

FIRST QUARTER 2017

FAR & NEAR

Vision: Christ's transforming presence in Healthcare and the nation through Christ - centered medical professionals.

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Truth | /tru:θ/ |

Tintoretto's painting known as 'Christ before Pilate' is an amazing portrayal of the power of Truth. The cool, calm and lonely presence of Christ is contrasted with the overall disturbance of other figures and a disturbed, grimacing Pilate who is washing his hands. Imposing tall structures of the palace are seen in the background.

Truth does not need to justify or defend its claims. The presence of Truth is disconcerting to those who hold on to untruth. Initial shock and disbelief about the presence of Truth gives way to intimidation and violence. Then there is the concerted effort by the political, religious, bureaucratic, judicial and military establishments to subjugate and defang Truth. When held up to the mirror of Truth, these establishments become panicky. These establishments that are built on untruth and often on fiction, feel threatened of their very foundations and consequently their existence. They react with all the force they can muster to keep the status quo—that hollow and dead tranquillity. This we see across the globe, in our own 'post-truth' generation.

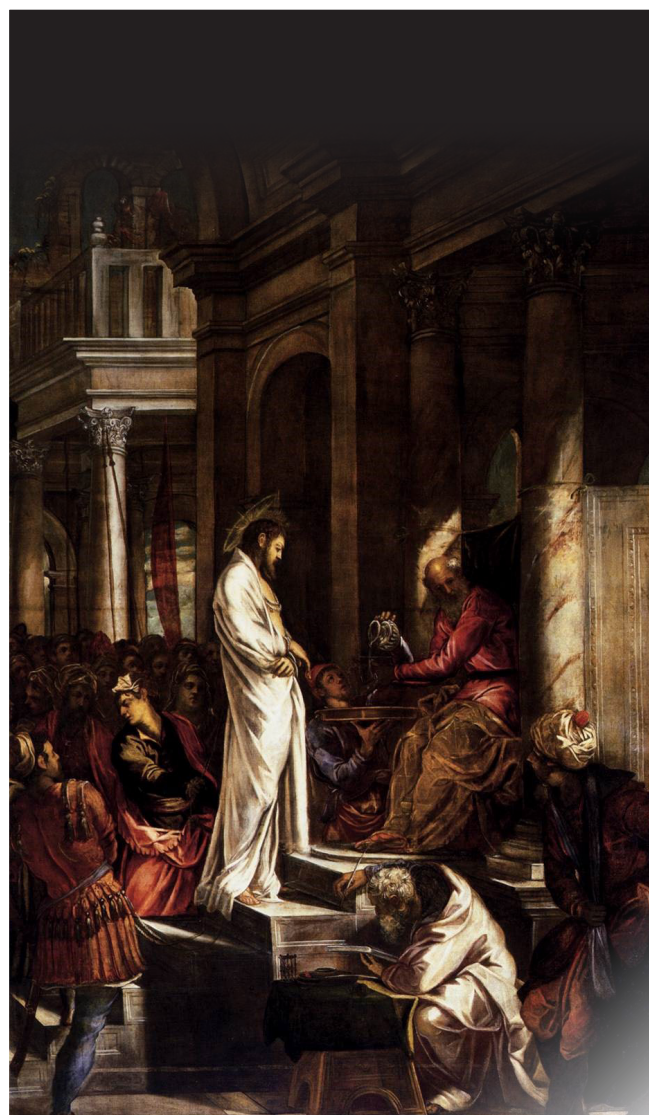
Jesus remains silent to Pilate's famous question 'What is Truth?' For many years, like Pilate, I had assumed, Truth was a set of principles and facts. Only later, the words of Jesus - 'I am the Truth', began to make sense. Pilate was not willing to pursue the question further. But symbolically, he washed his hands off, indicating his desire to distance himself from Truth and from its far reaching, radical implications.

We are no different! We would like some distance between Truth and us. We are frightened by the demands of Truth:

'Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat; I am. Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to saving yourself, your true self. What good would it do to get everything you want and lose you, the real you? What could you ever trade your soul for?' (Mark 8:34-37 The Message).

The incredible freedom that we experience when nothing else matters except Christ and His Kingdom is truly amazing and truly liberating.

