

ignited

2014-15



Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation Chair for Inter-Religious
and Inter-Cultural Dialogue, St. Andrews College, Bandra (W), Mumbai

CREDITS

Faculty Members:

Prof. Sharmila Dhote

Prof. Saudamini Bhagwat – Vice Principal

Dr. Vatika Sibal

Editors

Sunny Rodricks

Ondrilla Fernandes

Siddhant Sinha

Cover Illustration and Magazine Layout:

Sheetal Kotain

Sunny Rodricks

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INDEX

Title	Page No.
Editor's Note	1
Welcome Note	3
Our Logo and Motto.....	4
History of the Chair	4
Committee Members	5
Diploma Course	6
Highlights from 2009-2014.....	7
Glimpses of Activities for 2014-2015	15
Articles.....	16
Ex-Students Speak.....	22
Acknowledgements.....	23

EDITORS NOTE

Religion, culture, peace and dialogue are four simple words that carry a lot of weight. They have an impact of varying levels on the lives of various individuals and on society, especially in India, which is already suffering from the dire blows of inter-religious conflicts. The Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation Chair serves as a platform that allows students to experience and understand the true meanings of the terms and sensitise them to the sentiments of the various religious communities. It was this idea, that prompted us to proliferate the message of our motto 'Peace Through Religion' to a larger audience. The various ventures of the Chair help shed light on the differentiated aspects of religion and culture.

This is our first attempt to spread the diversity in contemplation and reasoning of the students. It is our first step in the journey of a thousand miles. The blending of facts and creativity make it the perfect representation of the variety and diversity within India.

We hope this magazine inspires readers to incorporate the values of religious pluralism and motivates them to engage in peace building behaviours at their own levels.

*Editors
Sunny Rodricks
Ondrilla Fernandes
Siddhant Sinha*



His Eminence – Cardinal Paul Poupard:
Founder of the Chair.



His Grace – Archbishop Felix Machado:
(Ex-Officio, Established the Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation Chair in our college)

Welcome Note

The Cardinal Paul Poupard Chair for Inter-Religious and Inter-Cultural Dialogue makes a unique contribution to the life of St. Andrew's College. In a world that seems to be torn apart by religious and cultural differences, this Chair provides the students an oasis of mutuality between diverse groups, both as a laboratory of shared experiences as well as a school for formation in inclusive ideologies. This combination of experience and theory ensures that the value of inter-religious and inter-cultural harmony is assimilated in a profound manner. Those students participating in the activities of the Chair are surely in a better position to make a contribution to peace in our country. This Symposium on the "Impact of the Media on Religion and Culture" is a valiant attempt to grapple with the challenges posed by contemporary culture.



Fr. Aniceto Pereira

Rector

Congratulations on the first newsletter of the Cardinal Paul Poupard Chair of Inter-Religious and Inter-Cultural Dialogue. I would like to thank Prof. Sharmila Dhote for all the good work she does to make this association vibrant through the many activities she so religiously organizes every year. The newsletter is another feather in her cap and offers students an opportunity to share their reflections on their personal encounter with God or their thoughts on the meaning of life and death and other concerns that they might engage in. The poems are also written with a great depth of feeling. It is wonderful to read a beautifully written article by Vivek D'Souza about the problems that people face in Syria. Sadly many precious human lives are lost as religious fanatics refuse to respect people of other faiths and only spread hatred and destruction everywhere.



We hope that all the students of this association and the college will be agents of peace wherever they go. We hope they will reach out in love and brotherhood to anyone in need. We expect that many of our students will carry with them the rich experience they acquired through the many international and national seminars they helped to organise and also attended, their visits to the various shrines, the joy of sharing a peace meal together with students of different faiths, the lectures that exposed them to the richness of different religions and perhaps the awakening that all religions finally preach love and concern for one's fellow human beings.

We hope that there will be many more newsletters. God Bless

Dr. Marie Fernandes

Principal

Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation Chair for Inter - Religious and Inter - Cultural Dialogue



History

The Centre of Inter - Religious and Inter - Cultural dialogue was established in September 2009 in St. Andrew's College in association with the Cardinal Paul Poupard Chair of Inter – Religious and Inter – Cultural Dialogue.

The Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation has been constituted under Italian law and recognized by the Republic of Italy. The Foundation intends to conserve and make use of the considerable patrimony of cultures and relationships that the Cardinal created over many years, in seeking to promote and encourage cultural initiatives that can foster the coming together and understanding between religions and cultures all over the world. It seeks to promote Congresses, Conferences and Publications, to create Chairs in Universities throughout the world, so as to help students with grants, and to promote 'The Dialogue of Cultures'.

In a constantly changing world where intolerance and impatience have become the watchwords, it is increasingly necessary that concrete steps be taken to create and change the thinking of a generation born to violence and strife, whether real or witnessed, in the daily news and present day cinema. At time like this, as often seen in history, it is the religious institutions which are in the best position to bring about change. Archbishop Machado remarked "...the church is convinced that war creates more problems than it solves; that dialogue is the only just and noble path to agreement and reconciliation, and that the patient and wise art of peace-making is especially blessed by God."

We express our gratitude to Archbishop Machado and Cardinal Gracias for being instrumental in obtaining the Chair and establishing it at St Andrew's College. It is the first time ever that a college in India has been given this privilege.

The Chair not only spells prestige but a financial grant towards starting an autonomous department which will impart knowledge on different religions through short term courses, seminars and workshops.

