

# The Merry Tongue

A story of Love, Loss, Faith & Surrender

## Foreword



Reading 'The Merry Tongue' has had a great impact on me. It is, in my humble opinion, a masterpiece of spirituality, containing many nuggets of gold that one needs to discover for oneself.

The book is unusually produced – the combined work of a mother, Milly Pereira and her daughter, Noella Menon. Noella was the recipient of her mother's narrations and a witness to her experiences over the years and has committed all this content to writing so beautifully. The book is a tribute as much to Noella as it is to Milly.

I came to know Milly during the time when I was closely involved with both our ecclesiastical movements for widows: The Fraternity of our Lady of the Resurrection (F.O.L.O.R) and the Hope and Life. Over the years, our acquaintanceship has grown. Milly joined both these movements and for a while even coordinated the F.O.L.O.R having being elected to its leadership.

The strength of the book is that it tells a very simple, homely, love story. I am sure most people would easily relate to the events narrated. As Milly faces the inevitable ups-and-downs of daily life, she slowly but surely develops a tremendous closeness to God. If she could cultivate such a communion with Him, so can all of us, but how is this to be done?

I found the answer in chapter 13, 'The Embrace of Grace', the day that Milly lost her husband. They were both young – in their early forties with three young children. She was distraught and shattered, feeling like she was going insane. At this precise moment, she heard the Lord say; "You said you trusted Me. Can you surrender?" And Milly did surrender!

It is after she surrendered to the Lord that her friendship with him started to deepen rapidly, through the trials and sufferings and paradoxically through the immense joys she experienced in her widowhood as well.

The Lord began to intervene in miraculous ways in her life. At every moment when she needed something, it was made available to her. Life took on a new efficacy. She shares in chapter 17, 'The Merry Tongue'; *"As everything keeps falling in place, wrongs become right, sadness flips to joy, weaknesses turn to strengths and as my destiny unfolds and beckons, as I live out each moment in faith,*

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*I truly internalise how much he LOVES me and mine and that reassuring knowledge in itself is like touching bliss!"*

Milly, who was once a shy, tongue-tied introvert received a prophecy at a prayer meeting, which foretold that her tongue would be used as a gentle council. As her life unfolded, her apostolate has indeed been more and more in the realm of words. She went on to complete a course in Counselling and has since been serving as a counsellor in a reputable school. She shares; *"I have slowly realised that, though I still feel nervous, the more I put my faith in Him and trust that he will take over my tongue, my thoughts and my actions, he has guided me with the wisdom to make a difference to the lives of many. All I have to do is lean on him like a crutch and His unrelenting support is, in fact, more like a prosthesis, which props me up, where I know I am too weak to stand on my own. I find that the butterflies leave my stomach and instead begin to fly forth in the rainbow! I find that my tongue is merry, my heart rejoices in the Lord and my soul is so grateful that I sometimes find myself "Bursting out of Love" to sing His praises!"*

All the fantastic gifts that she experienced, the graces and blessings that have come pouring into her life and her wonderful closeness with the *Living God* who intervenes in her life day after day and with whom she has developed an intimate rapport, are available to each and every one of us. All we have to do, like Milly, is learn to trust in and surrender our lives to Him. That is the message of this book.

Are you ready, dear reader, to TRUST in and SURRENDER to the Lord?

**Bishop Bosco Penha**

**Em. Aux. Bishop, Archdiocese of Bombay**

*Initiator and Spiritual Director:*

*Fraternity of our Lady of the Resurrection (F.O.L.O.R)*

*'Hope and Life' Movement for widows since 1985*

*Small Christian Communities. (SCC)*

## BOOK REVIEWS

*"I read 'The Merry Tongue' in just a few hours. I feel this book has such a powerful message to share, I couldn't put it down! It is simply BEAUTIFUL! As Milly's life unfolds, transformation takes place and the power that flows through it begins with SURRENDER and FAITH that eventually uplifts her and her entire family. It is a lesson for everyone of us and will surely be an inspiration for all women. I feel enriched." - Dr. Armida Fernandez*

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**Founder Trustee SNEHA & the Romila Palliative Care Centre; Medical Director Holy Family Hospital, Mumbai, India.**

*"Every time I am with Milly I feel rejuvenated and ready to face life's challenges. Being with her gives me renewed energy and makes one feel like a better person. She radiates joy and her strength comes from 'Above'. We translated one of her testimonies from 'The Merry Tongue' to French and have shared it in our newsletter, with our F.O.L.O.R widow's community here in France. Reading it makes it impossible not to believe that the Lord takes care of everyone of us. - Alyette Vallette d'Osia*

**A French member of the F.O.L.O.R since 1978. She was widowed at the age of 29 years. Their sons were only 17 months and 2 months old.**

*"The Lord said, "I will take the part of widows and orphans." "The Merry Tongue' is a testimony to the promise of the Lord. Milly's children's' tribute in the book is a testament of the love, admiration and gratitude they feel for her. The book is a personal account of the loss and grief of losing a loved one. However, it goes beyond that. It is a deep spiritual surrender to the Lord who brings us out of the desolation of grief, widowhood and the difficulties of managing your life alone. The book is written in an engaging and easy narrative with beautiful sketches of family life. I personally feel the book reinforced my own experience with tragedy. I hope that 'The Merry Tongue' impacts many and helps to ease their lives into a new beginning of peace and renewal." - Virginia Mendonça*  
**School Teacher.**