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God, give us Saints a time like this demands



*We need saints in veil and cassock.
We need saints who wear jeans and sneakers, saree and sarong.
We need saints with bone and marrow.
We need saints, who put God in first place and communicate with God every day.
We need saints in the here and now, with a spirituality visible to all, somehow.
We need saints committed to the poor and the marginalized
We need saints who can read the signs of the times.
We need saints who live in the world, who sanctify and are sanctified by the world.
We need saints who walk in the highways and byways of society
We need saints who have table-fellowship with the high and the low
We need saints who passionately love the Eucharist
We need saints who allow themselves to be broken so that others could be made.
We need saints, strong in their beliefs, yet humble to manifest.
We need saints who are social, open, normal, friendly, happy and who are good companions.
In other words;
We need saints who are in the world, in touch with the world but not of the world.*

Sanctity is beautiful! It is a beautiful way: Pope Francis



Transport Arrangements - Pope's Visit

Contact details of SLTB Officers for transport arrangements for the faithful attending the celebration at Galle Face Green for the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to Sri Lanka

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10.	Mr K.S. Sujeewa De Silva	Uva Region	Chief Regional Manager	077-1057700
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12.	Mr A.R.F. Ameen	Eastern Region	Chief Regional Manager	077-1058200
13.	Mr S. Asker	Northern Region	Chief Regional Manager	077-1058100

Special Train Arrangements for His Holiness Pope Francis' Visit - 2015							
Date	Starting From	Departure	Destination	Arrival			
2015-01-13	Badulla	17.00	Slave Island	03.21			
	Jaffna	20.00	Slave Island	04.47			
2015-01-14	Kandy	00.00	Slave Island	03.38			
	Kandy	01.00	Slave Island	04.09			
	Puttalam	01.00	Slave Island	04.40			
	Chilaw	01.30	Slave Island	04.20			
	Kurunegala	03.50	Slave Island	05.55			
	Avissawella	02.00	Slave Island	04.30			
	Galle	02.00	Slave Island	04.20			
	Matara	01.15	Slave Island	04.35			
	Aluthgama	02.30	Slave Island	04.05			
	Date	Starting From	Departure	Arrival	Departure	Destination	Arrival
2015-01-14	Colombo Fort	14.00			Badulla	00.12	
	Colombo Fort	14.05			Puttalam	17.00	
	Colombo Fort	14.15			Kandy	17.40	
	Maradana	14.25	Slave Island	14.35	14.40	Matara	18.10
	Colombo Fort	14.30			Jaffna	23.32	
	Colombo Fort	14.40			Chilaw	17.43	
	Colombo Fort	14.45			Kandy	17.56	
	Colombo Fort	14.45			Avissawella	16.47	
	Maradana	14.45	Slave Island	14.58	15.00	Galle	17.25
	Colombo Fort	15.00			Kurunegala	17.02	
	Maradana	15.55	Slave Island	16.05	16.10	Alutgama	17.46

His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva - Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo

God walks in history with us and adjusts its course

VATICAN RADIO - "God's will has been to save us in history" the Pope has said. "Our Salvation is not sterile, as in a laboratory. No! It's history. He has walked through history with his people. Therefore - he said - there is no salvation without history. And to get to the point: history goes back a long time."

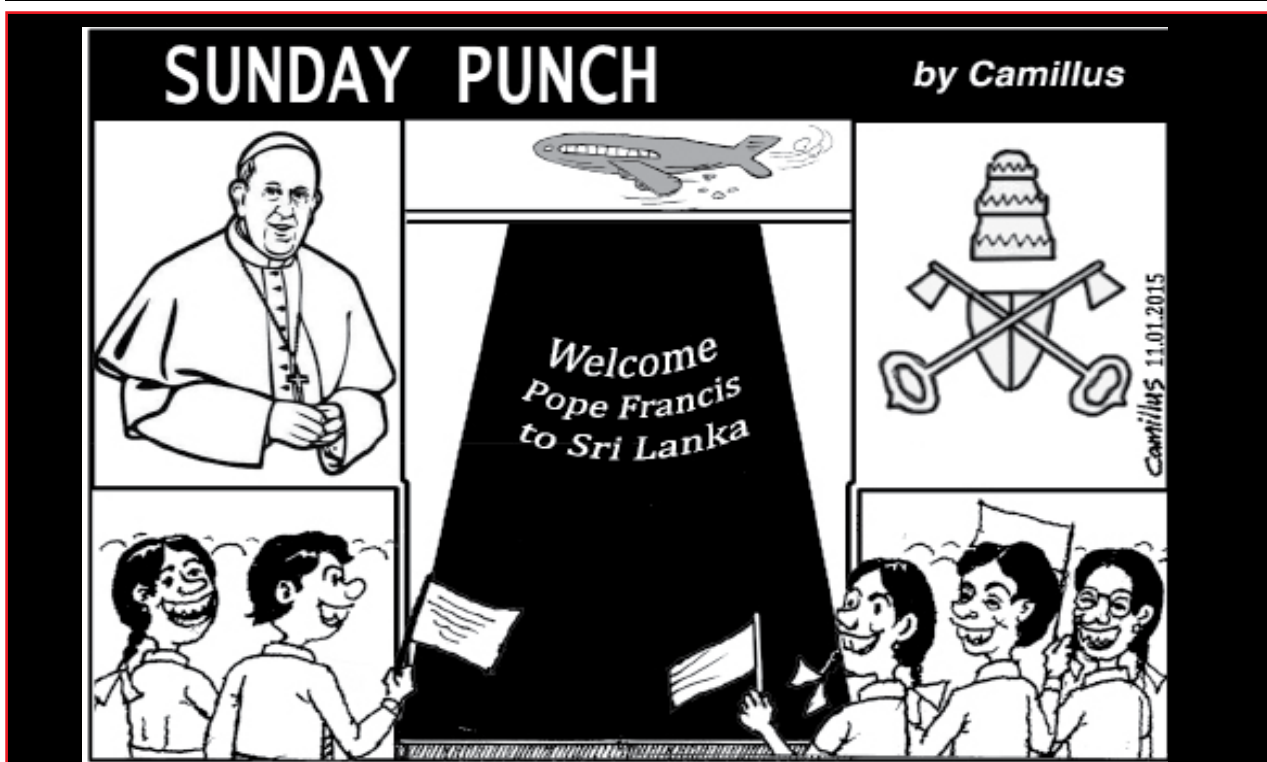
"And so, step by step, history is made. God makes history, we make history; and when we fail, God makes adjustments and sets history back on course, walking with us all the time. If this is not clear to us, we will never understand Christmas! We will never understand the Incarnation of the Word! Never! It's a story that goes forward in time. 'Father, is history over with the story of Christmas?' 'No! The Lord continues to save us in history. And he walks with His people.'"

"In this story," Pope Francis continued, "there are those chosen by God, those people that He chooses to help his people to move forward, like Abraham, Moses, Elijah. For them there are some bad times, dark moments, awkward moments, bothersome moments. Perhaps they are people who just want to live peacefully, but the Lord inconveniences them. The Lord inconveniences us to make history! So often he puts us on roads that we don't want to walk. So much so that Moses and Elijah, at a certain point, would rather die, but then they trust in the Lord."

"To make history with His people," the Pope said, "for God means to walk and to put His chosen ones to test." In the end He saves them:

"Let us always remember, with confidence, even in the worst moments, even in times of illness, when we realise we have to ask for the Last Rites because there is no way out, to say: 'Lord, history did not start with me and will not end with me! You go ahead, I am willing to come with you'. And to put ourselves in the hands of the Lord. "What then do those who are chosen by God teach us?"

"That God walks with us, that God makes history, that God puts us to the test and that God saves us in the worst moments, because He is our Father. And according to Paul He is our daddy. May the Lord help us to understand this mystery of Him walking with His people in history, of testing His elected ones, as well as the greatness of their hearts as they take upon themselves the pains, the problems, even the blame for our sins - Let us walk forward with Jesus across history."





Plans for Pope's Visit finalised

The Catholic Church announced last Tuesday that the Visit of Pope Francis was confirmed and finalised, despite the possibility of any post-election unrest. Leaders of several planning committees for the Pope's Visit scheduled from January 13 to 15, told a Media Conference held at the Auditorium of Caritas Sri Lanka-SEDEC that all arrangements had been finalised especially for the main event at Galle Face Green on January 14, for the canonization of Sri Lanka's first Saint, the Blessed Joseph Vaz and the Pope's visit to the Hallowed Shrine of Madhu.

They appeal to all Catholics and others to come early to the Galle Face Green for the historic Holy Mass on January 14, anytime after 12.00 noon on January 13. All facilities

Special Stamps and Coin

Two special stamps with First Day covers and a 500 rupee, silver coin will be issued to mark the Pope's Visit. This ceremony will take place at Temple Trees.

for the provision of food, beverages and water have been made while hundreds of mobile toilets have also been constructed.

Some 800 media personnel from Sri Lanka and other countries are expected to cover the Pope's Visit. More than half a million people are expected to attend the Galle Face Green Holy Mass, while 400,000 are likely to be present at the Madhu ceremony. On the stage for the Holy Mass at Galle Face Green about 1200 bishops and priests from Sri Lanka and several other countries especially

Goa in India are expected to take part in the Mass.

For emergency medical attention ambulances and doctors will be available at Galle Face Green and along the Katunayake - Colombo Road.

The official music and the official hymn for the Pope's Visit and the canonization of the Blessed Joseph Vaz were released at the Media Conference.

Very Rev. Fr. Cyril Gamini Fernando, Director Media Secretariat for the Papal Visit Sri Lanka, 2015 appealed to Catholics and all people to cast their votes at the Presi-



dential Election scheduled for January 8 and remain peaceful after that so that there will be a calm environment for the Papal Visit. He expressed confidence with faith and hope that the Pope's Visit could bring peace and unity to Sri Lanka.

When the Pope arrives on January 13 he will be greeted by the Government and Church leaders along with thou-

sands of others including children. For the State drive from Katunayake International Airport to the Archbishop's House at Borella, the whole highway will be decorated by the Government and people of 36 parishes along the way. Each parish will decorate a stretch of half a kilometer.

The planning committee also appealed that for security reasons

there should be no lighting of crackers or other fireworks.

Rev. Fr. Priyantha Silva, Head of the Sub Committee for Altar Structure and Decorations, Papal Visit Sri Lanka, 2015 said, the stage was designed and constructed by local craftsmen according to the cultural tradition of the last Kandyan King because the Blessed Joseph Vaz was buried in Kandy.

PRESS RELEASE

Holy Father's visit to Sri Lanka is definite. Do not believe in various false reports and statements

Certain social media had reported recently that the Holy See had decided to cancel the visit of Pope Francis to Sri Lanka scheduled from Jan. January 13 - 15, 2015. Certain individuals and groups had circulated such reports throughout the world even by e-mail. Reports have reached us that certain politicians have made statements at the political meetings held these days prior to the oncoming Presidential Elections, that would instill doubts and misgivings in the minds of people with regard to the visit of the Holy Father to Sri Lanka.

We categorically and repeatedly emphasize that such reports are absolutely false, groundless and malicious.

The objective of the individuals and groups who are engaged in publicising such reports is to thwart and diminish the enthusiasm of our people about this Papal visit and the canonization of Blessed Fr. Joseph Vaz which all Sri Lankans, including the Sri Lankan Catholics, are awaiting with much anticipation.

In this regard, we insist repeatedly that the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Sri Lanka and the Information and Media Office on the Papal Visit, appointed by that conference, reserve the exclusive right to issue official

statements on the occasion of this visit of the Holy Father. No other person is authorized to issue such statements or announce decisions in this connection. Therefore, we earnestly request the Catholics and all other people that they should not be misled into believing in such false and malicious reports made by others through any media.

We inform our people once more that the two main presidential candidates have met the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Sri Lanka and pledged their fullest co-operation for the Papal visit with no obstacle whatsoever and as planned, no matter what the result of the elections would be. We are confident that the two candidates will keep their promise. Therefore, we request our people not to believe in various false reports and statements circulated by certain people to achieve their ulterior motives and selfish objectives.

We once again emphasize that the Holy Father will be definitely visiting Sri Lanka from January 13 - 15, 2015 and all arrangements in this connection are being made properly and unhampered.

Very Rev. Fr. Cyril Gamini Fernando
Director
Information and Media Secretariat,
Pope's Visit 2015

Announcements regarding the Holy Eucharist for the Canonization of Blessed Joseph Vaz presided over by His Holiness Pope Francis on January 14, 2015 at the Galle Face Green.

1. The only public Mass celebrated by His Holiness Pope Francis during his pastoral visit to Sri Lanka will be held on the 14th January 2015 at the Galle Face Green at 8.30 a.m. during which the Canonization of Blessed Joseph Vaz will take place. Participation in this Eucharistic celebration therefore should be considered a blessing and an obligation. We invite all Catholics to personally participate in this memorable and grace-filled event.
2. You may enter into the Galle Face Green premises from 5 p.m. on the 13th January. All participants will be security checked and will be admitted only through the security gates at both ends of the Galle Face Green. Since this process is time consuming we encourage you to come as early as possible.
3. You will be informed about the train and bus time tables through the TV and radio channels and the newspapers.
4. You will also be informed about the parking lots assigned for buses and private vehicles coming from different directions.
5. We earnestly request you to be dressed decently for this sacred liturgical celebration.
6. You may bring your snacks and soft drinks though food and beverages stalls are available for purchasing of snacks and soft drinks within the premises. Sufficient wash rooms facilities are also made available.
7. Kindly participate in the Mass fervently and actively, praying audibly and singing along with the choir.
8. As the Holy Father declares Blessed Joseph Vaz a saint we will burst into a round of applause. This will be followed and accompanied by the ringing of bells and the ceremonial beating of the drums. This moment is indicated in your hymn books.
9. No one is allowed to get on to the altar platform before or after the Mass.
10. We offer the monetary collection done in all churches of Sri Lanka for the Charity Fund of the Pope and a spiritual bouquet prepared for him during the offertory procession.
11. The Cross that will be brought in procession after declaring Blessed Joseph Vaz a saint is the very Cross used by the saint during his life time here in Sri Lanka to bless the people. At present it is at the Shrine at Maha Galgamuwa in the Kurunegala diocese.
12. You may hold aloft any religious articles for blessing by the Holy Father during the final blessing.
13. Kindly note that you can leave the Galle Face Green premises only after the Pope leaves the premises.
14. Altar servers who have come with their parents and guardians can meet them in front of the VIP tent after the Mass.

Rev. Fr Cecil Joy Perera
MC for Papal Liturgies

'Vicar of Christ'

An art exhibition by Deshabandu Saman Hettiarachchi, titled, 'Vicar of Christ' to mark the arrival of His Holiness Pope Francis to Sri Lanka will be held at the Colombo Art Gallery from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. from January 12 to 15.

The exhibition connected with the lives of Jesus Christ and Pope Francis is organised by Indunil Tharanga of Little Hand Foundation and coordinated by Sam Avoon. All are welcome.



January 11, 2015

Hail Your Holiness

We whole-heartedly and joyfully join the Church, the government and millions of Sri Lankans in saying *Ayubowan*, *Vannakkam* and *Assalaam Alaikum* to Pope Francis who has emerged as one of the world's most loved, most powerful and most respected servant leaders in modern times.

When Pope John XXIII, recently canonized as a saint, opened the historic Second Vatican Council 50 years ago, he began with a fervent prayer to the Holy Spirit, "Renew Your wonders in our time, as though for a new Pentecost." Hundreds of millions of Christians believe that this prayer is being fulfilled today by the Holy Spirit, through Pope Francis.

