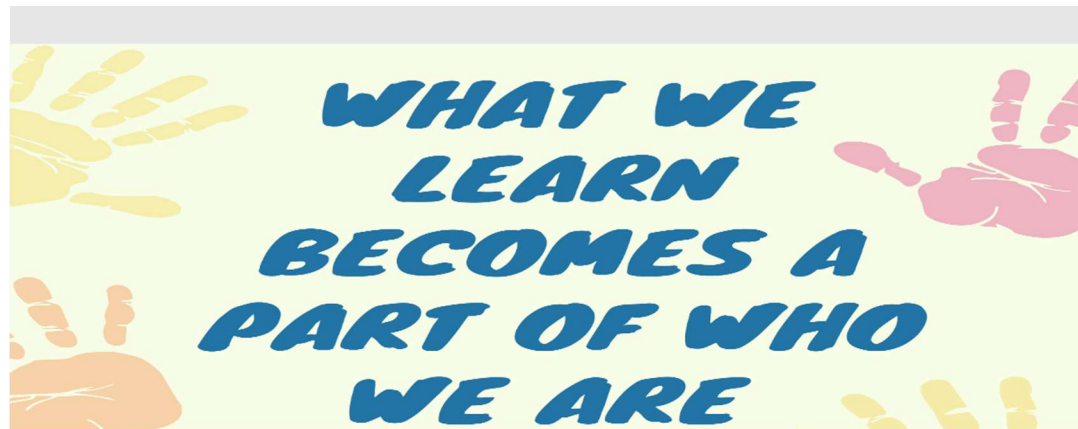




Carmel Times

A Teens Fellowship Initiative

CARMEL MAR THOMA CHURCH
BOSTON



George and Cooper

Short story series on the fruits of the Spirit

----- by **Andrew Varughese**

George and his dog Cooper went for a stroll at the dog park one day. As they walked along, George noticed the words "What is love?" spray-painted in bright blue on one side of the overhead bridge. The bridge had train tracks on the top and now and then a train would whizz by noisily. George thought about those words and wondered who had spray-painted them. And why? What IS love? Maybe it is something you feel when you are happy?

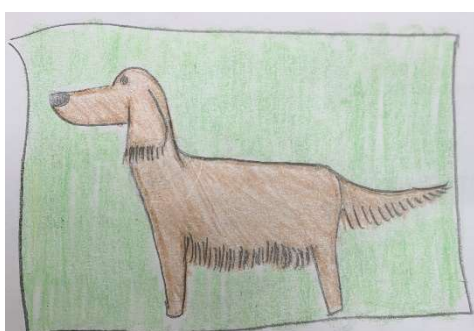
When they reached the dog park, George took Cooper's leash off and threw Cooper a frisbee and it went into the woods behind the dog park. Cooper brought it back, and wagged his tail, asking for another throw. George threw it again and again and each time Cooper came back with it. This game continued for a long time. George was happy because Cooper was happy. Cooper loved the dog park! After a couple of hours, George and Cooper headed home together. Later that night, George went out to dinner with his family. When George came home from dinner, the house was quiet. George called out for Cooper but Cooper was nowhere to be seen.

George looked around worriedly. He ran outside and shouted for Cooper and then ran around his neighborhood. He looked for Cooper for hours, but Cooper was nowhere to be seen. George was distraught. The next morning, George went to the police station and asked if they had seen Cooper or if someone had found him and brought him in. They said no but allowed him to put up his homemade "missing" signs for Cooper.

George put up signs around his neighborhood, the dog park, the library, and the town hall. He even put signs on streetlamps. As he was putting up a sign, George noticed an ad for the town newspaper. He got an idea.

George went to the town's newspaper office to put an ad in the paper for his lost dog, hoping someone somewhere had seen Cooper. They agreed but the fee for the ad would cost George a small fortune. George wondered if he should do it, and then he thought about Cooper, lost and afraid, and so George quickly agreed.

