

The Newsletter of Holy Cross Family Ministries, India.

Family Light

EDITORIAL

Recent happenings in our country, the violence against women and girl children have prompted the parents, social organizations and the media to express outrage demanding protection and justice from the civil authority. Today, some parents are anxious and worried about their children's safety when they are away especially in public places and institutions. In this issue of Family Light, we want to reflect the effects of abuse so that we will be able to understand the gravity of the problem and respond to it by helping to create a safe and sound atmosphere for them to live in. What is worrisome and frightening is that many of these abuses occur in familiar context. We cannot say that this fear is baseless. This is proved to be true in the testimony of the person who shares the sad experience of her past with us.



Dr. Johnson Pradeep helps us to understand how, when the child has undergone a traumatic experience caused by the abuse, the symptoms and clues need to be picked up by parents and caregivers in order to help the child. Normally, the child forgets these events but they crop up later on in his/her life, though the damage is done. It is alarming to note the long-term consequences it would have on the child, especially the mental wellbeing of the person.

How safe are our children? Children are innocent and believe us, the adults. So they are under our protection and care. Father Abraham in his article deals with the effects of various kinds of abuse and the impact it has on the child. *Child abuse has many forms: physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, and exploitation. All of these are potentially or actually harmful to a child's health, survival, dignity and development.* Fr. Abraham gives some corrective steps to be taken which are helpful for parents and caregivers who play a significant role in the lives of children.

Do children matter? Unfortunately today the adult society behaves as if the children don't matter. The children are neglected in their homes. The reflection of Fr. Morissette invites us to do self-examination of the quality of our caring. Jesus is stern in telling that the adults should set a good example and be their mentors. The challenge is to examine ourselves: how we live our life and conduct ourselves. Are we misleading the children as the old man in the story that Fr. Morissette cites?

Ultimately, what is important is to find love in the family. The abused child, to a great extent, can recover by experiencing love in the family and neighborhood and the Church community, as we read in the personal testimony of Zarina. Fr. Agi's suggestions are practical and he invites the parents and caregivers to be vigilant and responsive. The Church in Bangalore becomes alive and enthusiastic in preparing herself to celebrate the birthday of Blessed Mother on Sept.8. People throng to St. Mary's Basilica. We find good models in Mother Mary and Saint Joseph to be good and responsible parents and guardians. Let us remind ourselves of the dictum used by Father Peyton: "A World at Prayer is a World at Peace!" The challenge is to make the world a better place where the children would find safety, security, peace, freedom and joy.

Fr. Gali Arul Raj, csc
Director.



Volume 3
Number 3
September - 2014



The Family
That Prays Together
Stays Together™

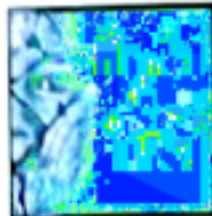
Published by
Holy Cross Family Ministries

294, 3rd Cross,
8th Main Road,
Vivekanagar,
Bangalore - 560 047.
Tel: (080) 25714309.
Email: hcfmin@gmail.com

For Private Circulation

HOW DOES ONE KNOW WHETHER THE SAFETY OF A CHILD HAS BEEN COMPROMISED?

"Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future" (J.F. Kennedy)



Children are the most vulnerable group in society. More than boys; girls are unsafe and discriminated more frequently. If the safety of the children is compromised, that has serious effects on their physical, psychological and social well-being. In India, two out of three children are physically abused, 53.22 % of them are reported having faced one or other form of sexual abuse and every second child has faced emotional abuse. However, the irony is that none of them reported it to anyone. (*Study on Child Abuse - INDIA 2007*).

Depending on their age and intellectual maturity, the children may present different types of symptoms. Younger children may sometimes not be even aware that their safety or rights are violated.