Signs of this were seen when Pope Francis was elected in March 2013 and came to the window of the Sistine Chapel, while tens of thousands in St Peter's Square waited for his first traditional blessing. Instead, Pope Francis asked the people to bless and pray for him. There began a papacy where he would set an example not only to Christians but to the whole world through a simple and humble lifestyle. Like his Lord and Master Jesus, who became poor to unite with the poor, Pope Francis also did that by moving from the Papal Palace to a room in a

Vatican guesthouse. Like Jesus, the Pope practises what he preaches and preaches only what he practises.

Important messages which hit world headlines have outlined Pope Francis' vision of building a Church of the poorest of the poor. One of the main goals will be world poverty alleviation through social justice and a more equitable distribution of wealth and resources. Pope Francis has severely criticised the globalised capitalist market economic system and pledged that the Catholic Church would give leadership to the world in dismantling the system which is making the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Last Sunday the Pope nominated 15 new members to the College of Cardinals, with the majority hailing from small, developing countries such as Cape Verde, Myanmar and Tonga.

The choices reflect his efforts to rebalance a College of Cardinals toward the developing world and make the Church oriented more towards the poor Third World than the rich West.

Pope Francis has also pledged he and the Church would get actively and effectively involved in world conflict resolution through peaceful dialogue. His latest moves towards this goal were secret talks held in the Vatican and elsewhere between top diplomats of the United States and Cuba. To mark the Pope's birthday on December 17, US President Barack Obama and Cuba's President Raul Castro, announced that the two countries were re-establishing diplomatic relations more than 50 years after they were broken in the aftermath of the infamous Bay of Pigs invasion in 1963.

Mr. Obama said he and the Cuban leader hoped to meet soon and the Pope's initiative would bring multitudes of benefits to millions of people in Cuba and the US.

Another major goal of Pope Francis is for the

Church and other world leaders to get actively involved in the battle against climate change, which many analysts see as a catastrophe which could lead to self destruction of the whole world if immediate counter measures are not taken. Inspired by the Pope's moves, the US and China - the world's two biggest polluters - signed a historic agreement last November to limit carbon dioxide emission. The Pope is also taking measures to ensure healthcare, education and equal job opportunities for all.

In his Christmas message Pope Francis focused on the song of the angels who appeared to the shepherds in Bethlehem on the night when Jesus was born. "It is a song which unites heaven and earth, giving praise and glory to heaven and the promise of peace to earth and all its people," he said.

"Above all else," the Pope said, Christmas calls us "to give glory to God, for He is good, He is faithful, He is merciful." He prayed that all people would come to know "the true face of God the Father, who has given us Jesus." He encouraged everyone to glorify God by spending their lives "for love of Him and of all our brothers and sisters."

The highlight of the Pope's visit to Sri Lanka will be a Holy Mass on January 14, to mark the canonization of the Blessed Joseph Vaz, the first Saint of Sri Lanka.

The missionary work of the Blessed Joseph Vaz was not colonial, not helped, authorised or associated with colonial conquest. He gained the protection of the Buddhist King of Kandy. He used 'inculturation' as a missionary method. He founded a Catholic para-liturgical and literature using the two languages and cultures of Sri Lanka, Sinhala and Tamil.

Holy Father, Force and Terror will not prevail, but Truth and Love will reign. St Joseph Vaz, Pray for Sri Lanka.

Francis: The People's Pope

By Rev. Fr. Daniel Icatlo, JCD

Avocation is a divine dialogue in which God always makes the first move. He calls and man responds. The story of the vocation of Pope Francis was no different from the rest of those who were called by God.

Astonishing encounter

It was September 21, 1953. The seventeen-year-old Jorge Bergoglio was getting ready to go out with his friends for Students' Day. But as he passed by the Buenos Aires Church of San Jose de Flores, he felt a strong urge to enter the church. He could not explain why but he was drawn to go inside and found himself talking with a priest he had never met before. The priest conveyed such a great sense of spirituality that he decided to confess to him. It turned out that priest was sick with leukemia and died a year after that encounter.

What seemed like an ordinary confession came to an unexpected encounter with God. His faith was so stirred beyond comprehension. Suddenly, an indescribable inkling welled up within him. Instead of going out with his friends he went back home firmly convinced God was calling him and he had to become a priest.

He went on to finish his schooling and continued to work at the nutrition analysis laboratory, not confiding his decision to anyone. Even though he was certain of his religious vocation, he spent the following years in a crisis of maturity that led him to spend time in solitude.

When he revealed his resolve to become a priest his mother was not pleased. He suffered a grave lung illness.

But through it all, the will of God prevailed.

The rest is history.

Total self-giving to others

Personality wise, Fr. Bergoglio did not appear like he would reach the heights of leadership in the Church of Argentina, much less of the whole Christendom. "Anyone who has seen him knows he is not a glamorous, TV-friendly figure. Nor is he a grandiloquent speaker of dramatic gestures; rather, he is soft-spoken, with profound content (Rubin & Ambrogetti, *El Jesuita*)."

He kept as a low key figure and definitely not a career priest climbing up the ecclesiastical ladder. But his appointment as Auxiliary Bishop of Buenos Aires in 1992, when he was 55-years-old, catapulted him into the limelight.

At that time, he served as confessor in the residence of the Church of the Society of Jesus in Cordoba, where he had been stationed for about two years. When Cardinal Quarracino's health began to deteriorate, St. John Paul II named him as an assistant archbishop, or coadjutor archbishop, with the right to succession. When Quarracino died in 1998, Bergoglio became the first Jesuit to head the Buenos Aires Curia (Ibid.).

The new Archbishop of Buenos Aires won the hearts of the clergy and the faithful. He set aside protocols in order to reach out to his clergy. By then, Bergoglio already had a strong influence over the city's clergy, especially the youngest. They liked his affable approachability, his sincerity, and his wise counsel. None of this would change with

Bergoglio's arrival to the main seat of the archdiocese, the cardinal's residence. He would have a phone installed so that priests could call him at any hour. He would spend nights in any parish, attending to a sick priest if necessary. He would continue traveling by bus and subway, eschewing a car and driver. He would reject moving into the elegant archbishop's residence in Olivos, close to the presidential estate and, instead would remain in his austere room in Buenos Aires. He kept personally responding to calls, accepting visits and keeping track of all his audiences and activities in a little rustic pocket notebook. And he would avoid social events and preferred his simple dark clergyman's suit to the cardinal's cassock.

His austerity

Speaking of his austerity, it is said that when it was announced he would be made cardinal in 2001, he did not want to buy a new wardrobe, but preferred to tailor the clothes of his predecessor. And that as soon as he learned some of the faithful were planning to travel to Rome in order to attend the ceremony where Pope John Paul II would make him cardinal, he pleaded with them not to come and to give the money for the trip to the poor instead.

It is also said that he made frequent trips to the shanty-towns of Buenos Aires, where during a chat with hundreds of men from the parish of Our Lady of Caacupe, in a slum in the Barracas neighbourhood, a bricklayer stood up and said, clearly moved, "I am proud of you, because when I came here with my companions on the bus I saw you sitting in one of the last seats, like one



of us. I told them it was you, but no one believed me." From then on, Bergoglio had a permanent place in the hearts of those humble, suffering people. "We feel like he is one of us," they explained. Many also remember from that time his attempt to stop a crackdown in the Plaza de Mayo during the protests of December 2001. When he saw police beating a woman from the window of his archbishop's residence, he picked up the telephone and called the Ministry of the Interior. The secretary of security took his call, and Bergoglio asked him to start differentiating between activists who were creating a disturbance and regular folks who just wanted to withdraw their savings from the bank.

This was the time that Bergoglio was rising in the national ecclesiastical ranks and, in 2004 he would be elected President of the Episcopal Conference (he was re-elected in 2007). He led a moderate line, far from the powers that be and with marked social concern, that had been the majority for some time now in a traditionally conservative Church. It **(Contd. on Pg. XXII)**



How a Pope is Elected

By Francis Madiwela

When the position of a pope falls vacant, either by death or the resignation of the pope, the college of cardinals from all parts of the world gather in Rome to elect a new pope. The maximum number of cardinal electors is 120 and cardinals who are above the age of 80 are not eligible to vote. In April of 2013 when the present pope was elected there were 117 cardinals eligible to vote but only 115 came to Rome and the other two could not attend due to ill-health. The meeting of cardinals to elect a pope is called a conclave and they meet behind closed doors of the Sistine chapel in the Vatican.

Two Thirds Votes

The candidate for papacy should get two thirds of the votes of the college of cardinals. Before they, start the conclave, all the cardinals take an oath to keep absolute secrecy about the deliberations and voting in the Sistine chapel. They vote once on the first day of the conclave and after that twice in the morning and twice in the evening till they elect a pope with two thirds majority. Before the conclave the Sistine chapel is cleaned and swept thoroughly under strict supervision to make sure that there are no electronic microphones, recorders and other bugging/eavesdropping devices. The cardinals cannot take their cell phones or computers into the conclave. TV and newspapers are barred from the Sistine chapel.

At the time of the papal elections in 2013 the world media was more engrossed with the resignation of the pope than the subsequent election of the new pope. But for the Italian media it was like a football super finals being played in Rome. They could not ignore it. Italian casinos even took bets on the papal elections. Their first contender was Cardinal Angelo Scola, the archbishop of Milan. Pope Benedict XVI had transferred him from the prestigious position of the Patriarch of Venice to the post of the Archbishop of Milan. Three previous popes before Pope John Paul II had come from these two dioceses of Venice and Milan.

There second guess was the Canadian Cardinal Marc Ouellet. Pope Benedict had promoted him to the Roman Curia (cabinet) as the cardinal in charge of appointing bishops. In 2010 he was transferred to Rome from the diocese of Quebec. He was holding this prestigious post when Pope Benedict resigned. The name of Cardinal Jorge

Mario Bergoglio was not even mentioned. Many journalists ignored the fact that he was the runner up during the 2005 papal elections. The Vatican sent cardinal Bergoglio a first class ticket to attend the conclave. But he returned the ticket and bought an economy class ticket for this long 13-hour journey from Buenos Aires to Rome. He booked into the international clergy hostel, the Domus Internationalis Paulus Sextus in the street Via della Scrofa. The day after his election as the pope, he went to this hostel on his own, to pay his bill.

The Italian press had already given Cardinal Scola more than 50 votes. They counted the 23 votes of the Italian cardinals, plus a few from Europe. They thought some of the cardinals from Latin America (19) and from the USA (11) would vote for Scola. Only 77 votes were needed for the two-third majority. Anybody who placed a bet on Cardinal Bergoglio at the beginning of the conclave would have had a winning chance of 30 to 1. Before the election of the new pope the cardinals gather in general congregations in the Vatican to make funeral arrangements for the deceased pope and declare a period of mourning after the funeral. These congregations were used by the prelates to give short speeches on what kind of a pope the church needs. There was no papal funeral or a period of mourning in the spring of 2013 because the outgoing pope had resigned from his post. There was plenty of time for the cardinals to introduce themselves to each other. Only 50 of the 115 cardinals in the conclave were there in 2005 to elect Pope Benedict XVI. So there were 65 new faces in the conclave. There was plenty of time for speeches the duration of which was limited to five minutes each.

Bergoglio

The congregation of the cardinals doing a post mortem on the elections would recall that it is the pre-conclave short speech which bolstered the candidacy of Bergoglio. He took only three-and-a-half minutes for his presentation. He emphasized two salient points during his speech. The Catholic Church must reflect the light of Christ as the moon reflects the light of the sun and it should not try to emanate its own light. The Church should go into the peripheries where there is poverty, sin, pain, injustice, ignorance and indifference to religion. He ended his speech saying, "The next pope should be someone who helps the Church surge forth to the peripheries like a sweet and

comforting mother who offers the joy of Jesus to the world." Cardinal Bergoglio did not know that he would be the next pope who would have to carry out this lofty agenda.

Many cardinals in the audience were edified with this short speech. Cardinal Jaime Ortega of Havana asked for a copy of the speech. Cardinal Bergoglio did not have any. He gave his speech from some scribbled notes. But he promised to recall what he said and give it to his colleague on the following day. Cardinal Ortega with the permission of the future pope uploaded the speech to his website. (It is not prohibited to publish the pre-conclave speeches of the prelates)

The last pope to step down from his post was Pope Gregory XII in 1415, exactly 598 years before 2013.

This shows the resignation of Benedict XVI was an extraordinary and not a customary event. The new pope had the golden opportunity to consult his predecessor which is a unique privilege the previous popes did not have for almost 600 years. The newly-elected pope need not depend on the speculations of others as to why his predecessor stepped down. The new pope can directly ask him. If he needs any guidance or advice he is privileged to ask his predecessor, who is still alive.

When voting begins the cardinals are given a square ballot paper. On the top of the page there is a Latin phrase: "*Eligio in Summum Pontificio*" ("I elect as Supreme Pontiff"), followed by a space for the name. Below that there is a space for the voter to sign his name. They are supposed to fold the ballot paper twice, walk to the front of the chapel where there is a big chalice covered by a paten (plate), display the ballot paper to the conclave of cardinals, keep the ballot paper on the paten and drop it into the chalice. The cardinals do this gesture one by one to prove to others in the conclave that they have voted individually.

When all have voted the three cardinals elected by the conclave count the votes. One takes a ballot paper from the chalice and opens it in front of the congregation of the cardinals. Then he announces the name and writes the name down. Then the third assistant cardinal puts a needle and a thread through the center of the ballot paper and collects them together, if there is no two-third of votes cast for one of the cardinals the papers are burnt in an urn which is connected to the chimney of the Sistine chapel, with a chemical



which produces black smoke. The crowd and the media personnel gathered outside the Sistine chapel seeing the black smoke coming through the chimney will know that a pope has not yet been elected. If one cardinal gets two-thirds of the vote then the ballot papers are burnt with chemicals that produce white smoke. At times the people outside cannot distinguish between the black and the white smoke. When the pope is elected, to make it clearer to the public, the bells of the Basilica of St. Peter will be rung.

Will of the Majority

When a cardinal receives two-thirds of the votes of the conclave, he is elected the pope and the bishop of Rome. The Dean of the cardinals approaches him and asks if he is willing to accept the will of the majority of the cardinals and what name he wants to be called by as pope. If he accepts the decision he will immediately become the new pope. He will also announce the name that he wishes to be known by as pope. In the case of Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, the name that he chose was Francis. He was elected on April 13, 2013 and was the 266th in the line of popes and the first pope to take this name. When Cardinal Bergoglio was asked whether he will respect the decision of his colleagues to elect him as the Pope he did not say, "Accepto" (I accept). He said, "I am a great sinner;

trusting in the mercy and the patience of God in suffering, I accept." The name that he took as the pope is the name of St. Francis of Assisi, an epitome of poverty and peace.

Once elected the new pope has to choose a white robe and a skull cap that will fit him. The Italian family which makes papal vestments has several robes and skull caps of different sizes ready for the new pontiff. The new pope with the Dean of the cardinals goes in procession to the balcony of the Papal Palace facing St. Peter's square where tens of thousands of people are gathered together to hear the good news and to have the first glimpse of the new pontiff. The cardinal dean declares, "*Habemus Papam*" ("we have a pope") followed by the former name of the cardinal and the name that he has decided to take as the pope. Then the new pontiff appears in the balcony and addresses the faithful and gives his first blessing to the City of Rome and to the world. Before the cardinals return to their dioceses the ceremony for the formal inauguration of the pope will take place in St. Peter's Basilica.