George then went home and called everyone he knew to form a search party to look for Cooper. George, his friends, and neighbors searched for Cooper for hours on end. George searched every forest, plain, and hill that they played on, but he could not find Cooper. Every time George went out looking for Cooper, he took some of Cooper's favorite snacks with him and shouted Cooper's name repeatedly.



Foreword by Vicar

Hello Friends of the Carmel Teens Fellowship,

It is my delight to jot down this foreword for the Carmel Times. This is planned as a platform for our youngsters to express their opinions and ideas in a meaningful manner from a faith perspective in connection with the world that we live in. I wish to encourage our friends to come up with their works of creativity to make this publication more relevant and meaningful to all. I feel that a space for your literary and artistic works is an important and priceless opportunity. It encourages the writers and artists to look at things and events happening around them not just casually or indifferently but with a critical, analytical, and reflective eye. Writing, again, helps us to organize our innermost thoughts in a cohesive manner and it also triggers our imagination and creativity to a significant level of wonder.

Do you think that you can understand or even make sense of everything in the world around you? Having lived on this planet for a few years I prefer to say no. There are many things that are still unexplained and mysterious. Albert Einstein in his book, *The World As I See It* says, "The most beautiful experience we can have is the mysterious. It is the fundamental emotion that stands at the cradle of true art and true science." Mystery is not meaninglessness. Christian Religion/Faith is an attempt to acknowledge and stand in awe and reverence before the Ultimate reality that is mysterious, wonderful, and further than reason. This is what Christian life and worship is all about, looking within and around us through the eyes of faith. As youngsters, I would encourage you to think about your experiences from a faith perspective, converse with your peers and informed elders and more importantly, write it down more often than now. After a few years of such an exercise you will grow to be competent enough to express your faith comprehensively. I am sure you will continue to enjoy this journey being part of the Church.

Yours,
Sujith Atchen.



Story Continued...

One afternoon exactly two days after Cooper went missing, George walked to the dog park. He walked under the overhead bridge and saw those three words again. "What is love?" But George did not stop to think about love or the meaning of those words! He only felt sadness.

He looked and looked for Cooper and called out for Cooper, but Cooper was nowhere to be seen. George was exhausted. He gave up all hope. George sat down on a park bench and began to cry. He cried and cried and cried. He didn't care who heard him or saw him. He kept picturing Cooper's happiness the last time they were in the dog park together. How excited Cooper had been! He missed his best friend so much. George knew he could not give up. He stood up quickly, determined to find Cooper. He walked into the woods behind the dog park, yelling for Cooper.

Suddenly, he heard a commotion from the bushes. Startled, George looked up and saw Cooper running towards him, wagging his tail. Relieved and happy, George laughed and cried as he hugged Cooper. "Where were you Cooper? Where have you been?" George asked Cooper over and over. He silently vowed to buy a GPS tracker and attach it to Cooper's collar so that he would always know where Cooper was.

When George and Cooper got home, a tired Cooper crawled into his dog bed and fell asleep. George lay on the floor next to Cooper and wrapped his arms around Cooper. Looking at Cooper, George finally realized he knew the answer to the question "What is love?" It is not just something you feel when you are happy. It is caring about something so much that you would go to the ends of the earth to find it, and never give up until you do.

Love is patient, love is kind. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

1 Cor 13:4, 7-8



Illustrations by Andrew Varughese
Carmel Times logo by Andrew Varughese

Jokes Corner

Q. Why didn't Noah go fishing?

A. He only had 2 worms

Q. What animal could Noah not trust?

A. Cheetah

Teens Fellowship News & Events

VBS 2022: Make Waves! Kickoff event on June 5

Believe it or not, VBS 2022 is on the horizon, and we are ready to dive into another exciting theme. We want to invite you to gear up for a splashin' summer with



Together, we can create a ripple effect that can impact the world around us. We are designed to make positive change. Registrations are ongoing for June 17-19. Please register and spread the word among family and friends who you think would love to join us. To celebrate the re-launch of VBS after a long hiatus, we will have a kickoff event on June 5 after church service. Come ready to dive in and MAKE WAVES!

