

CEO SPEAK



Mark S. Clive
General Secretary & CEO

A new look 'NDY Today' is in your hand. Ever since it has been launched there has been a conscious effort to improve upon the concept, design and matter to make the fortnightly newsletter much more readable and meaningful. I am sure you would like the newsletter in its new Avtar.

Even though Pandemic clouds are still hovering over us. But God has been kind to us. Most of our activities are catching up fast and guests are back at the Tourist Hostel, somewhat easing our fiscal burden.

The Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) has taken space on the 4th floor in CCL Building. Our association with this business chamber I am sure will benefit us.

We have also added human resources. Two new Assistant General Secretaries --- Noel Phillips and Hemant Agrawal -- have been appointed.

Christmas celebrations are still under the wrap though due to the pandemic. Secretaries have put their heads together and several ideas have emerged. Soon we will be able to give a concrete shape to these ideas and make them public.

It was good to see noted Supreme Court lawyer Pavan Duggal, an old friend of New Delhi YMCA, taking part in a Webinar on Stress in online education.

We are also proud of brothers Steve and John Alexander for making rapid strides in the field of music. Two years back NDY had picked Steve to go to Germany on Cultural Exchange programme. Later he also participated in the International Youth Festival in New Delhi and won prizes. Now a national daily has featured them much to our delight. NDY wishes them all the best for greater laurels.

God bless all

Mark

NDY, WHERE STARS ARE BORN

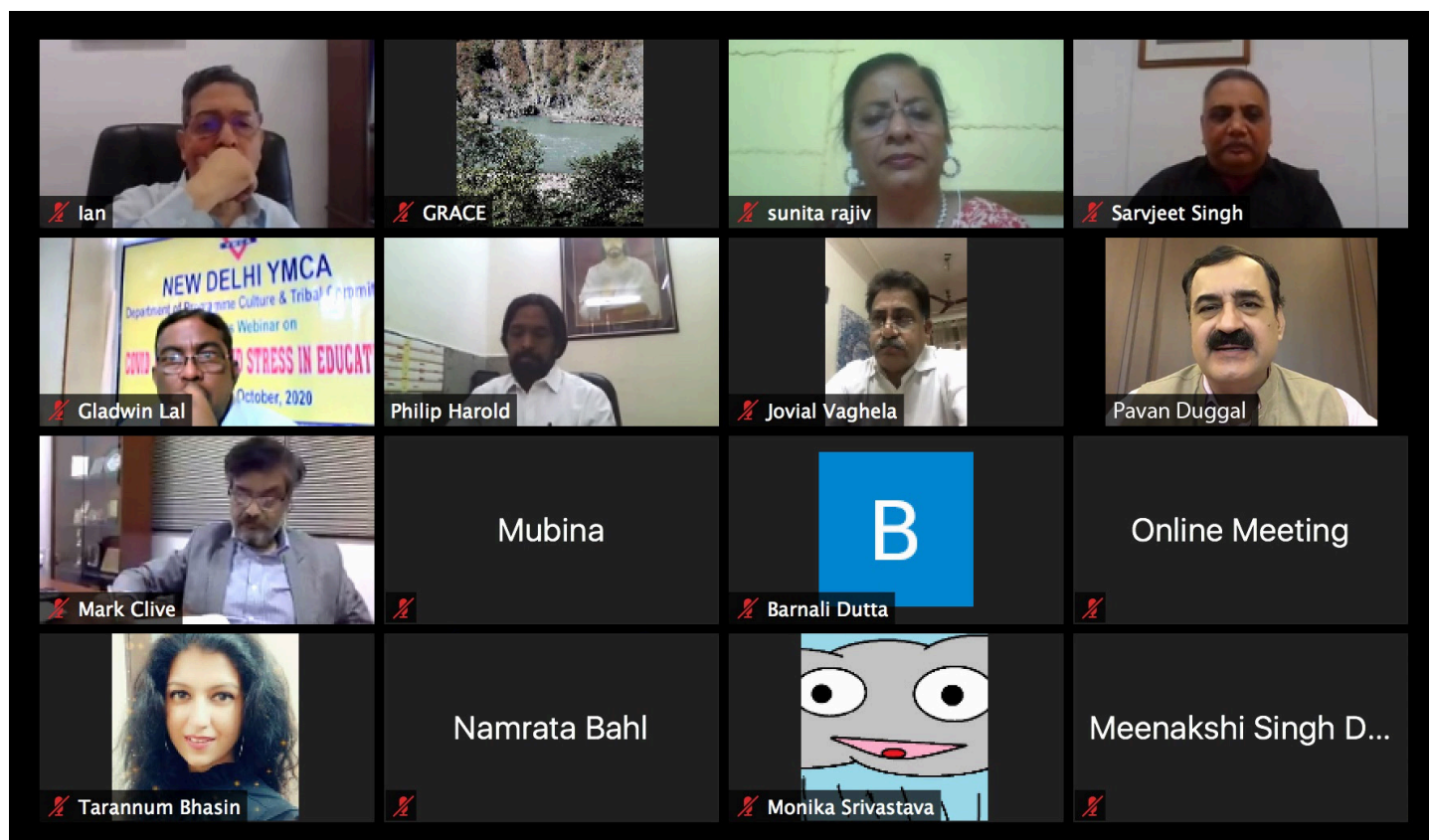
A New Delhi YMCA selection panel last year was extremely surprised to see young John walk in to the conference hall where members had to pick young students for a cultural exchange programme with Germany. Then in Standard X, at St Columba's School, John Alexander was brimming with confidence. His swagger was enough to make him qualify for the trip. That he played Saxophone was an additional stamp on his candidature.