Pope John Paul got rid of the coronation ceremonies of a pope where the new pope is crowned with a papal tiara (triple crown). Now a woolen pallium (long stole) will be placed on the neck of the new pope while the Vatican choir sings the Latin hymn, "*Tu es Petrus*" ("You are Peter"), which consists of the words of Christ placing Peter as the head of his followers (Mathew 16:18).



On the Feast of the Holy Family, Pope Francis gives a shout-out to big families

On the feast of the Holy Family and looking ahead to a 2015 in which concern for the family will once again be at the top of his personal to-do list, Pope Francis urged politicians to make support for large families a priority.

"In a world often marked by egoism, a large family is a school of solidarity and of mission that's of benefit to the entire society," Francis said.

The comments came in an audience the Pontiff held on Sunday, December 28; morning with an Italian association of large families, which filled the Vatican's Paul VI audience hall with children, parents, and grandparents. Children were seated on the stairs leading up to the stage where Francis spoke, and he spent considerable time interacting with them.

The "National Association of Large Families" brings together families that have at least four children, through birth, adoption, or foster care. Its mission is to promote poli-



cies, such as adjustments to the tax system and school fees, that encourage parents to have more children. Noting that article 31 of the Italian Constitution actually calls for special attention to large families, Pope Francis said this provision "doesn't get an adequate response in the facts. They remain just words."

"I hope, therefore, thinking also of the low fertility rate that Italy has had for a long time ... one percent, almost nothing ... there will be greater attention from politics and public administrators at every level to give support to these families," Francis said.

Earlier, Pope Francis said

that in a world often marred by selfishness, a large family is a role model for solidarity and sharing and this benefits the whole of society."

Speaking to the families and their children, Pope Francis said he was pleased to meet them, saying it was clear that they love the family and they

love life. "Each of your children," he said, "was wanted by God and it amazes us how great a miracle is a child. A child is somebody who changes our life."

Pope Francis also underlined the important role played by grandparents, saying they can not only provide practical support but above all can help the parents pass down to their children their faith.

The Pope went on to urge politicians and the local administration to provide more support to help people with large families, lamenting that such help is not always forthcoming. He concluded his address with a special prayer for families hit by the economic crisis where either the father or mother have lost their jobs or where the young cannot find employment, as well as all families struggling with solitude and divisions. And please, continue praying for me, the Pope ended, "because in a way I'm like a grandfather for all of you."

Retired but Retained in God's Service

By Trevor Ludowyke

On the eve of his birthday December 17, 2011, Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, Archbishop of Buenos Aires, had submitted his resignation to Pope Benedict XVI, in keeping with the stipulations of the Code of Canon Law which requires that diocesan bishops should retire at the age of 75. Customarily, this retirement age is delayed by a year or two in the case the bishop is a cardinal. Yet, Cardinal Jorge, being a well-organized man and meticulous in every way, had by then prepared all his documents well in advance and submitted the complete file to the Vatican office handling such matters. Furthermore, he had also prepared all the documents required to be handed over to his successor who would have been appointed within a year of his submitting his resignation. His Eminence had made up his mind that he should humbly retire from active service paving the way for a more energetic and youthful successor to take over the diocese of Buenos Aires, despite the fact that he was in no way incapable of continuing his Episcopal ministry. Many Cardinals and Bishops bat on despite retirement age while retirement of some are delayed owing to lack of a suitable successor. Cardinal Jorge had almost packed his bags to gracefully vacate his position and is said to have made plans to live his retirement in a retirement home for priests of the diocese which was situated within his native district of Flores.

Ready to Retire

Although he was to resign from office, Cardinal Jorge himself was convinced that he would not retire from Episcopal ministry, as he had so much to offer to the Church and those who required his spiritual guidance and ministerial service. Physically, he was very much fit and his sprightly walk was more than evidence of him being far from retirement. Furthermore, being a Jesuit, whose particular charism is spiritual discernment,



Cardinal Jorge proposed to make himself available to anyone who required spiritual guidance or counselling. He had in fact confided with his auxiliary bishop that he would be available even after his retirement to help out in parishes which needed his assistance and also provide spiritual guidance anytime.

Yes, he had planned it so well and was ready to open a new leaf in his retirement even though he knew that he would certainly miss being with those so close to his heart, viz. his people. As Archbishop, he was overwhelmed with Episcopal duties which laid heavy burdens upon him and managing such a difficult diocese was very demanding. Now, he was sure that he would be relieved of this pressure and could at last breathe easily and live a sedate life in his retirement. Cardinal's close friends are of the view that he did not seem anxious to retire as was evident when he had to talk about his life after retirement. Cardinal Jorge patiently waited for his resignation to be accepted. Little did he realise that his Master had greater plans for

him way beyond his imagination.

The abdication of Pope Benedict XVI from the Petrine ministry came as a surprise to the world and a conclave was convened to elect a new Pope. Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, packed his bags and instead of going to his planned retirement home for priests, boarded a plane and flew in to Rome. Arriving at the Fiumicino Airport, His Eminence avoided public comments about the forthcoming election, but had made it clear to the Argentine media that his age precluded him from election as Pope. His Eminence was convinced that he would be able to return back from Rome no sooner the conclave ended and he even booked his return air ticket on economy class for March 23, 2013.

Surprise Abdication

Prior to the conclave proper, the College of Cardinals met over a number of days in General Congregations during which each cardinal was allotted five minutes to make a brief intervention on issues confronting the Church as they saw it.

Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio made a brief intervention of the cuff, with no written text before him. He never considered himself papabile, nor did the media who had identified only a dozen among the 115 cardinal electors as such. Poor health conditions and advanced age precluded their eligibility to a great extent and Cardinal Jorge included himself in that category. Little did he realise that his five minute intervention off the cuff was in fact prompted by divine assistance and had impressed many of the cardinal electors, a fact revealed later on to His Holiness after his election.

Considering that Cardinal Jorge had tendered his resignation from administrative functions of the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires and was preparing to settle down in retirement, it came as a shock to him that the Master had other plans. Our Lord did tell Peter after the resurrection, "Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go" (John 21:18).

These words of our Lord came true in the case of Peter where he had to face martyrdom, whereas in the case of Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio it was a case of being chosen as the successor of Peter and entering the Room of Tears where he dressed in the official attire of the new Pope though minus the red mozetta or the elbow length cape worn by Popes and the red leather shoes of the fisherman, both of which he declined to wear. And in humbly accepting this call, Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio chose the name 'Francis'; a name which indicated the essence of his papacy, a shepherd who would stand with and stand for the poorest of the poor. The Lord retained him in his service for a more sublime mandate, saying "Feed my Sheep."



The new Portrait of Saint Joseph Vaz

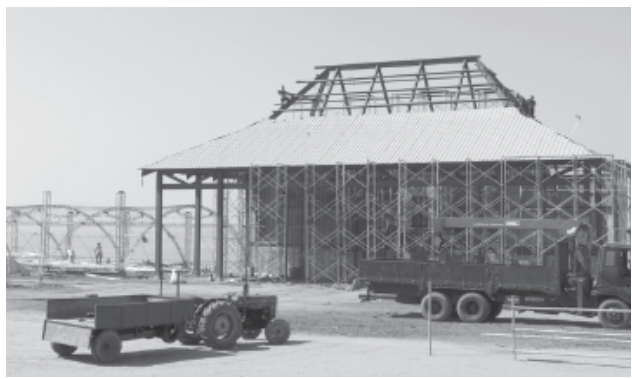
A new portrait of Saint Joseph Vaz is in the process of being painted. This portrait will be exhibited at Galle Face Green on January 14.

The new portrait will incorporate some additions to the present official painting by D.L.G Perera dated September 1896 and preserved in the Library of the National Seminary in Ampitiya, Kandy.

The official painting has been explained as follows : Fr. Joseph Vaz is holding the cross and pointing to it. The gesture of the hand resembles the gesture of the hand of God giving life to Adam painted by Michelangelo Buonarroti on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican. It is also interpreted as an invitation from Fr. Joseph Vaz to all of us to follow the cross.

The new portrait painted by Rev. Fr. Priyantha Silva is in keeping with sacred art and sacred geometry. It will be a theological depiction that will include the mission and service of Fr. Vaz in Ceylon.

As such the new portrait adds several figures on either side of Saint Joseph Vaz. On his left is the figure of Fr. Jacome Gonzalves who translated into the local languages the prayers written by Fr. Vaz. Hence he is depicted writing on a scroll that drapes from the hand of Fr. Vaz pointing to the cross. Behind Fr. Gonzalves are shown some other Oratorians that served in Sri Lanka. On the other side the same scroll is held in prayer by two persons representing the Sinhalese and the Tamil faithful of Ceylon and the lay ministries of 'Muppu' and 'Annavi' that Fr. Vaz installed.



On the top the sun is depicted behind the cross without eyes mouth, etc, as depicted in the painting of 1896, for Christ 'the uncreated sun' is prominent on the cross. A smaller moon with the figure of the rabbit turning towards the sun stands for Fr. Vaz's call to turn towards the uncreated sun. A star with twelve petals (symbolic of the 12 stars on the crown of Mary mentioned in the Apocalypse) signify the dream of the father of Fr. Vaz and the Blessed Virgin Mary whose slave Fr. Vaz professed to become. The Crosier above the heads of the two persons behind Blessed Joseph Vaz signify the shepherding ministry of Fr. Vaz. The Crosier here is shown like an Acanthus leaf seen on the capital of a Corinthian column which is the highest grade of columns used in the Roman Churches, thus signifying the offer from Rome to make him a Bishop.

The bread and wine on the altar beside the miter symbolizes the partaking in the sacrifice of Jesus, in refusing the offer to be made a bishop. A punkalasa or the traditional pot of plenty is used for the flower pot signifying prosperity of the new mission amidst persecution.

Extracts taken from the Fr. Priyantha Silva's masteral thesis.

As the arrival date of Pope Francis draws near, arrangements for his visit are also being completed. Here we set out some details of the Altar dais built for the Canonization of Blessed Joseph Vaz and Holy Mass to be celebrated by Pope Francis at Galle face green on 14.01.2015.

The location and positioning of the stage which includes the altar dais at Galle face green, was based on a detailed study conducted for that purpose. Reasons given for the present location were : to avoid the sun falling on the faces of the people and impeding their participation in the Holy Mass, the number of people that could be accommodated at Galle face green and sound travel with the wind blowing in from the sea - facilitating all round clarity.



The stage is built taking into account the Holy Father's spirituality and Vatican requirements for such a

ceremony. It is also representative of the Sri Lankan identity and culture.

The stage where the main altar dais is placed is covered by a Kandiyani style roof. On either sides of the stage are two parabolic huts to accommodate over 1000 concelebrating priests. The proposed roof line for these two sides was also a Kandiyani roof but to cut down on cost it was made simply.

The stage is composed of several levels including entrance lobbies, wash rooms, a medical unit etc. The top level is built with Sacristies for the Holy Father and the Vatican Papal delegation and the altar dais.

On the stage with the Holy Father will be local and visiting concelebrating Cardinals and Bishops, local and Vatican Masters of Ceremony, Deacons and Acolytes serving at the Holy Mass.

The Altar dais at Galle Face Green

The stage will be decorated with traditional local art forms, Christian iconology and symbolism. The four columns on either side of the Presidential Chair of the Holy Father will be

decorated with the symbols of the four Evangelists and the Na or iron wood flower - the local flower attributed to Our Lady of Lanka and thus representing the country's dedication to her. In between the columns are five arches which are traditional Kandiyani sun arches. In the central arch is placed a crucifix.

The 8' crucifix hangs behind the Presidential Chair on which the Holy Father will sit. The four ends of the cross and the centre circle is fitted with the design of the Honeysuckle flower referred to in Sri Lankan traditional art as the Vel pota. This bell shaped flower is sweetly scented and produces a nectar that attracts the Hummingbirds to it. The breaking of the stem releases its strong sweet odour. The flower has been likened to the Christian spirit attracting many followers with its sweet odour. However it also reminds of the persecution of Christians which is likened to the stem being broken to release the sweet odour of the Saviour. The cross and the Presidential Chair is donated by Amal Furniture's Moratuwa. The figure of Christ attached to the cross is crafted by fiberglass artist Ranil Fernando.

A further 12 columns can be seen supporting the roof of the stage. These are decorated with the figures of the Apostles. All these columns have a blue square base representing the human nature, an octagonal middle representing the resurrection and a red cylindrical top representing the divine nature. The figures of the Apostles placed on the octagonal section signify that they were instrumental in spreading the news of the Resurrection to the world. The column taken together represents the spiritual journey of a Christian - who journeys from the human through the resurrection experience to the divine. The capital of the column ends in a carved Pekada design giving it a local flavour.

The colours used for the stage are the royal colours according to Sri Lankan tradition - maroon and gold, considered appropriate to host the Holy Father who is the Vicar of Christ - the King of Kings.

On the front path and the steps leading to the Presidential Chair will be positioned 12 punkalasa or traditional pots of plenty. These represent the 12 Diocese of Sri Lanka. These are crafted under the direction of Ravi Bandu Vidyapathi of the Cultural Ministry.

On either side of two flights of steps will be pairs of Korawak gal balustrades in the form of a head and

trunk of an elephant, reminding us incidents related of Fr. Joseph Vaz who had the power to subdue and calm wild elephants. These are made under the direction of Former Navy designer Jayashantha.

The floral arrangements on the stage will be done with Nil Manel and white lotus flowers. The lotus was selected



since it is the national flower of Sri Lanka. Flower arrangements will be done by Joan Forbes.

The altar table that will be placed on the stage is the same altar table that was used by Pope Saint John Paul II at the Beatification Mass of Fr. Joseph Vaz in 1995. It was thereafter kept at St Mary's Church, Nayakakanda and used for the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. The Altar Cloth is a collective offering from the humble, rural people of this island - a community of traditional weavers, led by Sandra Wanduragala the founder of Selyn Exports Pvt Ltd and Andrea Boekel renowned needle work artist.

On the right side of the stage will be a 6' statue of Saint Joseph Vaz. The statue was carved specially for the occasion in accordance to the new portrait. The statue was carved by Mr. Raymond Fernando of Moratuwa. A statue of Our Lady of Lanka will also grace the stage. This is from the Atthidiya Church. This statue too was cut by Mr. Raymond Fernando.

It is customary that a relic of the Saint is present at a Canonization Ceremony. In this regard the ebony cross from Joseph Vaz Pura in Maha Galgamuwa will be exposed also on the right side of the stage. The cross was given by Fr. Vaz to be planted at the entrance to their village as a protection from wild elephants.



Sebastian Mill, Moratuwa.

The 12 wooden candle stands that the acolytes will carry are also works of art. These were donated by Nalin Fernando.

Stage design concept, colour scheme and other designs described here are by Fr. Priyantha Silva. Stage is constructed by the Navy under the supervision of Rear Admiral Wipula Jayasena and his team. Architectural drawings by Captain Priyantha Priyadarshana of the Navy perfected by Architect Sagara Jayasinghe.