Varghese Philip



SELECTED STORIES FROM THE FIELD

HIS-STORY

Ministering to medical students can be very frustrating especially if there is someone struggling in life and is not a positive influence on the group. This is where I have seen the Lord answering prayers. A brilliant youngster graduated from medical school last year. When he joined medical school he was totally broken because of a traumatic childhood and was hopeless due to mental, emotional and financial problems. It has been encouraging to see him healed and restored by the Lord Jesus as he surrendered himself to godliness, godly counsel and mentoring. When I met him recently, we recollected the past and thanked God for the good work Jesus began and is continuing in his life. Today he is a blessing to his family, patients, church and the community at large. All glory be to Jesus for it is 'His-story'.

(K.T. Paul)

OPEN DOORS

I did not have contacts in many places outside Bangalore in Karnataka, but by the grace of God, I was able to visit 5 different towns in Karnataka. The major goal of these visits was to introduce EMFI to students and invite them for the state conference. It was amazing to see how receptive the students were. God helped me to link up with the exact person who would lead me to the fellowships. I was also able to discuss and help a student who had difficulty dealing with stress. The most exciting thing was that he was interested in knowing how to open up to God and hear His voice.

(Bibin Benoy)

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

The women students of a college in Tamil Nadu used to meet in their hostels, but they did not have a common place to come together for prayer and fellowship. The college is located on the outskirts of the city. We were not very comfortable meeting in the visiting lounge where others used to look at us suspiciously. So we have met in the college ground and behind the college Auditorium by the staircase. Finding a place near the college was difficult. We prayed for a place near or outside the college, but God provided us a place inside the premises of the college itself. God's thoughts and plans are always higher than ours. The college management which has different ideologies, decided to allot a small piece of land and construct a prayer room within its premises. The construction of the same is almost completed and, God willing, we will be able to use it in the next academic year. We praise God for His marvelous providence in the college.

(Linu Zachariah)

INSIDE OUT

I have been in touch with a family who have their own hospital with an established practice for many years. Due to some tragic events, they went through a period of overwhelming sorrow, setbacks in health and many unanswered questions. Dr. Sam Sidhartha was on a visit to Bangalore in February 2016 and we took this opportunity to visit the family and pray with them. In the subsequent weeks and months we have been meeting regularly for a weekly time of prayer and study of God's Word. The Lord added some faithful elders, known to the family, who have been of great support and now we take turns in leading the current Bible study from the book of Acts. We thank God for the changes which we are seeing in terms of the family enjoying peace, improved health and a growing love for God and His Word. In fact last October, while we were discussing Acts 1, God provided both the freedom and future direction from verses 7 & 8. They also show a great desire to reach out to others. In many ways it has been a slow but steady transformation – inside out! Nothing is too hard for the Lord, praise His mighty Name!

(Chandy Issac)

THE LORD IS NEVER TOO EARLY, NOR LATE. BUT ALWAYS ON TIME.

Nanditha and I started the preparation for the last 'Marriage Enrichment Seminar' at Corner Stone in February 2017 with much trepidation! As always, we contact over 25 couples but till the last day we never know how many will finally show up. We began gingerly with just one couple – from Bangalore; no one else showed up and we literally felt like we were walking on egg shells! Then we heard 'One more family coming!' But with just 2 couples, we still had nothing to cheer about and as the days went by, I must confess, I was toying with the idea of cancelling the seminar. Then a doctor from Kerala gave me contacts of 2 couples. Wow! That came as a shot in the arm! And with 4 couples in, we were certainly encouraged. The preparations cracked into life & what joy it was! Just when we were happily going forward with 4 couples, the Lord further shocked us with 3 more couples from CMC, Bangalore and Chennai and before we even knew it we had 7 lovely couples and families. What a wonderful time of learning we had!

On Sunday, when we wound up at Corner Stone and headed home, Nanditha and I could only stop the car and thank God. Thrilling to say the least! Praise the Lord, HE starts, HE finishes!

(Deva Kumar)

A MEDICO SPEAKS

I was introduced to the ways of my faith when I was still young. I knew about Christianity as a religion but nothing about Christ. I faithfully devoted my time in prayer except that I did not know who I was worshipping. I was young and ignorant, with absolute freedom and that is how I got into a relationship. I spent all my time talking on the phone, chatting in social media and was completely consumed. My infrequent visits to church and fellowship came to a grinding halt. Finally the day of reckoning came when that person abandoned me. The emptiness & loneliness was profound. I sensed God speaking to me through the song, 'Why are you looking for love? Why are you searching as if I'm not enough?' I was overwhelmed with guilt and shame. Tears trickled down my cheeks and I cried for mercy! I needed His presence desperately but I did not know how to approach God. As we see in John 16:24, "Until now you haven't asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive and your joy will be complete." (NIV). I prayed and I found peace. I started attending fellowship and meeting believers who really helped. I thank my mentor and his family for their constant input in my life.

