

Editorials



Hurray! Finally the edition of the college newsletter is here! Hope we will all treasure it.

In the quietness of time I sit myself down in a pensive way, reflecting upon life's fleeting moments, I realize God is good all the time. It seems like we just closed our eyes to the past year, only to wake up to the close of this year. My mind jogged back through the year again, scanning images and texts, and apart from the many issues that shocked and enveloped us, three events have etched an indelible mark; the so called "solved" controversial case of Babri Masjid, the CAA and the COVID 19, consequences of which are still being felt and will continue to be felt for a long time to come.

COVID 19 is blind to race, community, gender and not a respecter of rich or poor, however, communalism chooses which race, community to strike. This, then is the problem my friends. The controversial CAA cannot be a neutral law as many opine, inasmuch as it requires community verification. Communalism, the indomitable nemesis of this great nation, has gone really low, hitting us right below the belt. At this juncture, let us as believers, not lose heart and have faith on the profound message of the Kingdom of God as modeled and ushered in by our Lord Himself. Let me commend the Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal when he confessed that it was a matter of highest satisfaction for him to run the government on the path shown by Jesus Christ. Whatever may be his intention, rhetoric or a piggy ride, it is commendable. Let us pray that he means it, honestly. And all the more, our honourable Premier Modi, tweeted in his Christmas message, "We remember, with immense joy, the noble thoughts of Jesus Christ whose teachings has inspired millions across the world." We may not agree to all programs initiated by the Government, but we must atleast, laud the premier for commending on the work of Christ. Talking of this, I am reminded of author Deepak Chopra where he calls Jesus, in the *Third Jesus*, as the radical iconoclastic teacher who taught love, justice and peace beyond the barriers of any religion.

We see leaders from other faiths seeking refuge in the principles of Jesus as a perfect model of politics in India. Believers, we as sojourners, having the same goals of humanity, how much more must be expected of us as fore bearers and champions of this truth, communed and readily participating in the very Body of Christ Himself. We can do much better.

Best wishes to all, particularly our graduating friends, let us take the timeless message of the Reign of God and respond to the challenges of nominalism within our churches, and transform it, not limiting ourselves to sunday 'services' but service beyond the four walls of the church. Karl Barth once said, "Preach using the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other" so that we may participate in the affairs of the world and look to transform it. Let this challenge us as a theological community.

God bless all readers and well wishers abundantly.

Editorial Team

Mr. Z. N. Sironbou

Dr. K. Tokivi

Mr. Jackson Siipunii

Viva le MTC

Mr. ZN Sironbou

Editor in Chief

RELIGION Source of Conflict or Resource of Peace ?

Dr. K. Tokivi, Associate Professor, Department of Religions

Tolerance, respect for each other's religious beliefs and mutual affection and understanding have been the hallmarks of India's long tradition of culture, religion and history. It is a proud legacy, by and large people used to live in amity. Indeed, there is a historical legacy of religious harmony in India which is very unique despite its diverse faiths, linguistic groups and regional cultures. But today the problem of religious violence has increased, which has endangered the very concept of unity and integration of the people of India.

Do religions cause conflict? Religion, at best, is one factor among many. Religion, it should also be noted, is rather an instrumental than a fundamental cause. Today, it seems that politics is mixed up with religion in India. The use of religion in the political sphere is not opposed as long as it is used to retain morality. But on the contrary, it is being used as a powerful instrument to achieve political, economical and social purposes for its powerful mobilizatory power. Religion has a powerful emotional appeal and hence it is easy to exploit clouding real interests of common masses. Therefore, the political parties and pressure groups use Religion as a powerful instrument to influence the very living style and thinking process of the common citizens through fundamentalists propaganda which in fact causes the conflict.

There can be a strong link between religion and violence when this link is based on religion's tendency to form strong identities exclusive of others, and thus divide people into *us* and *them*. Needless to say, unless we accept the others with all sense of his/her dignity, there cannot be peace. Mutual acceptability and respect for other's dignity is what is lacking and we often end up blaming religion. Religion and religious values can only be a guide for us. What is important is to bring a revolution within us and develop a culture of respecting the others and accepting him/her as he/she is.

