



# VAIHARAI

(The Dawn)

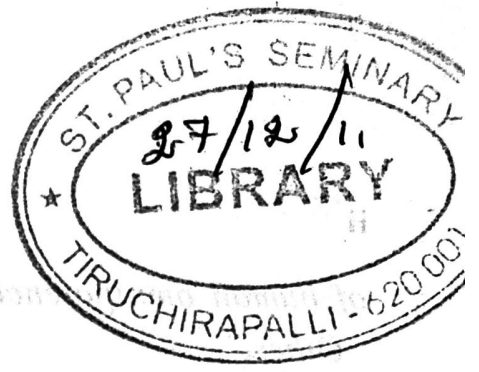
A Theological Half-Yearly

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## Editorial

Mahatma Gandhi cautioned the humanity against, "*The Seven Deadly Sins in Today's World.*" They are namely:

- Wealth without work,
- Enjoyment without conscience,
- Knowledge without character,
- Business without morality,
- Science without humanity,
- Religion without sacrifice and
- Politics without principles.

These lines of Gandhi throw an open challenge to humanity and lead the humans to take a deep look into the meaning of their own ethical existence and the moral status of their own society in which they exist. Morality is an oft-repeated theme, which has been proclaimed and pronounced from the pulpits of the churches, mosques, temples and from the daises of the political or public gatherings. Yet both the private and the public morality of the people have not gained a significant appreciation due to their disregard for self-esteem and responsible behaviors. From the start of the evolution of human history all the religions and various social traditions have imparted great virtues to humanity in order to inherit the civilization of love and a sense of responsible living. But such great virtues have been erased from the human minds due to two significant factors such as: *the prideful-false impression*

*of human omnipotence and a categorical refusal to coexist with the "Other."*

The false impression of human supremacy that wheels the governance today gives birth to a new identity, which is nothing but a "privileged-group." The so called privileged persons' plutocratic and oligarchic social engineering has increasingly pushed the present society's moral grade from bad to the worst. The negation of the sense of coexistence with the particular and the multiple-other daunts the emergence of the common good in the human community. Hence to enhance the public moral praxis in this present society the social thinkers, bureaucrats, political and religious leaders must engage their resources with the public education systems. It is this authentic connectedness with the community that fosters key common moral values in the public realm. The revivification of the moral values in the public space would make our own habitat into a space of lasting engagement rather than casual fleeting encounters; a space of dialogue, discussion, confrontation and agreement. In fact this realization will propel a community towards a moral- space in which humans breathe the fragrance of freedom, love, justice and truth.

In this issue we have nine reflections, which delineate the meaning of public morality from different perspectives. According to **Arokiasamy** the civil law must safeguard the common good of the society and the same law is very much bound to the measures of morality, because morality touches all the realm of human life. He emphasizes that the pluri-fabric of the Indian society gains its recognition through the enhancement of the common good. For **Felix Wilfred**, the sense of exclusion at all levels deteriorates the realization of common good. He argues that all religions have the moral obligation to uphold the emergence of the common good by pushing aside the vested motives of the powerful, which qualifies a moral society. He further adds, it is through the recognition of the particular that true morality is put into practice, which also defines a democracy that is based on sacrifice and justice. And such democracy will feed a fresh energy to the society for

the actualization of the amalgamated positive effects in order to uphold the wellbeing of all. **Sebastian**, through his reflection brings out the impact of moral policing in the present society. He believes that the idea of moral policing is an ideological plot, which has been designed by the so called elite-group, in order to reaffirm the existing fascist culture and to legitimize the subjugation of the "fragile-other." He thinks that church being a body of awareness has to promote a positive- counterculture to deflect the iron fists of the exclusivists in the current context.

**Augustine** conceives media as the physical extensions of human themselves. For him today media has become the tool of the powerful. The insensitive media makes the ordinary totally powerless, which is an immoral act. Hence the media has an obligation to function as the key to promote morality both in public and private realm of humans that eventually augments the quality of life, which means it enhances sense of respect for the other, truth and justice in the society. **Meti Amirtham**'s article reads the notion of morality from a feministic perspective. It brings out the detailed version of moral policing on women and reveals the double standards in morality based on gender discrimination. It proposes a gender equality in order to construct a just and a moral society. **Pushparajan** presents his views on morality from Gandhian perspective. He illustrates that according to Gandhi we cannot dichotomize the morality into public and private, because both are correlated. It is very much associated with the spiritual, political economical, cultural and social aspects of human life. In other words it is the force that disciplines our reason and instincts.

**Asghar Ali Engineer** explains the meaning of public morality from an Islamic framework. He believes that the Islamic religion constructs its moral duties based on virtues such as: truth, justice, compassion and wisdom. By practicing such virtues one creates a just and a moral society. He adds that a true worshiper of Allah believes in truth and thus he/she engineers the formation of a healthy society in which life thrives. **Diraviam** gives an overview of religious and the moral state of the middle ages. He brings out

the vital notions of morality of both the laity and the hierarchy of the church. He affirms that with all its ups and downs the church was the true educator of culture in the medieval period. **Cruz M. Hieronymus** presents a clear perspective about the public morality in the letters of St. Paul through his article. He illustrates that for Paul, morality is the total expression of one's own commitment to the faith and the community in which he/she belongs. He adds that a moral commune could be measured through its practice of love, sense of concern for the neighbor, negation of gender discrimination, equality, and hard work. It is through such performance a community becomes moral and holy, which reflects the real meaning of the Christian spirit.

*Editor*

*Dr. S. P. Johnson*