Next Carmel Times Issue – July

If you are interested to contribute matter to this, please reach out to the editorial board members or send your contributions to

cmtcprintcrew@gmail.com

We also seek donations to make printed copies of this available for Sunday School children.

Editorial Board

Andrew Varughese
Jairah Philips
Sarah Oommen



Insights on the Church, Liturgy and Sacraments

Candles: Generally, 12 candles are placed, six each, on both sides of the altar with a cross at the center representing Christ and his 12 disciples. However, owing to space and other constraints some churches have less than 12 candles. The lighted candles symbolize the presence of God. God is the source of light and reminds us that we too are called to be the light of the world. Generally, the candles are lit at the time of worship (except during the Sandhya Namaskaram Service).



Candles



Peelasa with Kakubo

Peelasa: (Syriac, meaning paten or plate):
The bread for the Holy Qurbana is placed in the Peelasa.

Kakubo (Syriac, meaning star):

This is a separate raised portion placed on the paten in the shape of a star so that the cloth cover over the paten will not touch the bread.

Kasa (Syriac, meaning chalice):

The wine is taken in the Kasa.

Tarvodo (Syriac, meaning spoon):

Tarvodo is a spoon used to serve the sanctified wine.

Espugo (Syriac, meaning cushion):

The Tarvodo is usually placed on the Espugo (a small red cushion). The paten and chalice are placed for Eucharistic celebration on the Virikoottu. The chalice is placed on the 'east' and the paten is placed on the 'west' on the Thabaleetha.



Peelasa and Kasa



Kabalana

Kabalana (Syriac, meaning to cover):

Kabalana are two richly stitched cloths used for covering the paten and the chalice. The covering over the paten has embroidery, depicting stalks with wheat grains. The covering over the chalice has embroidery depicting grape clusters.

Sosappa (Syriac, meaning veil):

Sosappa is thin white linen covering used for covering the paten and the chalice. It represents the glory of God, which covers the produce of the earth.



Sosappa



Dhoopa-kkutty

Dhoopakkutty (Malayalam, meaning Censer):

Censer is a lower cup with burning incense separated by a little gap followed by the upper cup, all of which are held together with four chains. The incense is generally used on important occasions during the worship service and at the time of the consecration of the church and housewarming services. The Censer in Latin it is called 'Thurible' Incense denotes the sweet-smelling sacrifice to the Lord.

Quiz

1. The sanctum sanctorum of the church is called the
2. The three divisions of the Chittola signify the
3. The Mar Thoma Church uses the cross without the
4. Incense is a symbol of _____ going up to God
5. The thin white linen covering used for covering the paten and the chalice is called_____.

Voice from the Past

----- BY SARAH OOMMEN

Many of the songs that we sing during our daily worship were penned by a composer named M.I. Varughese, more commonly known as Sadhu Kochukunju Upadesi. Just recently, during our Lenten Recital, we sang Krooshinmel Krooshimel. This song is only one of the many composed by this amazing composer and preacher.



Sadhu Kochukunju Upadesi
1883 - 1945

Born in November 1883 into a devout Christian family, Kochukunju Upadesi was a famous Christian preacher, poet, and composer from Kerala, India. He had a very distinctive appearance because he always wore a white shirt and a dhoti and almost always carried a Bible everywhere he went. His teachings about self-discipline, self-control, commitment, and an unwavering faith in God made him an especially unique person.

Kochukunju Upadesi had a difficult start in life. When he was 15, his mother passed away and later his father fell ill, leaving him to be the breadwinner of his family. These circumstances did not deter him from his zeal to preach the gospel. He would work during the day to earn an income for his family as a farmer and preach the gospel at night, going house to

house with a lantern and a Bible to share the good news of Christ. A few short years later, his father passed away. Kochukunju Upadesi was only 20. The untimely and early deaths of his parents did not hinder his efforts to spread the gospel. Kochukunju Upadesi was also active in church, organizing prayer meetings and holding the position of secretary of the Edayarammula Christian fellowship.