Inauguration of the Chair



Executive Committee

The Executive Committee Members of the Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation Chair for Inter-Religious and Inter-Cultural Dialogue had the privilege of having a special meeting with Cardinal Paul Poupard, Archbishop Felix Machado and Advocate Giuseppe Musumeci.

Committee Members

St Andrews College Management Committee for The Cardinal Paul Paupard Foundation Chair Of Inter-Religious And Inter -Cultural Dialogues

Cardinal Oswald Gracias (Chair Person)

Archbishop Felix Machado (Ex-Officio, Card. Paul Poupard Foundation)


Adv. Giuseppe Musumeci (Ex-Officio, Card. Paul Poupard Foundation)

Fr. Aniceto Pereira(Manager)

Dr. Marie Fernandes (Principal)


Sr. Teresa Joseph (Secretary)

Inter-Religious Diploma



ST. ANDREW'S COLLEGE
OF
ARTS, SCIENCE & COMMERCE

OFFERS



Diploma Course
Religion and Society, Peace and Dialogue

St. Dominic Road, Bandra (West), Mumbai - 50.
Tel: (022) 2640 16 57 | 2642 86 84

Course Co-ordinator : Dr. Vatika Sibal

OBJECTIVES

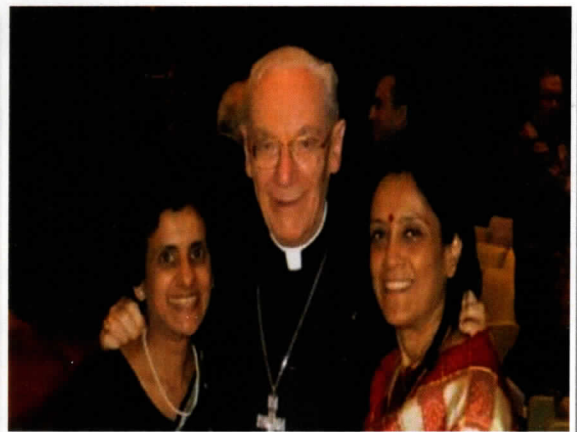
- * To understand the spiritualities of various religions.
- * To strategize in order to establish small human communities.
- * To grasp the principles of inter-religious harmony.
- * To help the students to get to know other cultures and religions.
- * To bridge the gap between various religious communities.
- * To stem the growing mistrust between religious communities through sound knowledge of each other's beliefs and traditions.
- * To train students in a climate of religious intolerance to work for nation building and make them ambassadors of peace and dialogue.
- * To help the students to become aware of the transformative role they can play to promote peace and national integration.

Highlights 2009-2014

U.S. Independence Day Celebrations, Grand Hyatt (Santacruz)



International Conference in Milan, Italy

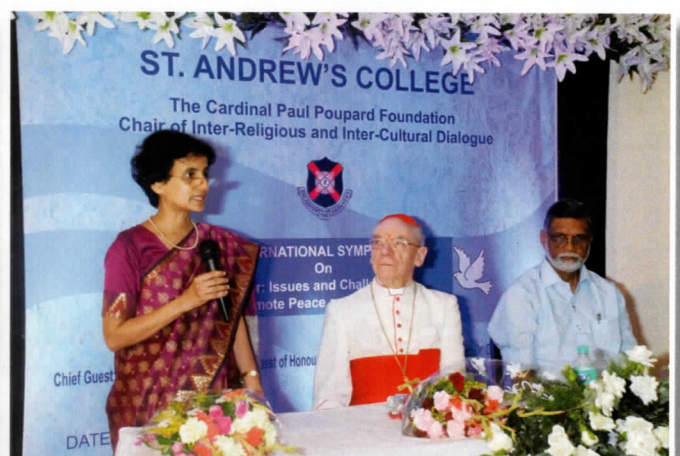


Dr Marie Fernandes and Professor Sharmila Dhote presented papers on the
'Anthropological and Culinary Customs of Religions in India.'

International Symposium on “Forgiveness and Healing across Religions”



International Symposium on Water: 'Issues and Challenges to Promote Peace and Harmony'



