

GENUINE HUMILITY EQUIPS MYSTICS TO CONQUER EVIL AND SELFLESSLY SERVE HUMANKIND WITH DIVINE LOVE

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Abstract: The heart breaking news from all over the world every time is generally about the atrocities and injustice meted out to the vulnerable section of the society. Such facts lead one to believe that the evil ones possess all the power to destroy the world leaving humanity helpless and hopeless. However, life bears witness to the truth that the humble people who conquer evil by uplifting the oppressed and downtrodden by their selflessness manifest the omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent nature of the Divine who is in control always. In this context, the paper attempts to illustrate that a mystic receives the gift of humility from the Absolute, facilitating one to share the love of the divine, giving one's life to build the lives of others. The paper tries to elaborate the truth that humility guides persons to give up the desire for self-fulfillment or self-satisfaction empowering them to give their best to the world. This could be illustrated well with the analysis of the lives of a few personalities like, the very little known St. Vincenza Gerosa, the first companion of Saint Bartolomea, the foundress of (SCCG), Don Bosio, the Spiritual father of (SCCG), St. Jeanne Jugan, the foundress of the Congregation of (LSP) and the well acclaimed Saint Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscan orders. The lives of Dr. Alok Sagar, a hero of the tribals and Sr. Georgette, the mother of the vulnerable who serve humanity in the 21st century are also appropriate illustrations of the above stated truth. Finally, the paper establishes that these ennobled persons practice to live passionately for the good of their neighbour's spiritual and material needs. Hence, they fit well into the category of Mystics as described by Underhill in her works on Mysticism.

Keywords: Humility, St. Vincenza Gerosa, Don. Bosio, St. Jeanne Jugan, St. Francis of Assisi, Dr. Alok Sagar, Sr. Georgette, mystics

Introduction:

A human being's realisation that one's life becomes beautiful and worthwhile not through self-fulfillment or accumulation of riches but through humble self-giving leads to solve many problems that the world faces today. The Scriptures open before one the way to true happiness, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves" (Phil: 2:3). Humility alone unfolds the wisdom to know one's real worth and value the others as one's equals. In the twenty-first century, human beings seem to be trying strenuously to gain power and rise up to a position from where one can hoard up wealth, to make life secure for oneself and for one's own family, through wrong means. In the process of doing so, one oppresses and destroys the lives of others, whom one does not consider one's own, as they become a hindrance to their personal plans.

The view that one can achieve anything in life without others' help and everything is within one's reach appears to be replacing even the Divine. The temptation to believe in this perception is strong because technology seems to be making things which are impossible today, possible tomorrow. However, true-life experiences which people face while tackling problems which have no solutions like, natural calamities, incurable diseases, suffering of the innocent and ultimately inevitable death, enlighten one of the fact that this is a false notion and then the human mind and heart comprehends the magnanimous love of the Divine, which inspires one to bow one's head before the power of the divine not in sorrow or in shame but in humility and in awe. "For great is the might of the Lord; but by the humble he is glorified" (Sirach 3:20). The book of wisdom reads, "for God created man for incorruption, and made him in the image of his own eternity" (2:23), then, why this needless desire to compete with the divine to possess power in the world? The paper, while acknowledging that there are numerous humble people even in one's own home, attempts to present the lives of a few humble people who make a difference in the lives of people in need.

The Psalmist says, "He (God) guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way" (25:9), the truth, which is exhibited through the lives of the humble is clarified by what God told St. Catherine of Siena, which Underhill quotes, "This is the way," ...by humbling thyself in the valley of humility thou wilt know Me and thyself, from which knowledge thou wilt draw all that is necessary. . . In self knowledge, then, thou wilt humble thyself; seeing that, in thyself, thou dost not even exist" (185). Genuine humble persons who are close to God, acknowledge the power of God in their lives and learn to know themselves well. The good self-esteem that they possess helps them to take up responsibilities that others cannot even imagine taking up. Evidently, the spiritual life of people plays an important role in being close to God and being humble.