Barely a few minutes after John, his younger brother Steve faced the panel. He was even smarter, with a shiny black bowtie around his neck. He too replied confidently and almost made it but for be-



ing under age. With a heavy heart the selection panel had to say no to him. Like elder brother John, Steve was also musically inclined.

Last year when New Delhi YMCA organised the International Youth Festival, John performed as a member of Team NDY. Perform he did and with distinction! He won a gold and a silver medal in the Festival. He had arrived. Today, the two brothers are much acclaimed performers in the Delhi musical circuit. Recently, the Alexander brothers were featured in the national daily, The Times Of India. The New Delhi YMCA family obviously feels proud of their feat and wishes the musical brothers best in their musical endeavour. ■



GOLDEN AGE OF CYBER CRIME HAS BEGUN: DUGGAL

The New Delhi YMCA organised a webinar on stress in education during Covid-19 on Saturday, 31st October. Several educationists, school principals and teachers participated in the webinar.

Noted Supreme Court lawyer and cyber law expert Pavan Duggal also took part in the webinar.

The participants were unanimous that in the digital education system

"self discipline and self direction' were essential. It was felt that online education system has advantage in that it gives a chance even to those students who may otherwise be shy to interact in a physical face-to-face scenario.

Duggal also spoke about the new vistas that online education has opened. But he also cautioned about the negative side effects.

"Today we are seeing fantastic new

opportunities. Covid-19 has acted as a steroid and digitisation has suddenly begun all around us. We are so much dependant on Internet and with that dependence and in cyberspace come additional issues," Mr Duggal said. He however said that in the virtual world of education there were issues pertaining to online education, cyber security and cyber crime.

"Golden age of cyber crime has begun," Mr Duggal said explaining about the online crimes. His reference was to phishing, cyber theft and all similar crimes. ■

CHRISTIAN INTERNATIONAL HEALTH CHAMPION FOR 2020 NO MORE

Elizabeth Gates, a noted Christian health missionary passed away in North Carolina on October 19. Gates was known as a person who led a life of unconditional love and devotion to the welfare and health of people from the margins of society.

Gates worked at the World Council of Churches from 1970-73 as secretary for Publications of the Christian Medical Commission. She also served as founding editor of Contact magazine. As a 22-year-old, Gates witnessed and contributed to crucial and historic days of the genesis of the Christian Medical Commission.

Gates had a very strong and lasting connection with Jamkhed, a small town in Ahmednagar district in Maharashtra.

