

Image Reflection

Our journey through life is one marked by encounters, encounters with God and with others, leading us to find hope in unexpected or surprising places.

The image of the two figures walking is based on an artwork by Cynthia Carr Kusmer, who paints 'parable art' with the aim to invite people into the love of God. The Gospels are filled with stories of transformative encounters with Jesus, just as our own experience of the love of God changes us and renews hope. This transformation urges us to 'look beyond' to see the world and each other differently.

The lower image takes us to one of India's largest resettlement colonies, Kannagi Nagar, with a diverse population, largely fisherfolk who have suffered the effects of displacement. Many of its occupants have struggled to find employment just because they live in a neighbourhood with a tainted reputation.

In 2020, *St+art India* commissioned a series of murals to change perceptions about Kannagi Nagar in an attempt to positively affect the image of the neighbourhood and the city's collective imagination. A mural of two children drenched in sunlight was painted as a way to humanise those living there and capture the core spirit of the urban landscape, characterised by the life of its young people. The mural was created by artist A-Kill and captured by photographer Jose Mohan.

In the large scale smiling faces of the mural, the young people and residents began to see themselves differently. Our environment is fundamental to our sense of identity, and when it changes, our life changes accordingly. In viewing themselves in a new light, it also led to a transformation in the way the community saw itself: full of life, with hope and a future.

The simplicity of a smile, a kind word or willingness to 'look beyond' and see the other with different eyes, are reminders of the small and gentle building blocks of hope, God's love for us.



PILGRIMS OF **HOPE**

Look Beyond

