



“The Child’s first school is the Family”

Holy Father’s Visit to Sri Lanka

‘Abide in Love’

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Spiritual preparation for the forthcoming visit of our Holy Father, Pope Francis to Sri Lanka.

Special intentions for the Sunday Liturgy

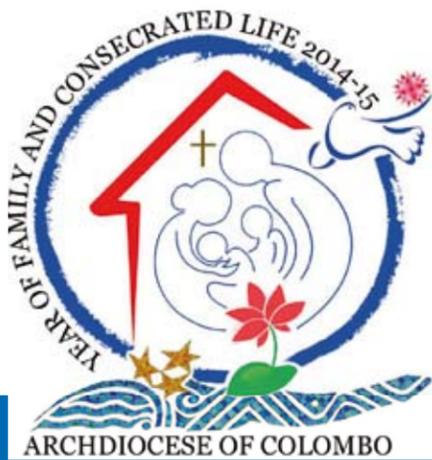
SEE Pg.15 >>>

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ARCHDIOCESE BEGINS YEAR OF - Consecrated Life, Responding to the Call to Holiness in the Family

November 30, 2014 to February 2, 2016

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REMOVE POLITICAL POSTERS OF POPE

The Catholic Church has requested those responsible to remove cut-outs and posters of Pope Francis that may be connected to the up-coming Presidential Election. Rev. Fr. Cyril Gamini, Director Media and Information Centre, Pope’s Visit 2015 in a statement said:

It has been brought to our notice that

political posters and cut-outs with the picture of the Holy Father have come up in some places in the country. We earnestly request respective authorities and persons to remove those political posters and cut-outs immediately and urge all the political groups to refrain from using either the Holy Father or His visit to Sri Lanka for the political campaign of

the Presidential Election.

According to Church sources, construction work has begun on the giant stage for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist and the historic occasion of the Canonization of Blessed Joseph Vaz. These constructions are being carried out by the government in accordance with the church requirements.

Gift for the Papal Charities

Archbishop of Colombo His Eminence, Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith wishes to inform the priests and faithful that no individuals or organisations are permitted to do any collections for the Gift for the Papal Charities, other than the collections made in the par-

ishes during all the Sunday Masses on November 30, for which special envelopes have been sent to all the parishes.

Very Rev. Fr. Anthony Fernandopulle
Episcopal Vicar for Colombo South Region

Inviting all Altar Servers to participate in the Papal Mass

The Liturgy Committee for the Papal Mass and the Canonisation invites altar servers from all parishes of Sri Lanka to send their representatives for the Mass presided over by Pope Francis on January 14, 2015 at the Galle Face Green.



socks and surplices which they wear in their parish church. Altar servers will be allocated a special place within the Galle Face Green to be together and, they are requested to bring the small bells they ring in their churches during the Mass. Kindly note that this

Accordingly, each parish may send a maxi-

mum of 10 altar servers who are above 12 years of age. They are expected to wear the altar server cas-

Contd on Pg. 2 >>>>

For 75 years he gave laughter as the best medicine

Camillus Perera, long serving cartoonist of the Messenger and its sister papers celebrates his 75th Birthday on Monday, December 1.

During the past 50 years, Camillus has used the creative and imaginative skills given to him by the Lord to portray cartoons of major events.



His cartoons have been widely admired as being both educative and entertaining.



We pray for God’s abundant graces, that he may have many more years of cartoon creativity.

Temporary shelters for resettled families in the Mannar district

His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph recently laid the foundation stone for the building of 82 temporary shelters for resettled families of Mullikkulam in the Mannar District. There, families have been undergoing severe hardships in the jungle areas where they are living now.

You can now receive the latest news about the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to Sri Lanka directly to your mobile phone through SMS

Type: Follow (Space) Popevisitsl and send to 40404 to register



Writers' gathering at Chilaw Diocese



The Writers' Association of the Chilaw Diocese gathered at Holy Family Convent, Wennappuwa to discuss the launching of a new newspaper, under

the guidance of Rev. Fr. Frank Tissera, Director-Communications, Chilaw Diocese.

Mr. Kumara Nayanajith of the *Gnanartha Pradeepaya* was also associated with them giving useful advice on newspaper journalism.

Shriyangani Felicia

Catholic Students barred from sitting Sunday School Exam



was being used by a teacher conducting an Islamic class.

Considering this extremely unreasonable action from St. Mary's School, Nawalapitiya which is a Catholic School, disgruntled parishioners made arrangements for the students to sit on the ground within the school premises and write the exam.

Subsequently, the faithful staged a protest on the road. While the initiative for this was taken by the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Newman Pieris, Rev. Fr. Paul Liyanage and Rev. Fr. Benedict and Religious Sisters too remained with them to ensure their safety.

Mikey Fernando

Catholic Students of St. Mary's School, Nawalapitiya were barred from sitting the Sunday School 3rd Term Examination.

Despite a written request from the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Newman Pieris, that was made well in advance to the Principal at St. Mary's School for the classrooms to be made available for students sit-

ting the Sunday school 3rd Term Examinations, the students were surprised to find the classrooms closed and padlocked when they presented themselves for the Exam.

While it is understood that this situation has arisen with the knowledge of the Principal it has also been revealed that at this time one classroom

Inter-religious forum calls on Bishop of Mannar

His Lordship the Bishop of Mannar, Rt. Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph told a visiting group of religious leaders from the Eastern Province that a website report had claimed that he was responsible for the recent lifting of the ban on the LTTE by the European Union.

"I have nothing to do with this development. This is mere speculation

by certain parties. This type of thing will only help to widen the existing rifts instead of helping to solve problems," His Lordship said in an interview given to "Manna", the Mannar Diocesan Catholic weekly newspaper.

Among the delegates of the Ampara Branch of the Sri Lanka Council of Religions for Peace who undertook

the four-day visit to Mannar were Dr. M.I.M. Jameel (President), Mr. V.T. Sahayadevaraja (Secretary), Ven. Ranmuthugala Sangaratne Theero (Vice President), Pastor A. Kirubairaja, Pastor S. Christopher, Mr. M.S.M. Ibrahim, Mr. M.S. Ailees, Ashaik Ansar Moulana, Mr. T. Kailasapillai and Mr. M.S. Himayathulla.

Feast of St. Martin of Tours in Dewalagama

The 118th feast of St. Martin of Tours was held recently presided by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Cletus Chandrasiri Perera O.S.B., Bishop of Ratnapura. His Lordship was assisted by Rev. Fr. Milton Wickramasinghe, Parish Priest Kegalle, Asst. Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Ayal Fernando and Rev. Fr. Sanjeeva Peiris Rector of the Kegalle Minor Seminary.

A new Mission House was also blessed and opened on the same day.



The Annual Feast of St. Jude's Church, Halkandawila was celebrated recently. The chief celebrant at the Festive Mass was Very Rev. Fr. Anthony Fernando, Episcopal Vicar, Colombo South Region.

Picture shows the Rev. Fathers lighting the oil lamp.

D. Anselm Fernando

Land Gifted to Church



The 113th Annual Feast of Holy Rosary Church, Andiambalama was celebrated recently presided by Very Rev. Fr. Patrick Perera, Episcopal Vicar of the Negombo Region.

At the end of the festive High Mass, the deed of a land that belonged to S.M. Chandrasiri Semon Gunawardena, was gifted to His Eminence Rt. Rev. Dr. Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, the Archbishop of Colombo.

The deed was handed over to Very Rev. Fr. Patrick Perera, chief celebrant of the Mass by Mrs. Mala Jayakody (niece of Mr. Gunawardena) and her husband Mr. Chamly Jayakody.

Pic. T. Sunil Fernando

Elders Felicitated



Catholics of Maliboda Parish in the Kegalle Deanery presented gifts to thirty elders from the estates and villages, who had been closely associated with the late Rev. Fr. Anjelo Stafenizzi, SJ. The event celebrated at the Asuntha Primary School at Maliboda, Deraniyagoda was held to commemorate Elders' Day.

The Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Winston Rosairo, SJ presided at Holy Mass.

J. Antony

Epitaph in honour of Fr. K.D.A. Nanayakkara

An epitaph in honour of the late Rev. Fr. K.D.A. Nanayakkara OMI, was unveiled at the Maggona cemetery by the Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Ishan Prameena.

Fr. Nanayakkara served the parish of Maggona for 18 years.

D.A.F.



Inviting all Altar Servers..

Contd. from Pg. 1

Committee for the Papal Mass is not in a position to provide food/beverages or transport. Parish Priests are kindly requested to send the names of the participating altar servers with their signature and seal before the December 7, 2014 to the following address:

Mr George Fernando, St. Lucia's Cathedral, Kothahena, Colombo 13.

For further information kindly contact:
George: 0774955621, Daniel: 0775377923,
Eymard: 0776600383, Milvon: 0777333067,
Tyrone: 0773138643, Adrien: 0773597559

Discussion in Negombo to coordinate Pope's Visit



A discussion was held recently in Negombo under the direction of the SSP, Negombo Police Jayantha Liyanage to coordinate the visit of His Holiness.

Present at this occasion were Senior Police

Officers and several Rev. Fathers.

Picture shows Very Rev. Fr. Patrick Perera Episcopal Vicar for the Negombo region expressing his views.

Raymond Aponu, Negombo

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Church in the Modern World

Muslim, Christian, Jewish Leaders Unite at Saudi Conference to Condemn Islamic State

VIENNA, Nov 19 (Reuters) - Senior Muslim, Christian and Jewish leaders condemned the violence by jihadi militants such as Islamic State (IS) at a Saudi-backed conference on Wednesday in a rare display of inter-faith unity aimed at promoting tolerance and diversity.

Islamic State has caused international alarm by capturing large expanses of Iraq and Syria, declaring a Sunni "caliphate" straddling their borders and massacring those they deem apostates and infidel, like Shi'ite Muslims and Christians.

"Some organizations that are affiliated with Islam are perpetrating some actions in the name of jihad. This is not Islam at all," said Abdullah

bin Abdulmuhsen Al Turki, secretary-general of the Muslim World League.

"This is why we wish to deplore and strongly condemn this behavior, which we see as against Islam," he told an audience including the Muslim grand muftis of Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan; top representatives of several churches, Rabbi David Rosen of the American Jewish Committee, and diplomats.

Nizar bin Obaid Madani, Saudi minister of state for foreign affairs, decried the emergence of factions in the Middle East "that use terrorism and violence in the name of religion. They are wreaking havoc. They are killing and destroying everything.

"Those who have

embraced terrorism unfortunately attribute everything they do, every oppression they practice, to Islam. Islam has nothing to do with them," he said.

The conference called for countering the messages of jihadi militants on social media used to lure recruits, and for leadership courses in schools, houses of worship and the broader community to spread the principles of diversity and tolerance.

The conference was organized by the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Center for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialog (KAICIID), which is sponsored by Saudi Arabia.