Schedule of the Apostolic Journey of His Holiness Pope Francis to Sri Lanka



Monday, January 12, 2015

19:00 - Departure from the Airport of Rome/Fiumicino to Colombo

Tuesday, January 13, 2015

09:00 - Arrival at the Colombo International Airport, Katunayake

WELCOME CEREMONY

13:15 - MEETING with the Bishops of Sri Lanka at the Archbishop's House, Colombo - 08 **1**

17:00 - COURTESY VISIT to the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka at the President's House. **2**

18:15 - INTER-RELIGIOUS MEETING in the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH) Colombo **3**

Wednesday, January 14, 2015

08:30 - Celebration of Holy Eucharist and Canonization of Blessed Joseph Vaz in Galle Face Green, Colombo **4**

14:00 - Departure to Madhu Shrine

15:30 - MARIAN PRAYER at the Shrine of Our Lady of Rosary of Madhu **5**

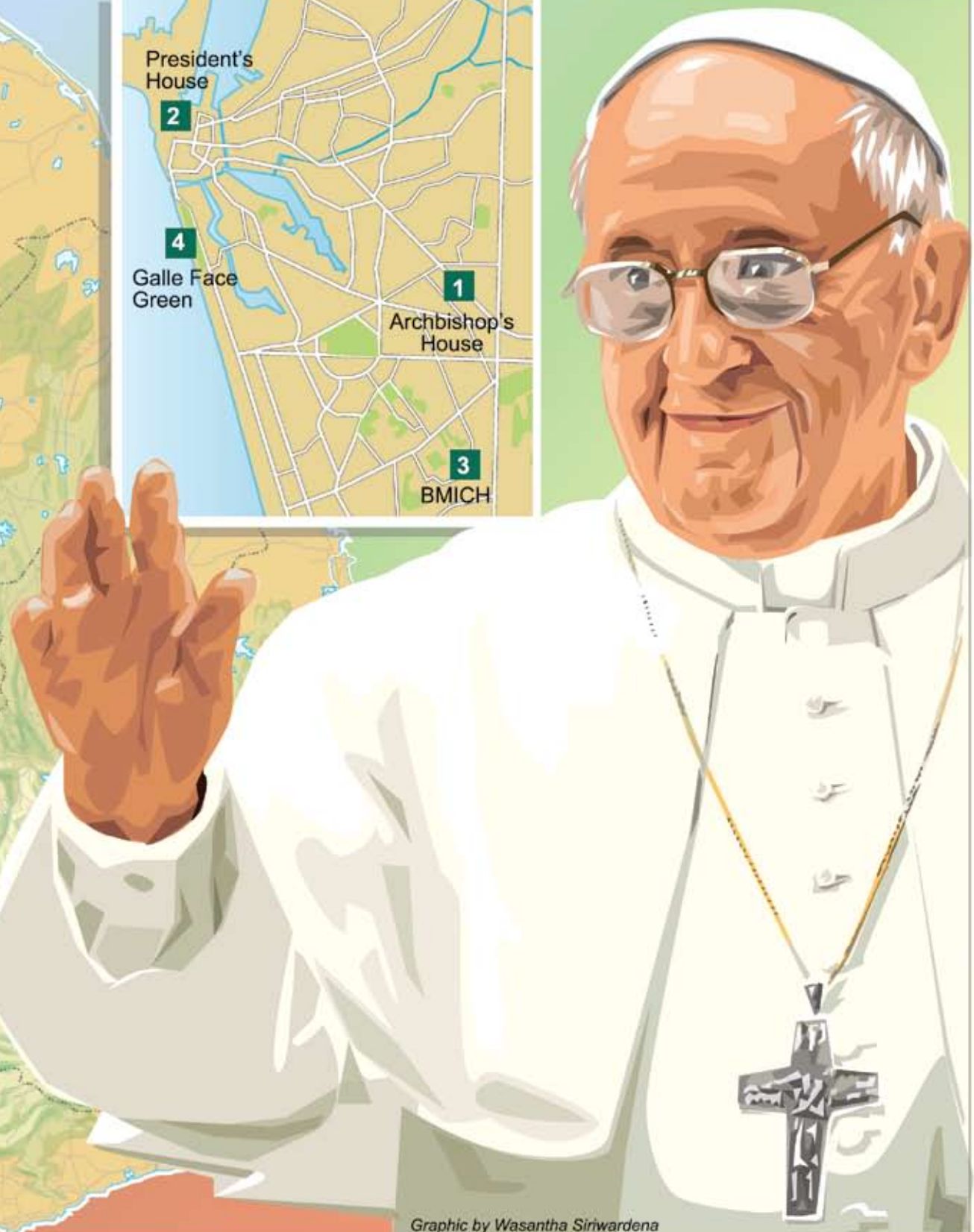
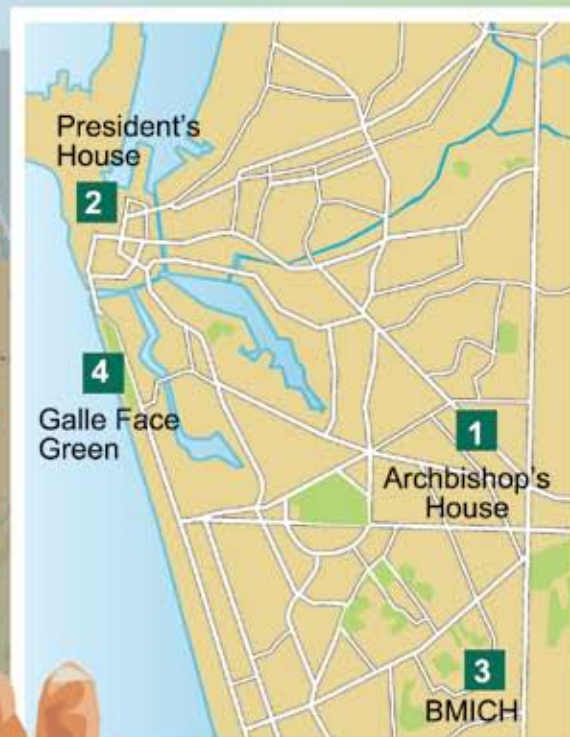
16:45 - Departure to Colombo

Thursday, January 15, 2015

08:15 - Visit to the Chapel of the 'Benedict XVI Cultural Institute' at Bolawalana **6**

08:45 - Farewell ceremony at the Colombo International Airport, Katunayake

09:00 - Departure from Colombo to Manila





The Altar Cloth : A labour of love

By Kishanie S. Fernando

Pope Francis' visit to Sri Lanka had been announced. Fr. Priyantha Silva was in charge of the Altar and stage decor, for the Canonization Mass of the Blessed Joseph Vaz to be celebrated at Galle Face Green by the Holy Father. Who would stitch the Altar cloth?

In 1995 when Pope Saint John Paul celebrated the Beatification Mass of Fr. Joseph Vaz at the Galle Face Green the altar cloth had been made by a team led by Barbara Sansoni of Barefoot Pvt. Ltd. More than five hundred severely distressed young persons who were living a happy and wholesome life having learnt the skill of weaving, had taken part in the making of the cloth. It was a beautiful cloth. Who would do it this year?

I suggested Selyn Handlooms who also had a community of weavers that engaged in the traditional Sri Lankan weaving. The Selyn Socio-Economic Development Foundation or "Selyn Foundation", was a vision of founder Sandra Wanduragala. It is part of Seylin's initiative to uplift the livelihood and empower the rural woman artisan and to innovate within the handloom industry. Her vision beyond Selyn to a grassroots effort to relieve poverty and empower Sri Lankan youth and women by means of education, vocational training, credit-provisions and other developmental tools was impressive. To carry out her vision, they have established nine handloom workshops and five sewing/handwork workshops in villages in the rural outskirts of the Kurunegala and Batticaloa districts.

Meetings were arranged. Selyna Peiris, Director Business Development of Selyn Handlooms confirmed that their products are made by women, including groups of war widows from both sides, ie the wives of soldiers and the wives of displaced persons and these groups were distributed mainly in Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Galle. "Weaving also works as a therapy for these persons who have lost much due to the war And it would be considered a privilege by them to be part of such a project" she said. It was settled that Selyn Handlooms will undertake the job with the assistance of Andrea Boekel renowned needle artist as their designer. Time lines were set for the initial design concept to be presented. Sacred iconography and Christian symbolism of colours and numbers were discussed. A proposal presented. Changes made. And work begun in earnest with teams of women working in the North and East, Central, Southern and North Western provinces. The task of coordinating with Selyn Handlooms was undertaken by Felicia Adihetty.

Stitching and spinning to live

"On Sri Lanka's east coastal town of Trincomalee, in a modest yet well-ventilated room, Ayitta sits with her head poring over an embroidery frame. She has a look of deep concentration on her face. Her nimble fingers weave in and out of the fabric held taut in the frame, creating sheer wizardry with needle and thread. Ayitta is highly skilled in hand embroidery, yet not too long ago, Ayitta was a mere statistic. She was a war widow - someone who had lost the main provider of the household income. Her husband was a part of the separatist group engaging in acts of destruction to man and property with shrill calls for a separate state. Ayitta had no part in this, but she had involuntarily been caught up undergoing immense hardship; death had

taken away the mainstay of her home. She was left to provide for her two children and herself as best as she could."

"In Sri Lanka's south, in the town of Ahangama, Epa sits in a similar room. She too is deftly embroidering a work of art as she pores over her work. Epa creates exquisite works of art with needle and thread. Epa is also a war widow - her husband, a soldier in the Sri Lankan army lost his life in a volley of gunfire from a separatist weapon. In the instant he was felled, Epa lost the provider of sustenance to her two children and herself. Her world was torn apart. Epa however, is in a financially more stable position than Ayitta because the army provides her with her husband's pension. What they cannot provide her with is her strength to forge on ahead. Epa discovered this inner strength through her work. She mobilises other women to engage in her same craft. Through this, she finds a level of serenity - an almost therapeutic peace."

"In several far-flung villages, groups of women sit spinning coloured yarn in a vivid spectrum of colours. They dexterously set up their hand looms and before long, the 'clack clack' of the loom fills the air. Sitting on a stool a woman works both hands and feet as a beautiful piece of fabric appears almost as if by magic. This is hard work, but the end result is something stunning. These women are often the mainstays of their homes."

"On Sri Lanka's East Coast, in the town of Maruthumunai, Selyn's weaving community consist of men, who also are masters in the craft of weaving on a hand loom".

These are the kind of people to whom Selyn Handlooms provide skills, training and



marketing abilities. These are the stories of some of the people of Sri Lanka who contributed towards the making of the Altar cloth.

The Picture message

Andrea Boekel the designer of the Altar Cloth, says that the concept for the design was based on two passages from the Holy Bible - Romans 5:2-5 and Jeremiah 17:7. In her proposal for the production of the Altar cloth. She elaborates:

"The concept is straightforward and simple. Every person who views it will gather the meaning of our portrayal of this work."

You will see how "Lovingly, His arms protect this island and its people in His tender grasp. The four colours of the main communities are represented in the graphic of Sri Lanka. He seeks their trust in His all-encompassing power. The Christians of this country have never wavered, praying for peace and harmony even while mayhem reigned. The red circle is divinity - the state of holiness of Christ's believers who uphold his cross even when tormented and persecuted. It is how we stand and boast in our hope of the glory of God."

St. Joseph Vaz flag



The Joseph Vaz flag is composed of three colours the face of the Saint Joseph Vaz and the Oratorian cross. The colours green and orange symbolize all the races and religions in Sri Lanka and India. The yellow stripe in between represents the Papal authority. The Oratorian cross reminds us that Joseph Vaz belonged to the Oratorian Order of Priests. Last year the flag was re adapted by the Joseph Vaz National Secretariat, by the addition of a halo around the head of Fr. Joseph Vaz in recognition of his status as a Saint.

The flag is used in shrines and churches dedicated to the Saint and also by other churches on his feast day.

The Joseph Vaz flag was designed by Mr. Shelton Fernando in 1995.

- Kishanie

"The two bird motifs are representative of doves holding the olive branch of peace. However, this has been given a Sri Lankan flavour with the bird depicted in the traditional art form of the island. The tree represents the one mentioned in Jeremiah *the tree planted by the water, That extends its roots by a stream. And will not fear when the heat comes;.....* The fish represents Jesus' ministry: he chose several fishermen to be his disciples and declared he would make them "fishers of men." The fish is also used by Jesus to describe "the Sign of Jonah." (Matthew 12:38-45) This is symbolic of the resurrection of Christ upon which the entire Christian faith is based. (1 Corinthians 15:1-58).

The fabric, techniques, shape and form

Andrea continues to explain : The rich, lustrous fabric of the background which in effect, forms the canvas for our expression is hand woven by Selyn weavers. Traditional appliqué, patchwork and hand embroidery has been used. Vividly coloured, beautiful fabrics have been selected for the appliques. The finest quality fabrics and threads have gone into its making. Almost all aspects of the project are created by hand. This ensured that work could be distributed to several participants at one time.

The Altar Cloth is different from the conventional ones in that it covers the altar fully. This is necessary because Galle Face is whipped by strong winds. It is tailored to perfection. The tailor is a whiz. Handling that amount of fabric could not have been easy.

The main design will be featured in the centre drop. On either side of the main design, two peacocks will be featured. The design of the peacock was taken from a sculpture done by Fr. Priyantha. The Peacock is symbolic of the resurrection. On the border of the cloth, small Sri Lankan patchwork motifs as is attached will form a border.

The offering

Result : obviously a glamorous work of art portraying an "Sri Lankan" identity even while espousing Christian symbolism.

It is "A collective offering from the humble, rural people of this island who gave of their labour and love to prepare an exquisite work of art that will adorn the altar for the Holy Father, Pope Francis to offer mass. It was a project led by Sandra Wanduragala and Andrea Boekel who has invested their own funds, time and creative efforts in it."

Extracts taken from the Proposal presented for the production of the Altar cloth by Selyn and Andrea Boekel and the Log book of Andrea Boekel



POPE FRANCIS: Man of God and Man of the People



It was 17th October 2014. The Extraordinary Synod of Bishops on Family which attracted so much of world attention was about to be wound up. It being a non-working day for the Synod, most of the Asian bishop-participants of the Synod were having their special Central Committee (CC) meeting of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) at the Filipino embassy attached to the Vatican, just a few steps away from Casa di Santa Marta in the Vatican where Pope Francis lives. I too had the privilege of being present at that meeting as the specially appointed secretary to keep the minutes of that particular meeting. All of us were informed beforehand that in spite of his very busy schedule that particular week (with the Synod reaching its Conclusion the following day, with the Beatification of Pope Paul VI two days thereafter and, with so many bishops from all over the world having appointments with him, one after the other...etc.), Pope Francis had agreed to give a special brief audience for the CC participants, at 10 am at Casa di Santa Marta. It was organized thanks to the good offices of Antonio Luis Cardinal Tagle of Manila. So, the idea was to adjourn the special CC meeting around 9.55 am, and then, walk up for the special papal audience. However, as the CC meeting was well into its first hour, suddenly the hand phone of Oswald Cardinal Gracias of Mumbai (who was presiding over the meeting) rang. It was around 9.45 am, and some of us who were seated closer to Cardinal Gracias could hear the voice at the other end of the line saying in Italian: "Sua Eminenza,...Papa sta già aspettando per voi. Sbrigatevi per favore!" ("Your Eminence,...the Pope is already waiting for you! Please hurry up!"). The CC meeting was abruptly suspended and all of us rushed to Casa di Santa Marta within just five minutes. And there His Holiness was indeed waiting at the very entrance of Casa di Santa Marta with a broad smile on his face.