The untiring work of Mabelle Arole and Raj Arole (both doctors and members of the Christian Medical Commission) inspired her. Aroles laid the foundation of Jamkhed Comprehensive Primary Health Care Project in 1971

Gates served voluntarily as the international training coordinator of the Jamkhed Comprehensive Primary Health Care Project, for six months each

year for 24 years until her death.

On 25th October, Rev. Dr Shobha Arole, current co-director of Jamkhed Comprehensive Primary Health Care Project, organised a memorial service for Gates at Jamkhed.

"Connie worked tirelessly with trainees from around the world who had come to Jamkhed to learn. She facilitated and coordinated training programs

for students, as well as supported groups coming there to learn about community-based primary health care," Dr Shobha said.

During her time supporting Jamkhed Comprehensive Primary Health Care Project, the program received 45,000 trainees – 42,000 from India and 3,000 from more than 100 countries around

the world. Gates was a founding member of Christian Connections for International Health (1988) and a founding member of the Working Group on Community-based Primary Health Care of the International Health Section of the American Public Health Association (1993). Christian Connections named Gates Christian International Health Champion for 2020 ■



WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES MOURNS PASSING OF THE MOST REV. DR JOSEPH MAR THOMA METROPOLITAN

It is with great sadness that the World Council of Churches (WCC) and its global fellowship received the news of the passing away of His Grace The Most Rev. Dr Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan, the Supreme Spiritual Head of the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church, on 18 October.

"His Grace the Most Rev. Dr Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan was an exemplary church leader, who cared for and contributed to the ecumenical movement and mission of the church from the local, regional and international contexts," said Rev. Prof. Dr Ioan Sauca, WCC interim general secretary.

Dr Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan participated as a special invitee to the WCC assemblies held in Canberra in Australia (1991), Harare in Zimbabwe (1998), Porto Alegre in Brazil (2006), and Busan in South Korea (2013). In a regional context, he was part of the leadership of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) over the last 30 years. At the national level, he guided the National Council of Churches in India; the Church's Auxiliary for Social Action and the Kerala Council of Churches and led these organisations as their president during various periods.

"We are in solidarity in prayer and fellowship, with the members of the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church in this period of bereavement. Let us celebrate the life of His Grace The Most Rev. Dr Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan and pray that God may grant him eternal rest in His Kingdom," added Sauca.



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The Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church, a founding member of WCC since 1948, has provided guidance and leadership to the ecumenical movement, both nationally and internationally. ■



YOUTH-LED SOLUTIONS SUMMIT LOOKING INTO FUTURE

The World YMCA's first-ever Youth-Led Solutions Summit on environment ended on October 23. Young environmental activists and leaders gathered online for detailed consultations and workshops.

Canadian Kehkashan Basu, 20, hosted the opening event. A One Young World ambassador and founder of the Green Hope Foundation (at the age of 12), Kehkashan said "Climate Action for me is about obtaining Climate Justice. We can mitigate climate change only when we link it to Human Rights and Development".

"The project was about multiplication and bringing things to scale," said World YMCA President Patricia Pelton.

"We are at the start in a number of ways. 600 young people have just spent a fortnight road-testing their initial ideas for climate action. We will take them to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland, next year. And we will take them to our YMCA World Council that will set the course for our future in Denmark in 2022, Pelton added.

World YMCA intends to organise two more Youth-Led Solutions Summits on jobs and mental health. "For this it will recruit more young leaders, providing more resources, and driving more

change," Pelton added.

In her keynote speech, the UN Envoy for Youth, Jayathma Wickramanayake, specifically praised the behaviour of young people: "Young people show tremendous resilience, resourcefulness and leadership, while adapting their activism to respond to the emergent challenges of the pandemic. They show unwavering passion and fearless optimism that a better world is possible". She reminded the participants that the "clock is ticking, and the countdown to 2030 is not stopping because of the pandemic: we have less

than 10 years left to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)".

Tearfund UK Theology and Networks Manager Jo Herbert-James chaired a virtual panel with five young leaders already making an environmental impact.

Anna Luisa Beserra (Brazil), Founder & CEO of Safe Drinking

Water For All, was 15 when she created a water cleaning system using solar energy. She spoke about her challenges: "Every time someone doubted me, I tried to understand why, and if it was because of my age or my gender, then I did my best to prove them wrong".