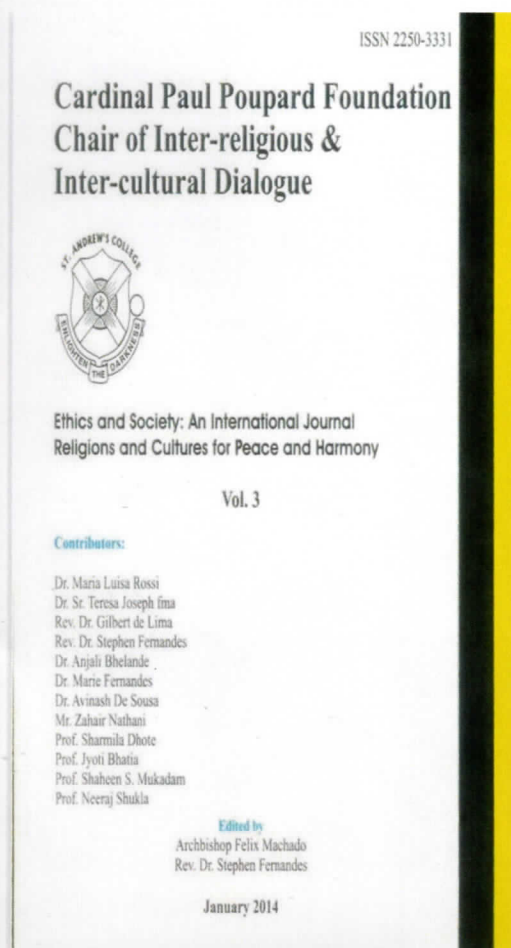
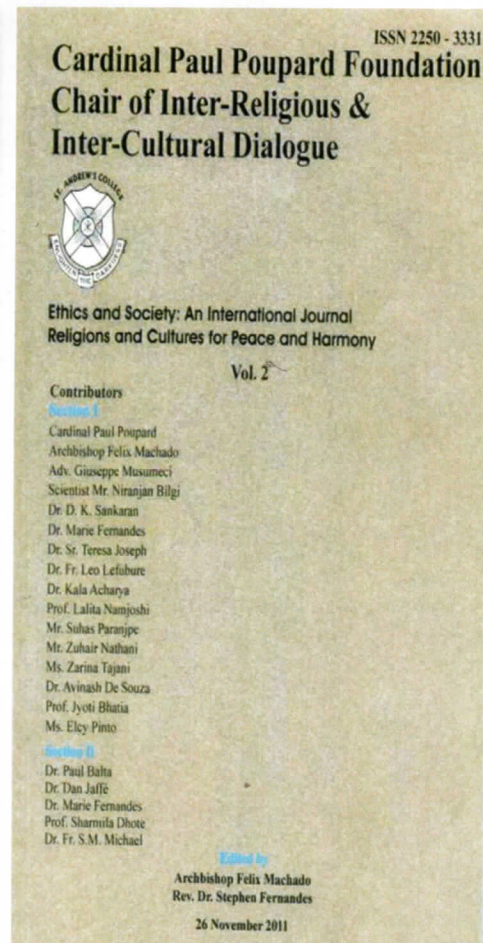
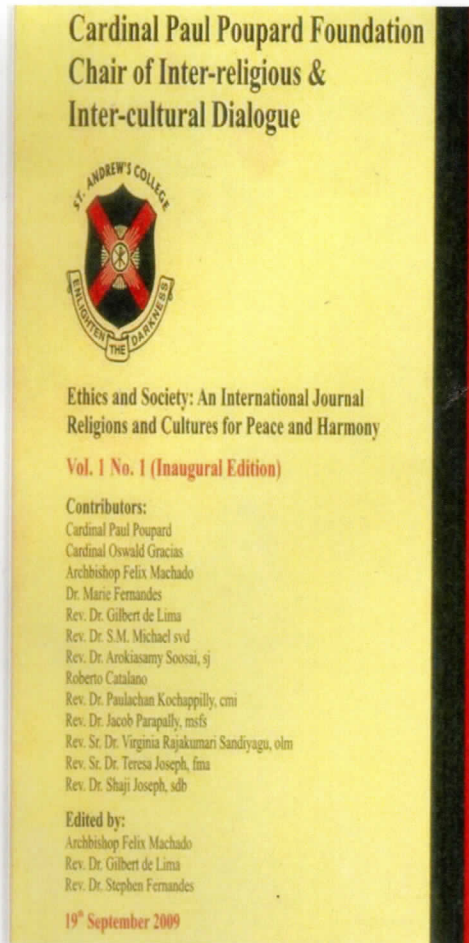
International Symposium on 'Life and Death Across Religions'

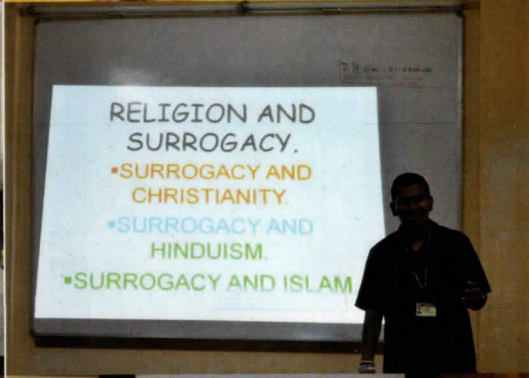
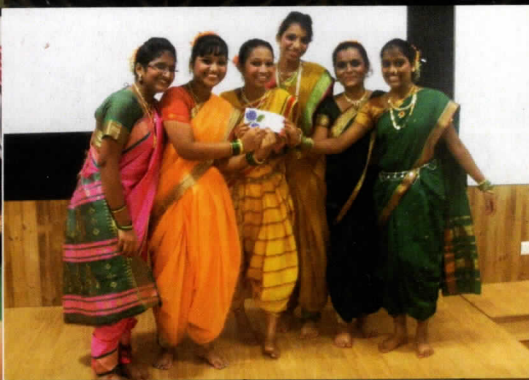
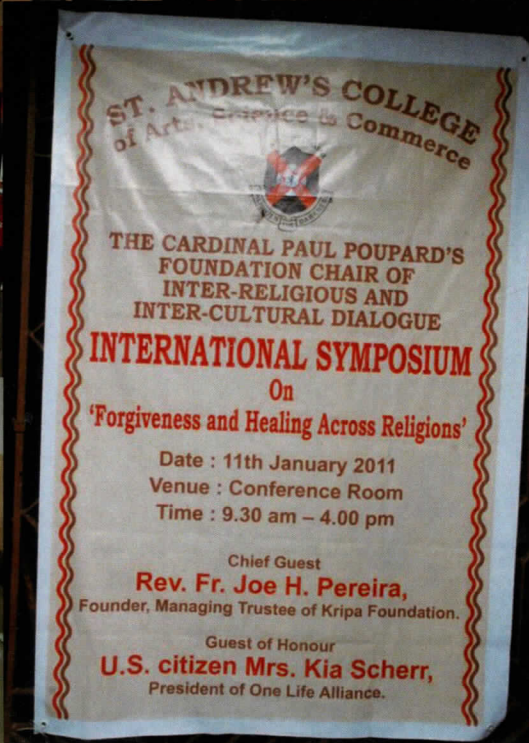
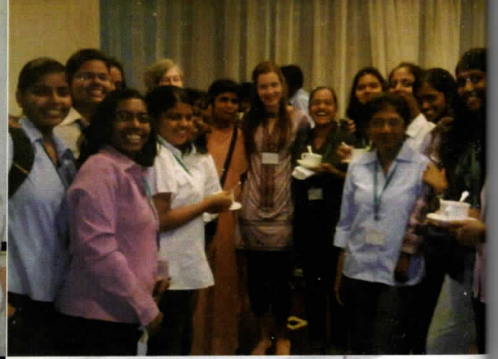


