



# Messenger

**YEAR OF THE WORD OF GOD**

Whatever you do whether you eat or drink, do it all for God's glory.

**1 Cor 10: 31**

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## ◆ *Pope's Message for Lent* **Concern and fraternal correction this Lent**

**"Today, in general, we are very sensitive to the idea of charity and caring about the physical and material well-being of others, but almost completely silent about our spiritual responsibility towards our brothers and**

**sisters," said Pope Benedict calling on Christians worldwide to look-out for one another, in every sense, as they prepare to enter the period of Lent.**

"In a world which demands of Christians a renewed witness of love and fidelity to the Lord, may all of us feel the

urgent need to anticipate one another in charity, service and good works, as we prepare for Easter as members of the same body," the Holy Father said.

Being concerned for one another and fraternal correction were the focus of Pope Benedict XVI's message for Lent

presented on Tuesday at the Vatican by the Pontifical Council Cor Unam.

"The great commandment of love for one another," also demands that we acknowledge our responsibility towards others and want what is good for them "from every

point of view: Physical, moral and spiritual," the Pope has observed.

Inspired by a passage in the Letter to the Hebrews (Heb 10:24): 'Let us be concerned for each other, to stir a response in love and good works', the Holy Father underlines the importance of "being concerned" for one

another, which he said invites us to "not to remain isolated and indifferent to the fate of our brothers and sisters."

The Pope says, "Contemporary culture seems to have lost the sense of good and evil, yet there is a real need to reaffirm that good does exist and will prevail."



Cardinal Malcolm lights the traditional oil lamp

### **Christian life is a journey with the Cross: Cardinal**

**H**is Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, presiding at the 150th Jubilee of St. Mary's Church, Nayakakanda, reminded the faithful that to be a real Christian, is not to be obsessed with oneself and questioned the purpose and the rationale of a life lived totally for oneself.

The 150th Jubilee of St. Mary's Church, Nayakakanda, the largest parish the Archdiocese of Colombo, was held last Sunday, amidst a large

gathering of the faithful, clergy and the religious and politicians. The occasion was graced by the First Lady, Madam Shiranthi Rajapaksa and Prime Minister D. M. Jayaratne.

"Having consideration for another and being totally other-centred is the calling of a Christian - the Christ-like way," said His Eminence, reminding that it is better to make an effort to be other-centred.

"The journey of the Cross is not an easy  
*(Continued on Pg. 2) >>>*

**S**ing to the Lord with thanksgiving; make melody to ur God on the Lyre: (Ps. 147:7). This was the song of Praise on the lips of each and every member of the Peterite Family who got ready for the ceremonial opening of the Peterite Learning Resource Centre on Wednesday 1st February 2012. It is no doubt an act of Divine Providence that this event took place in the wake of the 90th year celebrations which commenced on 18th January 2012.

The Chief Guest at the function was His Excellency the Apostolic Nuncio, Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Spitteri and the Guest of Honour was the chief donor, Mr. Timothy Ashanta Andradi, who is a distinguished Old Boy and CEO of the London School of Commerce, UK. Many dignitaries including the Immediate Past Rector Rev. Fr. Felician R. Perera, other



His Excellency Joseph Spitteri, Apostolic Nuncio, declares open the new Library Complex of St. Peter's College, Colombo.

former Rectors, members of the Old Boys' Union, Parent-Teacher Association, Welfare Society and a gathering of well-wishers were present.

The day's proceedings commenced with a General Assembly which was followed by a Prayer Service and the Blessing and opening of the new four-storey building.

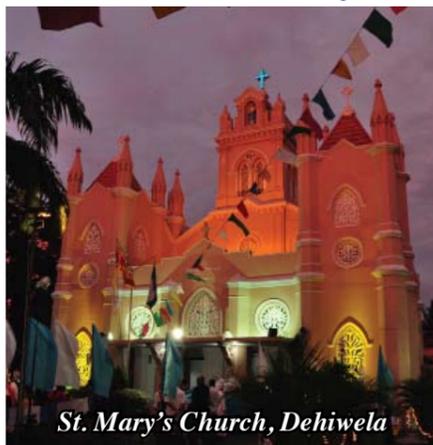
The Peterite Learning Resource Centre comprises an ultra-modern, air-conditioned, state-of-the art library with an IT centre, lecture halls, classrooms and many other facilities.