KAICIID has come

under intense scrutiny in Austria since it opened in 2012 to fanfare. Critics say the center has done little to promote religious dialog at a time when 150 jihadis have left Austria to fight in the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia itself enforces a strict Islamic code and bans non-Muslim religious practice. But as the birthplace of Islam and a champion of conservative Sunni doctrine, the country is an important ally for Western countries battling Islamic State and a symbolic target for the militant group itself. (Reporting by Michael Shields and Shadia Nasralla, editing by Mark Heinrich) Rohan Jayawardena (rohanjay2004@yahoo.com)

Cardinal Sarah appointed head of Vatican Congregation for Liturgy



Cardinal Sarah, from Guinea, is described as 'traditional' in terms of liturgy

Pope Francis has named Cardinal Robert Sarah as the new prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

Cardinal Sarah, 69, from Guinea, is currently president of the pontifical council "Cor Unum". He will replace Cardinal Antonio Cañizares Llovera, nicknamed "Little Ratzinger", who has been appointed Archbishop of Valencia in Spain.

Vatican-watcher Andrea Tornielli said: "The profile of Robert Sarah, a Curia member with a long experience serving as a pastor in Africa, is rather traditional... His arrival as head of the dicastery for worship is therefore unlikely to herald any innovations in the liturgical field."

Last month Cardinal Sarah spoke at a meeting of priests and seminarians attending the Populus Summorum Pontificum pilgrimage in Rome. The annual pilgrimage brings together faithful from around the world devoted to the Extraordinary Form.

Prominent Muslim figures welcome Pope's visit to Istanbul

Two prominent Muslim religious figures in Turkey have welcomed the upcoming visit of Pope Francis to their country, saying they hoped it could shed light on the "peace" of Islam and help change bad images associated with that religion.

At Istanbul's famed Sultan Ahmed Mosque - often referred to as the Blue Mosque because of the turquoise tiles that adorn the early 17th-century structure - Ishak Kizilaslan said Muslims welcomed "everyone coming to us in a good way".

Pope Francis' scheduled visit to the mosque is important because the Pope will learn from mixing with those worshipping inside that "Islam is always peace," Kiz-



People pray in the Blue Mosque in Istanbul (CNS)

ilaslan, the mosque's head imam, News Service in a telephone interview. or Muslim preacher, told Catholic

Pope Francis has canonised two saints from the Indian state of Kerala who were members of the ancient Syro-Malabar Catholic Church



VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis last Sunday named six new saints, including two from India, in a Holy Mass gathering tens of thousands of worshippers at Saint Peter's Square.

Some 5,000 Indians were among those attending the Holy Mass to see Pope Francis canonise Kuria-kose Elias Chavara (1805-1871) and Euphrasia Eluvathingal (1877-1952).

Both were from Kerala and members of the ancient Syro-Malabar Catholic Church in southern India. Chavara was founder of the Church's first men's congregation and helped start the first women's congregation. Eluvathingal, also known as Rose, was part of the women's congregation.

Pope Francis spoke of taking inspiration from their "example of harmony and reconciliation." He said: "... Let the Lord give new missionary impetus to the Church in India so that, inspired by their example of harmony and reconciliation, Indian Christians continue on the path of solidarity and fraternal co-existence."

The Indian Church, which according to tradition dates back to the arrival in southern India of St. Thomas, one of the 12 apostles, accounts for only about two per cent of the population.

SUNDAY PUNCH

by Camillus



THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY SRI LANKA
Messenger
SINCE 1869

EDITORIAL

November 30, 2014

Put Christ back into Christmas

Today we begin another season of Advent but this year, with Pope Francis appealing repeatedly for a simple and humble lifestyle to rebuild a Church of the poor, hope the commercialization of Christmas will end and it will become deeply spiritual.

For the past few decades and specially after Sri Lanka swallowed wholesale the globalised capitalist market economic system, Christ has virtually being taken out of Christmas and that is why we see so many "X'mas" bargain sales.

Bells, balloons and bonbons, cakes, crackers and cards with banquets and heavy boozes have unfortunately become part of the holiest feast of the Incarnation which changed the course of history. The Baby Jesus was born in a cattle shed but shopping malls and supermarkets say December of Christmas time means more business and profits than any other month of the year. We cannot blame the business centres because they are run for profits. The responsibility is more with the Christians who support the commercialization of Christmas by going on shopping sprees. Santa Claus, the reindeer toys and tinsel may be ok for little children but mature Christians need to go deeper into the spirituality of this momentous event where the helpless baby in the cattle shed went onto become the Lord of lords and King of kings, the theme of last Sunday's feast Christ the King.

Pope Francis, through whom the Holy Spirit is bringing about a new Pentecost in the Church and the world does not preach too much but the way he lives is a powerful sermon that is changing the world.

For Christmas this year Pope Francis is raffling off unwanted items including a Fiat Panda, tandem bike and coffee machine to raise money for the homeless. For just \$12.50, those hoping to get their clutches on perfume, pens and even a panama hat given to the pope can enter a draw, the proceeds of which will go to a papal charity set up to help those who bed down nightly around the Vatican.

Tickets are to be sold throughout the upcoming festive season and signs have already gone up around the tiny city state advertising the draw, which will take place on January 8, which happens to be the crucial Presidential Election day in Sri Lanka.

While the first prize is a gleaming Fiat Panda 4X4 in papal white, runners-up could go home with racing bicycles, an HD digital video camera, a gentleman's wrist watch, an umbrella or bottle of perfume - all of which will have much higher-than-usual value because of where they come from.

The Argentine Pope - who chose his papal name in honour of Saint Francis of Assisi and his devotion to the poor - has cast off luxuries such as the ermine-trimmed cape and red shoes worn by his predecessor Pope Benedict XVI and focused his efforts on helping the down-and-out.

He is also unlikely to have room to keep the hundreds of presents bestowed on him in his modest apartment, having opted out of moving into the spacious papal palace after his election last year. In February, the 77-year-old pope sold off his Harley Davidson - worth around 15,000 Euros and inscribed with his name - for 241,500 euros at a Paris auction, giving the proceeds to a hostel and soup kitchen in Rome.

He also appointed a papal almoner, Polish Archbishop Konrad Krajewski, who helps those who regularly sleep rough among the porticos near Saint Peter's Square, or poor families struggling to pay their bills.

Archbishop Krajewski announced recently that the Vatican would be installing showers for the homeless at public toilets just off St Peter's square. The initiative followed an encounter with a homeless man who declined an invitation to dinner because he said he was too smelly to dine with a bishop.

Going beyond this to dismantle the structures that enslave the poor in poverty and make the rich richer, Pope Francis has condemned speculation in food commodities and greed for profits, saying they were undermining the global fight against poverty and hunger.

Addressing a United Nations conference on nutrition, he called on rich nations to share their wealth and denounced waste, excessive consumption and unequal distribution of food.

Christ willingly became poor to unite with the poor. Let us put Christ back in to Christmas this year.

Devotion to the Virgin Mary

Rev. Fr. Daniel Icatlo, JCD

The Year of Mary has come to a close in the Archdiocese of Colombo. It is time to take stock and see whether we have actually grown in our Marian piety. It is always high time to make a new beginning and renew our efforts to be closer to the Blessed Virgin.

Among the apparitions of Our Lady, which numbers to around 350 times in different parts of the world, she invariably requests that we pray the Holy Rosary. Since she is the most powerful intercessor before the Lord, our prayers have greater assurance of being heard if we channel them through her.

As we offer generous prayers and sacrifices as suffrages for the souls of our departed loved ones in this month of November, we likewise raise our sights on our eternal destiny: Heaven. It is the will of the Father that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth. But in this fallen world, given our innate shortcomings and weakness, we need the motherly help of Mary. She truly comes to our aid especially in the moment of truth: that of our transit to eternal life.

This indispensable assistance of the Blessed Virgin is graphically portrayed in the painting of the *Last Judgment* of Michelangelo, serving as altarpiece of the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican City.

About twenty five (25) years after painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and many years after the death of Pope Julius II, Michelangelo is asked to paint the wall behind the altar with a fresco of the Last Judgment by Pope Clement VII.

Michelangelo is not the same man he was when he painted the ceiling. His mood is more pessimistic, he is more devout and clearly concerned about the fate of his own soul. The times had changed as well.

The Protestant Reformation was well under way, and the Church was beginning to turn its back on the Humanism of the High Renaissance. The Church responded to the attack by Luther by going on the offensive, bringing a powerful, energized Catholicism to the people. The subject of the *Last Judgment*, where we see the damned tortured in hell, needs to be seen against these historical developments.

The *Last Judgment* is a very old subject in art history represented by many artists. The subject is the Second Coming of Christ, where Christ returns to judge all of mankind.

Christ separates the blessed (those



The 'Last Judgment' by Michelangelo

"It is time to take stock and see whether we have actually grown in our Marian piety"

who will go to heaven), who He gathers on His right, from the damned (those who will go to hell), who He gathers on His left. In the 9th and 10th centuries, during the Middle Ages, this scene was often represented on the doorways of churches so that you had a vivid image of the Day of Judgment on your way in to church.

Here, Michelangelo shows us Christ in the center and below Him to His (Christ's) left are the damned who are being pulled down and shipped to hell where they are tortured by demons.

Below Christ to His right, not to our right, are the blessed who rise from their graves and float up to heaven with the aid of angels.

On either side of Christ directly are important figures, like Eve and also Saints, many of whom died particularly painful deaths. We can identify these different Saints by what they carry. Usually Saints carry the instruments of their martyrdom, or some other identifying attribute (Dr. Beth Harris and Dr. Steven Zucker).

An important detail could easily pass unnoticed from a cursory gaze at this fresco. On the lower left, some dark-skinned figures are being pulled upward by an angel. What implements was he using?

They may look like ropes but a closer look reveals that they are Rosary beads! This image seems to show two "heathens" being lifted heavenward by the rosary, a literal depiction of a figurative idea. It may be a tiny detail among the many images of the altarpiece but it definitely tells us a great truth about Mother Mary's role and power in the whole process of sanctification and salvation.

The Rosary may not be a stairway to heaven, but our love and devotion to Mary do lead us to heaven and guarantees our salvation if we persevere along this Marian itinerary.

As Michelangelo's fresco depicted, some souls were ascending to heaven aided by angels, on one hand. On the other hand, there were also souls going up to heaven thanks to the mercy of our Mother Mary. Like a good mother, if she sees that someone cannot make it through the front door of heaven, she does wonders so that that soul gets to heaven even if it is through the "back door." Such is the greatness of her mercy.

"Michelangelo is not the same man he was when he painted the ceiling. His mood is more pessimistic, he is more devout and clearly concerned about the fate of his own soul. The times had changed as well"

Be Hopeful, Be Holy



ADVENT
REFLECTION

First Sunday

By Tanya Ferdinandusz

A little girl and her grandfather were admiring a beautiful nativity scene.