Warmth and conduct

As we entered, the Pope cordially welcomed each of us with a warm shake-hand, as if each of us mattered to him so much! Then, he informally spoke about the mission of evangelization in Asia and its importance, and assured his closeness and prayers for all the Churches in Asia in fulfilling their mission. He reminded us that he had already been to Asia (to Korea just the previous month) and also that he would soon be going to Asia again: to Sri Lanka and to the Philippines, and said he was looking forward to those trips eagerly. At the request of Cardinal Gracias (President of the FABC), the Pope then imparted his Apostolic Blessing on all of us gathered there and on the different Churches in Asia that were represented. Since he had to meet the visiting Prime Minister of Korea, immediately thereafter, he bade good bye, again greeting

each of us with a warm hand shake and a broad smile.

In my life thus far, I had been to many audiences and meetings with both ecclesiastical and civil dignitaries in many parts of the world, but I must say with all sincerity that at none of those precious moments of my life had the dignitaries concerned been so much at ease, so informal, so human, as Pope Francis was during this particular audience. To begin with, there were no airs put on, nor were there those empty (and at times ridiculous!) formalities that one normally encounters on such occasions. Here was Pope Francis, the Universal Visible Shepherd of the Church, the Vicar of Christ on earth, meeting the shepherds of the local churches and those who were helping them. It was simply a meeting of a human person with other human persons, but with this unique difference: By his very simple, sincere and informal conduct, the Pope not only showed what a great personality he is, but also automatically earned respect for himself as a person. Yes, he did not demand respect by virtue of his office as Pope, but earned it through his very human personality, warmth and conduct! Only those who are real men of God and those who have healthy personalities with a sane self-image could afford to be so, and that's exactly what Pope Francis is! Thousands upon thousands of persons who had met him as Pope during the past 20 months or so, have shared the same personal experience and, it is this very experience that has taken the world by storm, ever since he was elected as the Successor of St. Peter in March 2013.



It is no exaggeration to say that his very personality has put the Church not only back on the right track of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but also back on the secular international scene. Commentators are more or less unanimous that in the history of the Church there has never been a Pope so popular as this Pope is. In addition to what I mentioned above, they give a few more other reasons for such unprecedented popularity: his peculiarly people-orientedness, his down-to-earth realistic approach to Church and world issues, his love for the poor and the marginalized (not only in words as many leaders do today, but in his very deeds), his courage to call a spade a spade without any sense of hypocritical diplomacy and his determination to continue the reforms of the Second Vatican Council as willed by the world-wide episcopate of the Catholic Church. All these characteristics were more than visible in his celebrated Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* in written form (issued in November 2013), and at the recently concluded Extraordinary Synod in the form of action. However, in order to illustrate what each of the above-mentioned reasons amount to, I will discuss each of them briefly under the following sub-headings:

A Pope of the People

Jesus Christ came to liberate people from the evil ways and to show them the right path to walk. He established His Church to continue that liberation work down through the ages. He appointed St. Peter as his visible representative here on earth, and that's what all the Successors of Peter (Bishops of Rome) are expected to be. They are first and foremost to be at the people's side and then, lead them along the way that Jesus has already shown, just as a good shepherd leads

Rev. Fr. Vimal Tirimanna, CSSR

his sheep. Pope Francis who as the Cardinal Archbishop of Buenos Aires used to travel daily by bus and do his own cooking, often has been insisting that bishops and priests all over the world as shepherds of the flock (the sheep) of Jesus Christ need to be so close to them (the sheep) in such a way that they familiarize themselves with them, be in solidarity with them, not above them. To put it in his famous words, he wants them to get "the smell of the sheep" (*l'odore delle pecore*), by going into the sheepfold, being with the sheep, sharing their joys and sorrows, rather than sitting in comfortable places or even inside the sanctuary of the church. In his very first visit to the Cathedral of San Rufino, Assisi, on October 4, 2013, in a memorable speech he expressed exactly the same sentiments colourfully when he said: "This, I have been repeatedly saying, to walk with our people, at times in front of them, at times in their midst and at times behind them, in front of them, to guide the community; in the midst of them, to encourage and sustain them; behind them, to keep them together in unity so that no one should be too far behind; and also for another reason: to have 'the smell' (*il fiuto*) of the people, to have their sense, because people normally have the sense for new ways to walk; they have the sense of the faith which theologians call 'sensus fidei!'"

The Pope's oft-repeated call urging bishops and priests to reach out to people is vividly expressed

also in *Evangelii Gaudium* No:49 where he repeats what he has been already telling the priests of the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires when he was the Archbishop there: "I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security!"

A Down-to-Earth Realistic Approach

What has endeared this Pope to most of the people around the world (even among non-Catholics) is his down-to-earth approach to the Church and world issues. His concern to find some concrete pastoral solutions to those who are in difficult marriage and family situations (by calling the two Synods, one of which just ended in Rome) without denying the Church's cherished teachings, is a clear example of this. That is to say, he is more interested in arriving at where concrete, real human persons live in the world and finding ways of showing them that the gospel of Jesus is indeed "good" news rather than endlessly repeating Church's teachings in an abstract way that goes above and beyond the real people of this world! This was exactly the style of Jesus, too, who spoke and worked among real people of this world, in their own concrete life situations.

Extraordinary Love for the Poor

Our present Pope is the only Successor of Peter to choose the name Francis, after St. Francis of Assisi, the great friend of the poor who first founded a religious congregation that was to earn its own living by begging (*mendicanti*). In fact, one of the main characteristics that defines Pope Francis is his love for the

(Contd on Pg. XXII)



Miraculous Moment with the Holy Father, Pope Francis



The Holy Father, His Holiness Pope Francis who arrives in Sri Lanka on January 13, 2015 has proved himself as a Pope of Surprises. I would like to share in this article, the miraculous moment spent with him, a day in his life as the Pope and some poignant measures of his mission to restore authenticity and integrity in the Universal Catholic Church.

During his years as the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, he was known for living a simple lifestyle, using public transport and spending much time with people in the poorest parts of the city. As far as feasible, he continues to live that way today, using a small car, travelling by coach with his fellow cardinals and rejecting any symbols of power and prestige.

I am sure the readers may have heard tales of astonished individuals who've picked up their phones to hear a voice on the other end saying, "Hello, this is Francis speaking, I received your letter and was wondering when you'd like to come and meet me.?" He loves to manage his daily diary himself and maintain as much contact as possible with people.

The news of the Holy Father's magnanimous gesture to invite the 'Fernando Family' to his

Private Mass at Saint Martha's House reached whilst my wife and I were in the Olympic City of Lausanne, Switzerland to attend my graduation and for a while we were speechless. The four children barely had a couple of hours to leave Colombo for Rome.

It has been a dream of my family to join the assertive Pope with the winning smile at a Holy Eucharist, to partake in the celebration of the greatest miracle on earth on the very altar of his Private Chapel in the Vatican State. Indeed, that moment with the charismatic leader of 1.2 billion Catholics in the world will linger as the most cherished event in the lives of self, wife Carmel and children - Shanil, Shalini, Shemal Jnr and Shenali.

When the day September 18, 2013 dawned, we reached the Vatican well in advance and the Swiss Guards on duty guided us right to the chapel without any hassle. The Holy Mass took nearly 40 minutes and at the end, the Pope came and joined the congregation in silent meditation for a few minutes. Then we were warmly embraced by the Holy Father.

His relaxed, unhurried way of speaking to each one of us, asking questions, joking

and seeming apparently delighted to spend time chatting certainly amazed us. He was pleased to hear that I have been christened on Christmas Day like him and that we share our birthdays on two consecutive days in the month of December. The Holy Father quipped, 'We can share one birthday cake!'

His Holiness was delighted to hear about the development in Sri Lanka since the end of the humanitarian operations, to identify our resplendent isle as the land of 'Cardinal Ranjith,' discuss about the career in the Navy, congratulate on the Silver Anniversary and share a few minutes with each child and had a hearty laugh in accepting the decorative pack of 'Ceylon Tea.' Then the Holy Father astonished us by proposing a 'Family Portrait,' before warmly bidding each one of us adieu.

Throughout the audience with the Holy Father, he repeated his first words immediately after his election on March 13, 2013 from the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, 'Pray for me!' easily more than a dozen times.

Saint Martha's House

It was within days after the inauguration of his pontificate that Pope Francis disclosed that he would not be living in the Vatican's Apostolic Palace,

but had chosen to reside in the guesthouse known as Saint Martha's House which would allow the Holy Father 'to live in the community' with other priests and people staying or passing through the Vatican.

Saint Martha's House stands on the site of a hospital built a century earlier to provide health services for local residents or for pilgrims travelling through the Eternal City and was fully refurbished in the 1990s under Pope John Paul II. In more recent decades it served as a home where elderly priests and bishops could live out their twilight years following their retirement.

But after participating in two conclaves himself, Pope John Paul II decided the time had come to improve living arrangements for the cardinals called from countries around the world to elect a new successor of St. Peter. Accordingly, the ancient hospital was transformed into a five story guesthouse with one apartment, 106 suites and 22 single rooms.

Suite 201

During a conclave, rooms in the Saint Martha's are assigned. Argentinian Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio was allocated Room 207, where he continued to stay for

a week or so. After he decided that the splendid isolation at the Apostolic Palace was not for him, he moved into Suite 201, which includes a small sitting room for receiving guests.

Pope Francis said that the Apostolic Palace seemed to him like "an inverted funnel" – big and spacious, but with a really narrow entrance. He explained, "People can only come in dribs and drabs and I cannot live without people. I need to live my life with others." He elaborated that a strong sense of community, together with discipline and a missionary spirit, were the three features of Jesuit life that first attracted him to the order.

The simple, austere setting of Suite 201 where the Pope now lives and works has drawn much attention. Besides a small desk, an armchair and a stiff-backed chair where the Pope chooses to sit, there are a few books and objects that include an icon of St. Francis, a statue of Our Lady of Lujan, Patron Saint of Argentina, a crucifix and a statue of a sleeping St. Joseph.

It was on St. Joseph's feast day, March 19, 2013 that Pope Francis inaugurated his ministry, explaining that just as Joseph was the loving, faithful guardian of Mary and the young Christ child, so we are all called to be responsible guardians of Christ, of each other and of all God's creation.

Holy Mass

The Pope's day begins around 0500, when he gets up and spends an hour or so in private prayer preparing for the day ahead. The Holy Father once disclosed that he likes to pray with the psalms in the morning, while in the evening, between 1900 and 2000, he likes to spend an hour in adoration in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

At 0700 he celebrates Holy Mass in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit at Saint Martha's House. The Chapel of the Holy

Spirit has large glass windows along one wall of the chapel that give it a light, airy atmosphere, while a striking white ceiling with sloping sides decorated with triangular shapes recalls the Holy Trinity hovering above the heads of those gathered.

In the chapel, a small central aisle leads to the plain white marble altar and large wooden crucifix on the wall behind. It is where, Pope Francis has presided at Holy Mass with regular groups of Holy See employees and other guests visiting the Vatican City state.

Formal Encounters

After breakfast, the Pope sets off through the Vatican gardens to the Apostolic Palace where most of his formal encounters and audiences take place. On an average day, he may meet with a president or a prime minister, religious or lay people, or with bishops from around the world.

He'll also meet with his closest advocates, the cardinal and bishops in charge of the different Curial offices, and sometimes there'll be a less formal encounter with friends, journalists or ordinary people who have written to the Pope sharing their personal stories of joy or suffering.

Attitude of Closeness

At lunchtime, the Pope returns to Saint Martha's to share a meal, often in the company of those he has met with during the course of the morning. After a short rest and a quick cup of coffee, it is back to work for the rest of the afternoon, before returning to the guesthouse for a shared dinner and a private time of evening prayer. He still listens to classical music to relax before bed and Borges and Dostoevsky are among the authors he most frequently revisits.

(Cont. Pg 15)



Journey of Blessed Joseph Vaz



Miraculous moment...

Contd. from Pg. 14..

That attitude of closeness can be clearly seen when the Pope holds his General Audience attended by tens of thousands of people in St. Peter's Square. After sharing his reflections and brief greetings read by assistance in a dozen different languages, Pope Francis spends up to two hours walking through the crowds, shaking hands, embracing, hugging and talking to pilgrims, particularly children and young people or the sick, disabled and elderly visitors.

Hands-on Approach

While the media has been astonished and

enchanted by his more hands-on approach, Pope Francis has insisted that every good pastor, priest or bishop, should always be found, "walking with our people." During a visit to Assisi, the city of his namesake, the Pope asked priests, "What could be more beautiful for us than waling with our people? In front in order to guide the community, in the middle in order to encourage and support, and at the back in order to keep it united and so that no one lags too far behind."

Flight to Rome

The Vatican provided a first-class air ticket to the future Pope to come to Rome for the Conclave, but he refused to use it and opted to trav-

el in economy for the 13-hour flight to Rome. The only concession to comfort he made was to request a seat by the emergency exit where there was more legroom. He had a bad knee and hip. The Alitalia crew put him in Row 25 and he settled in for the long flight.

Name as Francis

Pope Francis commenting of his choice of name said, during the election, I was seated next to Archbishop Emeritus of Sao Paulo and Prefect Emeritus of the Congregation for the Clergy, Cardinal Claudio Hummes: a good friend, a good friend! When things were looking dangerous, he encouraged me. And when the votes reached two-thirds, there

was the usual applause. And he gave me a hug and a kiss, and said: "Don't forget the poor!" And those words came to me: the poor, the poor. Then right away, thinking of the poor, I thought of Francis of Assisi.

First Act as the Pope

On the first day after his election, Pope Francis did something unprecedented. At about 0800, he slipped out of the Vatican in a single unmarked black car and rode across Rome to the Basilica of St. Mary Major, the largest and most beautiful basilica in the world dedicated to Mary, the Mother of God. Then stopped at the chapel in the far corner toward the back to place a bouquet

of flowers on the altar beneath an ancient icon of the Virgin Mary.

The image that Pope Francis knelt in front of is called 'Salus Populi Romani.' It is held to have been painted by St. Luke, the author of the Gospel that shows more than any other suffering side of Christ's life and also of Mary's life. The tradition that this particular image is the original, and was painted by St. Luke himself when Mary was still alive, is very strong.

The legend tells that after the Crucifixion, when Our Lady moved to the home of St. John, she took with her a few personal belongings, among which was a table built by Jesus himself in the work-

shop of St. Joseph and it was the top of this table that was used to memorialize her image. While applying his paints, St. Luke listened as the Mother of Jesus spoke of the life of her son, which the Evangelist later recorded in his Gospel.

It was truly an act of love of a son towards his mother. And in this act, we could see clearly more of the inner life of Pope Francis. No Pope has ever seemed so completely focused to honour the Blessed Virgin Mary before doing anything else. And that is why this first act of Francis's pontificate was so revelatory - he was declaring his love for Jesus's mother.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR B - 11th Jan. - 18th Jan. 2015

Sun: THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD
Is.55:1-11; 1Jn.5:1-9; Mk.1:7-11

Mon: Heb. 1:1-6; Mk.1:14-20

Tue: Memorial of St. Hilary, Bishop and Doctor
Heb.2:5-12; Mk. 1:21-28

Wed: Heb.2:14-18; Mk.1:29-39

Thu: Heb.3:7-14; Mk.1:40-45

Fri: Feast of Bl. Joseph Vaz, Apostle of Sri Lanka
Acts.20:17-18,28-32,36; Mk.16:15-20

Sat: Heb.4:12-16; Mk.2:13-17

Sun: SECOND SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME
1 Sam.3:3b -10,19; 1 Cor.6:13-15,17-20
Jn.1:35-42



Pope Francis' address to Asian Youth

Dear Young Friends,

This great gathering of Asian young people allows us to see something of what the Church herself is meant to be in God's eternal plan. Together with young people everywhere, you want to help build a world where we all live together in peace and friendship, overcoming barriers, healing divisions, rejecting violence and prejudice. And this is exactly what God wants for us. The Church is meant to be a seed of unity for the whole human family. In Christ, all nations and peoples are called to a unity which does not destroy diversity but acknowledges, reconciles and enriches it.

