abode on 12 July 2024, at Eleanora Linse Bhavan, Sancoale. Sr. Placida was a woman of prayer, dedication, jovial and simple. She served in our Archdiocese through different apostolates – as a boarding mistress taking care of the children in our boarding houses, teaching the little ones, pastoral work and family visits, etc. This is what she always said:



“Jivitachem ponn somptoch, konnem tori mhozo mogan ugddas korcho mhunn, hanvem mhaka dil'lem karya zobabdaren pall'lam”

### Felicitation

On October 10, 2024, the Founders' Day of Sisters of Holy Family Congregation and the felicitation of Auxiliary Bishop Simiao Purificação Fernandes, was held at Holy Family Sisters Convent, in Sancoale, Goa. The event began with a floral welcome by Superior General Sr. Berna Rodrigues and a dance by the hostel girls. Bishop Fernandes, the guest of honour, presided over the Holy Eucharist, emphasizing our call to be signs of hope, in line with Pope Francis's Jubilee 2025 message. The program included personal encounters, video clippings, and a felicitation ceremony with tokens of appreciation.

### St. Joseph Vaz High School Achievements

Students of St. Joseph Vaz High School, Sancoale, showcased exceptional talent across various inter-school events. The school secured top positions in numerous categories, including project competitions, singing, and PowerPoint presentations. The



dedication of the students was evident as they won accolades in elocution, effective public speaking, and dance competitions.

Notably, at St. Michael's Convent High School, Anjuna: “Glow on 2024”, St. Joseph Vaz High School received the prestigious Rolling Trophy, highlighting their overall excellence. Additionally, the school's U-17 girls' football team achieved an impressive state runners-up position and 3rd Place in DSYA U-17 Football Tournament.

These accomplishments reflect the students' hard work and the school's supportive environment, bringing great pride to St. Joseph Vaz High School.

### **Musical Operetta**

In a captivating display of talent and faith, 1,440 students of Perpetual Succour Convent High School, Navelim, staged an operetta titled *The Ship That Sailed to Save Souls*, portraying the life and legacy of St. Francis Xavier.

The story emphasized his close friendship with St. Ignatius of Loyola, who inspired him to join the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). The final act vividly portrayed St. Francis Xavier's missionary journey, culminating in his voyage to India. The grand finale featured a powerful four-voice rendition of the hymn *San Francis Xavier*.

As the saying goes, "No one can whistle a symphony. It takes a whole orchestra to play it." The operetta was a collective effort of talent, creativity, and prayer, led by Headmistress Sr. Libia Fernandes, her dedicated staff, and the students. A movie based on the operetta will be released soon.



### **XVIII Solemn Exposition of the Sacred Relics of St. Francis Xavier**

The XVIII Solemn Exposition of the Sacred Relics of St. Francis Xavier has commenced on Thursday, 21 November 2024, and will conclude on Sunday, 05 January 2025. The opening ceremony began with a Solemn Eucharist presided by His Excellency Archbishop Anil Couto of Delhi on 21 November, followed by a solemn procession to the See Cathedral Church, where the Sacred Relics will be venerated for 45 days.

On 05 January 2025, the Sacred Relics will be taken back to the Basilica in another solemn procession starting at 9:30 a.m., culminating with the Solemn Eucharist to mark the closing of the Exposition.

### **Jubilee 2025**

A Jubilee Year is traditionally proclaimed by the Universal Church every 25 years. It is a particular year set aside to encourage the faithful to embark on pilgrimages, to repent of their sins and forgive the sins of others, and to renew a focus on the spiritual life.

The 2025 Jubilee will officially open on December 24, 2024, at 7pm with a Mass presided over by Pope Francis in St. Peter's Square. Hope is the unifying theme of the Ordinary Jubilee of 2025 "Spes non confundit. Hope does not disappoint." The Jubilee Year begins with the traditional opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica on December 24, 2024 by Pope Francis and will remain open until the closing of the Holy Door on January 6, 2026, the solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord.







# MISSIONARIES OF FAITH



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To know more about us drop a line to:  
**THE VOCATION PROMOTER**  
Holy Family Generalate, Fr. Faustino Road,  
P.O. Cortalim, Sancoale, Goa 403710 Tel: 0832 2551355