Mystics and Practical Mystics:

Underhill, affirms, "The spiritual life is not a special career...It is a part of every man's life; and until he has realised it he is not a complete human being, has not entered into possession of all his powers" (Practical Mysticism Preface 4-5). She was deeply convinced that all human worth depended upon eternal values and the immanence of the Divine Spirit within the human soul lies at the root of a mystical concept of life. She suggests that through a faculty which all men possess in a greater, or less degree ordinary persons may also participate in the experience of mystics (Practical Mysticism Preface-3-5). She defines mysticism as, "the art of union with Reality, and describes a mystic as "a person who has attained that union in greater or less degree; or who aims at and believes in such attainment" (Practical Mysticism 7-8). She continues to explain in *Practical Mysticism* that the practical man is invited to a practical mysticism:

"to a training of his latent faculties, a bracing and brightening of his languid consciousness, an emancipation from the fetters of appearance, a turning of his attention to new levels of the world. Thus, he may become aware of the universe...This amount of mystical perception...is possible to all men: without it, they are not wholly conscious, nor wholly alive"(11-12).

According to her, Practical Mysticism teaches one to see the world in a truer proportion, discerning eternal beauty beyond and beneath apparent ruthlessness and those who practice it become wholly competent and truly committed people (Practical Mysticism Preface 5). In this context, while a few of the personalities, discussed in the paper, are undoubtedly great mystics the others may be considered practical mystics.

Recipients of Humility found in all generations and in all lands:

The few persons who are chosen as models for the paper belong to different nations. It demonstrates the truth which is highlighted in the Holy Bible, "...God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him" (Acts.10:34-35). The book of Proverbs explains, "Humility is the fear of the LORD; its wages are riches and honor and life" (22:4). The lives of the humble provide evidence for the fact that when people are closely in touch with the Divine they become recipients of humility and learn to make wise decisions in life as the book of Proverbs rightly says, "with humility comes wisdom" (11:2). After an encounter with the divine or after receiving some inspiration from above, which is a free gift, one begins to do what is right and acceptable to God because, "Wisdom's instruction is to fear the LORD, and humility comes before honor" (Proverbs.15:33). Thus, the humble people live simple and honourable lives and perform life-giving activities, which are truly inspiring.

The abundant fruit received is worth the price paid by the humble:

While presenting her book *Practical Mysticism; A Little Book for Normal People* Underhill says,

"We learn... that the mystical consciousness has the power of lifting those who possess it to a plane of reality which no struggle, no cruelty, can disturb: of conferring a certitude which no catastrophe can wreck. Yet it does not wrap its initiates in a selfish and otherworldly calm, isolate them from the pain and effort of the common life. Rather, it gives them renewed vitality; administering to the human spirit not - as some suppose - a soothing draught, but the most powerful of stimulants" (Practical Mysticism Preface 4).

Humble peoples' lives exhibit that they function with the vitality and the power that they receive from the mystical consciousness which stimulates them. Further, she makes a very valuable observation that, Practical Mysticism educates one in a charity free from all corruption and on those who practice it, "it will confer an unconquerable hope; and assure them that still, even in the hour of greatest desolation, "There lives the dearest freshness deep down things" (Practical Mysticism Preface 5). The lives of the humble people stand witnessed to this hope, it is seen that even though they have undergone unimaginable pain, torture, struggles and injustice, unlike those who retaliate and take revenge, in greater measure, for the injury done to them, the humble do not make much of their suffering as the Psalmist rightly affirms, "The LORD sustains the humble," without nurturing grudges they choose to spend their lives in more constructive endeavours (147:6). They seem to follow the Scriptures which say, "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up" (James 4:10).

Genuine Humility, the mother of all virtues, is 'Truth' in its fullness:

The attitude that is exhibited in the lives of humble people beginning with the life of the Son of God Christ Jesus who became a human being is that they possess the fear of the Lord which grants them, "wisdom and discipline, fidelity and humility (which) are his (God's) delight" (Sirach 1:27). The holy Bible has an example of Jesus' humility, which is par excellence, and calls for imitation of the same,

"Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God...but emptied himself taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross. Therefore, God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name (NRSVCE, Phil. 2:4-9).

Wordsworth in his poem, "The Virgin," rightly describes the humility of the young maiden who was chosen to be the mother of Jesus, as "Our tainted nature's solitary boast." Hence, quoting Julian of Norwich's description of the humility of Mary at this juncture may be appropriate,

"The greatness and nobility of her contemplation of God filled her full of reverent fear; and with this she saw herself so small and so humble, so simple and so poor in comparison with her God that this reverent fear filled her with humility. And founded on this, she was filled with grace and with every kind of virtue, and she surpasses all creatures" (Colledge and Walsh 187).