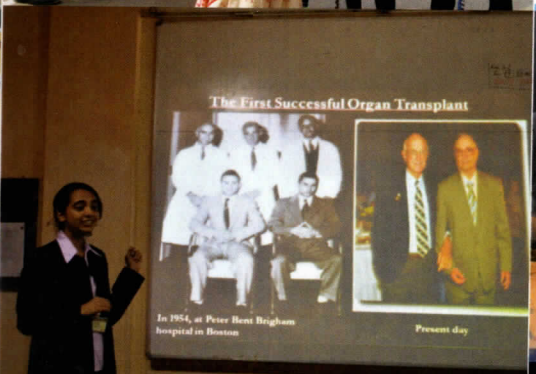
International Symposium on 'Care of the Earth'



Journals Published







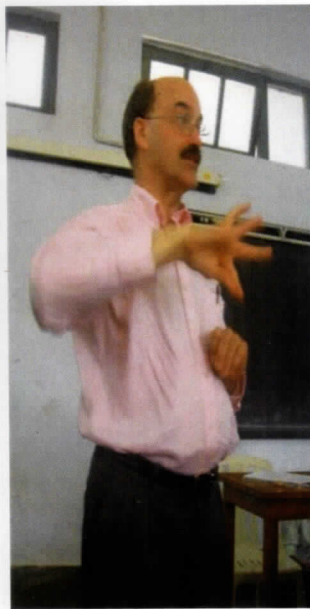
Empowering Lives Project



Guest Lectures



'Worship Across Religions' by
Suhaib Sayyed



Talk on 'State of Inter –
Religious Dialogue Today' by
Leo Lefebure



Lecture on 'Prayer as a
form of Therapy' by Dr.
AvinashDeDesousa

Field Visits



Hazrat Quamer Ali Durvesh Dargah
- Pune



Birla temple- Alibaug

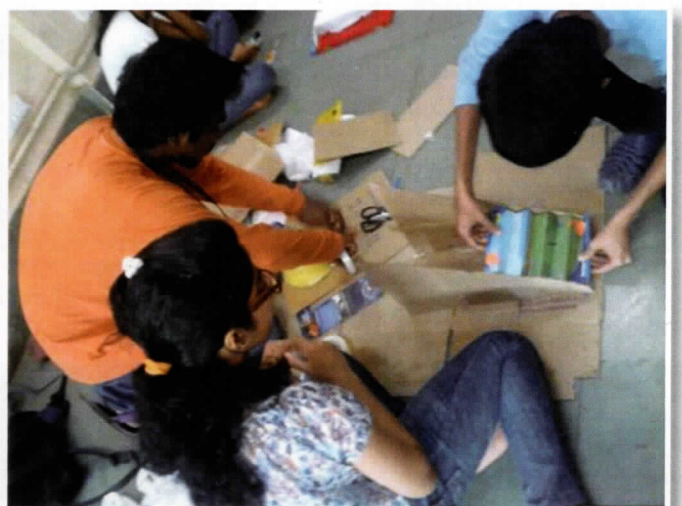


Narayani Dham - Pune

Colours of God Competition



Drawing



Best out of Waste



Annual Peace Keepers Awards



Screening of 'The Mount of Faith'



Candle Decoration



Presentation Competition

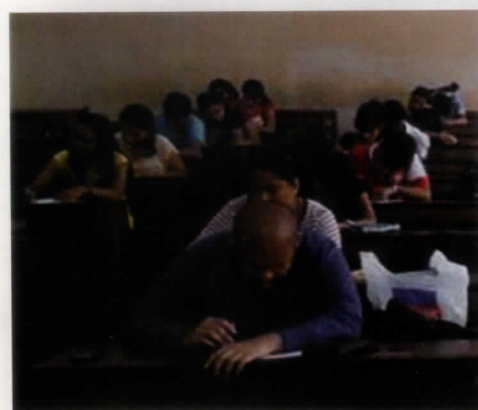


Christmas Celebration



Rink Hockey Tournament

Glimpses of 2014-15



Essay Competition



Quiz Competition



Lecture on Religious Conflict



Visit to Eucharistic Congress Exhibition



Visit to Narayani Dham



Iftaari Celebration

ARTICLES

Six feet of earth make all men equal...!!!