Kochukunju Upadesi married Aleyamma who was a great source of support to him. They were blessed with three children. He wanted all three of his children to follow God and live a righteous life. It was his desire that his oldest son Varghesekutty should become a full-time evangelist, his second son Samuelkutty should become an agriculturist to take care of his land, and that his daughter Mariamma should be a lady evangelist.

Unfortunately, Kochukunju Upadesi's second son Samuelkutty passed away at the tender age of 9. In the depths of his despair at the loss of his young son, Kochukunju Upadesi, wrote what would become one of his best-known hymns, Dukhaththinte Paana Paathram. This hymn is a testament to Kochukunju Upadesi's unshakeable faith in God despite the great tragedy he endured. Instead of turning away from God or feeling betrayed by the God he served so wholeheartedly, we find, in the lyrics of that famous song, that the death of his young son inspires Kochukunju Upadesi to reaffirm his faith in God and actively choose to see God as loving and faithful, despite the painful circumstances.

In time, Kochukunju Upadesi became a very popular evangelist. He was equally well known for his meaningful hymns. His meetings were held in

many places across Kerala and Southern India. Irrespective of caste and creed, people from all over came to listen to him preach. Many of the hymns he composed are still sung in churches across the world even today.

Kochukunju Upadesi also wrote a book of hymns called Aasawaasa Geethangal (Songs of Consolation) which featured 210 of his own songs. 17 hymns written by Kochukunju Upadesi are included in the Kristheeya Keerthhanangal, a book of 427 devotional hymns published by the Mar Thoma Church, including Dukhaththinte Paana Paathram, Krushinmel Krushinmel, Ente Sampaththennu Cholluvann, and Ente Daivam Swargga Simhassanam.

Kochukunju Upadesi passed away on November 30, 1945. He was buried in the Lakha St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church Cemetery with over 40,000 people, 2 Bishops and more than 100 priests in attendance.

Kochukunju Upadesi, was faithful to God till the end despite enduring so many personal tragedies. The legacy of his faith lives on in the many hymns he composed and the exemplary life he led continues to inspire people across India and the world.

<https://www.mgmministry.org/sadhu-kochukunju-upadesi-life-story/>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sadhu_Kochoonju_Upadesi

God uses words and language

As God started his church, he sent the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit could have come with healing, or walking on water, but it came with language: language that allowed all the listeners to hear about Jesus in a way they would understand. On that day, God was not only fulfilling his promise from Jesus to the disciples, but He was also fulfilling a much older plan to unite all the different people of the world. God used language to divide people at the Tower of Babel, and he used it to bring people together as he started his church. God knew that words are powerful.

How do your words affect others? Do they divide people or bring them together? The Holy Spirit helped Peter use his words to point others to Jesus. How can you use your words to do the same? Want to dig deeper and learn more about the power of words? Check out these stories: God uses words to create the world (Genesis 1). He uses language to confuse the people at the tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-8). Jesus is called the Word of God (John 1:1-4, 14).

Journey of a First Communicant

----- BY CHRISTIAN VARUGHESE



My journey as a first communicant began quite abruptly. I was told one day in March that I was now old enough to take communion, and that I would take my first communion in about 4 weeks. I would be joining my 12-year-old brother who would also be taking communion for the first time as I was not able to do it when I was 12 due to the pandemic. I did not fully process what to expect except that I understood that once I did it, I would start taking communion with my parents during Holy Communion services instead of sitting in my seat with my brothers as I usually did.

Everything started to become real once the first communicant classes, conducted by Achen, began. On the morning of the first class, my mother made my brother and I bring notebooks to take notes. I thought that a notebook would be pointless but when the lesson started, Achen said we would all have to take notes, so I was glad that I had a notebook. In those two-hour lessons each week, I wrote more notes down than I did in an entire week of History Class. We were taught a lot of stuff, from church traditions to the biblical perspective of communion. I learned things I never knew before - for example that the most important object used in the communion service is a tabletha, which is a wooden board from 1973, with the carved-on signature of the bishop, Philipose Mar Chrysostom MarThoma Metropolitan. Without it, a communion service cannot be carried out.