God is still waiting for you. Even if you stumble, trust in Him, for our God is faithful.

(Pratik Sindhu)

PARENTING MEDICOS

As a family we have worked among and with medicos since 1990 and we wanted a break, as we found ourselves compelling the students for prayer, Bible study, fellowship, witnessing etc. But after a time of recouping ourselves with prayer and encouragement from the Word, we realized that it was worth it. We frequently encounter students who thank us for pursuing them. On one such occasion, when an individual was left uncared for by kith and kin and even parents, Grace and I stood by and helped this person settle down in life. But we needed God's guidance, His wisdom and leading at every step. It was costly, as we needed to give our time, talent and treasure to make this person realise that it was God who helped. Medical professionals need moral and spiritual support when they face crucial moments like deciding about a partner in marriage or relocating to another place. This support may not come from parents but fellowship members and staff like us who work with them. We praise God for helping us to be spiritual parents to some of our doctor couples and we rejoice with them.

(Michael & Grace Sundersingh)

STUDENTS' SECTION

Q: I have sinned a lot in my life. I continue to do them even after I know that they are wrong, just because I enjoy them. But now I want to return to God and live a holy life and be restored. Will I be forgiven?

A: Absolutely! Don't even doubt it!

You will be forgiven because, we are returning to the God who created us. His heart longs for us. He eagerly desires and patiently waits for us to come back to Him. This is the very reason, Jesus died on the cross and shed His blood. He made a 'way' through His death and resurrection so that we might come back to Him.

All we need to do is to confess our sins (Proverbs 28:13).

We need to confess our sins, our need to be cleansed of our sins and our confidence in the blood of Christ. If we do this, He is faithful (Deuteronomy 7:9) and just (He is true to His own nature and He cannot deny Himself), not only to forgive our sins but also to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

The problem with us is we either 'quantify' our sin or 'qualify' ourselves. There is no sin which cannot be forgiven by God. By quantifying sin, we start to believe in a lie that certain 'big' sins cannot be forgiven. But, the Truth is He cleanses us from 'ALL' unrighteousness. On the other hand we 'wait' to get rid of that 'particular sin' and then return to God 'blameless and holy'. If that is the Truth, we shall never return to God in our life time for we cannot get rid of our sins without the help of God. That is why God says to us who 'qualify' ourselves – 'Return to me, I will heal your backsliding' (Jeremiah 3:22). Our healing from backsliding happens in His bosom. Both 'quantifying sin' and 'qualifying ourselves' are road blocks for us to return to the Lord. But when we return, Jesus embraces us, soaks us in His love (Luke 15:20), cleanses us and removes our soiled rags and clothes us with His righteousness (Luke 15:22; Zechariah 3:4). One of the greatest journeys we ever take is 'returning to the Lord'. So, do return. You will be forgiven!

– Dr. Solomon Shashikanth, Hyderabad

This column addresses issues and questions raised by students at various forums. Students are welcome to send their questions or articles including poems to emfipublications@gmail.com and we will seek to address them appropriately by experienced resource persons.

PROGRAMS IN APRIL

- 6th - 9th April: Karnataka State Conference at Bangalore
14th - 16th April: The Tamil Nadu state conference at Pachalur, Oddanchatram
14th - 16th April: North East Regional Conference near Shillong
22nd April: EMFI Executive committee meeting at Chennai and commissioning of the new General Secretary

NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

EMFI takes pleasure in welcoming the new members of the Executive Committee for the Period 2017 - 2019. We thank all the members who have served in the previous committee for their valuable contributions in terms of their time, input and prayers. The following are the new members:

Dr. Varghese Philip	Chairman
Dr. Samuel Sidhartha	General Secretary
Dr. Grace Thomas	Treasurer
Dr. Joseph Dominic	Tamil Nadu
Dr. Sukumar Chitturi	Andhra Pradesh
Dr. Thomas Abraham	Uttar Pradesh
Dr. Bertha Rathinam	Madhya Pradesh
Dr. Vineeth Gladson	Kerala
Dr. Asangla	Uttar Pradesh
Dr. Shyam Sundar	Karnataka
Dr. Susheel Tharian	Tamil Nadu
Dr. Rabin Chacko	CMC, Vellore
Dr. Clement Momin	North East India
Mr. Solomon	EMFI Staff rep – Andhra Pradesh
Dr. Mathew George	Tamil Nadu
UESI Representative	