"Look at all the animals, and Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus," said the old man. "Isn't it beautiful?"

"Yes, Seeya," agreed the little girl, "but one thing bothers me - isn't baby Jesus ever going to grow up? He's exactly the same size he was last year!"

Sometimes, in our minds, Jesus never outgrows the crib - perhaps because we find it more convenient and comfortable to keep Him safe and cozy in the manger, ignoring the man He grew up to be, neglecting the mission that took Him to a cross and, sparing little thought to the practical implications of His reign as the King of kings who will one day return in glory.

Advent means 'arrival' or 'coming.' The season of Advent invites us to look both backward

and forward. We look back with appreciation, as we remember the Lord's first coming, which we celebrate at Christmas—the incarnation, where He deliberately laid aside His majesty and came in meekness and weakness. But Advent also means looking forward, with anticipation and hope, to His Second Coming—in unrivalled splendour, "coming on the clouds of heaven" with power and great glory" (Matthew 24:30).

When unrighteousness is rampant, when injustice and corruption flourish—in our country, workplace, school, neighbourhood, even in our church and in our own lives—it can be a daily struggle to hold on to hope. It is far easier to give in, or even just slip in, to hopelessness, to wring our hands in despair, to throw in the towel and give up on holiness. The season of Advent encourages us to be hopeful and challenges us to be holy.

BE HOPEFUL

In today's First Read-

ing, Isaiah prays for God to intervene with power to deliver His people: "Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down—at your Presence the mountains would melt" (Isaiah 64:1). Even when God seems to be silent, the prophet encourages the people to hope, by reminding them that God is both their Father and Redeemer.

We talk about the 'reason for the season'... The reason for Christmas was that Jesus might redeem us and reconcile us to God. At the heart of the Christmas message lies that which is the deepest desire of God's heart—Reconciliation or Peace: God and Humanity reconciled; Humanity reconciled to one another; reconciliation between Humanity and Creation (Nature). That is why the Christmas message is one of love, joy and tremendous hope for all of creation.

And Hope does not leave us helpless. Today's Second Reading (1 Corinthians 1:3-9) reminds us that while we await the full revelation of

Jesus at the Second Coming, we are strengthened by the gifts of the Spirit and indeed, by the supreme gift of the Holy Spirit Himself, for as Paul writes, "hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us" (Romans 5:5). Ours is a powerful hope.

BE HOLY

In today's Gospel, Jesus warns that since we do not know when He will return, we are to remain awake and alert at all times. Ours can never be a passive waiting, but always an active vigil, in which we strive to live holy lives, lives set apart for God and for His purposes. Loyalty to our Master also necessitates faithfulness to the mission He has entrusted to us, that of being faithful ambassadors of His ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). As author Philip Yancey puts it:

"The people of God are not merely to mark time, waiting for God to step in and set right all that is wrong. Rather, they

are to model the new heaven and new earth and by so doing awaken longings for what God will some day bring to pass..."

At every Mass, we pray that God will deliver us from evil, grant us peace, keep us free from sin and safe from distress, "as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ."

*** This Advent, and beyond, as we struggle through situations that may seem utterly hopeless—whether in our country, society, workplace, church or family—and as we encounter people who are weighed down by feelings of despair and hopelessness, how will you and I rekindle this BLESSED HOPE?**

*** This Advent, and beyond, how will this BLESSED HOPE prompt us, even provoke us, to grow in holiness?**

Advent - A Time of contemplation and for New Evangelization

By Eric Jeevaraj

Advent is a wonderful time to discover this joy of sharing our faith because at the heart of Advent is the proclamation of the Good News.

Pope Francis wrote *Evangelii Gaudium* very much in the same spirit of Blessed Pope Paul VI's *Evangelii Nuntiandi*. Both are a meditation on our call to evangelise.

In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis is calling us to be spirit-filled and joyful evangelisers. An evangeliser is one who has been sent to share, witness or testify to the Good News.

We do this first by proclaiming the *kerygma* which is the message of God's saving love. The *kerygma* has the power to change and transform people's lives. This Greek word *kerygma* literally means to cry or proclaim as a herald.

Advent is busy, frantic and full - on time. There is so much to do and cram in. Shopping to get by, presents to buy, Christmas cards to send, meals to prepare, services to attend, because of this it can be a challenge to prepare spiritually to find time to pray and grow closer to God. However this is the challenge we are invited to rise to and with God's help we can. Christmas is an opportunity for us to grow in faith, be refreshed in our hearts, deepen our grasp of the Gospel message and in turn share this great joy, this gift of grace with others.

During this Holy Season of Advent, if each one of us is able by God's grace to share our faith in such a way that each year one person is renewed, our parish communities would double in size year by year.

The Holy Spirit is the one who

evangelizes, who inspires us to share our faith and who gives us strength, wisdom and courage. We need this courage to examine our conscience and ask ourselves: Do you really believe what you are proclaiming? Do you live what you believe? Where does your true and real joy come from? We evangelise and win others for Christ by first turning back to God and embracing the Gospel again.

In the strength and power of the Holy Spirit we are being called to enter into a new chapter of evangelization (*Evangelii Nuntiandi* 2).

Renewal of Love

Advent is a wonderful time for us to know a renewed encounter with the love of God poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. We come to know this love by proclaiming the Gospel, first to ourselves and then to others. We are being called to give the Gospel away, seize it and live it, spread it and share it, so that we become living witnesses of God's joy, a light and hope in the world. St. Irenaeus said, "By his coming Christ brought with Him all newness." The joy of the Gospel is such that it cannot be taken away from us by anyone or anything (John 16:22). Nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. However, we must guard against a certain defeatism or negativity which can subtly pervade and influence the way we think.

As Pope Francis says, "Nobody can go to battle unless he is fully convinced of victory beforehand." If we start without confidence we have lost half the battle and have buried our talents, of course we are aware of our weakness and frailty as were Zechariah and Elizabeth but the Spirit raises us up,

gives us his strength, wisdom and joy.

Advent holds out a wonderful opportunity for us to contemplate our Blessed Mother Mary. When we do so we notice that a homely warmth enters all our efforts in living the Christian life. Through the work of God's grace we become more tender, more gracious and more humble before God and others. We are those who have embraced the spirit of Mary our Mother. This is why she is the model of the New Evangelisation; she is full of love and compassion and reveals the loving heart of the Father. The gift to evangelise, a gift we have all received through Baptism, is a gentle gift. It does not force itself nor is it weak or uncertain but recognizes how everyone is created in the image and likeness of God.

Through Baptism we are immersed into the life of the Trinity. When we witness to having a relationship with God we bear witness to God as the Blessed Trinity.

To be an evangeliser, to be someone who proclaims the faith, is to bear witness to the very mercy of God. It is this quality of mercy which attracts others because in this mercy we all encounter God's goodness, kindness and forgiveness.

Pope's Call

Pope Francis is leading the Church in a new Chapter focused on the New Evangelisation.

He is calling us all - Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Religious and Lay Faithful to turn over this new page. No one is excluded, all are invited and together we are united in a common cause to pro-



claim the riches and treasures of Christ.

Our Holy Father expresses his vision simply, beautifully and elegantly: "How I long to find the right words to stir up enthusiasm for a new chapter of Evangelisation full of favour joy, generosity, courage, boundless love and attraction!" (*Evangelii Gaudium* 261).

The Holy Spirit is the one who creates in us a burning heart of love which makes us spirit-filled evangelisers whose hearts burn for the love of God and the proclamation of the Gospel.

For us Catholics, the Church's New Year begins with the Holy Season of Advent. Let us respond to the invitation of Pope Francis and follow his example. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to cultivate the fruit of the Gospel joy within us. Let us embrace by grace the way of humility demonstrated by John the Baptist and our Blessed Mother Mary the Mother of God and find the happiness of heaven beginning right here on earth.

To be an evangeliser, to be someone who proclaims the faith, is to bear witness to the very mercy of God. It is this quality of mercy which attracts others because in this mercy we all encounter God's goodness, kindness and forgiveness.

Sunday Schools

The development of Sunday Schools as a medium of religious instruction is a healthy phenomenon in our parishes. Our Catholic children are given the opportunity of learning their religion and Christian morals and ethical values through these classes. The children as well as the parents also get to meet the other children and parents of the parish. This is true especially for the parents and the children who are attending schools that are not located within the jurisdiction of the parish.

Many of our children especially in the suburbs attend International schools and some government schools where Christianity is not taught. There is no opportunity for these children to receive First

Holy Communion or Confirmation. The parents of children who are attending such schools get the opportunity of preparing their children for these two important Sacraments in their respective parishes.

The parish priests take into their hearts the importance of religious instruction. Many of them take these religious instructions as a priority. They spend time and money to train catechists or religious educators, who mostly volunteer their time and energy to instruct these children of different ages and different grades. It is edifying to see these men and women volunteer to take up this task. They forego their weekend leisure time to dedicate themselves to the teaching of religion.



The print media highlights pictures of children who are taking part in sports activities that are organised by these Sunday schools. One of the principles of a school spoke about an art exhibition which displayed drawings done by the Sunday school students. She said that the students have lofty artistic talents. Some of the Sunday school teachers also boasted about the annual drama and carol competitions that they organize among the parishes of the dioceses.

The purpose of the Sunday Schools is to

instruct the Catholic students on the basic doctrines of the church. It is justified to get the children to spend half a day during their weekend to teach the rudiments of their faith and religion. But to prepare them for competitive artistic enterprises and sports activities may be going a step or two too far from the purpose of the Sunday school. These weekends may be the only opportunity for the children to be with their parents who are toiling to earn a living during the weekdays. The cost of the art exhibitions and sports meets too have to be borne by the meager earnings of the poor parents.

Some Sunday Schools also have uniforms for children. The poor growing children who have been regimented to

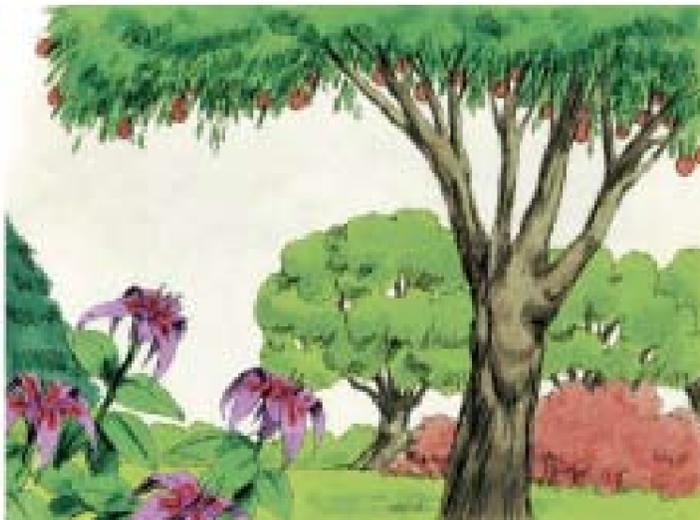
wear school uniforms have to wear another Sunday school uniform during the weekend. Many modern child psychologists as Dr. Alan Hilfer, speak adversely about school uniforms. They are of the opinion that they lead growing children to lose their individuality and personality and become part of a collective "kibbutz." Uniforms are more appropriate for the military, to prisoners or mental health hospital patients. Who is going to pay for all these paraphernalia? The money has to come from the pockets of the poor parents. It is bad enough having to pay for sports, drama and prize-day activities in the schools. It is a pity if they have to pay through their noses for these extravagant Sunday school extracurricular activities.