The signs and symptoms of children whose safety is compromised are given below:

- 1. Behavioural changes:** The children may appear anxious, worried, tearful, gloomy, tired, irritable or scared. They show extreme changes such as demanding, withdrawn, aggressive or very passive attitudes. Children do have depressive symptoms and some of them report suicidal tendencies. Girls usually internalize their symptoms and are depressed, socially withdrawn and express somatic symptoms such as headache and abdominal pain. Sometimes they may appear totally normal or pretend to be normal so that others may not know about their distress. There may be a change in their eating pattern, sleep and communication. Their personal hygiene may be poor, dressing may be dirty and may even emit bad odour. Some children may regress to early behaviours such as clinging to mother, bed-wetting or thumb sucking. They may be afraid of meeting strangers or specific people and have difficulty remembering traumatising events. Children also may have poor peer interaction, poor social interactions and may not act to relieve distress in others. (*Naughton, 2013*)
- 2. Academic and extracurricular activities:** The best predictor that there is a problem is sudden academic decline. The children may show a lack of concentrating ability; they may shun classes, avoiding their teachers in order to hide any injury due to abuse. Some children may show developmental delay. That is manifested by delayed language abilities, cognitive function (brain functions), and overall development in preschool children.
- 3. Risk-taking behaviours:** Teenagers are very prone to experimentation and go for high-risk activities. That includes the abuse of drugs, antisocial acts such as harming others, sexual experimentation, using weapons to threaten people or cruelty towards other children, disruptive behaviour, problems of conduct and oppositional behaviour.
- 4. Acting out sexual behaviours.** The children may engage in excessively sexualized behaviour or feel very guilty about being abused, curse themselves or use sexually explicit languages. They may abuse other vulnerable children also. Some children may display inappropriate sexual behaviours not suited to their age. In teenagers, some of the common symptoms include self-destructive behaviour, sexual dissatisfaction, promiscuity, homosexuality, and an increased risk for re-victimization. (*Beitchman, 1991*)
- 5. Long term consequences:** It may not only cause short-term effects but severe long term effects. It has been reported that the children may show signs of depression, alcohol abuse, anxiety, and suicidal behaviour, HIV and herpes simplex virus type 2 (HSV2) infection (*Jewkes, 2010*). Also, it is well established that child sexual abuse has been associated with mental illness later in life. (*Polusny, 1995*)

Conclusion:

It is very challenging for the parents to identify child abuse. They should be very watchful and suspect whenever the children present unusual psychosomatic complaints or behavioural changes. They should not tackle this issue with anger or hostility. They need rather to be empathetic and give adequate time for the children to report their problems. That will give them confidence to open up.

References:

- Kacker, L., Mohsin, N., Dixit, A., Varadan, S., & Kumar, P. (2007). Study on child abuse: India, 2007. Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.
- Naughton AM, Maguire SA, Mann MK, Lumb RC, Tempest V, Gracias S, Kemp AM. Emotional, behavioral, and developmental features indicative of neglect or emotional abuse in preschool children: a systematic review. *JAMA Pediatr.* 2013 Aug;167(8):769-75.
- Beitchman, J. H., Zucker, K. J., Hood, J. E., DaCosta, G. A., & Akman, D. (1991). A review of the short-term effects of child sexual abuse. *Child abuse & neglect*, 15(4), 537-556.
- Jewkes RK, Dunkle K, Nduna M, Jama PN, Puren A (2010) Associations between childhood adversity and depression, substance abuse and HIV and HSV2 incident infections in rural South African youth. *Child Abuse Negl* 34: 833-841.
- Polusny M, Follette V (1995) Long-term correlates of child sexual abuse: theory and review of the empirical literature. *Appl Prev Psychol* 4: 143-166.