OPPORTUNITIES

DOCTORS & DERMATOLOGISTS NEEDED URGENTLY AT TLM Naini Hospital, Allahabad, January 2017

The TLM Naini Hospital is a green, safe campus with Wi-fi facility, electricity and water supply. Family accommodation is also available on campus. Allahabad City is situated 10 km across the new bridge over the Yamuna River. Not too many after-hour emergencies (enough time to study). Regular CMEs. Patients are from the neglected BIMARU region. *Monthly Salary for MBBS - Rs 44,810/- and for MD (Dermatology) - Rs 61,150/-; (additional increments for experience);*

BENEFITS: Provident Fund, Gratuity, Christmas Gift, Home Town and Holiday Travel allowances, Health Fund Benefits etc.

CONTACT: E Mail: premal.das@leprosymission.in; WhatsApp/ Text 9336773083; Phone 05322697267
TLM Naini also welcomes Volunteers and Medical student visits – contact loreta.das@leprosymission.in
Website: www.tlmnaini.org



NELLORE ONE DAY RETREAT

ONE DAY RETREAT

12th December 2016

We are constantly encouraged by the transforming work of the Lord in the lives of medical students. Given below is the feedback from some who attended a one day retreat in one of the towns in North India

• "Before I attended the retreat I was totally addicted to my mobile phone and was quite lazy. I thought I could find happiness by satisfying the desires of the flesh. But ultimately I felt worthless and even lost my interest in studies. It was at this time that I came to know about the retreat and attended it. And as I attended the retreat I felt the desire to live

according to the will of God. I had a glimpse of true happiness at the retreat. I have learnt to change my way of living to satisfy the need of the spirit and not the flesh and prepare myself for God's plan and accept it with an open heart."

• "I felt as though I was at home with my family. So warm and blessed to be in their midst praising God and worshiping Him with songs of praise."

• "God spoke to me saying, "You are special and ordained for a mission on this earth. I will hold your hands and teach you everything. I am with you always and I love you."

NEWS

GOVERNMENT SET TO PUT RS.1,000 CAP ON PHARMA COMPANIES' GIFTS FOR DOCTORS: (Times of India – 26th February 2017)

NEW DELHI: In a move to curb the unethical practice of pharma companies seeking to influence doctors and chemists through expensive "gifts", the government is set to impose a ceiling of Rs.1,000 on the value of such giveaways. The government is also considering a blanket ban on expensive freebies such as cruise or vacation tickets and sponsored educational conferences and seminars that can be means of making payments and offering benefits.

The Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP) is in the final stages of issuing an executive order making Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP) mandatory for the drug manufacturing industry. The order will cover doctors, chemists and hospitals and the states. Any violation

of the norms will attract punishment and penalty. It can vary from a warning to cancellation of licence depending upon the extent of violation.

The proposal also includes suggestions to form an ethical committee which will investigate and take decisions if there are complaints of violation. "The proposal for the order is with the health minister and will be announced any time soon", a senior official told TOI. At present, the marketing code is "voluntary" and the industry is expected to "self-regulate" by adopting it. However, official sources said there are rampant violations of the code and the government felt the need for "stringent" norms to monitor unethical practices. The Indian pharmaceutical market, pegged at sales of over Rs.1 lakh crore annually, is one of the largest and fastest growing markets worldwide.

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- The Christmas programs conducted in different fellowships across the country where many attended and were blessed
- The National Prayer Summit that was conducted at Lalitpur, where all the EMFI staff along with leaders from EMFI, EHA, CMAI etc. could intercede for the health care fields of the country
- The EMFI staff meet that was held at HBM hospital, Lalitpur where all the staff could meet and plan for the work ahead
- The young couples who could attend the leadership / mentoring workshop at Hyderabad in February (This is the second part of a series called "Encounter with God" - EWG)
- The couples who could attend the marriage enrichment seminar in February and the parenting seminar in March at Chennai
- The 12 medicos who attended the pre-marital counseling seminar at Chennai
- The students who could attend the one day retreats in Chennai, Dibrugarh, Shillong, Nellore and Vijayawada
- The interns and students who could attend the foundational course on Medical Missions (IMM) at Oddanchatram, Tamil Nadu and Lamtaput, Orissa
- The series of Saline process and TOT programs that were conducted in Maharashtra in March