It is high time that the bishops and the

priests and religious who are in charge of catechetical activities in the dioceses of Sri Lanka to set some rules and limits to these unnecessary extracurricular Sunday school events. The parish Sunday school should be limited to instructing children on religion and Christian values. It could be used to instruct and prepare them for the Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation. Sunday schools should not organize sports activities or competitive musical or artistic events. It should not become an extra financial burden on the poor Catholic parents who have to bear the brunt of expensive and extravagant extracurricular activities of the schools. In this Year of the Family let the children get the opportunity of spending at least a few more hours with their parents during the weekends.

Thoughts on "Darkness" and "Light"

The creation story in Genesis Chapter 1 Verse 3 in the Bible says God said "Let there be light" and there was light. These were God's very first words in creating this stunning and beautiful world. The world of which God was "Pleased" (Gn.1:25). In numerous places



in the Bible we find God exemplified as "Light" and Jesus our Lord himself said "I am the Light."

Most probably based on the biblical perspective, the General theological and spiritual belief is that "Light," is good and evil and bad is very often illustrated as "Darkness."

I would like to share some thoughts from the book *Learning to Walk in the Dark* authored by Barbara Brown Taylor, in which she gives quite a different viewpoint of "Darkness" and "Light" that calls us to think about these two elements in a broader concept. - I would say "through eyes of faith in the Holy Word."

All of us have experienced, that the absence of light - "Darkness" have a tendency to make us scary or give us creepy feelings. We also know that Darkness is also linked with the absence of God's presence in our lives. Yes indeed the absence of light - the Light of God should definitely give us a creepy feeling.

On the other hand when surrounded in darkness we also experience things that are helpful and beneficial to our lives. Take for instance the time when we lay sleepless in the dark our thoughts help us realise things and sometimes during such times we are inspired emotionally and spiritually. Darkness also gives us an opportunity to gain control or come to terms with difficult situations in our lives. Above all surrounded by darkness in a quite, serene place we are able to connect ourselves and encounter God.

If we turn our thoughts to some of the glorious

events that are recorded in the Bible we would also see that God can reveal His splendour amidst darkness as much as in the Light.

The exodus from Egypt happened at night. God met Moses in the thick darkness atop Mount Sinai to hand down His Commandments. Commencing the story of salvation - Jesus was born beneath a star in the dark of the night. The most glorious event - The Resurrection happened in a dark cave, amidst the sounds of trumpets.

It is almost impossible to imagine faith without light and it is equally hard to imagine a world without darkness, because in the perfection of His creation God certainly can transform the darkness to reflect life. In Isaiah 45:7 it says "I created both light and darkness; I bring both blessing and disaster"

In John 12:36 our Lord says, "Believe in the light while you have light, so that you may become children of light." When darkness around our lives reflects evil our Lord and Saviour calls us to "Be the Light of the World" (Mt. 5:14), by living righteous lives that would radiate 'Light' bright enough to overcome the evil of 'Darkness'.

Sunethra Obeysekera

Conscience

An old Sioux Indian once asked a white man to give him some tobacco for his pipe. The man gave him a loose handful from his pocket. The next day the Indian came back and asked for the white man. 'For', said he, 'I found a



quarter of a dollar among the tobacco'.

'Why don't you keep it?' asked a person standing by.

'I've got a good man and a bad man here', said the Indian pointing to his breast, and the good one says, "It is not yours; give it back to the owner." The bad man say, "Never mind, you got it, and it is your own now." The good man, "No, no! You must not keep it."

So I didn't know what to do; and I thought to go to sleep; but the good man and the bad man kept talking all night, and troubled me; and now when I bring the money back, I feel good..... **Anon**

The testimony of a good conscience is the glory of a good man; have a good conscience and thou shalt ever have gladness.

Thomas a Kempis

A CROSS The Way

By Sirohmi Gunasekera

Preparing

"November is coming to an end and soon it will be time to prepare for Christmas," remarked Carla.

"I know. I am up to my ears in debt and I don't know how I can find the money to spend to enjoy Christmas!" said Nora.

"Why do you need money? Jesus was born amid the poorest of the poor among the destitute in a stable. I think we have a wrong understanding of Christmas to squander money to enjoy the festival. Everyone thinks it is a time of eating and drinking in plenty. Can you imagine that Jesus never knew Santa Claus and did not have a decorated tree?" commented Joshua.

"Well then. How can we celebrate the birthday of our Saviour?" asked Carla.

"First of all, there should be a Spiritual Spring cleaning. Think of your network of friends and relatives and ask yourself if you hate anyone. Maybe there are people who have hurt you and you need to pray for forgiveness. Christmas is a time of Reconciliation. Then you can call or visit a lonely or sick person and brighten Christmas Day for him or her. In both rich homes and poor, there are those who need a kind word and a loving touch. You don't have to give them cake or presents unless you can afford it," said Joshua.

"You mean I can spend Christmas and enjoy it without spending money?" asked Nora stupefied.

"Of course. You can go for Midnight Mass somewhere close by and pray and thank God for sending His Son to save humankind. Then you can spend Christmas Day alone by listening to the radio or tv as there are Christmas programmes. If you have someone you care about you can share a packet of rice with them and sing Christmas Carols together. Make your Christmas meaningful," concluded Joshua.



CPArts: Peace building through arts for 49 years



The Centre for Performing Arts (CPArts) celebrates its 49th anniversary on December 3, and is all geared up to step into its 50th year. The great day will be celebrated in Jaffna with a Common Prayer Service on the eve of its anniversary and a Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the morning of the 3rd followed by the hoisting of CPArts' flag. Many special programmes are envisaged during the coming year to commemorate its existence for 50 years.

Arts for peace



CPArts is Sri Lanka's longest standing organisation using arts for peace building. It is one of a few independent organizations embracing all major cultural groups which has firm and deeply embedded roots in many regions of Sri Lanka. Promoting peace, justice and equality among all communities; creating opportunities for intercultural exchange among Sri Lanka's regions and; identifying and encouraging artistes to be ambassadors of social peace and development, are some of its main objectives.

The centre focuses on the performing arts as a method for conflict resolution, healing and promoting co-existence and mutual cooperation between people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds. Because of their unique method and approach to peace building, the Centre has been able to spread its vision and activities from Jaffna to all other areas of the country.

Today, CPArts is working island-wide in more than 25 centres distributed in eighteen districts in different parts of Sri Lanka, speaking both Sinhala and Tamil. In most of these CPArts Centres, there are children, youth, women and adult groups.

Programmes



The Centre has different peace building programmes designed for different age groups, addressing the main issues felt under each age group. They encourage women to use artistic performance as a way of expressing their unique experiences of conflict. With children, they use more games and music to get them together with other children from different ethnic and religious origins. In this way the Centre makes use of music, dance and drama to encourage expressions of conflict, facilitate healing and support while assisting them to listen to each other. Another approach used is to re-tell historic stories according to the present context. They relate old epics like Ashoka and Ramayanaya with which all are familiar in Sri Lanka, relating them in a way that brings out the destruction of war and the suffering of people that befalls all races as a result.

13.7 + P = 0

Their last performance 13.7 + P= 0 was on the Creation of the Universe based on the deep philosophical thinking and the mystical vision of Teilhard de Chardin. It was a dance mime production of forty two minutes. Its cast and crew included seventy youth from different parts of Sri Lanka comprising of CPArts groups from Avissavella, Illavalai, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Monaragala, Vavuniya.

The production was reviewed as "outstanding." Modern drama techniques like theatrical sculpturing to

create still images and moving images, strobe light effects and black theatre were used to heighten dramatic

effects. The composition of music included the mystical intones of "om" while lighting and sound effects acted as a language by itself that communicated with the audience.

Passion Play

Their annual Passion Play held in Jaffna is now renowned worldwide. Come what may - war or peace - Jaffna CPArts team has considered it their sacred duty to stage the Passion Play annually for fifty year without interruption. Thus catering to thousands who consider the watching of a Passion Play an Act of Lenten obligation. CPArts Passion

Play has today become a part of the Jaffna Catholic tradition. It is a historical performance that reflects the perseverance and courage of a people who kept the Passion Play tradition alive amidst the bloody war consuming their families. A commitment as great as the story they perform on stage.

Other plays

Other stage plays they perform include mimed wordless plays such as Ashoka, Dharshana and Sri Lan-



ka 300BC which stressed the evils of violence and war and the necessity for tolerance, understanding and social harmony. CPArts have teamed up with the theatre group of professor Ediriweera Sarachchandra and the dance of group of Miranda Hemalatha and produced remarkable peace programmes in various parts of the Island. The enthusiastic interest taken by Professor Sarachchandra, his family and his troupe of professional actors enabled CPArts to stage high quality performances with culturally mixed casts of artistes and technicians from the North, East and the South. This was the beginning of CP Arts inter-cultural peace programmes.

CPArts

CPArts was founded in Urumpiray in Jaffna in 1965 by Fr. N. Maria Saveri, as a Catholic parish theatre-group, the Centre for Performing Arts was then known as Thirumarai Kalamaram. From the very beginning members of this group consisting of young

amateur actors, musicians and technicians came from all parts of the diocese of Jaffna and from all strata of society. Within this limited circle, the barriers of cast, creed and social status were successfully overcome.



Coinciding with its Anniversary celebrations CPArts young artists from Avissavella, Panadura and Jaffna will perform on the 3rd and 4th of December in Colombo at an international gathering organized by Caritas. Their main performance will highlight the theme of the gathering 'Beyond the Tsunami Waves. Mission Accomplished, Journey Continues....'

The group was re-organized in the late eighties under the name Centre for Performing Arts (CPArts) and assumed, in addition to its earlier names, a third name Ranga Kala Kendraya. At this juncture the group's activities involved not only the performing arts, but fine Arts and Literature as well. It started a school of fine arts in Jaffna with more than 500 girls and boys and a dozen teachers who were experts in their fields. A magazine called *Kalai Muham* was launched with the purpose of

developing the literary writing skills of the youth.



developing the literary writing skills of the youth.