Dr. Johnson Pradeep.R

Assistant Professor

Department of Psychiatry, Ethics, Institutional Ethics Committee, Human Research Protection Programme

St. John's Medical College Hospital,

St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences, Bangalore

TESTIMONY OF A PERSON WHO HAS BEEN ABUSED

If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the dept of the sea." Mt18:6

Now I am 25 years old and have a loving family with a comfortable income and I thank God for giving me a loving husband and two beautiful children. My in-laws are really adorable and treat me as their own child. This I believe is a gift God has given me because He knew that I deserved it. I assure you that whatever I pen down is real and it happened in my life. My mother passed away when we were still young and innocent. The two of us were left with our father unaware of the wickedness that I would be facing during my growing years, and that too from my own father.

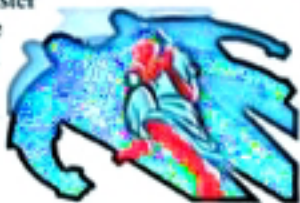
After my mother's departure we had no other option but to put up with my father who made my life miserable soon after. I being the eldest was expected to do the household chores and my father helped me. My younger peer too helped sometimes as we had to go to school together. Life had become routine for us—get up every morning at 5:00 a. m., cook food, rush off to school, then back home and do the house work. By this time my father lost his temporary job also. It is said, "an idle mind is the devil's workshop" which led him to set his eyes lustily on me and so began my harrowing experience which has not left my mind nor will it ever leave me. He looked at me lustily as a sex symbol and not as his daughter to be protected from all devilish plans. He could not control his sex urge which he satisfied with me. As a result I dreaded when night approached because I could not sleep due to his sexual advances. I became happy when he got a job much

away from home as he had to stay at workplace. But whenever he came home on leave, again the fear crept in and I was spending sleepless nights whenever my father was at home on weekends or on leave. I tried to hide his misdeeds by keeping quiet and crying in solitude. There was no love in his eyes but only lust. Thus he abused me and warned me not to tell anyone.

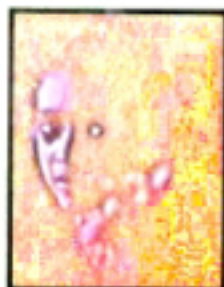
Since I spent sleepless nights, naturally I slept in the classroom as I felt very sleepy when the teacher was teaching. It was the teacher who noticed my behaviour and decided to take me into confidence. After a lot of cajoling and counseling, I finally broke down and confessed to my teacher who agreed to help me. My aunt was called by the teacher who was told about my home problem. She was shocked to hear the bad news and volunteered to look after me and my sister and not allow us to be with our father henceforth. She became very understanding and nurtured us with love and affection. The moment I turned 18 she advised me to settle down as by then my father could not object to the marriage.

Thanks to my teachers and my good aunt that I now have a good family in which I'm settled and can also give shelter to my sister who is studying to be a teacher. I thank God for all the wonderful things He has done in my life.

Zarina Bi



PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF ABUSE ON CHILDREN



The recent horrific incident of the gang rape of a minor-student in school premises on July 17 in East Bangalore sent shock-waves across the city and the nation as a whole. A school is a second home for children, a sacred place of learning and growing up, in an atmosphere of trust, friendship and guidance.

While the angry parents continue their protest, the police advance with their investigations into the incident. In the recent months, sexual crimes against children have seen an unprecedented spurt in our country. Incidents of child abuse are now made more public in India by the social media. As a result, the policy makers and social activists have acted in a united and competent manner to punish the guilty and send a clear message to the erring public that we shall protect our children, and the guilty will have the most stringent punishment.

Children are vulnerable, handle them with care

All human beings are born with an insatiable hunger for relationship. We exist in and through our relationships. Our relationships give us an identity, we discover ourselves in the context of others. It is to be formed and matured through a long developmental process, which begins before we are born and unfolds throughout our entire lives, through different stages: prenatal, infancy, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. If one's childhood experience in relationship is wounded or fragmented, then the child's capacity for authentic and trusting human closeness will not be realized. History of our relationship exerts a powerful influence on our self-esteem. And our self-esteem in turn affects our capacity for friendship, our style of interacting with others and our way of being and behaving in the world.