FRANK GARLICK AWARD FOR ESSAY WRITING - 2016

The Frank Garlick Award for Essay Writing 2016, (Doctor's Category) was awarded to Dr. Divya Ninan from Bangalore at the award ceremony held at the Karnataka State Conference on 7th April 2017 at BBH, Bangalore. The Award carries a cash prize of RS 15000 and a certificate



GROUND REALITIES WHEN THE TYRE HITS THE ROAD

"Doctor, how much more time do I have to live?" This was a "frightening" question that I frequently encountered from my patients. I became very uncomfortable dealing with this issue that I tried to avoid dealing with patients who asked this question. During my pre-final MBBS, at a prayer meeting in our medical students' fellowship, the preacher laid his hands over me and prayed saying, "God is calling you to work with cancer". I pondered over these words regularly and after my post-graduation in Internal Medicine and a short stint as faculty in a medical college, I chose to pursue DM in Medical Oncology at AIIMS, Delhi.

In 2006 when I finished my course I wanted to continue as faculty at AIIMS and do academic work. But circumstances were different and I had to return to my hometown, Chennai. I joined a corporate hospital in Chennai (Dr. Kamakshi Memorial Hospital) where I continue to serve as a Consultant Medical Oncologist. In 2007, I was invited to render my services at a CSI Mission Hospital (CSI Kalyani Hospital) once a week which is also continuing.

I entered private practice very reluctantly as I feared that I was not "cut out" for it. However within a few months of working at Dr. Kamakshi I began to realize that God had planted me there with a purpose. I tried to provide quality care to my patients, at a reasonable cost. Medical oncology was witnessing rapid strides in terms of availability of novel drugs and therapies with the cost of treatment spiraling out of control. It was challenging and many times I felt discouraged. But the Lord gave me strength to carry on. My practice blossomed and I became very busy.

As success came my way, I started taking myself very seriously. I wanted to "cure" every patient. I began ignoring patients who were not getting better. When patients were not getting better, I became very angry and upset. I experienced what I understand today as "burnout". My work became a burden and I loathed many things that I once enjoyed, including my time of prayer and scripture reading. But the Lord remained faithful despite my frequent backsliding. I spent a week at the Life Revision Seminar

with Dr. K.O. John, where the Lord began a deep work of challenging my priorities. I began to recognize my calling as a "care giver" and cared for my patients as Jesus did for the people. I began to make changes to my work so that I had time for myself, my family and most importantly, time with the Lord. The most difficult step was learning to say "No" to many things, but once I began to obey, the Lord blessed my decisions.

Through the EMFI, I was introduced to Partnerships in International Medical Education (PRIME), an international charity that focuses on training health care professionals to care for the whole patient. In 2015, I was part of a team that trained health care workers in palliative care as part of a PRIME training. I was introduced to the concept of role plays as a tool for teaching communication skills. In the role plays, I would play the role of the patient. That experience helped me empathize with my patients and I began to spend more time listening to them non-judgmentally.

When I joined medicine I set out to do extraordinary things. But I am beginning to learn that the Lord wants me "to do ordinary things with extraordinary love". I thank the Lord for the support of my wife Candice and my children Ray and Timothy in my journey.

"For the Mighty One has done great things for me - holy is His name". (Luke 1:49)

**Dr Joseph Dominic,
Chennai**



FAMILY NEWS

Births

Drs. Esther & Starlin Vijay (Hyderabad) have been blessed with a baby girl on 25th January

Drs. Kim & Joni (Chennai) were blessed with a baby girl Iva Patricia on 24th January

Drs. Jonathan & Anjali were blessed with a baby boy Michael on 7th March

Wedding Bells

Dr. Mekha Prem wed Dr. Jafferine Nishanth on 23rd January at Marthandam, Tamil Nadu

Dr. Johan (S/o. Drs Boaz & Romala Rabinder) wed Dr. Shwetha on 10th February at Bangalore



Dear friends,

It is with mixed feelings that I write this column for the last time. On one hand, there is the sadness of leaving you all and the EMFI constituency and on the other the relief and joy of handing over responsibility to the next person, and looking forward with anticipation to what the Lord is leading us into.

At the outset, I must mention that it was Dr. M.C. Mathew who encouraged and supported me in taking up this responsibility in spite of my reluctance and apprehensions. I am grateful for this season of life, as personally, it has been an exciting and transformative experience. The last 10 years have been a journey of varying emotions and experiences filled with the excitement of seeing God at work but at times also wondering, 'Is it worth all this effort?' I take this opportunity to briefly share my experiences.

