



Pages from my Christmas Diary - 2017

(Dated 14th Dec 2017)

While driving back from Ayroor on the 3rd of December 2017, I took the route via Kottayam passing through KK Road, instead of Alleppey, for fear of the 'Okhi' cyclone and the likely disturbances in the coastal area.

The next day morning, I was fascinated to see the words, '25 Miles' in our family WhatsApp page, in a message posted by Annie (daughter of Somichayan, Prof. A. N. Thomas). It was about the advent and a programme which contained audio messages of Lent meditations for the 25 days before Christmas. The programme is titled, '25 Miles' - one mile for each day of the lent. The first day was captioned as '01 Mile', the second day '02 Mile' and so on would it go till the 25th Mile. The messages I have heard so far are very meaningful and beautiful. Besides, they are very short. Beautiful...., in every manner. Thank you, Annie, for leading me to it.

When you think about the word 'Mile' – there is an interesting fact about KK Road (Kottayam-Kumily Road) that I want to share. The places or townships, through which KK Road passes are identified by the distance the road has covered from the starting point (Kottayam) to that particular place. For example, Velloor (not Vellore in TN) is referred to as 7th mile, Pampady as 11th mile, Vazhoor as 14th mile etc. Although KK Road was constructed 150 years back and despite miles, pounds and gallons having vanished from our measuring system long back, the legacy of calling these places as 11th Mile, 14th Mile, and so on, is still continued.

This concept of 'Mile', which came to my mind during my journey from KK Road to the WhatsApp page, is still fresh in my mind. Milestones are part of a journey, whether it is a journey by road or any other mode in our day to day life, or the journey of our life in this world. Each mile or each day of the journey, should be a moment of introspection and thanksgiving. Quite often, on birthdays, anniversaries, special days like Christmas



etc., we remember the distance travelled in our life so far, with gratitude to God. May Christmas this year also be such a blessed occasion!

Christmas is a gift to mankind from God. It brings the message of joy and peace on earth. And it is a festival...a festival of feast and rejoicing...also a festival of fast and prayers...an occasion for sharing too...and so, on it goes.... We cannot fully contain its meaning in a few words or sentences. For, Christmas is an experience...an ever-widening experience.

When I look back, I find the Christmas days of my childhood in our native village Ayroor, as the happiest in my life. Money was not easy to find in those days. But there are many things in life, which money cannot buy. And such things were plenty in those days.

Christmas is a celebration, which should be celebrated with all its meanings. It is for us to find its meanings and this meaning might be different for each one of us. A small piece of a story I want to illustrate - it is about a poor girl of school going age. It was the school re-opening day and as any kid she was very excited. After all, the school was re-opening after a long summer break! AND now once again, she could start selling stationery at the traffic signal to feed her family...!!!

There might be people like this little girl around us. Let us find them and show compassion towards them this season. The joy and peace that it would bring to our hearts and minds would be priceless.

Wishing each one of my elders, my peers in age and my youngsters in the family, a very happy Christmas and a blessed New Year. May God bless us all!!!