We were told that to take our first communion, we would have to be mature enough to understand the significance of it and pass a test of all the things we learnt in the preparation class. That forced me to focus a little more as I did not want to be the only one failing the test. Thankfully, in the end the test was an optional open book study guide to help us remember what we had been taught. Additionally, my parents drummed into us the seriousness of the sacrament of Holy Communion and how we must remember the death of Christ as the ultimate sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins everytime we partook in the communion and how we should not take communion lightly. My grandmother also decided to have a one-on-one session (on FaceTime) with my brother and I on the seriousness of taking communion, going through the Bible verses on communion, and the importance of confessing one's sins at home before prayerfully attending church, every single time we take communion. At this point, it all seemed very sobering and a bit burdensome to have to carry such a great responsibility.

Finally, the day arrived. After we got dressed at home in special outfits and a tie, we were made to take a video thanking our Godparents for praying for us all these years and informing them that they were in our thoughts on our special day. We knew that our Godparents had wanted to be with us and would have been with us if they were able to.

I forgot to mention one thing. During the preparatory classes, I always sat on the extreme left-hand side of the row of chairs. In one of the last classes, Achen asked us all to stand up and approach the altar. I walked straight ahead and found myself on the extreme left. "All right, this will be the order in which you will all kneel and receive the communion, starting with Christian," said Achen. To my horror, I realized that I would now be the first person to take communion. I wish I were the second or third or fourth instead, so I could have looked to my left and seen what I was supposed to do. (You will understand why I say this, very soon.)

The church sanctuary looked very different from how it is on ordinary Sundays. There were flowers and decorations inside the sanctuary like there was going to be a wedding, which I had never seen before for a regular church service.

I was sent up front to take my seat, with the other First Communicants. We were called to the front to recite the prayer to affirm our faith holding a candle and a Bible that was given to each of us. Eventually, during the Communion part of the service, we were called to kneel at the altar to receive communion for the first time. Due to the pandemic the bread and the wine were both given to us in our hands. I received the bread from the Bishop and held it in my hand, wondering if there was anything further that we needed to do before we ate it. Everyone else to my right looked at me and did the same and held the bread in their hands. It was only when the Bishop had gotten to the 4th person that he noticed that we hadn't eaten the bread and he signaled for us to eat it which we all then did, promptly. (Having witnessed our stellar performance, when Achen gave us the wine, he also instructed us, quietly but firmly, to drink it.)

At the end of the service, we were given formal certificates from the Bishop that said that we were now full members of the Marthoma Church. When the service ended, we went downstairs and had a wonderful lunch, and tried hard to not ruin our outfits by spilling anything. It was a special day for me, but if I am totally honest, I was very relieved when it was all over.

Then, I was tasked with writing about my experience. Despite my reservations about the task, here it is.

ChitChat Room

Conversation with our Vice President Mr. Thampy Kurian

-----By Jairah Philips and Mathew Mathai

J and M: What does the role of the Vice President of the church mean?

Thampyuncle: Vice-President is a member of the Church executive committee, managing the affairs of church. In the absence of Church Vicar, who is the President, the Vice-President takes up the needed responsibility.

J and M: What has inspired you to take an important role in our church community?

Thampyuncle: It is a humble way to serve Lord's kingdom by serving in the Church executive committee that makes decisions to effectively run the parish. I also want to inspire and set example to the younger members to be the leaders of tomorrow.

J and M: If you were to describe the impact that our church has coming together to have on the lives of the members, how would you do so?

Thampyuncle: I am now involved with the recently formed senior fellowship (GEMS) group of our Church. It is a wonderful opportunity for the seniors to come together and support each other in their golden age. Our Church now has Teen Fellowship group, nurturing the younger generation. Similarly, I like to see various functional professional groups formed to mentor and help each other in their respective careers. Also, like to see a church Strategic team formed to look into the future needs and growth of our parish.