A child-mother relationship is greatly gratifying to both. Child abuse in India was till recently a non issue, or was often a hidden issue, especially when it happens within the context of home or by family members. Often the public attention was directed to or focused on issues such as child labour, prostitution, marriage, etc. Children in India are often highly dependent on their parents and elders. India does not have a law that protects children against abuse in the home. Studies in intra-familial child abuse in the US have shown correlation to delinquency, crime, teenage pregnancy, and other psychosocial problems.

What is child abuse? According to UNICEF, violence against children can be "physical and mental abuse and injury, neglect or negligent treatment, exploitation and sexual abuse. Violence may take place in homes, schools, orphanages, residential care facilities, on the streets, in the workplace, in prisons and in places of detention." Child abuse has many forms: physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, and exploitation. Any of these that are potentially or actually harmful to a child's health, survival, dignity and development are abuse.

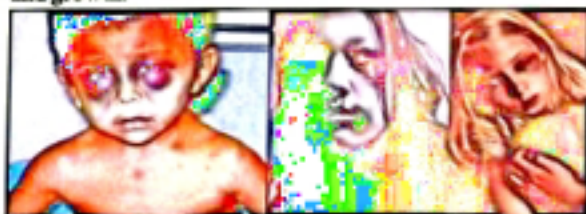
In Western countries, preventing child abuse is considered a high priority, and detailed laws and policies exist to

address this issue. Different jurisdictions have developed their own definitions of what constitutes child abuse for the purposes of removing a child from his/her family and/or prosecuting a criminal charge. According to the *Journal of Child Abuse and Neglect*, child abuse is "any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation, an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm".

In 2007, the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) released a study report on child abuse in India. The study of the MWCD found a wide-spread incident of child abuse. Children between the ages of 5-12 are at the highest risk for abuse and exploitation. India has launched an Integrated Child Protection Scheme which aims at shielding children from violence and abuse.

Effect of abuse on a child

For every child, growing up means a progressive gratification of its basic needs for love, safety, belonging, respect and self-esteem so that there is motivation for development of talents, capacities and creative tendencies. At the same time, a child learns reluctantly that growing up is all about learning to give up the comfort and company of toys, the security of home, the protection of the parents, etc. The tragedy is that some children experience abandonment before they are ready for it. Experience of rejection, abandonment, neglect of basic dependency needs, and abuse of all forms (emotional, physical, sexual) in early childhood negatively influence thoughts, perceptions, emotions, motivations, interpersonal relationships, and behaviour patterns in their adulthood. Tragedy strikes some children at an early age; Rejected in the womb as unwanted child, uncaring depressed mothers, ill health of the mother, death of a parent, adoption, abandonment, living away from parents, parents away due to employment, divorced parents, etc. Painful and negative experiences of early childhood adversely affect a child's human development and growth.



Physical Abuse: it is about inflicting physical injury most often unreasonably by strikes, throwing a child, throwing things at a child, etc. As a result the child becomes bitter, is preoccupied with feelings of anger and fantasies of revenge, feels unloved by parents or elders. We are humanly incapable of loving those who hurt us.

Emotional abuse: There are different ways of emotionally hurting a child. And this form of abuse is more severe, leaving a deep scar that refuses to be healed for a long time. It happens in most familiar places like home, school, care homes, etc. where the child is very dependent for its very sense of survival and security. A child can be emotionally abused by

Rejecting-	shout at a child to leave, get out of sight..., not talking to the child for a day or more.
Ignoring-	show no attachment or provide nurturance to a child, emotionally adult person being unavailable to the child.
Terrorizing-	ridicule the child's physical, intellectual weakness, compare him/her with others, make him/her compete with others, threaten him/her with mutilation or abandonment.
Isolating-	no exposure to stimulation, gender biased control of a child
Corrupting-	permit use of alcohol, watch cruel and vulgar behaviors on TV, participate in cruel acts etc.