Man is the best creation of god and he is considered to be one of the most marvellous wonders of the world. Man has the most advanced brain compared to any other animal on this planet. We can notice from the evolution of man that he is capable of establishing his supremacy over the entire planet. But he wasn't satisfied with just being better than other animals, he wanted to be better than his own species and he thus started exploiting other human beings. He wanted to feel power and authority and went to all extend to gain it, even if it meant killing one of his own to achieve it. Nothing could stop his greed. There was enough for man's needs but not enough for his whims and fancy. Today man has become arrogant, selfish, abusive and apathetic. He thinks only of himself and he fails to realise that there is someone above him who is almighty the creator and is controlling his life. Man is like a puppet in God's hands and God can cut out his life whenever He wants.

Today men in different regions have created different religions with different Gods some of them are Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism etc. Each one believes that their religion is supreme and the only way to salvation is by following and defending their faith. Religion has been the single biggest killer of mankind from its inception. Many wars have started in the name of religion. But we fail to realise that all the religions teach us the same thing i.e. Christianity urges that we: "Treat others as you want them to treat you." (Luke 6:31). Confucius said "Do not do to others what you do not want the others to do to you." Hillel the Elder, the famous Jewish rabbi from the 1st

century summed up the Torah with the expression "What is hateful to you, do not do to your friend." Wiccans follow the Wiccan Rede which allows them to: "Do whatever you wish, as long as it harms nobody, including themselves."

Many great missionaries, apostles and saints taught us this ultimate truth, but we continue to be sinful, boastful and superficial beings. We want to start a war for every little thing in the name of religion but do we actually know our religion or do we just follow the crowd blindly without knowing the truth about what our religion really wants us to do. Whether we are Hindus, Muslims or Christians we are all going to die one day i.e. we shall go to dust. This is inevitable and the grave makes all of us equal. So then what's the use of all the fighting and religious supremacy. We are all one and should live with unity following the principles of love, humanity and brotherhood. We must help one another when in need. We must not use religion as a strategy to divide and rule the country or as a base to start a war. Enough lives have been lost because of religion; we do not need any more wars. Pope Francis has spoken very well he said "It is not necessary to believe in God to be a good person. In a way, the traditional notion of God is outdated. One can be spiritual, but not religious. It is not necessary to go to church and give money, for many nature can be a church. Some of the best people in history did not believe in god, while some of the worst deeds were done in his name."

ONDRILLA FERNANDES
TYBA Sociology Majors

Religious conflict in Iraq and Syria

Religion – is a word that many dwell upon. It is something perceived by many as a way of communicating with the creator, as a way of being accepted in society, and as a hope for survival during times of distress and sorrow. Religion is that elixir of life that sustains people in order to live in peace, harmony, mutual understanding and coexistence. However, religion has been the major cause of some of the worst conflicts in the history of mankind. It has caused destruction to life and property to such an extent that it cannot be explained. There have been many conflicts arising out of the very same religion we all supposedly take great efforts to protect. But now knowing the sentiments of the people belonging to other faiths that surround us, we always tend to stereotype people and religion, which is one of the reasons of religious conflict. Whether it was the war by the Crusades (1095-1291), the Lebanese-civil war (1975-1990), the Israel-Palestine conflict, or the India-Pakistan conflict – all of these huge uprisings were caused because of religion so to say ‘protection of one’s religion.’ And it is not new that the recent conflict on religion especially on religious minorities is taking place in Iraq and Syria by religious fanatics – the ISIS (The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria).

Not going much into detail, the major conflict that led to the devastation and destruction of property and loss of countless civilians was mainly because of terrorist groups who aimed at creating a fully developed Muslim state known as the Islamic State (IS). They attacked the Syrian army and took control over the military power like death on swift wings. They approached and attacked in hundreds mercilessly, beheading hundreds of soldiers to create an unpleasant environment of shock and fear among the civilians. Their basic motto is – Either convert to Islam, or pay non-Muslim tax, or die! This shocking, yet horrifying mass conversion led to thousands lying dead as they were beheaded in front of their families – kids as young as 7 and 8 were sacrificed in the name of religion. Due to this, thousands of religious minorities namely the Syrian Christians and the Kurdish Christians fled away in the desert only to be caught by sweltering heat of the sun. Sooner or later they perished one by one!

The members of the jihadist group ISIS enforced the Sharia law upon all civilians in order to lead a life of discipline and justice. This was seen as an act of valor among these religious fanatics as they often neglected their own families and was ever ready to die in the name of God. The law also kept into account drinking habits, economic affairs in the country, and crime and punishment where the accused are often beaten, scourged, killed on a cross in public, or even beheaded in extreme cases. Houses were ravaged, churches were destroyed completely, cross and other religious monuments were uprooted from its very foundation and in place of it, the members of IS established teaching centers where they teach young kids the meaning of true Islam and Jihad.