J and M: Uncle, you have been an entrepreneur and a philanthropist. And you probably have had your fair share of trials and challenges. How did you stay so close to God even through hard times?

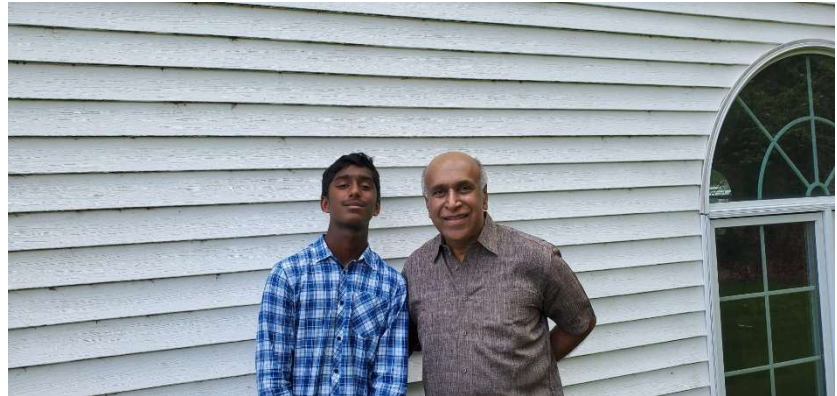
Thampyuncle: I believe that despite everything in all circumstances God is in control. When my faith waivers, I look back on the past and see how God's faithfulness has led me. I constantly affirm Bible Words such as Psalm 23:4; Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me, and Isaiah 40:31 "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." I also look to the faith and persistence of Bible characters like Joseph, Daniel etc.

J and M: What is your motivation behind coming to church every Sunday?

Thampyuncle: To encounter, reconcile at the Lord's Table and have a meal with resurrected Lord Jesus Christ and fellow parishioners. It gives me much joy to worship God and to interact with other believing friends.

J and M: Were you always this close to God? How was your childhood like? Were you a good Sunday school student?

Thampyuncle: I do not claim to be a perfect Christian at all. I was raised by God fearing parents and grew up in a prayerful family. It helped lay the foundation for my life. I attended Sunday school regularly. My father was a Sunday school teacher and set an example for me.



J and M: What hobbies or activities do you enjoy at your leisure?

Thampyuncle: I enjoy music by singing and playing Guitar. I also, enjoy gardening.

J and M: Would you like to share some words of advice to us the younger generation on how we can be a fruitful generation to this church?

Thampyuncle: You have already started a great Christian mission by forming "Teen fellowship Initiative". I am happy and proud of each one of you who are involved. Through this initiate you can shape our community. Obey your parents. Always treat them with respect. Give God thanks for all the talents He has given you. Your talent can be your special personality, your ability to give kind words, musical ability, giving, compassion, teaching skills, communication skills, or anything you are good at. Pray always for wisdom to use your talents to help others and for God's glory. We are all part of the body of Christ. Please make use of God's gifts to you. Do not let it catch dust. Try to practice teachings from Bible, example Micah 6:8 Do what is good; and what doth the Lord requires of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" These words made an impact in my life and let it do the same to you all to become a "Fruitful Generation".

Whats Happening!!!



“World of the Word” in session. These sessions are meant to equip our children with the power of the written and spoken word and the Holy Word to help raise self-awareness, promote self-confidence and kindness, and engage with the World around you in a meaningful way. Hence, this stream is aptly titled as “World of the Word”!

The children get to work on building their skills in effective Bible reading in a public forum, research, critical thinking, persuasive speech and above all, to listen respectfully and communicate effectively

*By God’s grace the first Edition of Carmel Times was published in March 2022 and the **Print Crew** was able to present a copy to our Thirumeni during the Episcopal visit.*



Our friends from the “Art in The Street” program, put up excellent work around the sanctuary to inspire us throughout the Lenten period.



Keep an eye out for news from the “Adventure League” about an exciting Hike .