In the process of growing up, a child needs to feel a progressive gratification of his/her basic needs for love, safety, belonging, respect. Emotional abuses communicate to children that they are not valuable or worthy of their parents' love and care. Such abuses leave hidden scars in the vulnerable mind of children that manifest themselves in feelings of insecurity, poor self-confidence, destructive behavior, angry acts (cruelty towards juniors or animals) withdrawal from group life, poor development of basic skills in relationship and communication, difficulty in forming relationships etc...

Sexual abuse



is about involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children in sexual activities that they do not fully comprehend and therefore to which they are unable to give informed consent. In this context an adult is using his/her power over a child or taking advantage of its trust. There are two types of sexual abuse;

Touching- fondling, making a child touch an adult's sexual organs, any penetration of a child's vagina or anus by an object that does not have a medical purpose.

Non-touching- it involves indecent exposure/ exhibitionism, exposing children to pornographic material, deliberately exposing a child to genital sexual activities on screen or reality.

Dependence on others and developing a trusting relationship with familiar people are qualities of children. However, when children enter into relationship with immature elders, relationships are initially innocent but, later on, these turn out to be sexually abusive and emotionally manipulative. To be violated sexually is not the same as to be violated in other ways. Abusive sex leaves the soul a scar that is unique both in its pain and in its power to create chaos and disintegration within one who has been violated. Abusive sex or casual sex however loving, cheapens the experience of love. The impact

of these abuses are detrimental to the wellbeing, development and growth of a child. Its effect upon a trusting and dependent child is that as the child grows up, there is an accompanying feeling of guilt and shame upon oneself. There is a feeling of low self-worth or self esteem leading to anger and hatred alternating with depression, feelings of sadness and loneliness.

The self esteem of a child is based on a judgement that one makes about one's own worthiness and acceptability to be loved by others. This judgement is based on the opinion of parents or significant persons in the life of the child. As a result, a positive opinion will create a pleasant feeling in a child or a negative opinion will create an unpleasant feeling in the child. A close observation of the child's and the adolescent's behaviour at home or in educational institutions, could identify a healthy or a weak self-esteem of that particular child. Some of the manifestations of low self-esteem are: disabling guilt feeling, inability to trust others, a sense of personal insecurity, fear of being vulnerable, fear of failure, inability to let go, inability to have fun and play, immobilising fears, problems with intimacy, inability to forgive or forget, problems with denial, unresolved anger, problems of accepting change, problems in interpersonal relationship, fear of rejection, insatiable need for approval, inability to be assertive, etc.

Conclusion:

Can we prevent child abuse? Yes. We can. With responsible parenting and collective social and institutional responsibility for the formation of our children, they can be given a happy childhood and a secure environment to grow up and to actualize their potentialities. Some of the concrete steps could be;

1. Create a home of joy and love for the family. Bringing up children involves discipline for both parents and children. If parents provide quality time to communicate their love and appreciation for the child, listen to him/her and participate in his/her activities, thereby the child-parent relationship becomes mutually trustworthy and emotionally fulfilling.
2. Discourage the child from excessive use of electronic gadgets; encourage healthy and refreshing sibling relationship at home.
3. Educate the child to respect him/herself and others. Give age-oriented lessons on the psycho-sexual growth process and its impact on physical changes and emotional growth.
4. Get to know the friends of your child, their family background and behavioural patterns.
5. Do not frighten children. Instead assure support and encourage confidence in your child to think logically and behave ethically at home or outside, alone or together with friends.
6. Know your locality or neighbourhood and take precautions, if necessary. Learn from the experiences of others, thus you prevent a similar situation for your child.

THE WAY JESUS LOOKED AT CHILD ABUSE



The Gospels do not report any explicit saying of Jesus about child abuse. However, Jesus speaks about this crime implicitly when he says, "Anyone who is an obstacle to bring down one of these little ones who have faith in me would be better drowned in the depths of the sea with a great millstone round his neck" (Mt. 18: 6).