Carrying my bag and criss-crossing the length and breadth of the country has been a great privilege but also exhausting at times. In one such tired and low moment, the Lord encouraged me through a verse, "He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, Shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him"! (Psalm 126:6). Leaving home frequently was not easy. I felt a pain in the heart each time and especially when I had to often hear the refrain "Appa is going again!" The joy of seeing the Lord at work and young people's lives being transformed and touched by His Word neutralised much of this pain.

I had an excellent Staff team to work with and I am grateful to God for that. We did have our challenges with regards to planning and a systematic approach to ministry but the commitment and dedication of the team was a great blessing which made things easier.

This period was a good occasion to learn faith and trusting the Lord for provision. When I was asked to take over responsibility as GS, I was very reluctant and was trying to tell the Lord "...not one more organisation where we have to wait in faith for each month's salary after 11 years in Asha Kiran where it was the same story". However, looking back over the last 10 years, there was never a month where we had to cut salary or not pay staff, though there were anxious moments periodically. God has been so faithful in spite of all our doubts and unbelief. Personally for me and for us as a team, we have learned precious lessons on God's faithfulness and provision, even in the most uncertain times. There were also times when we received up to 6 lakhs in 5 days! May be we needed to learn dependence on God through all this and we look forward to a time when there is more financial stability. Thank you all for your

sacrificial gifts and offerings and I trust you will continue to give as you have been.

The love and hospitality I experienced all over the country visiting and staying at many of your homes and in the colleges has been so encouraging and heart-warming. Thank you all so much. I sure will miss this fellowship and times of sharing.

I am so grateful to God for Manju, my dear wife for the last 26 years who has been a pillar of strength for me, especially in some of the low times. She held the fort in my absence, juggling with multiple roles and especially when children were unwell. She whole-heartedly supported me in this calling and has been a gift and blessing. Children were understanding and put up well with an often absent father whose address was "Indian Railways" for at least 10-12 days every month!

Nanditha has been a great support and it was a joy to work with the team in the office consisting of Jacob, Raji, Jabez and Sylvester (who has since moved on). I will miss Karuna's coffee, water and snacks which would promptly arrive on the table.

Samuel (Sam) Sidhartha is a person with a deep love for the Lord and a pastoral heart. I am glad that God has brought him at this important juncture to lead the team. With the entire staff team and all of you continuing to pray, involve and support, I am confident that this movement will continue to grow to greater heights for God's glory and Christ indeed will be honoured in health care and the nation. I believe that EMFI has a very critical role to play at this point in the health care sector and history of our nation and in shaping mature, Christ-centred leaders for the next generation.

We do not have much clarity about our next step but in view of some family commitments, we consider spending a year at home in Kerala to sort out matters. We also hope to spend more time with my Dad who is bed-ridden and demented for the last couple of years.

Finally, I am grateful to God for this opportunity and privilege you gave me to serve you all in this role and thank you for standing with us in this journey. I have often felt very inadequate for the responsibility but the Lord enabled and carried me through, in spite of all my limitations and weaknesses. Please uphold us in prayer too that God would guide us as we wait on the Lord and seek clarity for our next steps.

Adieu,

Manoj Jacob

TREASURER'S NOTE

As you can see from the accounts we have received adequate funds for the past few months and we are grateful to God for His provision through each one of you. Galatians 6:9-10 states *"Let us not become weary in doing good for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers"*. Please continue to uphold the ministry of EMFI in prayer that we will wisely use the gifts you give for the building up of God's kingdom.

Grace Thomas

Published on behalf of EMFI by Dr. Manoj C. Jacob - General Secretary
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FINANCIAL UPDATE

MONTH	INCOME	EXPENSE
NOVEMBER	8,61,114	7,24,876
DECEMBER	10,87,009	6,72,628
JANUARY	6,15,374	6,11,652
FEBRUARY	6,01,878	5,86,797

Those wishing to contribute can send your cheques/DDs/MOs in favour of 'Evangelical Medical Fellowship of India' to the address given below or make an electronic/Bank transfer to: **State Bank of India** CURRENT A/c No: 35465591006 (Branch Code: 2288, IFSC: SBIN0002288) • **HDFC Bank A/c No:** 0492100009885 (Branch Code: 492, IFSC: HDFC0000492)
*Please call/Text/Email us after you make the transaction.
09176215489/90. emfihq@gmail.com