Many say that the reason for this widespread uproar has been religion. However, that is not it. The major reason has been US’ invasion on the Muslim lands especially after 9/11. The situation post 9/11 (War on Terror) took a turn for the worse and failed in some areas. The constant breach on Muslim lands by western countries namely the USA and countries in Europe and America’s failed foreign policy on Iraq and Syria were some of the untold causes that led to the Iraqi-Syrian conflict that we see today. Media officials have hidden much of the untold story. The reason being that wealthy oil-rich countries that predominantly exhibit Wahhabism fund the well-known media companies. This is part and parcel of what we call politics and geo-politics. The ongoing humanitarian crisis has led to various Human Rights violations and several countries have condemned ISIS as barbaric in nature. The United Nations relief and aid programs have helped most of the surviving minorities, but the question remains is this “How many more conflicts based on Religion are we going to witness in the near future?” “How long will political and influential people misuse their power to change the status quo?” “When will the world realize that we all are a part of a global family irrespective of religion, caste, and creed?” We need to think about it as human beings, as brothers and sisters of one global family.

Vivek D'souza
SYBA

“Journey to the Mount - Spiritually”

10 years back as I used to walk up to the Mount - also known as the Basilica of the Lady of the Mount, I never knew what it had in store for me. Years have passed by and it's the dawn of a new beginning in my life. A beginning which started at Our Lady's feet and ended with a cherry on the cake called 'The Mount of Faith'. Yes, I am talking about the first ever documentary made on the historic Basilica situated in the Heart of Bandra, Mumbai. Produced by St Paul's Publication and Sandhya films and directed by Etienne Coutinho. The Mount of Faith was the first of a kind that reflected Bandra's landmark Shrine on celluloid. One of the most popular religious shrine, Christian and non Christian, in the city of Mumbai and possibly the whole of Maharashtra. Released on the 15th of August, on the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady, The Mount of Faith is a 40 minute documentary film reflecting a rich and colourful history of the 400 year old Basilica, revealed by experts, which takes you on the journey to experience peace, where thousands flock, 'to be in the presence of the Holy Mother'.

Now you must be thinking why I am talking about The Mount of Faith. Is it because I am an ardent devotee of the Holy Mother or because I was born and brought in Bandra? But none of the above matters! The reason I am talking about Mount of Faith is because of the journey that I share with it. I was very much associated with the documentary film, as I was working as a research co-ordinator under the guidance of ace director Sir Etienne Coutinho. My experience about working for this historic documentary is beyond words. The happiness and the peace that this place brings about in my life cannot be compared. From working on the history of the Mount to the very process of editing the videos and finally translating it into various languages, gave me a sense of responsibility and showed the love and blessings that the Holy Mother showered upon me as her child and in return led me to her son Jesus Christ. This journey not only made me feel closer to Jesus Christ but each and every moment spent working for this movie was guided by the presence of the Holy Mother. This place holds a very important place in my life, being a Bandra boy and also an ardent devotee of the Mother I somehow, some way feel connected to her. As a devotee in the

film says, "She is like my mother, I speak to her like my own mother". Mother Mary has always been a constant guide and companion to me, from my fight against depression, examination stress to the time when my granny was fighting against cancer. She has given me the strength to fight against all odds and overcome all problems, and be a messenger of her son Jesus Christ.

I feel privileged that she blessed me and in a way chose me to play a small part in the making of this historic documentary. With the guidance of ace director Sir Etienne Coutinho and the constant encouragement and support of my Prof Mrs. Janine Coelho (H.O.D of History, St Andrews College). I not only gave my best as a research co-ordinator but also as a firm believer in the Holy Mother to this historic project. I dedicate this movie to my granny who passed away due to cancer, to my mother who also celebrates her birthday with the Holy Mother and to my professor Janine Coelho who has always motivated me, guided me and encouraged me to work hard and pursue all the opportunities that come my way.

The Basilica of the Mount is not only a church for the Catholics but thousands of devotees including non - Christians who visit this holy place during the month of September.

"This place has an amazing aura. I have come here a million times....I don't remember asking for anything.... but she knows why I am here", says Salman Khan about his experience at this holy place.

I would like to conclude by saying that let all feet walk to the Mount in the journey to experience peace and harmony. Let this beautiful shrine 'The queen of the suburbs' be a symbol of love, peace and unity not only to the people of Mumbai but also to the firm believers and devotees of the Holy Mother who in turn leads them all to Her son Jesus Christ. And come September 8th on the birthday of the 'Blessed Virgin Mary' let your voices raise and tap your feet to sing and praise Her, as we sing ' AVE MARIA '.

*Sunny Rodricks
TYBA Sociology Majors*

Life after Death- An Inter-Religious Perspective

"Now I have become Death, the Destroyer of Worlds". These words of ten echoes in the minds and hearts of practically all men and women on earth since time immortal, causing fear, distress panic and worry.

I am reminded of a Chinese legend which revolves around the life of an ancient monarch of the Orient. He had an ambition to write all China under one throne, a dream which he later fulfilled. He brutally executed all his opponents. But he could not withstand his last opponent -Hades. And so he lived and so he died, his body reduced to ashes; his empire scattered among the greedy barons and earls. Death befalls both the prince and the pauper, golden thrones and wooden chairs, alike. No living thing can escape the Grim Reopet; he simply takes what is rightly fully his. So, it is safe to conclude that life and death are two sides of the same coin, very much like the Yin and Yang of the Chinese inhabitants.

All religions are basically methods promulgated to live a better life. It is but natural for saints and sages to comment on death. Research has proved that there are two aspects of death-oblivion and afterlife.

The afterlife is not a new concept. It was first used by the ancient Egyptians. They believed in 'Ka' (body) and 'Ba'(Soul). When the 'Ka' perished the 'Ba' lived on to meet Orisis, the God of the Underworld.