Bertine Lakjohn (Marshall Islands), an Environmental Studies student, said: "Wherever you start, just start! Even if your idea or project is really small, you can start with it, and then learn to grow with it, and as the initiative grows you can extend it to others".

Hemant Ya-u-thai (Thailand), a volunteer from Chiang Mai YMCA and English Teacher, shared: "In our school, we teach students how to calculate their environmental footprint. We also organize climate activities with local communities". He encouraged the participants: "Keep, and never give up". ■



PRAYERS FOR QUAKE VICTIMS

World Council of Churches (WCC) has called for prayers for the victims of last week's earthquake in Turkey and Greece. A 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck in the Aegean Sea off the coasts of Turkey and Greece on 30 October.

WCC interim general secretary Rev. Prof. Dr Ioan Sauca called for prayers, and expressed solidarity with churches and responders who continue to help hundreds of injured and traumatized people.

Many people have died across Turkey and Greece, and hundreds more have been injured. The city of Izmir in Turkey has been particularly badly hit, as has the Greek island of Samos. Some Turkish coastal towns have been flooded as well.

"As a global community, we offer our prayers and stand in solidarity with those who are coping with the aftermath of this disaster in Turkey and Greece," said Sauca. "We pray for the responders who are helping on the scene, we pray for medical workers, we pray for families who are mourning—may God comfort you in this time of trauma." ■

MEMBERS SPEAK

• Well done Mark and Team!
— Colville Desouza

• Dear Brother Mark ji, Praise be to Our Lord Thank you for your mail with attachment of the Newsletter. It's well published indeed. God bless your efforts.

— B V Selvaraj

• Thanks a lot
— Issac John

• Greetings! Thanks Mark and all the team members bringing out the New Delhi YMCA Newsletter, "NDY Today". Volume-5 is timely and very briefly mentioned how all our activities are conducted very nicely. During this pandemic, use of electronic tools has a major role not only in our business/educational programme but also in our social and religious responsibilities. Also taking this opportunity to congratulate the five leaders who got opportunity for another year. Special congratulations to our President Mr Vaghela ji and GS & CEO Mark Clive and all the team for nicely conducting the special online AGM. It was a historic event for our NDY.

Thanks once again and stay blessed.

— Saju Varghese

• Dear Mark, Thank you so much for forwarding the 'NDY Today', Volume 5. It makes for interesting reading. Regards
— Anjan Mukherjee

WEEK OF PRAYER AND WORLD FELLOWSHIP



World YWCA & World YMCA
WEEK OF PRAYER AND WORLD FELLOWSHIP
8-14 NOVEMBER, 2020

WAYS OF HOPE
CREATING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES
THROUGH PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY

Bible Reading Plan 2020-2021



This year, the World YMCA and World YWCA – *Week of Prayer and World Fellowship* will be held from November 8 to 14.

The theme of this year's Week of Prayer is: *Ways of hope: creating resilient communities through practical spirituality.*

Since 1904, the World YMCA and the World YWCA have traditionally come together to deliver the World Week of Prayer and World Fellowship.

Celebrated each year in the second week of November, the Week sees both organisations joining forces to produce a booklet with a theme, a set of Bible studies for each day, and an annual Bible reading plan so that communities around the world can unite in prayer for a specific cause linked to current realities.

This year, the Covid-19 pandemic has changed our world immeasurably. It has exposed unjust structural systems and demonstrated how a global emergency affects lives disproportionately, especially the lives which are more vulnerable to inequalities.

We are therefore called upon to reflect on all the good things in our lives, and challenged to take action to rebuild a world that promotes justice, love and peace in our communities and beyond.

The pandemic has also come with new opportunities for personal and spiritual growth.

It has shed light and helped us see what is truly essential in our lives, how can we rediscover ourselves and how can we best invest our time spreading kindness and supporting those in need, including investing in our own mental and physical health. ■

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES ESSAY COMPETITION

The World Council of Churches (WCC) has announced an essay competition for youth who want to reflect on the theme "The Future of Interreligious Dialogue." The contest marks the 50th anniversary of the WCC's Office of Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation.