What role religion can play in the present century? Will religion be sidelined in view of the breathtaking technological progress or will it be a valuable resource for peace or a source of conflict? These are the questions which have to be grappled with and one has to find answers to them. Religion is not a source of conflicts, but it can be a valuable resource for peace. Religious identities clash as these identities signify much more than mere religious beliefs. If religious values, rather than religious rituals, are asserted, there will be greater possibility of building a just and peaceful society, it must be noted that the core values of all religions are complimentary rather than contradictory. If Hinduism and Jainism stresses non-violence, Buddhism stresses compassion, Christianity stresses love, Islam stresses justice and equality, these core values can become important resources for a meaningful and peaceful society.

The ethical heritage that each religion emphasises is on good life, good social behavior, and compassion towards fellow human beings. People who take religion as an ideology are tolerant and peace-loving and they search for God with a high degree of religiosity in whatever form it is expressed. They do not want to foster hatred and hostility, injustice and inequality, which cause division and disharmony in society. Thus religion can never be a source of conflict but can be a resource of peace in motivating believers towards tolerance and peaceful acceptance of other's religious groups.

THE BIG MTC ΟΙΚΟΓΕΝΕΙΑ



MOMENTS TO Remember

1. The College reopened on 13th June 2019, after a summer break with a community cleanliness drive the next day. We were happy to see all our staff and students come back with a bang to start the new academic session.
2. On 15th June 2019 the inaugural retreat was conducted under the theme “Remember your commitment” with Mr. Jackson Siipunii as the preacher, wherein many students recommitted and reaffirmed their calls.
3. One – day academic seminar: The college conducted two one day academic seminars, one each semester, on 26th July and 6th November respectively. The presenters were Rev. Dr. Paolen Haokip (Tribal Theology), Rev. Dr. Kennedy (New Testament), Dr. Tokivi (Religion) and Miss Gaichamliu (Theology). The sessions were highly academic and very up to date contextually.



MTCSU successfully conducted the **LITERARY MEET** on August 23rd with various items and competitions that put all students on the edge and teased their theological as well as up to date general knowledge skills. Mention must be made of the *Theospell* (another version of spell bee) which was newly introduced last year 2018-2019.



Music and MTC: Hats off to Miss Leong Chin yee from Singapore, who tirelessly and selflessly left all comforts of home to come and dusher in music back into our college. She spent almost two years with us and I am sure her hard work has not been in vain, as we can already hear new hymns reverberating in the chapel. All the more, many students have decided to take up music as a career, thanks for the inspiration miss. Not forgetting Mrs. Wong Kae Chee and other friends who have assisted us in this regard. God bless your ministries.



1st cultural day cum musical concert was held on 26th Oct 2019: Honouring God Almighty, from whom sources all varied traditions, cultures and tribes of the world, our college displayed an awe inspiring majestic cultural tapestry. The program gracefully ended with a food fest and musical showdown in the evening. Mrs. Renee Newmai, SDO of Tamei Sub Division and Dr. Ngamkhohao Haokip, principal of Eklavya Model Residential School, Sapormeina, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and Guest of Honour respectively.

- The college practical week was conducted from 23rd – 25th November. This time our ministerial focus was on the churches of STNBA and some few TBCA churches. We visited about 37 churches covering the two Associations.



The sports committee under the dynamic leadership of Mr. Boaz Popa and his executives conducted the annual sports week in a week long celebration of games and sports from December 7-11th 2019. The Olympic Flame was brought to our college and lit by our respected chief guest Shri. Haokholal Hangshing, Chairman, SH-ADC, Kangpokpi. There was a lot of excitement, and euphoria that captured our spirits. Both teachers and students participated enthusiastically by either playing inside the game or shouting from the flanks for their own houses.



This year the advent season was celebrated in the college quadrangle with a pre-Christmas on 12th December under the theme “Beautiful star of Bethlehem”. It was all colours and festivities in the air. Dr. Tokivi brought the word of God to us preparing our hearts and

minds for the season. The college choir herald the season with melodious chants and chorales. Not to forget bands like Prophet Boys and other college bands thundering their loud music and praises for God with Christmas numbers.