How distant the spirit of the world seems from that magnificent vision and plan! How often the seeds of goodness and hope which we try to sow seem to be choked by weeds of selfishness, hostility and injustice, not only all around us, but also in our own hearts. We are troubled by the growing gap in our societies between rich and poor. We see signs of an idolatry of wealth, power and pleasure which come at a high cost to human lives. Closer to home, so many of our own friends and contemporaries, even in the midst of immense material prosperity, are suffering from spiritual poverty, loneliness and quiet despair. God seems to be removed from the picture. It is almost as though a spiritual desert is beginning to spread throughout our world. It affects the young too, robbing them of hope and even, in all too many cases, of life itself.

Yet this is the world into which you are called to go forth and bear witness to the Gospel of hope, the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the promise of His Kingdom – this is your theme. In the parables, Jesus tells us that the Kingdom comes into the world quietly, growing silently yet surely wherever it is welcomed by hearts open

to its message of hope and salvation. The Gospel teaches us that the Spirit of Jesus can bring new life to every human heart and can transform every situation, even the most apparently hopeless. Jesus can transform all situations! This is the message which you are called to share with your contemporaries: At school, in the workplace, in your families, your universities and your communities. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we know that He has "the words of eternal life" (Jn 6:68), that His word has the power to touch every heart, to conquer evil with good, and to change and redeem the world.

Dear young friends, in this generation the Lord is counting on you! He is counting on you! He entered your hearts on the day of your Baptism; he gave you his Spirit on the day of your Confirmation; and He strengthens you constantly by His presence in the Eucharist, so that you can be His witnesses before the world. Are you ready to say "yes"? [Yes!] Are you ready? [Yes!] Thank you! Are you tired? [No!] Really? [Yes!]

A good friend of mine told me, "You cannot speak to the young with paper; you must speak and address young people spontaneously, from the heart."

This is only an apparent conflict, because when the Lord calls, He always does so for the good of others, whether it is through the religious life, the consecrated life, or as a lay person, as the father or mother of a family. The goal is the same: To worship God and to do good to others.

This is the prayer that a young person should make: "Lord what do you want from me?" With prayer and the advice of some good friends – laity, priests, religious sisters, bishops, popes. First, my advice is to pray; to pray for our brothers and sisters in the North: "Lord,



we are one family, help us. Help us to be united. You can do it. Let there not be winners and losers but only one family, only brothers and sisters." Now I invite you all to pray together in silence.

HOPE

Now, a word of hope. What is hope? There are so many forms of hope, but here is one which is really beautiful! Korea is one; it is a family. You all speak the same language, the language of one family; you are brothers and sisters who speak the same language. In the Bible, when the brothers of Joseph went down to Egypt to buy some food – they were hungry, they had money, but they had nothing to eat – they went there to buy food and they found a brother! How? Because Joseph realised that they spoke his language. Think about your brothers and sisters in the North: They speak the same language and when a same language is spoken in a family, there is room for hope.

None of us know what life will bring us. And you, dear young friends,

are asking: "What is in store for me?" We are capable of doing bad things, very bad things, but please, do not despair: The Father is always there waiting for us! Come back! Come back! This is the word: Come back! Come back home because the Father is waiting for me. And if I am a great sinner, he will celebrate the more. And you priests, please, embrace sinners and be merciful.

To hear this is something beautiful. It is something that brings me great happiness, to know that God never tires of forgiving; He never tires of waiting for us.

May Mary, our Mother, watch over you and keep you ever close to Jesus her Son. And from his place in heaven, may Saint John Paul II, who initiated the World Youth Days, always be your guide. With great affection I give you my blessing. And please, pray for me, thank you very much!

(We carry here excerpts of the Pope's address at the Asian Youth Day in Korea)





Pope Francis in the world of the young

A warm welcome by Korean youth



Asian Youth Day delegates welcome Pope Francis to Salmoe, where Koreans commemorate the birth of Catholicism. The faith was not brought to the peninsula by foreign missionaries but was sought out by Korean nobles in the late 18th century after reading Christian texts.

Hitching a ride in the Pope mobile



Pope Francis found some young friends to keep him company when he picked up two schoolboys in his Pope-mobile. The delighted 11-year-olds, Livio Bastianelli and David Maria Bianchi toured St Peter's Square in Pope Francis' white jeep, waving to the crowds.

With young offenders in a Rome prison



Pope Francis kisses and washes the feet of 12 young offenders at a Rome prison after Holy Mass, inside St Peter's Basilica which marked the beginning of four days of Easter ceremony in spectacular style. One of the 12 was a young Muslim woman. This was a ritual he had performed in Argentina. Previous popes would carry out the foot-washing ritual on Holy Thursday in Rome's grand St. John Lateran Basilica and the 12 people chosen for the ritual were priests to represent the 12 disciples.

A tribute from Indonesian youth



Indonesian youth take part in the 6th Asian Youth Day with Pope Francis at Salmoe Shrine in South Korea on August 15, 2014.

To young seminarians and novices



Pope Francis gave an off-the-cuff lecture to seminarians and novices from across the globe, at a four-day international event gathered in the Paul VI Hall. In his remarks, the Pope urged those present not to be tempted by a culture that exalts provisional values and told them to avoid trappings like the latest smart phones and expensive cars so that they can devote more resources to help the poor.

A little wanderer on stage with the Pontiff



Even little children gather around him. This adorable little boy waving to the crowd was on top of the world when he made friends with Pope Francis by wandering up onto the stage during the Pontiff's address at the Vatican's celebration for families.



Mesmerising the young at Copacabana in Rio



Pope Francis encouraged young people to honour their grandparents as he addressed a crowd of 3 million, on Friday, July 28, 2013 on Copacabana beach in Rio de Janeiro during the 28th World Youth Day



celebrations. Estimates stated that it was the largest gathering ever in Copacabana.

The Pope noted that Friday marks 'Grandparent's Day' in Brazil and many other countries. He said

young people should thank their grandparents for the wisdom they share. Bridging the gap between younger and older generations has been a major message for the Pope during his trip to Brazil.





English with Fun and Entertainment

Dear Readers,

In our 57th lesson we read about the predictions of Birth of Christ and events from the life of St. Nicholas with an insightful reference to the origin of Santa Claus.

In this lesson let's concentrate on the **Landmarks of the illustrious career of Pope Francis**

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

Activity 1 – Read aloud and learn the Landmarks of the illustrious career of Pope Francis



Spoken style Your Holiness
Religious style Holy Father

The official style of the Pope in English is *His Holiness Pope Francis*; in Latin, *Franciscus, Episcopus Romae*. *Holy Father* is another honorific often used for popes. His full title, rarely used, is: *His Holiness Francis, Bishop of Rome, Vicar of Jesus Christ, Successor of the Prince of the Apostles, Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, Primate of Italy, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Roman Province, Sovereign of the Vatican City State, Servant of the servants of God.*

Activity 2: Let's learn a few similar words to the underlined words and read the text again.

official – authorized, certified, endorsed, sanctioned

honorific – title, name, designation, pseudonym,

vicar – priest, cleric, rector, preacher, parson

successor – heir, inheritor, beneficiary, legatee

primate - archbishop, bishop, prelate cardinal

Coat of arms of Pope Francis



Motto: *Miserando Atque Eligendo* (Latin: "by having mercy and by choosing")

Symbolism: *Jesuit emblem*: In reference to Francis being a Jesuit, the uppermost charge is the emblem of the Society of Jesus. The emblem is composed of a radiating sun, within which is the IHS christogram (a monogram of the Holy Name of Jesus) in red, with a red cross surmounting the H and three black nails below the H.

Eight-pointed star: It is a long-standing symbol of the Virgin Mary.

Spikenard: Also called a nard flower, it represented Saint Joseph. In Hispanic iconographic tradition Saint Joseph is often depicted with a branch of spikenard in his hand.

Activity 3: Learn the inspirational quotes from Pope Francis as a spiritual and world leader

Quote (i) "I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security. I do not want a Church concerned with being at the center and then ends by being caught up in a web of

obsessions and procedures." —Pope Francis

The pope implored those involved in the conflict to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.

Quote (ii) "Leave behind the self-interest that hardens your heart, overcome the indifference that makes your heart insensitive towards others, conquer your deadly reasoning, and open yourself to dialogue and reconciliation."

Quote (iii) "The proposal of the Gospel must be simpler, profound, and radiant. It is from this proposition that the moral consequences then flow."

Quote (iv) Pope Francis considers women an essential part of the church. "The feminine genius is needed wherever we make important decisions," he said.

Quote (v) "The Big Bang, which today we hold to be the origin of the world, does not contradict the intervention of the divine creator but, rather, requires it. Evolution is not inconsistent with the notion of creation."

For clergy - Pope Francis fears some clerics "become wolves and not shepherds". He criticized "spiritual worldliness", which can be defined as deceitfully trying to appear holy and said that "Careerism and the search for a promotion [to the hierarchy] come under the category of spiritual worldliness." Francis gave an example of clerical vanity,

Quote vi - "Look at the peacock; it's beautiful if you look at it from the front. But if you look at it from behind, you discover the truth ... Whoever gives in to such self-absorbed vanity has huge misery hiding inside them." Francis believes bishops and priests should resist the temptations of money, "careerism" and "vanity".

He states that "If, hypothetically, Western Catholicism were to review the issue of celibacy, I think it would do so for cultural reasons (as in the East), not so much

as a universal option." He emphasized that, in the meantime, the rule must be strictly adhered to, and any priest who cannot obey it "has to leave the ministry".

Activity 4: Learn some more delicate shades of meaning of the words selected from quotes

Bruised - injured, hurt, sore, damaged, hurting aching battered painful

Obsessions - manias, fascinations, fixations, passions, preoccupations

Conflict- battle, fight, war, struggle, skirmish, clash encounter, engagement

Indifference – unimportance insignificance, inconsequence, meaninglessness irrelevance, triviality

Reconciliation – settlement, understanding, resolution, compromise, reunion, ceasefire, appeasement

Proposition – plan, proposal, scheme, intention, suggestion, offer

Contradict – deny, reverse, oppose, challenge, gainsay, dispute, controvert, refute

Deceitfully – dishonestly, cunningly, fraudulently, deviously, treacherously, craftily.

Activity 5: Read the texts given below and frame five 'wh' questions.

Early Life and Education

Jorge Mario Bergoglio was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on December 17, 1936, to Italian immigrants. As a teenager, Bergoglio underwent surgery to remove a lung due to serious infection. Following his high school graduation, he enrolled at the University of Buenos Aires, where he received a master's degree in chemistry before beginning training at the Jesuit seminary of Villa Devoto. In March 1958, he entered the Society of Jesus.

Bergoglio went on to attend the Philosophical and Theological Faculty of San Miguel, where he earned a degree in philosophy, and later received a doctorate in theology in Freiburg, Germany.

Entering Priesthood



Ordained as a priest in December 1969, Bergoglio began serving as Jesuit provincial of Argentina in 1973. He later returned to his alma mater, the Philosophical and Theological Faculty of San Miguel, where he served as rector (1980-86) as well as a professor of theology.



In June 1992, Bergoglio was named titular bishop of Auca and auxiliary of Buenos Aires, and in February 1998, he became archbishop of Buenos Aires, succeeding Antonio Quarracino.



Three years later, in February 2001, he was elevated to cardinal by Pope John Paul II, named the cardinal-priest of Saint Robert Bellarmine.



In 2005, he was named president of the Bishops' Conference of Argentina, and he served in that position until 2011.

After Pope John Paul II's death in April 2005, Bergoglio received the second-most votes in the 2005 papal election; Pope Benedict XVI (Joseph Ratzinger) won election as Pope John Paul's successor.

Becoming Pope

On March 13, 2013, at the age of 76, Jorge Bergoglio was named the 266th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church—becoming the first citizen from the Americas, the first non-European and first Jesuit priest to be named pope, and adopting the name Pope Francis (he reportedly took the title after St. Francis of Assisi of Italy, a Catholic preacher during the 12th and 13th centuries).

Also in December 2013, Pope Francis was named Person of the Year by Time magazine

The following March, it was announced that Pope Francis had been nominated for the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize.

Questions –

When was Jorge Mario Bergoglio born ?

Where was he born?

Why did he undergo surgery as a teenager?

What are his qualifications?

When was he ordained as a priest?





Papal Visits to Sri Lanka

As the Catholic community awaits the blessed and rare visit of the present Pope it is quite necessary to know about the previous Papal visits in 1970 and 1995. History is a teacher that takes us back to the past in order to prepare us for the future!



Pic. Nihal Senewiratne

VISIT OF BLESSED POPE PAUL VI

During the 1960s the Catholic Church and the government were not having a sound relationship. This was due to nationalizing of private schools and the political conflicts of the leftists and right-wing and many other socio-political reasons. However as time went on, the Papal pilgrimage of Pope Paul VI to Asia was announced. Without delay, the Prime Minister of Ceylon Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike with the guidance of the Archbishop of Colombo, His Grace Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Cardinal Cooray invited the Holy Father to visit Ceylon. The Pope's reply being a positive one, made the Ceylonese community prepare for the first ever Papal



Pope John Paul II at Galle Face Green

visit in just sixty days.

Finally, the Pope arrived after his visit to Manila, on December 4, 1970 in an ALITALIA aircraft at exactly 7.55pm. With more than eight hundred thousand people gathered at the Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA) premises, the Holy Father travelled in an Air Force Land Rover so that the people could see him. The Pope in his homily emphasised on peace and the necessity of a church of love. The few moments Pope Paul VI spent at BIA erased all ill-feelings of the past and generated a new atmosphere in cooperation of social reforms launched by the State. This Pontiff impressed the whole country as a true messenger of peace. Henceforth, a documentary film and Sinhala translation of the Social Doctrine of the Church was released to the public. Pope Paul left Ceylon three hours

later at 11.00p.m., despite a scheduled two hour stay

THE VISIT OF ST. POPE JOHN PAUL II

This visit was basically organised for the beatification of Blessed Joseph Vaz, Apostle of Sri Lanka. Scheduled for more than a day Pope John Paul II arrived at the BIA, on January 20, 1995 at 3.00p.m. President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunge and His Grace, Most Rev. Dr. Nicholas Marcus Fernando, who was Archbishop of Colombo, welcomed the Pontiff. The next morning thousands of the faithful were gathered at the Galle Face Green for the beatification of their long-loved Apostle, Fr. Joseph Vaz. After the beatification, Pope John Paul addressed the gathering and professed his message of peace. Thus the local Church started to shine in faith and continued its journey towards Holiness.

UPCOMING VISIT OF POPE FRANCIS

Since Jorge Mario Bergoglio was elected Pope two years ago, he has directed his flock towards the kingdom of God in quite a different way. His pontificate has been devoted to the values of simplicity and love. Pope Francis has certainly ignited the hearts of many people where hope had been diminished. It is this rejection of the ostentatious components of the



Papacy and a return to more simplistic roots of the Catholic faith that has propelled him into celebrity status, beyond what any other pope has known. Furthermore he has restarted activating the Vatican II reforms and made the Church strong in faith, hope and love. Truly, this upcoming visit by Pope Francis will re-organise the local Church and help its continuity in the right path. The significance of this Papal visit will not only be for the purpose of Canonizing Blessed Joseph Vaz but also to change ourselves and act as true Christ bearers - Abide in Love - will be our prime principle.