The book of Sirach from the Holy Scriptures manifests the truth that the humble rise up to the standard set both by God and human beings, "The greater you are, the more you must humble yourself; so you will find favor in the sight of the Lord" (3:18). "My child, perform your tasks with humility; then you will be loved by those whom God accepts" (3:17). Plainly, humility is seen as the hallmark of St. Vincenza Gerosa, Don Bosio, St. Jeanne Jugan, St. Francis of Assisi, Sr. Georgette and Dr. Alok Sagar. Their lives show how each one of them empty themselves with humility, possess great reverence for God and reach out to other human beings whom they consider as their own, fulfilling what Jesus said while giving up his life for humankind, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another" (John 13:34). The life stories of these personalities reveal how humility transformed the ordinary people into legendary figures.

St. Vincenza's incredible Life story:

St. Vincenza originally named as Catherine Gerosa was born in Lovere in Italy on October 29, 1784 in a family that was distinguished for its charities to the poor and to the Church. However, the Gerosa family, which was one of the wealthiest in the town, suffered much from domestic disharmony. Catherine had to bear to the full the result of such bitter discord. She was only seventeen when her father died and while she was still smothering her sorrow. A year later an even more terrifying bereavement struck. She lost her seventeen year old sister, and even before drying her tears, a most heart rending anguish began. Her mother who was considered eccentric by her father's own brothers and sisters was thrown out of the house and an order was imposed on Catherine and her sister Rose not to visit their mother. When the helpless young girls decided to leave the house so that they could assist their mother, they were advised not to do so therefore Catherine and her sister endured the untold agony of losing their mother, who died in a hovel alone and poor. In 1829, after Rose had died Catherine was left all alone. None of these tragedies deterred Catherine from her charitable zeal. She risked her life during the famine and pestilence and as an angel she reached out to the poor and dying (Interprovincial Centre 1-78). Her house was transformed into a hospital and all the family fortune was used to feed the poor (Saydon 37). She also started the girls 'oratorio' which was attended by three-hundred young girls (Saydon 50-52).

Then the priests asked Caterina to join Bartolomea to start a religious institute so that she could expand her charitable endeavors. Though Caterina was resolute to stick to her humble ways and intended to do 'nothing public', she was compelled to review her own aspirations and consider them from Bartolomea's point of view. Bartolomea admired Gerosa for her humility who said, "if God wants it, may his will be done" (Saydon 71). Caterina did not find complete freedom to make a firm decision as her father's aged sister, was against it. However, in Caterina, Bartolomea found her longed for companion and gave up all her wealth to the new congregation solving the financial problems to found the Institute. The Institute came into being in 1832 on Bartolomea's initiative and the co-operation of Caterina Gerosa and Don Bosio. Caterina, with her compassionate heart foresaw needs, continued to help in a hidden sort of way and performed the humblest duties, leaving the control to Bartolomea who was twenty-three years younger than she was. Caterina's life seemed to be an endless story of loss and grief. Bartolomea died within a few months after founding the Institute.

Caterina in her humility thought she was incapable of carrying on the work which Bartolomea started and wanted to leave it. However, when the priests intervened Caterina humbly obeyed and continued the work with the humble awareness that "it was God's doing", she said, "May his most holy will be done" (Saydon 85). As a religious sister, Caterina took the name Vincenza. She contemplated the Crucified Lord and received light to reach out to humankind in charity. Her teachings are summed up in her characteristic saying, "He who knows the Crucified One knows everything". Her conviction that, "One who does not know the Crucified knows nothing," demonstrates her life of deep humility as a reflection of her mystical sharing in the self-emptying of Jesus on the Cross" (Saydon 144).

True to what the Gospel according to St. Matthew says, "those who humble themselves will be exalted" (23:12), St. Vincenza proved sensible and courageous enough to surmount every obstacle. All the credit belongs to Caterina for drawing up the constitutions of the Congregation of Sisters of Charity of Saints Bartolomea Capitanio and Vincenza Gerosa (SCCG), winning ecclesiastical approval for the institute, guiding it in its early years, and developing its characteristic spirit of amiability, humility, and charity. She worked hard for the juridical establishment of the first community of which she was elected superior against her wish. Her suffering continued till the end of her life, she suffered with acute pain from dropsy. She was an example of a pure and upright life dedicated to God and the neighbour in humility and recollection (Interprovincial Centre 236-237). Humility, the distinguishing mark of Gerosa's personality, passed into the life-stream of the Institute and became its characteristic trait" (Saydon 145). On June 29, 1847, at her death in Lovere, there were 243 members in 24 houses.