CHAMPION



It is with great happiness in our cups, we declare that our indomitable college volley team, under the Captainship of Dr. Tokivi, a veteran himself, helped lift the coveted cup of Kangpokpi District Ward Games 2020. Kudos team.

Historic moment for the college: The College set another milestone as we embarked on a new partnership with other universities. On 24th January 2020 the D. Min. programme affiliated to the Hoseo University, South Korea and M.Th. programme affiliated to the Martin Luther Christian University, Meghalaya was inaugurated by Rev. Dr. W. Konghar, respected General Secretary of MBC in the presence of distinguished Board Members, various Secretaries of MBC and other pastors.



MOMENTS TO Remember

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12. The thesis proposals for the students were conducted successfully on 17th Feb. Thanks to this batch, about five of them will be attempting to write their theses. God bless them in their endeavors.
13. The Senior Sermon Appraisal was successfully conducted between 10th – 21st February 2020. This is an important ritualistic engagement, in which five years of their learning was put to test.
14. **Visits and supports:**
 - On 18th January 2020 an MoU was signed between Martin Luther Christian University represented by its pro chancellor Rev. Dr. Samuel Meshack and Rev. Dr. Lt. Haokip, Principal of MTC in the presence of other dignitaries.
 - Dr. Tom Golding, Principal, Adelaide College of Ministries, Australia visited the college on 10th February 2010 and gave us an encouraging chapel talk as well as a workshop on “Biblical Hermeneutics”.
15. Rev. (Dr.) Alfred C. Chiru sends the community best wishes from his place of stay, especially the final year grads, “I congratulate you first for faithfully completing your courses. As you pray and plan to step up into the world, it's my prayer that you would learn to be faithful in small things in whatever position you venture into. I pray all of you would give your best so that the beauty of Jesus is seen in and through your lives. God bless you all”
16. **Some news and some congrats:**
 - This academic session 2019 – 2020 welcomed a new lecturer in the person of Miss Gaichamliu Gonmei from the department of theology. We welcome you miss to our humble community.
 - Dr. K. Tokivi, an Associate Professor in the department of Religion has brought accolades to us by adding another feather in the cap for himself as well as our institution, as he was covetously conferred Doctor of Theology in the department of Religion. Kudos sir.
 - Another ecstatic news for the community: Rev. Kothil Maring, an Assist. Professor in the department of Theology was ordained into the Lord's ministry by his local church on 20th December 2019. Congrats sir.
 - The Church bells chimed on February 23rd 2020 ushering in happiness into our community as we saw one of our faculty members Mr. Z N Sironbou, Assist. Professor in the department of History of Christianity, start a new family. God bless the couple blissfully.
17. Another memorable event in the calendar of the college was the ebullient hostel day, filled with fun and frolic, when all staff and students let their hair loose and had fun celebrating hostel life. This year saw unprecedented events like photography competition on the theme “The joy of MTC” and “Movie making Competition” and subsequent giving of “MTC Oscar awards 2020”. The students were encouraged to use media only for building up purposes. We came across many talented photographers and movie makers from our community. Hopefully they will teach the younger generations of this age to use media with wise and good intent

GRADUATION DAY.....?

Rain Check... due to COVID 19





ROOTED IN CHRIST

Stand The Storm

Mr. Jackson Siipunii, Assistant Professor, Department of New Testament

Paul, having learnt that the believers at Colossae were exposed to heretical teachings based on worldly philosophies and was at risk of compromising their faith, urges them to be rooted in Christ like a tree deeply rooted on a good ground and a house well built with a strong foundation. He projects the fact that only by being rooted in Christ they will be able to stand against all storms of life. They are therefore, to stand firm in their faith in Christ without being carried away by the social pressure and different worldly philosophies which are nothing but empty deceit. The Christians in the twenty-first century are not exempted from such deceitful empty philosophies and various dangerous social pressures, though slightly different in nature from that of Paul's time. Now the question is, "How can one survive such appealing and strong storms of life?" Whether one realizes or not, Paul's advice is to be rooted in Christ, to live strong and survive the storm of life. But, how can one be rooted in Christ?