In all religions, there are central figures that represent the afterlife or the life after death. Here after Hinduism mentions Yamraj, Greeks had an idea of Hades with his Roman Counterpart-Pluto and the American pop culture has a skeleton with a Sycthe for harvesting souls.

There are two basic schools of thought on the afterlife- A =Eternal Rest and the other, B= Reincarnation or Rebirth.

Christianity, Islam and certain Jewish groups (save the Sadducees' sect) believe that once a person passes away, his soul will be judged and will be assigned either to Paradise or to Eternal Damnation. The Catholic Church has a teaching discourse that states that a soul of a person who died in communion with God will be first purified in purgatory and will be welcomed into Heaven. Hell is not a punishment rather it is a self excuse or rejection of the love of God. Islam preaches that all souls will be judged on Last Day and the Creator will see all things, good and bad, virtue and vice together. Some followers of Judaism, too, trust in the concept of paradise.

In addition to this , there are certain mystic or esoteric faiths where rebirth is a doctrine. For example : Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and so on. Here the concepts of Dharma and Karma play vital roles .In esoteric Tibet, the Dalai Lama is considered to be the reincarnation of his very first predecessor.

Also, there are certain individuals like atheists, agnostics and others who preach that death is final. All processes end at the last breath is their dogma.

Regardless of the last category mentioned above, nearly all persons are afraid of death and here religion plays a huge role in soothing and calming. I am reminded of the message that the Catholic cleric solemnly states while he imposes the ashes on the foreheads of his faithful congregation at his church on Ash Wednesday- 'Dust thou art, and to dust thou shall return'. Life and death are two parallel processes which cannot be separated at all. All we can do is remember Russell Crowes famous dialogue in the Oscar -winning film Gladiator- "Death smiles at all men ,all a man can do is smile back".

Aaron D'souza
F.Y.B.Com

Faith

They call you different names,
But you are one and the same.
It's brotherhood what they preach,
But burst in wars when it's time to practice by each.

Let religion be the one not to confine.....
But a matter of faith that oneself defines.
It's not a thing to be followed by force,
But a heart felt treasure to be cherished the most.

They sing your praise in melodious voice,
artis, hymns, kavalli's, so vivid and nice.
Like blend of symphony, to sing a song
For You 'Oh Almighty', let's be one in faith all along.

-Blossom D. Tuscano
SYBCom

Let's Change

We are born with humanity
But it doesn't seem like that anymore
We all live together
But unity seems like another world ago
Peace, Love and Understanding
Are just terms we know
It's hard to believe
That people actually lived like that before
Money and mobiles have taken over our lives
The only thing that matters are our Facebook likes
Enough is enough now
It's time to change
Let's make humanity our religion
And help in bringing about change.

Nelvita Fernandes
SYBCom

Many Roads, One Destination

To see good things put into action is everyone's need,
But are we following the righteous deeds.

Being a Christian, a Muslim, a Jew has become a religious fame,
But are we playing by the rules of the game.

They all preach, to strive to reach
A mutual goal in the end to achieve.

All religions give high advises to follow,
But if shown anger or hatred you will be swallowed.

It would be better if they walked with them,
Instead of merely showing the way.

It would be better if their hands were in action,
Instead of their tongues just wagging away.

Promises they grant to draw you into illusions,
But this only leads you into seductive delusions.
The simplest of things in life are made complicated,
Because of each individuals twisted interpretations.

Cut the blame, ease the pain, and love one another,
Maybe then this world would be a better place to live in.

Ondrilla Fernandes
TYBA Sociology Majors

Religion in the news

50 couples to tie knot in multi-faith wedding ceremony in city on Sunday

Beeta Jaisinghani | New

Mumbai: This Sunday Kallidas Nityamandir in Mulund will host a unique mass marriage where 50 couples from different communities will be wedded according to the traditions of their faith.

The 'Samocha Vivah' ceremony of June 22 is being organized by the Nair Welfare Society (NWS) and a social group, 'Pithruvadi'. Several young couples even in this day and age delay their marriages simply because they do not have the resources to arrange for a lavish wedding or to assemble the



basic essentials required for starting a home. We have resolved not only to host the rituals and the wedding feast free of cost for underprivileged couples, but will also gift them new clothes, utensils and gold jewelry," said Prakash Padikal, one of the organizers.

The cost, however, of any subsequent reception will be borne by the wedding party.

The rituals will begin at 11am and end around 2pm. Hindu, Muslim as well as Christian brides and grooms are likely to participate.

Padikal said that each application they received was scrutinized by a team that had been appointed to go into the merits of the case. "Our members even visited the applicants' native villages to make sure none of them were already married before," he said. An orientation programme was also conducted.

Shut Muslim personal law courts, says PIL

Mumbai: The Bombay High Court has ruled that Shariah law is not applicable in India. The court has ordered that all personal laws, including the Muslim Personal Law, should be abolished. The court has also ordered that all personal laws should be replaced by a uniform civil code. The court has also ordered that all personal laws should be replaced by a uniform civil code. The court has also ordered that all personal laws should be replaced by a uniform civil code.

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Love jihad: No, it's all about mutual respect, say inter-faith couples

Mumbai: A group of inter-faith couples has issued a statement saying that the concept of 'love jihad' is a myth. They said that love is a universal emotion that transcends religious boundaries. They said that love is a universal emotion that transcends religious boundaries. They said that love is a universal emotion that transcends religious boundaries.