Don Angelo Bosio's inspiring story of selflessness:

Don Angelo was born on 12 March in 1796 in one of the most prominent families in Lovere, Italy (Saydon 36). He was the assistant of Fr. R. Barboglio the Parish Priest of Lovere from 1822 and succeeded him in 1840 and served as Parish priest until

his death in 1863 (Saydon 42). Don Bosio along with Caterina was the closest collaborator and spiritual director of Bartolomea who regarded him as one of the principal instruments for the achievement of her aims (Saydon 34-67). He was an intelligent, learned man of firm principles, a great asset and a blessing from God's providence. He guided the Institute along a wise, well balanced manner in which both the State and Church authorities could effectively contribute to its growth" (Saydon 101). He was the mastermind behind the Institute's life and activity and continued to be its spiritual director (Saydon 144). He discerned along with the foundress Bartolomea to start the Institute and stimulated her first companion Vincenza to continue it.

Don Bosio's figure emerges with the unmistakable traits of spiritual fatherhood. His greatness lies in his humility which is exposed in the fact that, in spite of his invaluable contribution to the Institute he decided to remain 'behind' as it were, a discreet, far-sighted advisor. While the early sisters addressed him as 'Superior' he preferred to call himself their 'Servant' a provider for their needs. He exhorted them saying that he most gladly wanted to repay a debt he owed them. He had run into that 'debt' when he undertook to watch over the Institute from the moment that it was born in Bartolomea's heart." When she, the foundress, was gone, he was deeply conscious of his duty to transmit what had been entrusted to him (Saydon 140). He followed its development and ensured its fidelity to the original inspiration. He said, "What matters to me is that you acquire the real spirit of our Institute...to be worthy sisters of charity, full of love of God and of charity towards your neighbour" (Mascotti-i-ii). "Fr. Bosio showed an audacity ahead of his times, previous to the emancipation of women" (Mascotti-vi).

Don Bosio observes that Humility truly leads to dying to self he says, "We must put to death everything else if we want Jesus Christ to live in us" ... "Never to indulge in self-satisfaction in order to satisfy others ... and "fills the heart with gladness" (Mascottiiv). His practical advice is applicable to all, "Sanctity consists in executing as best as possible our duties, the tasks entrusted to your care...in acquiring a true spirit of humility; that is being fully convinced of the great truth, that by yourselves, you are unable to do anything that is acceptable to God." He says, "Humility humbles us and makes us small...before our own eyes. But at the same time it ennobles us, elevates us makes us dearer to God" He goes on to say, "the most hardened sinners cannot resist the influence of a humble soul." The humble soul is that precious garden in which God is delighted and imparts abundant and precious graces" (Mascotti39-42).

St. Jeanne Jugan's poignant life story:

The long life of Jeanne Jugan the foundress of the Little Sisters of the Poor (LSP) from 1792 to 1879 may be summarized as, "Forty-seven years of fairly commonplace existence. Twelve years of intense evangelical creativity, and twenty-seven years of silent and hidden inactivity" (Neame Introduction). St. Jeanne Joucan was born on 25th October in northern France and grew up as the sixth of eight children to Joseph and Marie Joucan. Jeanne's challenges in life began when she lost at sea her father who was a fisherman when she was three and a half years old. Four of her siblings died young and she assisted her widowed mother who raised her children single handedly. She who seems to have been blessed with intuition told her mother when she chose to live a celibate life, "God wants me for himself. He is keeping me for a work as yet unknown, for a work which is not yet founded." When she was 25 years old, she decided to live among the poor and serve them. She reached the town and served as a nurse, at a hospital, where she learnt a great deal about human nature, medicine, herbal remedies and the techniques to take care of the poor, the aged and the sick above all she gained the experience of a total commitment of self.

Jeanne left the hospital because she was completely exhausted and joined a third order group where she met an excellent woman who took her in as her maid, looked after and loved her as a friend and bequeathed her entire estate. Jeanne then rented and shared a flat with two other women and with their approval she carried on her back, the first aged woman, a blind and infirm old woman up the narrow stairs to their small apartment and placed her in her own bed and herself moved into the loft and adopted her as her mother.