Avishka Mario Senewiratne
St. Joseph's College,
Colombo 10.

Pope Francis opens 2015 with calls for peace, loyalty to the Church and devotion to Mary



Pope Francis opened 2015 by calling on the world to redouble its efforts for peace, saying, "peace is always possible, and we have to seek it." He also asked Catholics to remain loyal to their Church.

"May there never again be wars, but always the desire and commit-

ment to peace and fraternity among peoples," the Pope said in his traditional noontime Angelus address on New Year's Day, delivered before a crowd of more than 100,000 gathered in St. Peter's Square.

"Prayer is at the root of peace," Francis said on January 1, also declared World Day of Peace.

The Pope's New Year message under the theme, "No Longer Slaves, but Brothers and Sisters" - indicates, that the Holy Father is reminding us of the Good News that Jesus has freed us from the slavery of personal sin and the structures of societal sin and invites us to accept this divine freedom, to live it out in our lives and to share it with all people.

However, instead of offering freedom and fraternity, the exploitation of countless human beings by many who hold power, "leads to contempt for the fundamental rights of others and to the suppression of their freedom and dignity," laments the Pope.

He writes that millions of people today - children, women and men of all ages - are forced to live in slave-like conditions.

"I think of the many men and women labourers, including minors, subjugated in different sectors, whether formally or informally, in domestic or agricultural workplaces, or in the manufacturing or mining industry."

In his address Pope Francis prayerfully mentions migrants who have been lied to regarding jobs in foreign lands, adults and children held captive in labour trafficking and debt bondage, those caught in the snares of sex trafficking and those who have suffered (and often died from) organ trafficking. The Pope knows that human trafficking is not simply another money-making venture.

"Whenever sin corrupts the human heart and distances us from our Creator and our neigh-

bour, the latter are no longer regarded as beings of equal dignity, as brothers or sisters sharing a common humanity, but rather as objects. Whether by coercion or deception, or by physical or psychological duress, human persons created in the image and likeness of God are deprived of their freedom, sold and reduced to being the property of others. They are treated as means to an end." The Pope has stated.

"Businesses have a duty to ensure dignified working conditions and adequate salaries for their employees, but they must also be vigilant that forms of subjugation or human trafficking do not find their way into the distribution chain. Together with the social responsibility of businesses, there is also

the social responsibility of consumers. Every person ought to have the awareness that "purchasing is always a moral - and not simply an economic - act."

Organisations in civil society, for their part, have the task of awakening consciences and promoting whatever steps are necessary for combating and uprooting the culture of enslavement.

Pope Francis also calls for end to the "globalization of indifference," and a greater emphasis on fraternity and solidarity with all our brothers and sisters. He also calls for an end to indifference and tolerance of human trafficking, not only on the part of nations, but on the part of each individual. Many organizations besides governments have a role to play to ending trafficking.



Our work is done: Fr. Alex Dassanayake



I did not learn of Joseph Vaz in school. My generation school religious knowledge syllabus was silent on Joseph Vaz. We did not hear of him in church either. In 1995 when he was beatified in Colombo, it did not mean much to many of my generation. Then how did I hear of this Man-Saint to whom we owe our Catholic lives today.

We drove along narrow rustic roads first to Mahawewa and then to Wahakotte. It was just my husband, my baby daughter and Fr. Alex Dassanayake. It was the first time we had met Fr. Alex. All the way Fr. Alex talked about Joseph Vaz and his life and mission in Sri Lanka. Fr. Alex was the expert. We knew nothing and tried eagerly to soak in his vast knowledge.

Fr. Alex wanted me to

write about some places hallowed by Joseph Vaz in and around Kandy. That is how I got my price photographs of the relics of Joseph Vaz given to the Mahawewa community and the Wahakotte community. At Mahawewa he led us to the church on the hill and took out the ivory statue of Our Lady from its glass case and removed the oversized crown placed on her head by the devotees - so that I could take a photo of the statue.

At Wahakotte the crucifix behind the altar in the Sacristy was placed high on a cupboard and closed with a glass globe. I was wondering how to take a photo of this when almost as if reading my mind Fr. Alex got a wobbly stool and climbed on to the cupboard and removed the glass globe. We held our breath. He handed down the crucifix to us and told me to take a picture which has been one of my favourite shots ever since. He did not stop there he took us into the garden overgrown at that time, to a structure built in honour of the Blessed Joseph Vaz. After many more stops we returned to the Ampitiya Seminary. Fr. was silent on the return journey he wheezed badly. However next morning he was waiting for us and wanted to show us the Blessed Joseph Vaz shrine on the opposite hill from the Seminary which had been refurbished by Fr. Claver.

After this initial meeting with Fr. Alex, several years back I would often call him to verify facts on Joseph Vaz.

The last time I talked to him was last November - with labored breath he told me "our work is now complete". Fr. Alex served as the Vice Postulator in the cause of Canonization of Blessed Joseph Vaz - the Apostle of Sri Lanka. He had carried out his mission effectively under the guidance of his heroes dying words: "Remember that one cannot easily do at the time of his death what one has neglected to do all his life". A saying that he even got printed on his letter head.

Saying all that it must be added that Fr. Alex Dassanayake was introduced to me by Mr. Christopher. One evening in 2005 two strangers came to see me at my residence. They had removed their shoes at the door and sat in the Verandah waiting for me. This was how I met Mr. Christopher. Christopher was precise with words and did not waste time. "The Joseph Vaz feast is coming up in a few weeks, he informed me. My parish church at Moratu Modara is dedicated to him". It did not mean a thing to me - "I do not know anything about this person", I half lied remembering that I did in fact have a book under that title inherited from my father's library. Later I also remembered that Fr. Anselm Cruz had referred to Joseph Vaz as having been a good friend of King Narendrasimha of Kandy. Fr. Cruz had also taken me to the Archbishop's private parlour to show me the large painting of the man with the bird like fea-

tures. This is how I came to know about Joseph Vaz and his crucial mission in Sri Lanka.

Every year thereafter in the first week of January, Mr. Christopher would come to remind me of the impending feast of the Blessed Joseph Vaz. He would invariably bring me leaflets, booklets, newspaper articles, photocopies, photographs. One day he brought me a book on Joseph Vaz autographed by the Indian priest author. It was no surprise that I became an enthusiastic proponent of Joseph Vaz - visiting churches and shrines dedicated to him and digging up historic documentation on him, throughout the length and breadth of the island. All my research would be put into words and pictures in News paper articles. I remember an occasion when Mr. Christopher had inspired me to carry out some basic research on Joseph Vaz in Katukurunda, Kalutara, Christopher himself leading me to many places including the house once owned by the family of Fr. Suwaris where Fr. Joseph Vaz had taken rest.

In his company I was also introduced to Mr. Raymond Fernando the wood statue carver. I was impressed to see how Mr. Christopher spiritually inspired Mr. Raymond to carry out his work. I was surprised to hear how Christopher and Raymond had carried a statue of the Blessed Joseph Vaz during the war times - having bought a separate bus ticket for the statue all the way to the Mannar Bishop's



House. I learnt that every time a statue was completed - it was Christopher who would accompany him to the various churches to present and install it.

It was also Mr. Christopher who introduced me to the work carried out by the Joseph Vaz Committee - a small but dedicated lot of persons. I believe their prime objective was to promote the devotion to Blessed Joseph Vaz. Led by Fr. Alex Dassanayake and the most Rev. Dr. Vianney Bishop of Kandy, they have worked tirelessly for the cause of the Canonization. But what inspired me most were those members of the Joseph Vaz Committee who silently walked endless miles and spent ungrudgingly their money to propagate the name and work of Joseph Vaz.

Kishanie S. Fernando

Pope Francis Surprises Again: 20 new Cardinals, majority from developing nations

Pope Francis announced his new picks for Cardinals last Sunday and the lineup continues to diversify the top leadership in the Catholic Church.

The Pope selected 20 new Cardinals from 18 countries and not one is from the United States and, only one is from the Vatican bureaucracy. These Cardinals, Pope Francis said in his Sunday Angelus in St. Peter's Square, show that the Church of Rome and the particular churches across the world are connected by "indissoluble links."

Selecting Cardinals is one of the most important choices a Pope makes. Cardinals are the Catholic Church's senior leaders, lead the largest dioceses and are the Church's highest-ranking advisers. Most importantly, Cardinals under the age of 80 vote to select the Pope. Pope Paul VI set the limit of Cardinal electors at 120 and Pope Francis' new picks will push that number to 125.

Pope Francis, once again, showed that he wants this top Church leadership to reflect the changing global Catholic population and priorities. Seven of the new cardinals come from Europe, five from Latin America, three from Asia, three from Africa and two from Oceania. Three countries —

Burma, Cabo Verde and Tonga — will each have a Cardinal for the first time. The only English speaker in the group is Archbishop John Dew from New Zealand and the only Vatican official in the group is the Moroccan-born Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, who leads the Vatican's Supreme Court. The last time the US did not receive a Cardinal for two years in a row was nearly four decades ago.

Last Sunday's move is another play in Francis' efforts to reform the Roman Curia, and not just geographically. In mid-February, he will call all the Cardinals to the Vatican for a two-day meeting "to reflect on the orientations and proposals for the reform of the Roman Curia."

The 15 new Cardinals under the age of 80 and eligible to vote for the next Pope are:

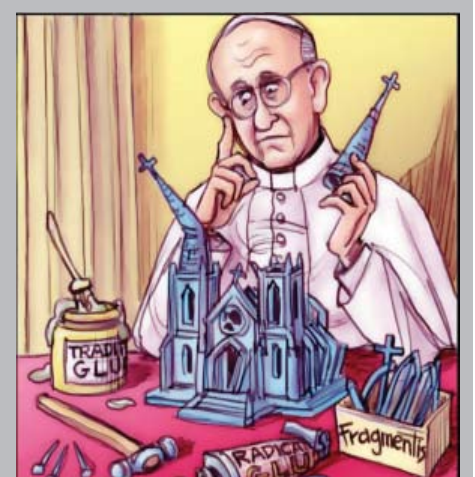
- Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura
- Archbishop Manuel José Macario do Nascimento Clemente, Patriarch of Lisbon (Portugal)
- Archbishop Berhaneyesus Demerew Souraphiel, C.M., of Addis Ababa

- (Ethiopia)
- Archbishop John Atcherley Dew of Wellington (New Zealand)
- Archbishop Edoardo Menichelli of Ancona-Osimo (Italy)
- Archbishop Pierre Nguyen Van Nhon of Hanoi (Vietnam)
- Archbishop Alberto Suárez Inda of Morelia (Mexico)
- Archbishop Charles Maung Bo, S.D.B., of Rangoon (Burma)
- Archbishop Francis Xavier Kriengsak Kovithavanij of Bangkok (Thailand)
- Archbishop Francesco Montenegro of Agrigento (Italy)
- Archbishop Daniel Fernando Sturla Berhouet, S.D.B., of Montevideo (Uruguay)
- Archbishop Ricardo Blázquez Pérez of Valladolid (Spain)
- Bishop José Luis Lacunza Maestrojuán, O.A.R., of David (Panama)
- Bishop Arlindo Gomes Furtado of Santiago de Cabo Verde (Archipelago of Cape Verde)
- Bishop Soane Patita Paini Mafi of Tonga (Island of Tonga)

The five additional honorary Cardinals — Archbishops and bishops emeriti, who are over the age of 80 and therefore unable to vote in papal elections — are:

- José de Jesús Pimiento Rodríguez, Archbishop Emeritus of Manizales (Colombia)
- Archbishop Luigi de Magistris, Major Pro-Penitentiary Emeritus
- Archbishop Karl-Josef Rauber, Apostolic Nuncio
- Luis Héctor Villaba, Archbishop Emeritus of Tucumán (Argentina)
- Júlio Duarte Langa, Bishop Emeritus of Xai-Xai (Mozambique)

The new Cardinals will be elevated formally at the Vatican on Feb. 14. Pope Francis will then have appointed a total of 31 cardinals. (TIME)





Francis: The... Contd. from Pg. 4

was a line that had been very critical of the neoliberalism of the 1990s and the prescriptions of the International Monetary Fund, which constantly sought repayment of the foreign debt on the basis of the sacrifice of those who had the least.

It is easy to detect in Bergoglio's pronouncements before the financial collapse at the beginning of the century his concern for the deteriorating situation in the country. His messages in the *Te Deum* on May 25, 2000—which became a kind of civic speech of great consequence—were eloquent. In 2000, when Fernando de la Rúa had been president for less than five months, Bergoglio said: "Sometimes I wonder if we aren't marching, in certain aspects of the life of our society, in a sad parade, and if we aren't putting a tombstone on our search as if we were walking toward an unavoidable destiny, doomed to impossible things, and we just resign ourselves to small illusions lacking hope. We must acknowledge, with humility, that the system has fallen into a period of dark shadow—the shadow of distrust—and that some of the promises and principles sound

like a funeral procession, with everyone consoling the relatives, but nobody waking the dead."

After the worst of the crisis, in the *Oficio Patrio* Mass of 2003, before Nestor Kirchner, who had assumed the presidency just hours before, Bergoglio called for everyone to "carry the nation on their shoulders" to make the country great.

But it was his homily of the *Te Deum* Mass the following year that would end up having the largest political consequences. Among many other ideas, Bergoglio pointed out that Argentines "are quick to intolerance." He criticized "those who feel so included they exclude everyone else, those who are so clairvoyant they have become blind," and he warned that "copying the hate and violence of the tyrant and the murderer is the best way to inherit it." The next day, his spokesperson at the time, a priest named Guillermo Marco, clarified that the archbishop's words were directed to the whole society, including the government and the Church itself, and that, in any event, "if the shoe fits, wear it." President Kirchner was highly annoyed and decided never to attend another *Te Deum* officiated by Bergoglio. And in an act not seen in two hundred years of Argentine history, he moved the *oficio patrio* out of Buenos Aires,

to churches in various capitals of the province.

Except for a chance occurrence—a tribute to the Pallottines massacred during the military dictatorship—Kirchner and Bergoglio never saw each other again.

The Cardinal was often the target—especially during the 2005 conclave, in which he was one of the most likely Papal candidates—of persistent journalistic attacks. Reporters accused him of turning over two Jesuit priests who had been working in a slum to a marine command during the military dictatorship. The author of the report claimed that Bergoglio, who was at that time the leader of Argentina's Jesuits, was trying to push out the progressive members of the Church of the Society of Jesus.

Other observers thought just the opposite—that Bergoglio actually saved the lives of the two priests and circumvented an extreme crisis in his religious community. "It was a very difficult time for the Church of the Society of Jesus, but if he had not been at the forefront of it, the difficulties would have been much worse," said the Order's two-time secretary of religious matters, Angel Centeno.

Personal charm

To many leaders who visit him regularly, Bergoglio is a man of personal charm who captivates with his demeanor

and shines with his guidance. To the regular people who for one reason or another come into contact with him, he is a simple, warm person, full of thoughtful gestures in things both big and small. For those who know his religious thinking intimately, he is the priest committed to getting the Church out among the people with a message of compassion and enthusiasm; the priest whose veneration would turn into a true phenomenon of popular devotion in Buenos Aires; the pastor who is ultimately respectful of orthodox doctrine and ecclesiastic discipline, but equally the owner of an understanding that is both modern and spiritually profound about the Church and living the Gospel in challenging contemporary society.