We may ask ourselves, who are these "little ones" whom Jesus refers to? We need not think only of children, because Saint Matthew adds this explanatory expression, "who have faith in me", which makes it clear that it is faith in Christ that is in question. Most commentators agree that the "little ones" are the unimportant members of the Christian community, the ones whom Jesus calls the heirs of the kingdom, because they are simple people, pure in heart, ready to hear him and believe, (Ref. Mt 5: 8), but who do not fully understand the implications of their faith.

When Jesus speaks of the person "who is an obstacle to bring down one of these little ones," he indicates that the person in question is leading the little one into something that he/she does not properly understand. Jesus does not say precisely what this plight is, but that is precisely what happens in the sexual abuse of children. Thus we know that the faith and the innocence of a little one can be ruined when he/she is led into sin by another person. When such a thing happens, the Evil One is at work.

The obstacle or the cause to stumble is followed by a very great threat of punishment. Jesus says that it is better for the one who scandalizes others to be plunged into the depths of the sea with a millstone round his neck. These words underline the awful punishment reserved to those who become stumbling blocks and lead others to fall into sin. In this case, the millstone that Jesus spoke about was a grinding-stone so big that an ass alone could pull it. To have such a stone hung round one's neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea is a powerful image that brings out the awfulness of the punishment reserved to those who scandalize others. In other words, Jesus is speaking of a fate that the scandal-giver cannot possibly escape, unless he/she repents.

This teaching is very stern. It stresses the awful responsibility of the one who leads another person to sin, especially in the case of child abuse. In a way we could say that the most heinous of all sins is to teach another to sin, because if one scandalizes someone else, that person in turn may teach still another to fall.

Thus the spiral of sin goes on and on. And if the scandal-giver has any conscience, there is nothing in the world which will haunt him/her more.

A comparison may help to illustrate his/her state of soul. As an old man was lying on his deathbed, it was clear to his pastor that something was troubling him. Finally, the old man broke the silence. "When I was a youngster," he said, "I played a prank that haunts me to this day. One day I twisted the highway route signs in opposite directions so the arrows would direct travelers in the wrong direction. 'I wonder, as I lie here now, how many people I misdirected by that action and I wonder how many I misdirected by the actions of my life.'" (Anonymous)

The world in which we live is also a sinful world. Temptations are sure to come. That is why Jesus adds: "Obstacles indeed there must be," (v. 7). That does not lessen the responsibility of those who scandalize others or place stumbling blocks on the paths of children or the little ones who believe in Christ. In a French cemetery there is this epitaph on a physician's grave: *Ci git par qui tant d'autres gisent*. It means "Here lies the one on account of whom so many others lie." This epitaph would do nicely for any scandalous person who does not repent for his/her sins.

Finally, Jesus stresses the very great importance of the child, when he says that "their angels in heaven are continually in the presence of my Father in heaven" (v. 10). In the sight of God, children are so important and precious that their angels have the right to direct access to the presence of God. The sexual abuse of children spoils their innocence and, in that way, is a direct affront to God.

Fr. Hervé Morissette, CSC

Newsbits:

We are pleased to inform our readers that the Holy Father, Pope Francis, has appointed Fr Arul Raj Gali, CSC, the Director of the Holy Cross Family Ministries in India, as Adjutor of the III Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to take place in the Vatican from 5 to 19 October 2014 to treat the topic

The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization.

The Editorial Team of *Family Light* congratulates Fr Arul Raj CSC on his appointment to this important responsibility at the service of the entire Church.