A group of three women that is Jeanne, Virginie with whom she shared her flat and Marie, Virginie's friend who had gathered other infirm and elderly people in their flat decided to create a charitable association forming the embryo of the Congregation of the Little Sisters of the Poor. The Brothers of St. John of God discreetly helped them. Jeanne began her new mission of assisting abandoned elderly women and recognized that the poor were her 'own flesh' and she went to beg instead of the beggars whom she cared for. She said, "It cost me a lot to do this, but I did it for God and our dear poor." This marked the beginning of the religious congregation with four members as Madeleine joined the group later, known now as "The Little Sisters of the Poor." Jeanne chose the religious name Sister Mary of the Cross.

In 1843 the four members proceeded to hold a formal election and Jeanne was elected Superior. However, Abbe Auguste Le Pailleur, a chaplain, an ambitious priest, who had taken over the direction of the young community quashed the election and designated Marie as Superior. The four associates bowed to the priest's decision and Jeanne was mysteriously cast aside and forced out of the leadership and assigned to strictly begging on the streets on behalf of the poor (Neame 3-74). Later, Abbe Auguste substituted himself for Jeanne as founder of the congregation in all official documents. In the year 1852 he recalled the foundress to the motherhouse, relegated her to a life of obscurity. Jeanne was only mentioned as one of "four girls of humble condition." Jeanne died on August 30 in 1879 and the inscription put over her grave described her as the "third Little Sister of the Poor." At the time of her death, the young Little Sisters did not even know that she was the foundress.

Jeanne Jugan's greatness lies in her peaceful endurance of the unjust way in which her work was stolen from her, yet she continued to magnanimously fulfill the responsibility given by God with overflowing thanksgiving for the gifts which He lavished

on her. In March 1879 a few months before Jeanne's death the constitutions of the Little Sisters of the Poor was approved. At that moment, there were 170 houses in existence and two thousand four hundred Little Sisters served throughout the world (Neame 145- 210).

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time' (1 Peter 5:6) emphasises the truth that justice may be delayed but never denied. A few years after Jeanne's death, an apostolic enquiry began and in 1890, Abbe Auguste was summoned to Rome and died in a convent. Abbe Leroy, the chaplain worked for the historical investigation into the origins of the congregation, which revealed Abbe Auguste was "determined, even at the cost of falsifying the truth, to concentrate power and fame in his own person." Then, Marie whom he designated as Superior admitted to Abbe Leroy, "I am not the first one, but I was told to act as though I were." She finally confessed, "I am not the first Little Sister, nor the foundress of the work. Jeanne Jugan was the first one and the foundress of the Little Sisters of the Poor."

St. Francis of Assisi's amazing story of life:

He was born at Assisi in Italy in 1182 to Pietro di Bernardone, a cloth merchant, and the Lady Pica. His mother named him Giovanni but his father renamed him Francesco. Francis enjoyed a very rich easy life growing up because of his father's wealth. He was constantly happy, charming, and a born leader. He wanted to be a noble, a knight but after losing the battle he was held prisoner for a year in a dark dungeon, even after that experience he ventured to go to battle again but after one day's ride from Assisi he heard a voice which told him to return to Assisi that had transformed and changed his way of life (Telaki 65). The villagers humiliated him and his father raged at him when he returned.

Again, Francis heard Christ speaking to him from the Crucifix asking him to go and restore His church. Francis immediately sold the best material from his father's shop and his horse as well and gave the money to repair the church and remained out of his house for fear of his father. However, when he returned home his father imprisoned him in the inky dark cellar in his own house, his mother set him free in his father's absence. When his father found his son had escaped summoned him to court but Francis claimed to be a free man and refused to come to the city courts. However, when the Bishop of Assisi summoned Francis, at once he presented himself before him. Francis's father publicly accused him of being a thief and a liar and legally disinherited him. Francis was forced to renounce all the family wealth and property, cut off all communication with the family and never cross the threshold of his home. Francis freely renounced his earthly rights and said he will never again call Bernardone his father but would call God the Father who is in Heaven as his father.