Fatwas can cause devastation: SC

New Delhi: The Supreme Court has ruled that fatwas are not binding on the state. The court has ordered that all fatwas should be abolished. The court has also ordered that all fatwas should be replaced by a uniform civil code. The court has also ordered that all fatwas should be replaced by a uniform civil code.

The court has also ordered that all fatwas should be replaced by a uniform civil code. The court has also ordered that all fatwas should be replaced by a uniform civil code. The court has also ordered that all fatwas should be replaced by a uniform civil code. The court has also ordered that all fatwas should be replaced by a uniform civil code.

Shirdi Sainath's Universal Prescription

Shirdi Sainath's Universal Prescription is a book that offers a unique perspective on the life and teachings of Sai Baba. The book is a collection of letters and speeches given by Sai Baba over the years. It is a must-read for anyone who is interested in the life and teachings of Sai Baba.

Did God create Universe or did it create itself?

Stephen Hawking has set off the science vs religion debate by discussing the role of a creator.



Stephen Hawking has set off the science vs religion debate by discussing the role of a creator. He has argued that the universe could have created itself, without the need for a creator. This has sparked a heated debate between scientists and religious believers.

Ex-Students Speak Up

It was a very enriching experience. It broadened my thinking and made me realize that India's secularism is her crowning glory and it should stay that way. Prof. Sharmila and Sr Teresa are fantastic guides.

Christopher Pashana
- Purchase Manager at Al Rabat LLC

Inter-religious association has been the best part of my college life. Infact it's the best thing Andrews could give me apart from amazing teachers and education. This nurtured me into a better human being and taught me to respect all the religions. The association has injected spiritualism and transcendentalism into me. I just love being a part of this family.

Kajal Solanki
- Pursuing LLB from G J Advani Law College

From the field trips to social service assignments to the institution of the Vatican Chair in our college, the interreligious association has come a long way. It will continue to shape and direct young minds particularly in India. Tolerance taught at its best. Kudos to Prof. Sharmila and Sr. Teresa for making the difference at St Andrew's.

Sephra D'souza
- Content Writer at Lexiconn

"Amazing experience of learning and bonding with different cultures and religions..."

Josephine Makuden
- Research Analyst at Directi

"It helped me build a connection between my talent of art & music with cultures of various people"

Melita Murzello
- Associate in Production and Design at CyberSol ID Systems

Some of my favorite memories of all time are the ones I've had as a student of the association. My perspective of religions and cultures changed drastically from the time I first entered the association, from a reserved and narrow outlook to I learnt to have an open and appreciative attitude.

The roles and responsibilities that were given to me during that time, led me to a journey of self- discovery which enabled me to understand my strengths and to convert my weaknesses into strong points. This has enabled me to a better person today and I am grateful to the association for giving me such rich learning experiences.

Chinchu Thankachan
- Pursuing MSc in Acturial Science.

I joined the org in Degree College, over the years the Inter religious group has given me many opportunities to meet and interact with interesting people. I got to be a part of many exciting events, it was so much fun. I got to learn values and traditions of other religions. The inter religious built my confidence to handle events and meet deadlines. The skills and values I learned from being a part of this wonderful association has definitely helped me to impress the campus recruiter and landed me a job in the liquidity division at JP Morgan. I have made lifelong friends here and college wouldn't have been the same without being part of the inter religious.

- Aaron Almeida working at J P Morgan.

"Through the chair and working for it, I have established relations that I will want to always cherish and memories that I miss..."

- Seann Kenny working in Jet Airways.

Acknowledgements

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. IGNITE is not just a mere representation of the Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation Chair for Inter Religious and Inter Cultural Dialogue, it is something way beyond.

IGNITE highlights all the efforts, joys, times of laughter and fun, commitment and teamwork of the students that radiates through the organisation.

We extend our gratitude and appreciation to our Rector Fr. Aniceto Pereira, our Principal Dr. Marie Fernandes and our extremely inspirational and kind hearted Prof. Sharmila Dhote for all the moments of support, appreciation and sense of belonging that they extended towards us.

We appreciate the efforts of the Executive Committee members, Dr. Fr. Stephen Fernandes, Dr. Fr. Gilbert de Lima, Dr. Fr. S. M. Michael & Prof. A. D. Mascarenhas who act as facilitators in promoting the activities of the chair especially, Dr. Sr. Teresa Joseph who has been the guiding force of the association. Her presence has always been a source of encouragement and inspiration to us. We also appreciate Prof. Saudamini Bhagwat, vice-principal, for her constant guidance and Dr. Vatika Sibal, co-ordinator of the Diploma course, for making it a lively learning experience.

Our acknowledgement extends to the pillars of our association namely, Chinchu Thankachan, Josephine Makuden, Seann Kenny and Melita Murzello, ex-students of the association, who relentlessly worked towards building a strong foundation for the Chair.

We thank the entire student committee, for the assistance and dedication that helped put things in place. The flawless organisation of field trips, events and so many wonderful activities made the passing of time feel like blur. Gratefulness is absolute.

Students in Charge:

Himanshu Choudhary (TYBCOM)

Connie Gonsalves (TYBCOM)



ST. ANDREW'S COLLEGE

St. Andrews College of Arts, Science & Commerce Bandra (W) Mumbai