Family of artistes

The Centre's organisation incorporates ethno-religious diversity and harmony. They have staff from all the different ethnicities in the country and has developed a reputation as a fair and unbiased organisation. As such, they have been able to move freely between the North-East and the South even during the times of conflict and today, in times of peace, their activities are even more prolific.

AQUINAS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE COLOMBO DIAMOND JUBILEE CONVOCATIONS

WERE HELD ON 7TH & 8TH OF NOVEMBER 2014

THE CONFERMENT OF DEGREE WAS PRESIDED OVER BY HIS EMINENCE MALCOLM CARDINAL RANJITH,
CHANCELLOR OF AQUINAS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, ARCHBISHOP OF COLOMBO.

THE CHIEF GUESTS FOR THE OTHER CONVOCATIONS WERE
HIS EXCELLENCY MOST REV. DR. PIERRE NGUYEN VAN TOT, APOSTOLIC NUNCIO &
PROF. DAYANTHA S. WIJEYESEKARA CHANCELLOR UNIVERSITY OF VOCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY, FORMER VICE
CHANCELLOR OF UNIVERSITY OF MORATUWA & OPEN UNIVERSITY SRI LANKA AND FORMER CHAIRMAN OF
TERTIARY AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COMMISSION (TVEC).



Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)



BRIEF HISTORY

The Aquinas University College was founded in 1953 by late very Rev. Dr. Peter A. Pillai OMI, Rector of St. Joseph's College, at its premises in Darley Road, Colombo 10 as an autonomous higher education institute with the approval and the blessings and the inspiration of His Eminence Thomas Cardinal Cooray OMI, 6th Archbishop of Colombo. In 1955 it was shifted to the present premises at 990, Maradana Road, Colombo 08.

The Aquinas University College is a nonprofit institution administered by the Catholic Church under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Colombo, devoted to education and philanthropic activities. It had contributed much to the development of the nation, by conducting numerous higher educational and professional programmes for the benefit of our youth in Sri Lanka.

Aquinas University College is now a Degree Awarding Institute and was Approved by the University Grants Commission (UGC) on 22nd December 2004 and was gazetted by the Hon. Minister of Education on 10th October 2005. Although Aquinas was registered in 1954 as "Aquinas University College" with the Ministry of Education of Ceylon, it is the present incumbent Rector Very Rev. Dr. Placidus de Silva who launched the Degree Awarding Programmes in 2006.

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Counseling (B.Sc)
Bachelor of Arts General Degree (BA)
Bachelor of Arts Business Administration (BA)
Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies (BA)
Bachelor of Information Technology (BIT)



Aquinas has Affiliations & Accreditations with:

NUI Galway - National University of Galway (Dip. In Psychology and Counselling)
M.B.A. (Victoria University, Switzerland)
ACU - Australian Catholic University, BA. In Teacher Training
IGNOU- Indira Gandhi Open University for Nursing Degree
Warnborough University College UK (Cantabury)

FACULTIES AND DEPARTMENTS @ AUC

Department of Postgraduate Studies
Faculty of Teacher Training ACU
Faculty of Undergraduate Studies
Faculty of Theology
Aquinas School of English
Faculty of Agriculture
Faculty of Nursing
Faculty of International Cookery and Hotel Management
Faculty of Marketing and Management
Faculty of Business and Finance
Faculty of Information & Communication Technology
Faculty of Engineering
Faculty of Professional Studies
Faculty of Linguistics
Faculty of Media Education



AQUINAS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

990 Gnanartha Pradeepaya Mawatha, Colombo 08, Sri Lanka
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Year of Family and Consecrated Life 2014 - 15

The logo is hybridized with the international and the archdiocesan logos for the year 2015 namely year of consecrated life and year of family respectively.

The number of symbols found in this logo is as follows:

Consecrated life

within a watery world a sacramental eucharistic symbol for blood and water gushing forth from the side of Jesus which is now made by the inseparable one flesh unity of man and wife. A home is made with the union of two persons in the sacrament of holy matrimony—marriage

members' heads bowed in its direction is what makes the family the domestic church. It is the abode of faith, hope and charity in the miniature form... family that prays together stays together...! This binding unity and the indelible inseparable mutual relationship of flesh and

ture is the lotus—the seat of wisdom on which the Hindu Goddesses Saraswati and Lakshmi the feminine divine manifestations of culture, arts, wisdom, learning, wealth and prosperity rest, themselves. The best of what family produces the offspring of children is what

stars and the family that arise from the water. The Logo for the Year of Consecrated Life expresses through symbols the fundamental values of consecrated life. In it we recognize the “unceasing work of the Holy Spirit, who in every age shows forth the richness of the practice of

through baptism.

The waters are made of mosaic fragments; they indicate the complexity and the harmony of the human and cosmic elements that are made to “groan” by the Spirit according to God’s mysterious plans (cf Rom 8, 26-27) so that they may converge into the hospitable and fruitful encounter that leads to a new creation. The dove flies among the waves of history, above the waters of the deluge (cf Gen 8, 8-14). The men and women, whose consecration was marked by the Gospel, have always been pilgrims among the nations; they live their various charismatic and diaconal presence like “good administrators of the multiform grace of God” (1Pt 4,10); they are marked by the Cross of Christ, even unto martyrdom; they journey through history equipped with the wisdom of the Gospel; indeed, a Church that embraces and heals all that is human in Christ.

The three stars stand for the identity of consecrated life as *con-fessio Trinitatis, signum fraternitatis e servitium caritatis*. They express the circular relationships found in the Trinitarian love, which consecrated life is called to live daily in the world. The stars also hint to the triple halo used in the Byzantine iconography to honor Mary, the Mother of God, the first Disciple of Christ and model and patron of every consecrated life. The small polyhedral globe on the wing of the dove symbolizes the planet with its myriad variety of nations and cultures, as explained by Pope Francis (cf EG 236). It is the breath of the Spirit that sustains it and leads it towards the future: an invitation to all consecrated persons “to become bearers of the Spirit (*pneumatophoroi*), authentically spiritual men and women, capable of endowing history with hidden fruitfulness”.

The Dove
Polyhedral globe, (multifaceted globe)
Water
Three stars arising from the water
Imperfect Circle
House
Cross
Water Lily
Family (Father, Mother, Two Children)
Red
Blue
Gold
Green
Pink
Brown
Mosaic fragments
Outline or the form of the dove that intuitively the word 'Peace' in Arabic



within the precincts of today’s Church has its humble beginnings in the family, and mostly the incipient seed of a vocation is supplanted in the fertile field of family life; hence family is the bedrock of God’s call to holiness in every form. The diocesan logo is an integrated expression of this reality. The most prominent is the imperfect and rugged circle within which the family is situated; it reminds us of the common human experience of living in a contingent world of good and evil, success and failure, perfections and imperfections, its blue color reminds us of the blue planet earth our “Mother” the cosmic essence of God’s creation. Planet earth is the home for the entire family of God—his creation.

The house is a home when a family inhabits it. The red shelter within the blue circle is the house of flesh and blood

between man and woman through an act of self-giving, self-sacrificing love. The home they make is of life and love hence red stands for this life giving, self-giving fecund love in married life which has both its blend of joys and sufferings. Blue is for maternity and red stands for paternity. Two (not one) Children stand for a vision of family redeemed of all socio economic and political ideals which has sadly reduced the richness of family taught by the Church according to the Word of God according to which it is an abode that welcomes life unconditionally! Marriage is humanly imperfect like the rugged circle around it, yet it resonates the call for perfection or holiness in and through the faithful living of its vows—a prefiguration of faithful love which is called to live in consecrated life.

There is a cross inside the house and the

blood are signified by the connected concentric lines that outlines the form of the family. Members turn towards one another in the family shows a posture of service; both father and mother at the service of one another and of their children. It’s like a fetus gestating within the womb of its mother, nurtured and protected—a sanctuary of life! The brown cross stands for the wood of the cross, which represents ‘soil’ a sign of the incarnation an act of humility, earthiness, terrestrial, human and the matter which God uses to create a new humanity a redeemed humanity through new Adam—Jesus.

The water lily is a symbol of the creative essence of the family- its offspring—children, that blossom up and flower in the form of a life ready to be offered up for the glory of God. The most sacred flower offered to Lord Buddha in our cul-

ture is offered up to God—lives consecrated for his glory, this spotless perfection is symbolized by the seven petals—a numerical expression of perfection! The lotus—the vocation to consecrated life is slightly turned towards the family as it is nourished and protected by the family. This flower has its roots in the creative primordial waters of Baptism. The green stem and leaf stands for this fertility and refreshment the baptized constantly receives from the sacramental life of the church. The red flower is a symbol of virginal love and first love or the first fruits offered up to God. The lotus grows in mud... symbolizing the hardships of family life yet it is fragrant and graceful and delightful.

A dove supports on one wing a polyhedral globe, (multifaceted globe) and while resting on the water, it safeguards with the other wing three

the evangelical counsels through a multiplicity of charisms. In this way too he makes ever present in the Church and in the world, in time and space, the mystery of Christ”. In the lines that outline the form of the dove one can intuit the word ‘Peace’ in Arabic: this is a reminder that consecrated life is called to be the model for universal reconciliation in Christ. The dove is the classical symbol of the action of the Holy Spirit, who is the source of life and the inspirer of creativity. This is a flash-back to the origin of history: in the beginning the Spirit of God moved on the waters (cf Gen 1,2). The dove, gliding above a sea swollen with yet unexpressed life, symbolizes a patient and hope-filled fecundity, while the symbols around it reveal the creative and renewing action of the Spirit. The dove also evokes the consecration of the humanity of Christ

Sr. Hilarina: An Embodiment of Creation Spirituality

Sr. Hilarina was a fresh breath of poetic air in the prosaic world of traditional religious life. The common expression "out of the box" would well describe her life. Though she lived to all appearances in the box, her real, inner life was outside the box; only those who came really close to her would see that. I do not know who was enriched more by our close friendship over 30 years; though she would swear it was she, only I know how much I was inspired and sometimes challenged by her creative ideas when we met, enjoying free ranging conversations on all kinds of subjects: The Church, spirituality, religious life, the cosmos, art, alternative medicine, ecology and what not. She would not hesitate to "pull me up" if I said something which she thought "foolish." Once when I told her that I was planning to go to a couple of ashrams in India for meditation experience, she thrust a piece of paper into my hands - some of her reflections -- saying, "take this paper and meditate on it and give thanks to the Lord; you need not go to India to ashrams. Heart is the Ashram where one meets the Creator, and stand in awe of him." Words of theological wisdom!

My ideas, feelings and dreams resonated with her's, sometimes with dissonances, half serious, half humourous. No wonder, we were both caught up in the rhythms of the cosmos, the Cosmos shot through and

through with the divine. A sure sign of close friendship is when the friends can both put their hair down and be themselves naturally without studied postures - enjoying the freedom of the children of God., Our encounters were of that kind, the divine humanized for the nourishment of the whole being, very much in tune with the Incarnationist creation/cosmic spirituality we had in common. "Up in the air" was also very much "down to earth"; a spirituality which married heaven and earth; matter and spirit - themes she could put creatively into words, poetically and in art.