Francis humbly bore his father's persecution and begged for material and through his intense manual labour restored the ruined churches in obedience to the voice of God. Then he devoted himself to works of charity, nursing the lepers, washing their wounds and assisting the sick and dying. On one occasion, Francis was horrified to see the hideously disfigured face of a poor man who was afflicted with cancer of the face, when the man fell at his feet, Francis embraced him with such affection that he was totally healed.

Francis, as a humble leader drew thousands of followers from all over the world whose beloved he was. However, when his own convictions clashed with some of his followers he was persecuted and faced a kind of martyrdom from his own brothers. Francis' final years were filled with suffering as well as humiliation because of his illness, his face was cauterized with a hot iron to treat his blindness. Brother Francis shared the secret with Brother Leo that on the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, Christ had given him the five wounds of the Crucified. He showed his hands, his feet and the deep wound on the right side. After receiving the Stigmata, he suffered excruciating pain like how Christ suffered (Telaki 65-156). He is considered the patron saint of ecologists for his remarkable love for nature and considering all creatures as his sisters and brothers. Moreover, his greatness lies in his humility, joy and love, which was Christ like that, won him the title, "Another Christ." He founded all the Franciscan orders of the Friars Minor, the women's Order of St. Clare (the Poor Clares), and the lay Third Order. On October 3, 1226, Francis sang welcoming "Sister Death" and died in the 44th year of his life worn out with much work (Telaki 160).

Sister Georgette Majorie Tshibang Kabong's excellent story of service:

Sr. Georgette who belongs to the congregation of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary has created a home for children who have been rescued from vulnerable situations such as sexual violence or abandonment in the Internally Displaced Persons camps in Goma away from her home. The story of a simple woman coming forward with courage not only to empower the victimised women and children but also to reintegrate them into society is indeed admirable and sufficiently inspiring to be included among the personalities discussed in the paper as it proves that humble people's lives influence others lives very powerfully. Sr. Georgette's greatness lies in her belief that God is present in all people, even those who are suffering. She is convinced that, "He is calling me to make life possible within this suffering" As St. James in his letter says, "God shows favor to the humble" (4:6), in humility she takes the help of like-minded people who tirelessly work to help the vulnerable, regain their strength and their dignity of being the "Children of God".

Sr. Georgette mentions a few people whose humility has stirred her spirit; she says that Saint Francis of Assisi is her greatest influence for various reasons like his compassionate approach to all people and his dedication to protecting life and human dignity. Trusting and even confiding in women, giving them a special place in his work helping them become disciples of the message of God and giving all humans the chance to live. She has also been inspired by Mother Theresa of Calcutta who gave all people the chance to be human, to live or to die with dignity. Sr. Georgette's inspiration to work with the people that others have

forgotten is drawn from Mother Mary of the Passion the foundress of her Congregation who used to help and live with the people that no one wants to be with, in the places where no one wants to go. She affirms, "I live my life, with this inspiration and this sense of purpose." Finally, Sr. Georgette humbly acknowledges the collaboration of the compassionate young women who volunteer to run the Center with their friendship and dedication.

Her desire is to make "The center... a place to repair their souls as well as their bodies" and to challenge the governments to create programs to protect and celebrate life, a sacred gift from God which no one has the right to harm or destroy (Adepoju). Sr. Georgette's life exhibits the fact that humble peoples' lives create a ripple effect touching the lives of others and drawing them into life giving actions.

Dr. Alok Sagar's motivating story of life:

In spite of being unaware of the background of the spiritual life of Dr. Alok Sagar, he is included among the few personalities the paper discusses based on his outstanding humility and his distinguished service to humanity. Underhill quotes Recejac who says, "Mysticism claims to be able to know the Unknowable without any help from dialectics; and believes that, by the way of love and will it reaches a point to which thought alone is unable to attain." Again, "It is the heart and never the reason which leads us to the Absolute" (Mysticism 84). The fact that the heart leads one to God may be observed in the life of Dr. Alok, the 69-year-old simple man who apart from building the lives of numerous students whom he has taught gave up his lucrative job and all that is considered great and valuable in the world in exchange for the peace he enjoys serving the tribals, working for the upliftment of women and staying connected to nature (Express Web Desk). In the 21st Century, where there is no dearth of publicity hungry men and women, the kind of quiet and selfless service Alok gives teaches a great lesson in humility for all human beings. He has adapted the lifestyle of the Adiwasis, managing to live with three kurtas, moving on a bicycle, fighting for their social and economic rights and teaching them to fight poverty. He has chosen to live in the forest in order to create and increase opportunities for self-employment among forest dwellers.