HOW TO PROTECT OUR CHILDREN AGAINST ANY KIND OF ABUSE

There is a recent story of a girl whose family is well known to me. The girl was lured into a relationship through the Facebook. That was averted by her alert parents who acted on my advice. The boy who proposed to her through the Internet continued calling her and advising her to abandon her parents saying they have no legal rights over her after she reaches 18. He almost convinced her to get married to him. Once the parents questioned her extraordinary addiction to the Internet, she was forced to reveal the whole story. They made a quick enquiry, only to find that he was a drug addict and an alcoholic who left his parents in the US and is living alone in the city of Bangalore without any job. Cases of this nature are coming to light these days, alerting everyone to be more cautious about the enticements of today's world. We cannot control the growth of the IT or science. We can only remodel our life style and the value systems of our families and take precautions that it will protect our beloved children from falling prey to the various forms of abuses that are on the increase every day. Both the parents and the society must be alert to avert such kind of happenings.

The following are some of the remedies that I would suggest mainly to the parents and caretakers of the growing children.

- 1) **Create an atmosphere of healthy relationship at home:** The family is basically a system of relationships. According to Murray Bowen, the family is an emotional system which is interlinked. When one person in a family is emotionally affected, the rest of the family also will naturally get affected. A healthy family gifts healthy children to the world and an emotionally sick family makes not only the entire family sick, but affects also the society. If the family is unhealthy, the relationships of the child also will be unhealthy in most of the cases. What he does not get at home, he will search it elsewhere. This is how some get addicted to pornography, Facebook, mobile phone related weaknesses, alcoholism etc. A healthy family will help the child grow in self-esteem that will prevent him from falling prey to the emotional struggles of his growth process. It is always a good family which is behind every successful person on earth. It is always the parents who help a child grow to maturity and no one can replace them or their care.
- 2) **Respectfully watch over your children:** *Familiaris Consortio* reminds us that, as procreation is an important responsibility of the parents, the upbringing and the education of the children also is equally important. The parents need to listen to their children very carefully and lovingly as they are taking steps to live their life in the complex situations of the modern world. Both the father and the mother should have a respectful eye on each movement of their child to maturity. When a child begins to move from childhood to puberty and from puberty to adulthood, that process of passage has its own implications on the emotional world of the child. That is also the time when they will try to be independent of their parents and reach out to their peers through the Internet, mobile phones and other means of communication. Parents who have already gone through such a stage must deal with their children respectfully and with more matured understanding. For this reason they need to educate themselves to guide their children.
- 3) **Be in close contact with the teachers and friends of your children.** It is always important that the parents keep a close contact with the teachers of their children. The teachers will know who the children are, at times even better than their parents. In a classroom, most of the children are themselves. It is also important that the parents know who the friends of their children are. According to Murray Bowen, every human being will seek to join only a person who reflects his own personality. From the friendship circle of your child you can know the direction he takes in his life. It is often bad friendships that give wrong ideas about life and often make children victims of online abuse.
- 4) **Control the use of mobile phones and other electronic gadgets.** Do we need them? Yes, we do. Do our children need them? Each parent has to decide, after careful and prudent study of the atmosphere in which they live. They are mere electronic instruments which are harmless, but people can make a good or a bad use of them. It is the responsibility of the growing generations to handle such instruments with care. It is very pathetic to note that many parents give their children mobile phones or PCs just to please them or to let the neighbors know they can afford to do it. It has become a matter of prestige for some. Often parents fail to see if their child is emotionally mature enough to handle such electronic gadgets responsibly. Even if some know they are not able to do it they tolerate it to avoid confrontation and uneasy feelings at home and the result will be more catastrophic. If your child is using a laptop prudently, convince him to use it in the common place.
- 5) **Be vigilant:** Be a person of shrewdness. Observe the environment before you act. Use parental control option on your PC or laptop so that children don't get access to the unwanted sites. Observe the whereabouts of your children. When children show less interest in family relationships, one can be sure that they have developed some other relationships elsewhere. Human beings cannot live without relating to someone or something. Or else they are psychologically ill. This relationship need not be a relationship with another person; it could be an addictive relationship to substances, particular behavioral patterns, the Internet or the mobile phone. If your children show extraordinary maturity regarding knowledge of sex-related subjects, it could be a sign that they are in bad company or even have been abused. Children are expected to develop a healthy relationship with their own age group but, sometimes, it can be that they develop relationships with older or even younger persons. They avoid their peers, because of the lack of acceptance they experience on account of their own emotional immaturity. When parents or teachers notice a visible change in any child's behavior, especially in their behavioral world, it must be prudently examined to see if the child is being abused or if there is some possibility towards the same. The teachers must be more vigilant in these matters at the school campus.
- 6) **Seek help in time:** No one is perfect in this world and no one grows perfectly. Human beings are interdependent beings; we need each other to grow. Should we then shy away from seeking help to grow? When parents and mentors find that their children require urgent help to recover either from a trauma or a danger relating to their behavioral or relationship patterns, they should seek the help of a trusted and trained counselor at the earliest.