I think I can take some credit for introducing her to the spirituality of Teilhard de Chardin who played the role of a "guru" in my own priestly/spiritual development. Sr. Hilarina followed my seminars on creation spirituality, very Teilhardian in form and content, assiduously taking notes, to prepare her own lectures to groups of sisters on the subject. How steeped she was in that spirituality is evident in a letter she wrote to me after she had spent a couple of days at SUBODHI, a few years back.

The naturalistic environment of SUBODHI was very much in tune with her whole being; whenever she came here, which was not often, she would get lost, so to speak, in the ambience and the environment, making

critical suggestions on improving the place. Her favourite "locus" was the balcony overlooking Bolgoda lake, an ideal place for meditation/reflection/dreaming, specially at dawn and at dusk. She sat still ("Be still and know that I am God") drawing inspiration from the water and the sky.

In the latter years of her life her creation spirituality naturally flowed into eco-spirituality, a spirituality which embraces the Earth with love and compassion, following the lead of the Good Shepherd Congregation itself. It is evident from her letter that she held the earth sacred, a revelation of God. It was Thomas Aquinas who said that the first Revelation of God is found in the Book of Nature, which can be read by one and all. She felt a personal pain in the wounds that humans inflicted on the environment - pollution of water, air, deforestation etc. In a programme she did in Australia, she came under the spell of Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry, the leading eco-theologians of today, their (joint authors) "The Universe Story," is a must-read "text" on the subject. Since I did not have a copy of the book I had to borrow hers and photocopy a few chapters. Her last major contribution to the Congregation was designing the Logo for the Provincial Chapter of 2013 with the theme, "Ablaze with Compassion, set the Universe afire."

A Spiritual Friend

Good Shepherd Convent Kandy at 125 years

It is with great joy and gladness that I write these lines to say how proud I feel to be a Shepherdian of my Alma Mater Good Shepherd Convent, Kandy.

The first group of Sisters of the Good Shepherd arrived from Ireland in 1888 to set up a school for girls in Kandy. The blessing of the school took place in February 1889. From its small beginnings, the school made progress.

We celebrated the centenary of our school. Now we are celebrating the 125th Jubilee. We started our Jubilee Year on February 8, 2014 with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Vianney Fernando, Bishop of Kandy along with many priests and nuns at St. Euphrasia's Hall. It sure was a very touching experience, to be part of the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, bringing back nostalgic memories of our days in school.

The Holy Mass was followed by the awarding of 125 scholarships

to needy students by the Principal, Sr. Gertrude at St. Patrick's Stadium. Many former principals and teachers were given tokens of appreciation. Programs were held throughout the year to celebrate our jubilee to give thanks and praise to the Lord the Good Shepherd for the blessings we have received throughout these 125 years. Our motto being "Strength and sweetness" we move along. In April 1979 a group of past pupils in Colombo started a branch of Good Shepherd Convent Kandy Colombo branch. Our main objective was to organize projects to help our Alma Mater. Over the years, we have organized various fund raisers and helped our school.

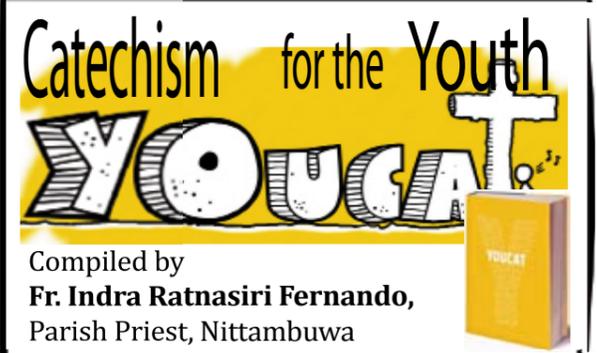
In this our 125th Jubilee Year the Colombo branch organized a sing-a-long in May this year titled "Melodies that linger" which was a resounding success. The fun-filled evening was patronized by past pupils, their families and friends. Part of the funds collected were given

to our Alma Mater to upgrade the school and the balance was given to the Cancer home in Kandy and Ward 24 Mulleriyawa Hospital. The parent body organized a walk on the 20th of September. The Kandy police had commented that this was the most peaceful and orderly walk, done by a Kandy school.

The president of Our parent body Nirosha Amerasinghe and her able committee did a great job in organizing a dance and the walk. The last event to conclude the Jubilee was to donate medical equipment to the infirmary of St. Bridget's Convent, from the parent body.

No doubt we Shepherdians past and present felt proud and happy to be able to participate in these events of our 125th Jubilee the motto of our Alma Mater "Fortiter et Suaviter," Our Motto ever be may all we do, all we pursue proclaim nobility."

Shirani David
President, PPA, Colombo Branch



Compiled by
Fr. Indra Ratnasiri Fernando,
Parish Priest, Nittambuwa

Mary, Mother of God was united with Jesus on earth. She is the queen of the kingdom of God. Yet, we do not worship Mary, God alone is worthy to be worshipped.

I believe in the forgiveness of sins... Jesus not only forgave sin, but also conferred on the Church the mission and the power to free men and women from their sins.

Why do we believe in the resurrection of the dead?

We do because Christ rose from the dead, lives forever and thereby helps us to share in this eternal life (Jn. 11:25b).

In death body and soul are separated. The body decays while the soul goes in search of God Almighty and waits to be reunited with its risen body on the last day.

Eternal life begins with Baptism, it continues through death and will have no end (1 Cor. 13:8).

So called personal judgment and the last judgment. The last judgment occurs on the Last Day, at the end of the world when the Lord comes again. Personal judgment occurs at the moment of death of the individual.

Heaven...

Heaven is the endless moment of love. Nothing can separate us, with the angels and saints we will be able to rejoice forever with the Father.

Purgatory...

Often imagined as a place, is a condition. Someone who dies in God's grace but who still needs purification before s/he sees God face to face...

We are able to help the souls of the faithful departed in purgatory. Through our acts of mortification (fasting/ prayers) and especially through the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, we can obtain grace for the departed.

We say "Amen" to the profession of our faith. Anyone who says "Amen" (yes) assents freely to the work of God in creation and redemption. We are fortunate to this unconditional 'yes,' only because Jesus in His death and Resurrection has proved to be faithful... thus, Jesus himself is the human yes to all God's promises, God's definitive yes to us, too.

Hell...

Hell is the condition of everlasting separation from God, the absolute absence of love... excludes himself from communion with God and the saints..

A Tribute to Professor Dr. Charles Santiapillai

Professor Dr. Charles Santiapillai who took ill suddenly entered eternal glory on October 29, 2014. His death came as a shock to his beloved family, friends and all Patricians.

Dr. Charles lived an exemplary life. He was a devoted husband to Anoma, his wife, an affectionate father to his children, Praveen and Shama, a loving grandfather and an understanding father-in-law. He was respected in his field and at the University of Peradeniya. Many were privileged to have moved with him closely and to have enjoyed his love and wisdom. His life was a blessing to many irrespective of their religion, race or nationality.

Dr. Charles was renowned in the field of Zoology and was recognised internationally for his work on animal protection and conservation, especially elephants in Sri Lanka. He was a recipient of many International Awards.

Dr. Charles was a man of God with a sensitive heart to help the needy and a source of inspiration for many. He was a faithful friend and a friend in need.

Members of St. Patrick's College Alumni Association of the Colombo Branch went to Kandy to pay their last respects to a beloved friend.

The Priest who conducted the final rites at the crematorium of the

cemetery commended Dr. Charles saying that though he did not attend Church, he had lived with God in his heart. He did not believe in exhibiting his faith by attending services regularly but within his conscience he adored God by practicing his faith through good deeds and actions.

Though Dr. Charles married into a respectable Kandyan Buddhist family he never lost touch of the Tamil culture and Christian virtues. His son Praveen daughter Shama and his wife Anoma honoured his last wishes by taking his ashes to Jaffna. The ashes were received first at St. Patrick's College where a service was conducted at the College Chapel, by Rev. Fr. Jero Selva-

nayagam. His ashes were buried inside his parents' grave at St. Mary's Cathedral, Cemetery.

St. Patrick's College, Jaffna has lost an illustrious son and a friend. May the Merciful Lord Bless his soul and welcome him into His Kingdom and grant him Eternal Bliss.

"The wise man delights in the truth

And follows the law of the awakened.

When he sees the good he has done

For great is the harvest in this world

And greater still in the next"

S. B. David
Wellawatte

Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and give us your saving help.

(Ps. 84:8)

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR B
30th Nov. - 7th Dec. 2014

Sun:	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT Is. 63:16-17,19,64:2b-7; 1 Cor.1:3-9; Mk.13:33-37
Mon:	Is. 2:1-5; Mt. 8: 5-11
Tue:	Is. 11:1-10; Lk. 10:21-24
Wed:	Memorial of St. Francis Xavier, Priest, solemnity Patron of Mission Lands Is.25:6-10; Mt.15:29-37
Thu:	Memorial of St. John Damascene, Priest & Doctor Is. 26:1-6; Mt. 7:21,24-27
Fri:	Is. 29:17-24; Mt. 9:27-31
Sat:	Memorial of St. Nicholas Is. 30:19-21,23-26; Mt. 9:35-10:1,6-8
Sun:	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT BIBLE SUNDAY Is. 40:1-5,9-11;2 Pt.3:8-14;Mk.1:1-8



**Spiritual Preparation
(Papal Visit) - Mass
SPIRITUAL PREPARATION:
PAPAL VISIT &
CANONIZATION OF
BL. JOSEPH VAZ
SUNDAY MASS INTENTIONS
(NOVEMBER 30 2014)**

In this season of Advent, that we remember of our Christian responsibility of being consciously aware of our behavior in the presence of others so that they may be helped and inspired to faithfully follow Jesus.

We pray to the Lord!

That we permit the Holy Spirit to make us consciously aware of God's goodness which has no limits and therefore does not discriminate against anyone, and lead us to promote peace and harmony.

We pray to the Lord!

That we Christians realize the importance of prayer as we are engaged in our mission of announcing the Risen Lord Jesus as the Saviour of humanity.

We pray to the Lord!

That we be graced by God the Holy Spirit to emulate Blessed Joseph Vaz in his life of prayer which was the fount of strength for his challenging mission.

We pray to the Lord!

First Sunday in Advent

First Reading:
Is. 63: 16-17, 64:1,3-8.

Here the Prophet Isaiah describes the total surrender of the chosen people to their Lord. Their lives are frustrated as they have not received God's grace. Therefore they plead with the Lord that He would once more restore them to His grace. They seek His mercy, strength, power and protection.