The contest aims to encourage people under the age of 30 with interests in the field of interreligious relations and engagement to develop and share their ideas on different subjects such as: Christian theologies of interreligious engagement; some aspect of another religious tradition which is relevant to its relationship to Christianity; religious pluralism more widely; or the theory or practice of interreligious dialogue. Essays may also reflect on interreligious cooperation for

the sake of the common good; or the World Council of Churches and interreligious relations.

The five best essays, chosen by a panel of judges comprising of WCC programme executives and faculty from the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, will be published in the 2021 issue of Current Dialogue, the WCC's journal for interreligious encounter. Further, the prize-winning authors will have the opportunity to present their work in a conference on "The Future of Interreligious Dialogue" (either physically or virtually) that is being planned for 2021. At this stage it is likely that participation in this conference will be virtual.

All entries, should be 3,500-5,000 words in length (including notes), and be written in English, following the WCC style guide which is available upon request at Media@wcc-coe.org.

The deadline for the competition is 15th January 2021. ■

YOUNG TRIBAL GIRL COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN NORTH EASTERN INDIA

Lilymaxima Ekka, a young Adivasi girl is working relentlessly for social causes in the North-East region of the country.

The main concern for the 25-year-old Ekka is to check trafficking of tribal girls from the region.

"Human trafficking is a very serious issue for many decades in our society. I have joined the fight against human trafficking because I am a social worker and feel compelled to do something for my community," says Ekka.

As a social worker I am much happy to work for my community. In view of the lockdown, we use webinars to connect with all the Adivasi youth. The youth of Japrajan parish are ready to work together and stand for reality to fight against

human trafficking. Ekka is working in three districts of Assam. According to Ekka, a tribal, North Eastern India witnesses frequent human trafficking as the region shares porous borders with countries such as China, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal.

Ekka has come across several people from the region, especially from her Adivasi community, who are kept as domestic workers and child labour in other states of India. Agents with promise of lucrative jobs in cities, she says, lure young women.

However, most end up in prostitution. She says she wants to save such women that why she has volunteered to combat human trafficking and related crimes. ■





DOMINICAN NUNS LAUNCH OFFICIAL WEBSITE

The nuns of the Order of Preachers, known as the Dominican nuns, have launched their first official international website, MonialesOP.

The site is the first of its kind to be completely dedicated to the Dominican nuns, who represent approximately 2,500 sisters in 190 monasteries, across five continents.

While they always had a spot on the Ordo Praedicatorum website, the order felt that information on the nuns was too hard to find, which led them to create the new website.

Available in three languages (English, French, and Spanish), MonialesOP informs visitors about the different elements that make up the contemplative life of a Dominican nun, as well as the ways in which they participate in the preaching mission of the order. This new digital home offers important information for women who are discerning a call to the monastic life. On the site, candid photographs of the sisters going about their duties are placed alongside explanations of the order's practices and good works, in order to provide a glimpse of their daily life.

The sisters note that there are five keys to the life of a Dominican Nun: Prayer, Community, Work, Study, and Preaching. These keys are essential to their mission, of which they write:

"In order that we may be perfected in the love of God and neighbour through this following of Christ, we are incorporated into our Order by profession and consecrated totally to God, and in particular we are dedicated in a new way to the universal Church, 'being appointed entirely for the complete evangelization of the Word of God.' The new site also includes an interactive map that shows the locations of every one of their monasteries around the world. ■

MISSING BELL AGAIN RINGS AT CHINESE CHURCH

Established nearly 70 years ago, the St. Paul's Church in Qingdao, Shandong is an important local Christian church. However, few know that the church's bell is 120 years old and has a tortured tale behind it.

The bell was sold to a scrap company during the Cultural Revolution. Twenty years later, when St. Paul's Church was renovated, the missing bell left a void that could not be filled. Li Lingming, a Christian in Qingdao, had been searching hard for the bell for nearly two decades. In 2007, he accidentally heard that the bell was in the possession of the Liaocheng Shuangli Group. On March 3, 2009, the original bell, which had been missing for nearly half a century, finally returned to St. Paul's Christian Church, undamaged.