But who is this descendant of Italians, born in Buenos Aires in 1936? Who is this boy who graduated from high school as a chemical technician and at age twenty-one embraced his religious calling? Who is this Jesuit, ordained at age thirty-three, professor of literature and psychology, with degrees in theology and philosophy, speaker of several languages? Who is this religious man who was a teacher at the Colegio de la Inmaculada Concepcion in Santa Fe, Argentina (1964-1965); provincial superior, from age thirty-six to forty-three, of the Company

of Jesus in the country (1973-1979); and rector of the Colegio Maximo in San Miguel, Argentina (1980-1986)? Who is this priest, confessor of the community of the Colegio del Salvador of Buenos Aires (1986-1990), who in his first year took a six-month sabbatical in Germany, where he completed his thesis on the eminent theologian and Catholic philosopher Romano Guardini, who helped stoke the church reform that took shape in the Second Vatican Council?

Who is this teacher who brought Jorge Luis Borges to class and had him read his students' short stories? Who is this pastor convinced that the Church should go from "regulating faith" to "transmitting and facilitating faith"? Who is this religious minister who in a very few years went from a modest place in a Jesuit residence in the city of Cordoba to become archbishop of Buenos Aires, cardenal primado of Argentina, and president of the diocese? Who is this Argentine who lived an almost monastic life, and is now pope?

Despite the maxim that it is difficult to know what a Jesuit is thinking—and allowing a certain mysterious aura that goes with the personality—this book *'El Jesuita'* tries to answer those questions on the basis of a series of meetings with Cardinal Bergoglio that took place over the course of more than two years in the



central office of the Buenos Aires archbishopric.

It was not easy to persuade him to do it. "Journalistic interviews are not my strength," he often says. (In fact, in our first meeting he agreed, initially, to discuss only his homilies and sermons.) When he finally agreed, he placed no conditions, although he showed a certain resistance to talking about himself in our efforts to show his human side and his spiritual dimension. And every session invariably ended with the cardinal's expressing doubt about the usefulness of the task: "Do you think anything I said might be helpful?"

There was never any attempt to exhaust the subjects that came up. Only to get a sense of the mind of this sensitive and yet also resolute and very sharp man, who had already become an important key to the Church in the world. His responses reflect a country in constant crisis, a Church plagued with challenges, and a society that searches, often unconsciously, to satisfy its thirst for transcendence.

To men and women who want to find meaning in their lives, to love and to be loved, and to find happiness, his answers are, in sum, an invitation to think with your gaze upon the most high.

Pope Francis: Man... Contd. from Pg. 10

poor and the marginalized, a clear trait of a real man of God. It is almost impossible to read any of his discourses or homilies without finding a reference to them, always in their favour. Even in his Papal audiences, he always gives a special place to the poor, the sick, the marginalized and makes it a point to break all formal/security arrangements and reach out to them and have a word with them, often a word of encouragement and prayer that often end in a blessing. After becoming Pope, he refused to live in the magnificent Apostolic Papal Palace in the Vatican, the official residence of Popes, and opted to live at Casa di Santa Marta. Immediately after his assuming of office as Pope, one of the first things he did was to make one of the Papal ceremonial liturgists an Archbishop, and put him in charge of doing charity to the poor in Rome. This writer personally heard from Archbishop Konrad Krajewski himself that the Pope told him in plain language: "Don't be wasting your precious time hanging around me for all these liturgical, ceremonial rubrics, but go.... and attend to the poor around us here in Rome, on behalf of me and the Church!" It is now public knowledge that the gifts the Pope receives often end up with the poor through Archbishop Krajewski's pastoral activities in Rome.

Calling a Spade a Spade!

Another clear characteristic of

this Pope is his boldness to proclaim the Gospel values and as he often says, to do so with joy and with humour – after all, it is a gospel of joy, not a gospel of anxiety or worry that imparts on people unbearable burdens! Just as Jesus, the prophet, was in His day, our present Pope has no time for diplomacy and duplicity. Since he has nothing to hide or no need to hoodwink others, he is honest to himself and expresses his convictions in his words and deeds without any inhibition whatsoever. There is no hypocrisy in him, and the world (irrespective of religious differences) has clearly seen this in Pope Francis and respects him for that. Only a God-fearing, truthful and convinced person could afford to do this and that is what Pope Francis is!

Continuing the Spirit of the Second Vatican Council

This, to me is the greatest contribution this Pope is making for our Church and history will not forget his unique role in bringing back to the Church that spirit of the Early Church which the Second Vatican Council tried to revive. His sincere intention not to govern the Church on his own, unilaterally and dictatorially, but together with the College of Bishops, is a clear illustration of this. After all, our Catholic faith tells us that Jesus entrusted His authority not just to St. Peter alone, but to the Twelve Apostles headed by Peter.

One of Pope Francis' efforts to revive and re-live this genuine ecclesial spirit is his appointment of Eight Cardinals representing all the continents of

the world as a primary group of advisers to him in making basic Church reforms, beginning with the Vatican Curia (This group of Cardinals was later expanded to nine members, now known as G-9). Anyone who reads his one and only Apostolic Exhortation to-date, *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013) will be able to see how the Pope yearns to re-introduce that spirit (The spirit of Collegiality) to the Church life all over the world. Moreover, the recent Synod itself (which was the first under this Papacy) is a clear re-enactment of this spirit which was so evident in the Second Vatican Council, itself.

In his very opening speech to this Synod comprising bishop-representatives from all over the world, Pope Francis encouraged them to speak freely. He stressed that all must speak clearly with freedom to say what the Holy Spirit prompts them to say; he also wanted them to listen to each other with humility and openness. "Speaking clearly with frankness and listening with humility are the keys to collegiality," he said. The Pope's aim was not to impose his own will on the Church according to his own whims and fancies (though he as Pope, has all the authority to do so), but to arrive at discerning and understanding what the Spirit was telling the Church as a whole. He wished to exercise his responsibility as the Successor of Peter, but together with the College of Bishops and not in isolation, in his own right, so that the true voice of the Holy Spirit (promised by Jesus to the Church) could be clearly heard, discerned and listened to. That is precisely why he reassured his brother-bishops: "Have no fear, as this is

done with Peter and under Peter!"

Cardinal Raymond Burke of the USA later told reporters that there has been no other Synod that he knew of in recent times that assured the freedom of expression, as this particular Synod. This "new" attitude of enhanced collegiality of bishops is surely a recovery of what the Second Vatican Council taught with regard to the exercising of the Church's supreme authority to teach in and through the Successor of Peter in communion with the College of Bishops (cfr., *Lumen Gentium*, Nos:22,23). As a matter of fact, Vatican II did not invent such collegiality in teaching, but re-discovered what was already there in our Catholic tradition from the earliest times.

Reforming the Vatican Curia Bureaucracy

From the very first moment of his election, Pope Francis has made no secret of his aversion to exaggerated formalities. When he appeared on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, immediately after his election as 266th Pope, instead of using the customary formula in Latin of greeting the thousands of people gathered there at St. Peter's Square, he simply said in Italian "*Buona Sera!*" (Good Evening!). The new Pope's informal way of doing things was further seen by the whole world that evening when instead of first imparting the customary blessing of the new Pope, he himself inclined in front of the people gathered there asking them to pray for God's blessings on him to fulfill his duties as the Bishop of Rome.

Contd on Pg. XXIV



The Pope, rock and foundation of unity

Rev. Fr. Daniel Icatlo, JCD

You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church (16:18).” Pope Francis invites us all to reflect on this famous passage of the Gospel of St Matthew. Christ promises the primacy on the prince of the Apostles after Simon, in the name of the Twelve, professed his faith in Jesus as “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus calls Simon “blessed” for this faith, recognizing in him a special gift from the Father.

As we read in the Gospel of St John (cf. Jn 21: 15-18), Jesus will actually confer on him this primacy after his Resurrection. This supreme authority is given to Peter for the benefit of the Church. And since the Church has to last until the end of time, this authority will be passed on to Peter’s successors down through history. The Bishop of Rome, the Pope, is the successor of Peter.

Understanding Jesus’ words

The Holy Father exhorts us to pause for a moment on this point, on the fact that Jesus attributes this new name to Simon: “Peter,” who in Jesus’ language is pronounced “Kefa,” a word that means “rock.” In the Bible, this name, this word “rock” is referred to God. Jesus attributes it to Simon not for his quality or for his human merits, but for his genuine and firm faith, which comes from above.

Jesus feels a great joy in His heart, because He recognizes in Simon the hand of the Father, the action of the Holy Spirit. He recognizes that God the Father has given to Simon a “trustworthy” faith, in which He, Jesus, can build His Church, that is, His community. That is, all of us, all of us.

What Jesus had in mind was to give life to “His” Church, a people no longer founded on ancestry but rather on faith, namely a relationship with Himself, a relationship of love and of trust. Our relationship with Jesus builds the Church. And so to start His Church, Jesus needs to find in the disciples a solid faith, “trustworthy.” It is this that He must verify at this point of His journey.

The Lord has in mind the image of construction, the image of the community as an edifice. That is why, when He hears Simon’s sincere profession of faith, He calls him “rock,” the intention of building his Church upon this faith is manifested.

When building an edifice, the first step is to dig the foundation. The taller the building the deeper ought to be the foundation. However, once a bedrock is reached there would be no need for deeper excavations. That “rock” will support the whole structure.



The words of Jesus “You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church” has been fulfilled to the letter. The symbol of the Christendom, St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome is in fact constructed on top of the bones of the first Pope. Under the main altar rests the remains of “Kefa.”

Magisterial teachings

The Magisterium or teaching authority of the Church in the First Vatican Council definitively defined the doctrine of the primacy of Peter and his successors in these terms:

“We teach and declare, therefore, according to the testimony of the Gospel that the primacy of jurisdiction over the whole Church was immediately and directly promised to and conferred upon the blessed Apostle Peter by Christ the Lord. For to Simon, Christ had said, ‘You shall be called Cephas’ (Jn 1:42).

“Then, after Simon had acknowledged Christ with the confession, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God’ (Mt 16:16), it was to Simon alone that the solemn words were spoken by the Lord: ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of hell shall not prevail against it.

“I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven’ (Mt. 16: 17-19). And after his Resurrection, Jesus conferred upon Simon Peter alone the jurisdiction of supreme shepherd and ruler over his whole fold with the words, ‘Feed my lambs Feed my sheep’ (Jn 21:15-17; Vatican I, *Pastor aeternus*, chaps. 1,2 and 4).

The Church understands those words of Jesus to mean that the blessed Apostle Peter was constituted by Christ

the Lord as the Prince of all the Apostles and the visible head of the whole Church militant, and that he received immediately and directly from Jesus Christ our Lord not only a primacy of honour but also a true and proper primacy of jurisdiction.

Out of his deep humility, the Holy Father refers to himself as the Bishop of Rome. However, this does not mean that he is one more Bishop among the many Bishops of the world. To occupy the See of Peter is to be the Head of the Catholic Church. He is the “Vice Christ” or the visible Christ on earth.

Misunderstanding the Gospel passages

Some non-Catholic Christians mistakenly think that the papacy was invented by the Roman Emperor Constantine three-hundred years after Christ. They claim that up until then the Church had no single head. Rather, so they say, the Bible alone showed individual believers the way to follow Christ, and the Church was a democratic gathering of those followers.

If that were so, they wish to change Catholic beliefs and practices the way modern political systems change laws and leaders - by opinion polls and popular votes. Besides forgetting that the list of books included in today’s Bible was not finalised until decades after the death of Constantine, and besides ignoring the fifteen centuries of Christian history between St Paul and Martin Luther, that point of view seriously misinterprets the powerful Gospel passages in the Gospel of St. Matthew (16: 13-20).

But Christ’s Church was never a democracy. It has always been hierarchical in its structure from the very beginning of its existence. Besides, as the Mystical Body of Christ there is a harmonious interaction among the Church members and the members with their Head. Just as there is no democracy in our physical bodies, neither is there such a phenomenon in the Church.

The Church of the New Testament, like Israel of the Old Testament, is a family of believers, a kingdom ruled by God, with Christ Himself as the head of that family and the King of that kingdom. Christ chose to exercise His headship through a representative, a vicar on earth. That “Vice Christ” is the Pope, whoever he may be.

In other words, Jesus Himself invented the papacy as an instrument of unity and continuity for His Church, the community of believers forged by God’s grace and destined to overthrow the devil’s rule of evil, which has dominated the world since the fall of Adam and Eve. This comes across in St. Matthew’s Gospel passage cited above both in what Jesus says to Peter, who was the first Vicar of Christ, the first pope, and also in where he says it.

Another common misreading of the Gospel passages where Jesus promises primacy to Peter claims that “Kefa” is a word, with a feminine gender. In Greek, nouns and adjectives are gender specific. So, they conclude that it could not have been applied to Peter since he is definitely masculine. But Jesus used a masculine form precisely to indicate that He was referring to Simon, son of John. This is clearer when we consider the Latin translation which is “Petrus” (masculine gender) and not “Petra” (feminine gender) meaning rock.

Jesus was making a play of words in Aramaic, a Hebrew dialect, using the same term both in the primary as well as in the secondary clauses of His sentence. Thus, a clearer rendition for better understanding would be: “You are Kefa and upon this Kefa I will build my Church.” The English translation certainly loses the original clarity of the beautiful play of words the Lord wanted to convey.

Thus, the theory that Jesus was applying to himself the word “rock” and foundation of the Church on earth seem unfounded.

Pope’s visit to Sri Lanka

We would not want these reflections, however, to remain in the level of theoretical reflections. These ought to have a real bearing in our love and reverence for the Vicar of Christ.

The successor of Peter, Pope Francis, is coming to Sri Lanka for the first time in a few days. Both the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of this country extended invitations to which the Holy Father acceded. Aside from the material preparations, the more important preparation is the spiritual one.

The visit of a Pope to a country is normally pastoral in nature. He may attend some official receptions of a civic nature but that would not in any way transform his pastoral visit to the Church in Sri Lanka into one of a political nature. It is still a Shepherd’s meeting with Christ’s flock, which brings with it enormous amounts of graces. Let us therefore make the most of those graces and spiritual benefits that the Pope will dispense to us faithful by growing in faith and love for the Church and the Papacy.

Listen to what Pope Francis tells us. “Brothers and sisters, that which has occurred in a unique way to Saint Peter, also takes place in every Christian that develops a sincere faith in Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Jesus challenges each and every one of us. How is your faith? Each one must answer in their heart. How is your faith? What does the Lord find in our hearts? A steadfast heart like a rock or a sand-like heart, that is, doubtful, wary, incredulous?

“If the Lord finds in our hearts a faith, I do not say perfect, but sincere, genuine, then He also sees in us the living stones with which He can build His community. Of this community, the fundamental rock is Christ, the only cornerstone. On his part, Peter is a rock, as a visible foundation of the unity of the Church; but each baptized person is called to offer to Jesus their own faith, poor but sincere, so that He can continue to build his Church, today, in every part of the world.

“And today Jesus asks His disciples, that is us, all of us: “But you, who do you say that I am?” What will we respond? Let us think about this. But above all let us pray to God the Father, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary; let us pray that He may give us the grace to respond, with a sincere heart: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”