Second Reading:
1Cor.1: 3-9.

St. Paul writes to the Corinthians reminding them that it is God's grace which has restored them in Jesus Christ. God who revealed Himself through Jesus Christ will continue to sustain them till the day of the Lord.

Gospel:Mk. 13: 33-37

The Gospel urges us to be watchful. Like the servant who has been placed in charge by the master, we too ought to be on the watch always as we do not know the day when master will return.

Reflection

Today is the first Sunday of Advent. This season prepares us to celebrate Christmas in a meaningful manner. At Christmas we celebrate the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to our midst in human form, which later led to the salvation of mankind through His death and resurrection. Now we commemorate

this event in order to prepare ourselves for the Second Coming of Christ which will happen in all glory. Therefore during this season of Advent as we prepare for the birth anniversary of the first coming of Jesus Christ to the world, let our thoughts be on the preparation for the Second Coming of Christ in glory as well.

When speaking of Advent, we speak of preparation or watchfulness. Preparation implies some change in our day to day living. As Christians we ought to lead a life that is faithful to God. And our life ought to be a total witness to the kingdom values. But because of trials and temptations we fail to keep up to these expectations. We ought to be watchful lest we be caught unawares. If a person is watchful then he will be ready. In the Gospel context he will be ready to welcome the master when he returns. This is what we should be doing. In our day to day living we ought to be watchful and ready to meet the Lord when He comes the second time in all His glory.

In the First Reading the prophet is pleading on behalf of his people that God would restore among them the grace they had lost. For without God's grace they feel a great void. Therefore they



make a total surrender to the Lord. In their sheer frustration and hopelessness they began to recognize the need for God's grace. Therefore it is a total come back on the part of the chosen people. This is a reminder that we too should return to the Lord.

In the Second Reading St Paul writes to the Corinthians to make them realize the grace of God which was bestowed on them through Jesus Christ Our Lord. This is done, so that out of respect, they will remain faithful to God. It was necessary that they remain faithful to God until the Second Coming of Christ. Therefore St. Paul did not want the Corinthians to lose their heads before the Second Coming of Christ.

In the Gospel it is a matter of keeping watch. Like the servant who keeps watch until the master returns. We ought to keep watch for the Lord. When the servant keeps watch till his master returns, then he is said to be ready. In the same manner if we keep

watch then we too will be ready and we would never be caught unawares.

Aid Story

A steamer was sinking after an accident five miles off the American coast. Everyone made desperate efforts to save their lives. A Bishop and a Mexican youth were left on the ship's deck. The Bishop had been the first to ask to take a seat in the life boat but, forgetting about himself, he preferred that the others be saved. There was only one more life preserver left, and the bishop offered it to the Mexican saying; "Take it and save your body and soul because I am already prepared for judgment"

Aid Story2

A story comes to us from Eastern mysticism: A monk asked, "Abbot, what has God's wisdom taught you? Did you become divine?" "Not at all." "Did you become a saint?" "No, as you clearly can see." "What then, O Abbot?" "I became awake!"

Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos

"Be watchful! Be alert!" - (Mark 13,33-37)

1. What is the narrative context of Mark 13?

Jesus predicts the destruction of the reconstructed Temple, begun under Herod the Great around 20 BC. This provokes Peter, Andrew, James and John to raise questions in private about the time and the sign "when all these things are about to come to an end" (13,4). Then Jesus, now seated on the Mount of Olives, responds with this Eschatological Discourse.

2. What is the historical context of Mark 13?

Mark is written shortly before or after 70 AD in Rome. It is a time of persecution of the Christians. This Discourse brings hope to them cooling down their fears, inculcating patient endurance and exhorting fidelity. Persecution and suffering are necessary. At the climax of human history, Jesus will come in power and

glory. He will come as a liberator to save His faithful people.

3. What does Mark the Evangelist want to say through this Eschatological Discourse of Jesus?

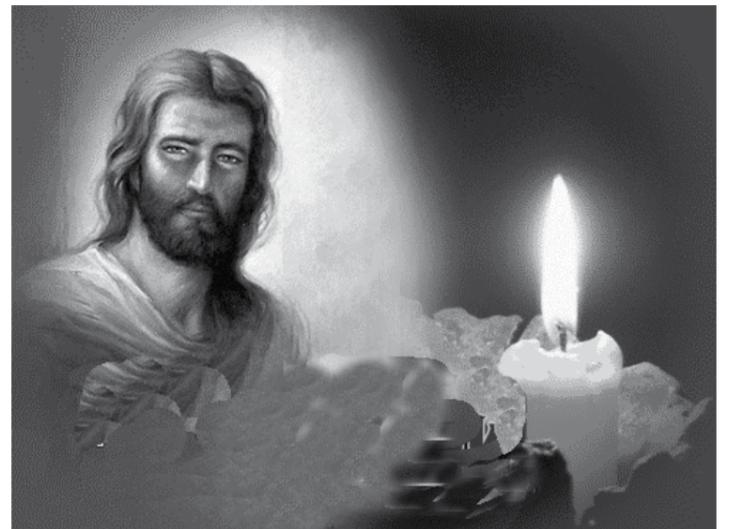
i. Jesus as the liberating Son of Man will definitely visit humanity. God the Father and Potter will visit His children and clay: "Yet, O LORD, you are our father; we are the clay and you the potter: we are all the work of your hands" (Isaiah 64,7).

ii. The Parable of the Traveler ("like a man travelling abroad") exhorts us to live in confidence, patient, endurance and preparedness for the Parousia, "May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping." We, as slaves and doorkeeper, need to live a responsible life that suits to welcome the Lord. The doorkeeper has to keep watch at the entrance, while the slaves have to use the authority

given and complete the work assigned to them. The future is already included in the present and hence the present life has to be lived seriously for a glorious future. What is there in my daily life that shows that I am looking forward to Jesus' coming?

iii. Only the Father knows the precise time of the parousia. The Lord can come at any time - "whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning" (the four watches of the night used by Romans in calculating time). Hence it is necessary to be constantly vigilant. St. Augustine commented: "It is by design that Jesus hid the last day from us so that we would be on the lookout for him every day of our lives." If He comes ten minutes from now, how ready will I be?

iv. Especially those who suffer for the Gospel and the desperate in their suffering are encouraged and lifted up by this



promise of the Lord's coming back and are enlightened by its consoling light. The present sufferings yield to final victory. The Christians suffering in Jesus' name will definitely be saved. A Sri Lankan, stricken with religious suppression, would find meaning and strength on his faith odyssey of living the Gospel and would surely be revitalized with this Discourse.

Thus this Discourse of the Lord has special significance not only to the early Christian communities of the first century AD (like those of Mark, John and Revelation under religious persecution of Rome), but to today's believing community as well.

Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi

'Prayer Power House'

A DIAMOND JUBILEE INVITATION TO SOLIDARITY IN PRIESTLY FORMATION

We invite you to send us your "special intentions" for which we assure you of our prayers before the Eucharistic Lord.



For 121 years, the Major Seminary at Ampitiya (61 years as Papal Seminary and 60 years as National Seminary), has been a house of formation for students aspiring to be priests, an oasis of spirituality for both Diocesan and Religious students. The Seminary has sent out a few thousands of missionaries to the vineyard of the Lord in the Indian subcontinent and particularly into all corners of Sri Lanka. She continues to do so.



With a resident priest-student population of over 170 every year, we above all form a strong Christian believing community. Prayer, penance and fasting, form a part of our formation. As a community forming itself to be the close collaborators in building God's Reign, in this Diamond Jubilee Year, we feel the need to be united with the faithful, from whom we hail and to whom we would be sent to serve.

Among various ways of being so, on our part,

being a "prayer power house" for the people, we believe, is also a significant way of beginning to serve them. Our community which gathers together morning and evening in prayer will continue to pray for the intentions of the people and benefactors in our dioceses and parishes.

So, we invite you to send us your "special intentions" for which we assure you of our prayers before the Eucharistic Lord.

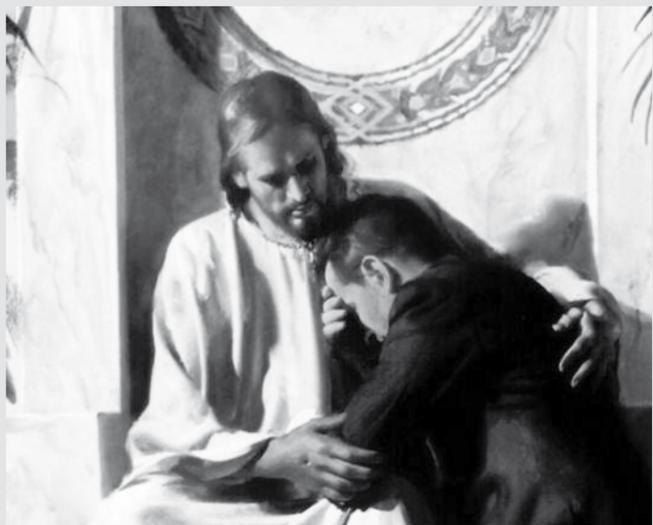
We invite you to pray for us too: So that we, your own sons, will persevere to become good shepherds who will "hold the people in their hearts."

If you wish you can become a "Friend of the National Seminary, Ampitiya" continue to be in touch and become "a friend indeed" of a community that depends on the spiritual and material generosity of the people of goodwill.

**Friends of the National Seminary
C/O Fr. Rector,
National Seminary, Ampitiya,
Sri Lanka.**

**Email: nsakandy@sltnet.lk
Tel. & Fax: 081-2219874**

A Love - paid in full



A young man was getting ready for his graduation day at his College. For many months he had admired a beautiful sports car in a dealer's showroom, and knowing his father could well afford it, he told him that was all he wanted.

As Graduation Day approached, the young man awaited signs that his father had purchased the car. Finally, on the morning of his graduation his father called him into his private study. His father told him how proud he was to have such a fine son and told him how much he loved him. He handed his son

a beautifully wrapped gift box. Curious, but somewhat disappointed the young man opened the box and found a lovely, leather-bound Bible.

Angrily, he raised his voice at his father and said, "With all your money you give me only a Bible?" and stormed out of the house, leaving the book.

He never contacted his father again for a long long time. Many years passed and the young man was very successful in business. He had a beautiful home and wonderful family, but realized his father was very old and thought perhaps he

should go to him. He had not seen him since that graduation day. Before he could make arrangements, he received a telegram telling him his father had passed away, and willed all of his possessions to his son. He needed to come home immediately and take care of things. When he arrived at his father's house, a sudden sadness and regret filled his heart. He began to search his father's important papers and saw the still new Bible, just as he had left it years ago. With tears, he opened the Bible and began to turn the pages. As he read the words, a car key dropped from an envelope taped behind the Bible. It had a tag with the dealer's name, the same dealer who had the sports car he had desired. On the tag was the date of his graduation and the words..