Born Again: a Prerequisite

If we turn to Jesus with the stated question, He would imperatively say, "**You must be Born Again.**" No matter how pious we look, we are still lost and detached from God unless we are born from above. Only then can we be connected and get rooted in Christ. This only happens when we have a personal encounter with the risen Christ, and accept Him as our personal Lord and Savior by surrendering our totality to Him and stand firm unwaveringly as Paul did.

Be not wavered

David used the metaphor of a tree, planted by the river whose leaves does not wither and bears much fruits, to portray a faithful child of God who is deeply rooted in Him. Such a child is not carried away by the worldly philosophies and advices of the ungodly. He does not flow with the popular trend of the ungodly society, but takes delight in obeying the word of God and meditates on the goodness, love, principles, commands and promises of God day and night. That's how a true child of God gets constantly nurtured spiritually, and thereby continues to grow stronger, deeper and closer in the Lord daily. Such a child of God, like an evergreen and fruitful tree planted by the water, is unwavering and fruitful in all his ways (Ps. 1:1-3). In all his/her doing and being, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, self-control, faithfulness and gentleness (Gal.5:22-23) are felt and seen. Such fruits of the Spirit are the very image and nature of Christ, the principles and life of the Kingdom of God. We got no choice, but to be nurtured constantly from the word of God and grow deeper in Him, so that the image and nature of Christ is reflected in our daily lives. And it does not easily wither and disappear even when the storm of corruption and worldliness knocks at us.

It is a known fact that we live in a social system that is deeply soaked in corruption, in all dimensions (taking our state, Manipur as an example). However, unsurprisingly our society has normalized corruption, bribery, extortion, exploitation, etc. and we don't see its ugliness anymore, rather almost everyone admires it and embraces it, both young and old, rich and poor, literate and illiterate, pious and sinners, etc. alike. The pressure to flow with the crowd is too strong, that almost everyone is carried away by the force of this eminent evil either subtly or blatantly, and evidently we compromise our faith and bow down to this fraudulent system. The

statements such as 'Everyone is doing this, so one can't be different and stand aloof,' 'When everyone else is doing, why not I?' 'Without corruption or bribery one can't survive today in a state like ours...' etc. have become the common statements. And sadly many, including the seemingly most pious Bible loving persons in the church or society also actively involve in it.

The challenge here is, "Who will and can say 'No' to social evils and fight against it to eradicate these evils in our society? And how can one be sensitive to these issues and stand against it? We cannot just call ourselves children of God when the leaves and fruits of the Kingdom of God appear in us only on Sundays and wither away on the week days. Different challenges of life are awaited at every turn of life, and COMPROMISE is knocking at every door. Therefore, we must be deeply rooted in the Lord, be attached to Him closely through the scripture and be strong enough in the Lord. Only then can we survive the storms of life and unwaveringly fight the prevailing social evils we are exposed to.

GALLERY



Dear Chassadians "You are remembered"
With love from MTC



OBITUARY



Apart from some parents / family members of our community leaving us for their heavenly abodes, what hit us most was when we lost two of our very own comrades (L) Mr. H Ngamboithang Kipgen and (L) Mr. P. Meveihrii Prou, who left us at the beginning of 2020. This has brought gloom and mourning to our community. They are terribly missed in our midst and will stay in our hearts for a very long time to come, but we are not disheartened because we know who holds our future, both in this world and the world to come. Let us continue to pray and be in solidarity with the bereaved.



Photography contest winners

Keep us in prayers

A. Faculty: 15 faculties and 9 staff

B. Various Development Projects being undertaken:

1. New Administrative Building (Work in progress)
2. Library development
3. Faculty development
4. Two staff quarters
5. Hostel renovations
6. Newly started M. Th. And D. Min programs



C. Students and Alumni: Our 70 boys and 18 girls totalling 88 students from different communities and tribes. Graduated students and their ministries in different fields.