Dr. Alok Sagar was born on 20 January in 1950 in Delhi. Sagar's father was an IRS officer while his mother was a physics teacher in Miranda House, Delhi University. His brother is a professor in IIT Delhi (Express Web Desk). From the petition filed in Dr. Alok's defense a little more information about Dr. Alok is available. He did his Doctoral and Post Doctoral studies abroad and is an ex IIT professor turned activist (Modi Anurag). Apart from the long list of Alok's qualification, Think change India reports, "Alok has command over seven-eight languages and can speak the dialects used by tribals (Express Web Desk).

Alok resigned as a professor at I.I.T. Delhi in 1982 and from 1990 he has been living and working for tribals in India, in a remote village named Kochamu which has just a primary school and where both electricity and roads are lacking. It is worth noting that Alok says he does not need his degrees to serve people, he does not believe in boasting about it as he has found his true calling in one of the remotest parts of Madhya Pradesh (Express Web Desk). Patrika reports, "Alok continues to maintain a low profile. However, during the Betul's district elections, local authorities grew suspicious and asked him to leave and threatened to arrest him if he did not leave the area. Alok revealed his identity, which the district administration, to their surprise, verified to be true" (Think Change India). Even the locals were unaware about his background. The tribals who usually remain secluded slowly started trusting him. After this incident Dr. Alok found a place in the hearts of millions of people proving the fact that humility has the power to touch the hearts of all human beings.

While speaking to the Hindustan Times Alok says, "In India, people are facing so many problems, but people are busy proving their intelligence by showing their degrees rather than serving people." For all the good, that Dr. Alok has been doing the challenges he had to face teaches one that reaching out to the oppressed has never been an easy task in the past, neither is it so in the present and nor will it be in the future. Modi Anurag says that Alok assists the Adivasis as their expert agent and participates in most of their demonstrations. However, the nursery which was built with Alok's support in the Nagdev forest was set on fire and the jhopdas of adivasi living there were also demolished. One needs to imagine that if this is what an educated person like Alok Sagar, had to face, without his help what would be the pathetic condition of the Adivasis.

Dr. Alok's has great regard for the tribals for their respect and connection with nature along with them he makes strenuous efforts to preserve environment, while educating and sensitizing tribals to plant trees he himself has planted more than 50,000 trees and supported to build the nursery in the Nagdev forest. He rides 60 kms to distribute seeds to neighbouring villages (Express Web Desk). He believes that by working at the grassroots, level people can serve better, he is closely associated with the Shramik Adiwasi Sangathan and works for the upliftment of the Adiwasis (Think Change India). Dr. Alok's service may even remind one of Bhagat Puran Singh who provided the last hope to the mentally and terminally ill patients, built homes for the homeless and gave hope to the forlorn (Grewal).

Humble people's invaluable contribution to humanity:

The Psalmist says, "For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory" (149:4). Underhill points out, "a wonderful passage, unique in the literature of mysticism in which Angela of Foligno had reported the lucid vision in which she perceived this truth: the twofold revelation of an Absolute at once humble and omnipotent...the unimaginable synthesis of "unspeakable power" and "deep humility" (Mysticism 233). The secret behind the fearless and triumphant lives of the humble is that they share closely the attribute of God Himself, no wonder, the lives of the personalities discussed in the paper manifest that each one of them not only led victorious lives but also brought victory for those whom they served. There may be thousands of

humble people like the few personalities chosen as models, known and unknown, who have given lifelong and selfless service. Humble people continue to live in the lives of those who were touched by their humility. However, the paper calls one to consider what one can do to give ones best to the world irrespective of what one receives from it making the world a beautiful place, a place it is meant to be. Underhill rightly emphasizes that mysticism (union with God) has much to offer to the average person helping one to solve ones problems and bring about a harmony in the duties and ideals of his active life (Preface-3-5). One is created to live a happy and contended life and it is gained only through reaching out to others selflessly. Therefore, it is worth leading life which is a gift in a manner that bears fruit through genuine humility as the Scriptures encourage everyone saying, “honor yourself with humility, and give yourself the esteem you deserve” (Sirach 10:28).

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