PAID IN FULL.

THIS IS CALLED LOVE

How many times do we miss GOD's blessing because they are not packaged as we expected?

*Courtesy: St. John Berchman's
Confraternity of Altar servers*



A Crown for Mary

Let's fashion a crown for Mary,
Using all the bright colours of May,
We'll start with a halo of pure gold,
like sunlight caught at the break of day,

We'll take emerald from the green grass
and from the leaves of the maple tree.
Pale blue topaz we'll pluck from the sky,
and deep sapphire we'll fish from the sea.

We'll pick the best rose from our garden
with a blossom of dark, ruby red
to remind her of her Son's great love
and the blood that He willingly shed.

With a handful of bright twinning stars
that we'll gather some black velvet night,
we'll sprinkle her crown with diamonds
to sparkle for Mary's pure delight.

Now Mary's crown is completed,
but our prayer has barely begun.
We'll pray each day to Our Mother dear,
"Thank you, Mary, for Jesus, your Son"

English with Fun and Entertainment

Dear Readers,

In our 54th lesson we learnt the Scene 11 of the burglary, did a crossword, read an exciting text on 'Why go to church and learnt parenthesis and some idioms.

In today's lesson let's do a crossword and read an exciting story.

Comments made by our readers are very encouraging. Thanks for your efforts to make 'English with Fun and Entertainment' an interactive process.

God Bless You!

NJ

Warm Up - Crossword -2

1		2		3	4	5			6
	XX		XX	2			XX	XX	
	XX	XX	X	XX	V	XX	3	8	
XX	4			9			XX	5	
XX	XX	XX	XX	6		XX	XX	XX	
7								XX	
	XX	XX	XX	XX		XX	XX	XX	
8	10	11	12	I		13		XX	
9				XX	10				
	XX	11		XX	12				

ACROSS

- 1. God's will
- 2. Can catch fish with this.
- 3. A medical test
- 4. A mark
- 5. A preposition
- 6. A preposition
- 7. a receptacle to hold the Eucharist.
- 8. His eminence MalcolmRanjith
- 9. the joint between the thigh and the lower leg .
- 10. quantity that expresses the extent
- 11. A Primary auxiliary verb
- 12. Superlative of little

DOWN

- 1. A friend
- 2. Extra hours
- 3. A preposition'
- 4. Prayerful
- 5. Latin word for and
- 6. Gospeller
- 7. They crow
- 8. Negative
- 9. a place for drinks
- 10. article
- 11. A colour
- 12. Latin word for God
- 13. form of 'copula 'be'

Activity 1 - Read the story and learn the delicate shades of meanings of words given

Seminary - school, college academy



- vacationing** - holidaying, relaxing staying
- taking** - having, eating, consuming
- restaurant** - eatery, cafeteria, café
- hoping** - expecting, anticipating, wanting
- quiet** - silent, still, calm, tranquil
- noticed** - observed, noted, saw

We never know what one kind word can do for another person. God Bless.

A seminary professor was vacationing with his wife in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. One morning, they were taking breakfast at a little restaurant, hoping to enjoy a quiet, family meal. While they were waiting for their food, they noticed a distinguished looking, white-haired man moving from table to table, visiting with the guests. The professor leaned over and whispered to his wife, 'I hope he doesn't come over here.' But sure enough, the man did come over to their table.

'Where are you folks from?' he asked in a friendly voice. 'Oklahoma,' they answered. 'Great to have you here in Tennessee,' the stranger said... 'What do you do for a living?' 'I teach at a seminary,' he replied. 'Oh, so you teach preachers how to preach, do you? Well, I've got a really great story for you.' And with that, the gentleman pulled up a chair and sat down at the table with the couple. The professor groaned and thought to himself, 'Great...'

- distinguished**- illustrious, eminent, great
- guests** - visitors, callers, lodgers,
- whispered** - muttered, mumbled
- folks** - people, guys, fellows
- friendly**- welcoming, approachable
- stranger**- foreigner, outsider guest
- preachers** - ministers, pastors, parsons
- groaned** - grumbled, squeaked, groused
- unwed** - unmarried, single
- recess**- break, vacation, rest
- benediction** - approval, sanction, blessing
- deathly** - deadly, stony, ghastly
- sensed** - detected, knew, identified
- discernment**- judgment, acumen, sensitivity
- resemblance**- similarity, likeness,
- inheritance**- legacy, birthright, bequest
- changed** - transformed, rehabilitated, new
- responded**- replied, answered, retorted
- probably**- perhaps, maybe, possibly
- stunned**- shocked, astounded, dazed
- grinned**- smiled, beamed, smirked
- reminder**- cue, prompt, recap
- withers**- weakens, declines, fades
- stands**- stances, postures, poses
- forever** - incessantly, persistently,
- repeatedly**- continually, endlessly, constantly, always , ever

Just what I need.... Another preacher story!' The man started, 'See that mountain over there? (Pointing out the restaurant window). Not far from the base of that mountain, there was a boy born to an unwed mother. He had a hard time growing up, because every place he went, he was always asked the same question, 'Hey boy, who's your daddy?' Whether he was at school, in the grocery store or drug store, people would ask the same question, 'Who's your daddy?'

He would hide at recess and lunch time from other students.. He would avoid going in to stores because that question hurt him so bad. 'When he was about 12 years old, a new preacher came to his church. He would always go in late and slip out early to avoid hearing the question on, 'Who's your daddy?'

But one day, the new preacher said the benediction so fast that he caught the boy before he got out of the back door as usual.

The new preacher, not knowing anything about him, put his hand on his shoulder and asked him, 'Son, who's Your daddy?' The whole church got deathly quiet. He could feel every eye in the church was looking at him. Now everyone would finally know the answer to the question, 'Who's your daddy?'

This new preacher, though, sensed the situation around him and using discernment that only the Holy Spirit could give, said the following to that scared little boy.. 'Wait a minute! I know who you are! I see the family resemblance now; You are a child of God.' With that he patted the boy on his shoulder and said, 'Boy, you've got a great inheritance.. Go and claim it.'

'With that, the boy smiled for the first time in a long time and walked out the door a changed person. He was never the same again. Whenever anybody asked him, 'Who's your Daddy?' he'd just tell them, 'I'm a Child of God..'' The distinguished gentleman got up from the table and said, 'Isn't that a great story?'

The professor responded that it really was a great story! As the man turned to leave, he said, 'You know, if that new preacher hadn't told me that I was one of God's children, I probably never would have amounted to anything!' And he walked away..

The seminary professor and his wife were stunned. He called the waitress over and asked her, 'Do you know who that man was -- the one who just left that was sitting at our table?'

The waitress grinned and said, 'Of course. Everybody here knows him. That's Ben Hooper. He's governor of Tennessee!'

Someone in your life today needs a reminder that they're one of God's Children!

'The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of God stands forever.' ~Isaiah 'You are one of God's Children - Have a great day!'

Answers:
Across (1) providence (2) net (3)DNA (4) symbol (5) on (6) at (7) ciborium (8) Cardinal (9) knee (10) areas (11) do (12) least
Down : (1) pal (2) OT (3) in (4)devotional (5)et (6)evangelist (7) cocks (8)No (9) bar (10) an. (11)red (12)deo (13) are

Contact us on: 071 8004580
E-mail: noeljayamanne@yahoo.com



Compiled by Noel Jayamanne

Every Spiritual Blessing in the Heavens



Pope John Paul II, now a saint, had said that, our essential commitment in life is to grow spiritually in the climate of the Holy Eucharist.

The Lord calls us today for communal worship. Then Jesus stays with us in the Blessed Sacrament where he is calling us to spend some quiet time in His presence in order to deepen our union and develop our personal relationship with Him. Pope Saint John Paul II said: "Our religion is a religion of dwelling in the Heart of God."

"Jesus waits for you in this Sacrament of His love where everyone is wel-

come and to everyone Jesus repeats His timeless appeal: "Could you not watch just one hour with me?" (Mt. 26:40), for the Eucharist is the gift of Jesus' Heart.

Mother Theresa of Calcutta said; "Each moment that you spend with Jesus will deepen your union with Him and make your soul everlastingly more glorious and beautiful in Heaven and will help bring about an everlasting peace on earth."

"Perpetual adoration," she said, "will save the whole world."

"The reason why the hearts of men have grown cold and why the world

is covered with darkness is because adoration has decreased" said Pope John XXII.

In the Old Testament, God instructed the people to look upon a bronze serpent in order to be healed. Similarly today, the Heavenly Father appeals to us to look upon His beloved Son in the Blessed Sacrament in order that the whole world may be healed.

Indeed this is the will of the Heavenly Father "Jesus said that everyone who look upon the son and believe in him..." (John 6:40)

Pope John Paul II said, "The Church and the world have a great need for Eucharistic Adoration. Those who adore will change the world and bring about an everlasting peace to all mankind."

The truth of this statement is seen in a vision God gave to Sr. Faustina canonized by Pope Saint John Paul II. In this vision every hour of prayer made in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament so touches the heart of Jesus, the Light of the world, that divine rays of Love and Mercy go out from His Heart to the whole world and touch the heart of every man, woman and child on the face of the earth.

He has got the whole world in

His hand. Every Holy Hour we make either in the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament or not, will bring the whole world to His Heart.

For this reason Saint Pope John Paul II exclaims; "Anyone, anyone who goes before the Saviour in a Holy Hour of prayer draws the whole world closer to Christ and lifts the world and every body in the world upto God the Father for His blessings!!"

"If I be lifted up, I will draw all men to myself" (John 12:32)

On the Cross Jesus was lifted up in hatred. Those willing to make this sacrifice, lift Him up in love and bring down God's mercy upon the whole world, so that instead of going to hell, the souls of those who know not Him and are far from Him go to heaven to be with God for all eternity.

Saving a soul is the greatest thing we can do. Therefore let us be generous with our time in going to meet Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Thus we will receive every spiritual blessing in the heavens.

*By Deven Peiris.
St. Joseph's Seminary, Kandy*

RECTOR'S DAY



You being a Good Shepherd of Jesus Christ has come to our College to guide us on the correct path of life. You mean a lot to us. Your efforts to develop the school is highly appreciated. You are strict when it comes to discipline, but you are kind and loving to us. You are courageous and a good leader for us to follow. We love you Rector and we know how much you love us. Your dream is to lead us to become good citizens in the future. We will work towards fulfilling your dreams. May the Good Lord shower His blessing on you with good health and happiness.

May God Bless you!

*Shenal Fernando
8E, St. Peter's College, Colombo*

MATRIMONIAL



Bridegroom

Sri Lankan Family living in the US (USA Citizens), seek a suitable partner for their youngest son, 27 years, 5' 5" and slim, graduated from a leading university in the US. Looking for a Roman Catholic, educated partner, willing to migrate. E-mail: with details and family picture to proposalnp@gmail.com

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