Try Prayer contest 2014

Title: The Family that Prays together stays together

Winners

Juniors:

First Prize: Augustus Rousseau (St. Joseph's Church, Chengaleni)

Second Prize: Satish Debbarma (St. Andre School, Bodiyungnagar)

Third Prize: Jayashree Debbarma (St. Andre School, Bodiyungnagar)

Consolation Prizes

Anet Ialunhlimi (St. John's Parish, Khawazuli), **Vishal Suchiang** (Holy Cross Higher Secondary School, Umkangi), **Vapri Jamatia** (Holy Cross School, Tackarman)

Seniors:

First Prize: Janitor Debbarma (St. Andre School, Bodiyungnagar)

Second Prize: Joyjit Goswami (Holy Cross School, Panisagar)

Third Prize: Swary Reang (St. Andre School, Bodiyungnagar)

Consolation Prizes

Mesonie 'S' Pamblang (Holy Cross Higher Secondary School, Umkangi), **R. Sangari** (Holy Cross Matric, Somarasampettai), **Nobil** (Holy Cross Matriculation School, Vakkampatty), **Chiranjit Dhar** (Holy Cross School, Panisagar), **Benedict VL Hritapua** (St. John's Parish, Khawazuli), **Moninanda Tuipwa** (Holy Cross School, Tackarman), **Damanjit Debbarma** (Notre Dame Holy Cross, Moharpara), **Somankim Darlong** (Holy Cross Higher Secondary School, Kathalcharrui), **Anurag Das** (Holy Cross School, Kamanghat)

Printed Matter

News Letter



Holy Cross Family Ministries

294, 3rd Cross, 8th Main Road
Vivekanagar, Bangalore - 560 047
Karnataka, India



Report of COMPAS August 2-3, 2014



Seven members of the Community Making Process and Skills (COMPAS) team participated in the two day training session held at St. Andrew's Home, St. Mark's Road, Bangalore on 2-3 August 2014. The resource person was Fr. M.C. Abraham CSC. Having allowed to critique their performance, he directed the team members to work in two groups and prepare their future session that introduces the COMPAS program to the new groups. The members spent a quite a bit of time in planning and presenting the module that they intend to conduct. Fr. M.C. Abraham suggested how to fine tune their power point presentations and encouraged them to bring out the best in them.

Shibu S.K. one of the participants of the training sessions shares the following with us:

"This weekend program as a unique and with hands on experience in planning our approach with module opened a whole new world ahead. With our New member Samantha (5 Months Baby angel) accompany us made us realise that the importance of trinity in our life and importance of family. This message was enforced through the 2 day workshop when we were asked to work on a module. 2 teams with similar object did things differently; however when we worked as one team we managed to get the skeleton structure in place within few hours. Fr. MC's feedback on our presentation enriched our skills and knowledge empowering our confident to take this forward. Big thanks to Fr Arul for supporting and being a pillar of hope, love and care from the start of this journey."