Love for the elderly

The leaders of Jinshan District and local churches are committed to caring for and helping the elderly. They visit them in their homes, show concern for those who are in elderly care institutions, and install fitness equipment in their communities. On the occasion of the Double



Ninth Festival, Jinshan churches showed their love to the elderly.

On the afternoon of October 18th,

Pastor Zhang Jinhua, and some volunteers visited a nursing home in Tinglin Town. They gave milk, biscuits and other items worth nearly 10,000 yuan to 100 elderly people, and expressed their best wishes for their continued good health. ■

WHY BIEBER AND WEST MAY BE NEW FACES OF MODERN CHRISTIANITY

Why Bieber and West may be new faces of modern Christianity

In just a month, Justin Bieber's song Holy has racked up more than 50 million views. The figure itself isn't too surprising. After all, the Canadian pop star has been at the top of music charts — and accumulating billions of YouTube views — for the past decade.

But unlike many of his hits, which usually reflect on relationship wins or woes, Holy is unflinchingly Christian, in both its lyrics and visuals.

Real spirituality, or a ploy to sell albums?

Daniel White Hodge, a professor in the arts department of Chicago's North Park University, is more sceptical of overt religiosity in pop music.

"Are artists really doing this for artistic sake or are they just selling albums?" he asks.

Chance isn't the only rapper from Chicago to espouse a Christian message.

Hip-hop artist Kanye West has incorporated religious themes into his music from his debut album, The College Dropout, which featured the track Jesus Walks.



Why celebrities get spiritual
So, why are artists like Justin Bieber and Kanye West choosing to proclaim their religiosity now — at the height of their fame?

And would they have risen to such heights had they sung about God and Jesus Christ from the get-go?

The rise of prosperity and charisma "Mainstream Catholic and Protestant churches are in decline, but charismatic churches, which are often Pentecostal-leaning, as Hillsong is, are growing quite rapidly, particularly amongst young people," says Dr Hodge. With many places of worship still shut due to the global pandemic, millions of Christians are seeking spiritual solace online — perhaps one Justin Bieber or Kanye West song at a time. ■

— (Courtesy ABC News)

59 PRIEST MUMMIES UNEARTHED IN EGYPT

In a span of one month, the number of sealed coffins found at an archaeological dig in Saqqara in Egypt has ballooned from 13 to 59 — and there is more to come — the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities said in a statement.

The colourful coffins, which date back to Egypt's 26th dynasty (688 B.C. to 525 B.C.), were found stacked together within or near three burial wells, the ministry said on Oct. 3. The mummies are still preserved within the coffins; and hieroglyphic writing on the coffins indicates that many of the mummies were priests.

Beside the coffins, they found the remains of 28 small statues. One of the most interesting statues is a nearly 14-inch-tall (35 centimeters) bronze statue of the god Nefertem, who is shown wearing a headdress shaped like a lotus blossom. ■



The World Council of Churches is publishing a series of interviews that portray insights and reflections from the leaders of faith-based global and regional humanitarian and development organizations. Rev. Dr Karin Achtelstetter is executive director of Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR)

What are the major ways in which you and your staff have had to adapt and/or restructure your work because of COVID-19?

Rev. Dr Achtelstetter: At the early onset of COVID-19 we determined which of our staff was onsite essential to en-

"I AM SEEING MANY SIGNS OF HOPE"

sure that the organization would continue to operate with as little disruption as possible.

This staff represented 13% of our workforce and is located at our head office in Winnipeg. Office protocols for staff working at CLWR's



worksites were developed and the proper personal protective equipment was procured and distributed. The remaining staff

worked remotely at home. Our technology was already conducive for staff to work from home in a safe and secure manner. We provided additional mental and physical wellness benefits and have ensured staff has the means to set up appropriate home offices.

What are some signs of hope you have observed along the way?

Rev. Dr Achtelstetter: I have seen and I am seeing many signs of hope. I am seeing communities — like my own community where I live — reaching out in new creative ways to "our neighbours," building social bridges. ■