This edifice of learning is the brainchild of the Rector of the College and the benefactor Mr. Timothy

Ashanta Andradi. It was a dream which began six years ago. As the dream began to take shape, many people worked together in unison, love and loyalty. Many Old Boys gave of their time and service in order to give the best of the very best to the school which had given them the

*(Continued on Pg. 2) >>>*

### **The Blessed Mother of Dehiwela celebrates her 176th birthday**



St. Mary's Church, Dehiwela

**P**arishioners of St. Mary's Church Dehiwela will celebrate the 176th Anniversary of their Church today, 12th February 2012.

The week long celebrations commenced with the hoisting of the flag staff on 5th February 2012.

The evening Novenas, Holy Rosary, Holy Mass and Blessing with the Statue of Our Lady of Purification

were conducted by the Blessed Sacrament Fathers. Service of Vespers followed by procession was held on Saturday, 11th February with Rev Fr Ernest Poruthota, former Parish Priest as the chief celebrant.

Festive High Mass (Trilingual), was conducted by Very Rev Fr Bonnie Fernandopulle, Episcopal Vicar for the Western Region of the Archdiocese of Colombo.

### **Episcopal Ordination**



Episcopal Ordination of Msgr. Fidelis Emmanuel Fernando and Msgr. Maxwell Granville Silva, Bishops-elect, took place on 11 February 2012, at 9.00 a.m. at St. Lucia's Cathedral, Kotahena.

### **Pope Benedict to meet Fidel Castro in March?**

**T**he Vatican and the Cuban government are working towards a face-to-face meeting between Benedict XVI and the sick and elderly leader, Fidel Castro, which will take place during the upcoming papal visit to the Caribbean Island.

Former Cuban President Fidel Castro had a momentous meeting with Pope John Paul II back in 1998. Pope Benedict XVI will be in Cuba from March 26 to 28.



A procession in honour of Our Lady of Charity in Havana

## Congratulations!



Blessings and wishes to Stella Anthony, staff member, Colombo Catholic Press, who entered Holy Matrimony with Arul Selvam on 21st January 2012, at the Sacred Heart Church, Rajagiriya.

We wish them joy and happiness in their journey in life together.

## Senior Citizens get-together at Pallansena

A get-together of Senior Citizens of the Pallansena Parish, sponsored by the manager and staff of the National Saving Bank was held at Onara Restaurant, recently.

Around 200 Senior Citizens of the Senior Citizens' Association participated. Holy Mass was officiated by Rev. Fr. Richard Pieris.

The event was organised in association with the Parish Priest of Pallansena, Rev. Fr. Jayantha Nimal and Asst. Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Sisira Samarakoon.

(Melvyn de Costa)

## New SVP branch at Balangoda

New SVP branch of the SVP was opened at St. Joseph's Church, Balangoda.

The new office bearers are:

**President:** Mrs. Margaret Perera

**Vice President:** Clement Wilfred Cecil

**Secretary:** Mrs. Ranjany Perera

**Asst. Secretary:** Mrs. Helen Perera

**Treasury:** Ms. Bianca Wickramasuriya

(Theobald Samaratunga)

## Christian life....

Contd. from Pg. 1

one. The burden is heavy. Many Christians refuse to take the path of the Cross but rather follow a comfort-ridden life, filled with earthly requirements, thus moving away from the Cross.

Commenting on the 64th independence of the country, His Eminence said that after so many years we still fail to address ourselves as one nation. This was what led to the war but the war is over now and we still are a divided nation, he observed.

If the country needs to be resurrected from the ashes of the war, we have to bridge the caste, creed, religion and also political divisions. Then only a new era would dawn and a new Sri Lanka can be born.

His Eminence thanked the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Mahendra Gunathilake, the Assistant Priests and Parishioners of the Church for their dedicated efforts in the last two years to beautify the Church and see to the necessary restorations.

(Text and Pic by: Nimal Perera)

## Programme on enhanced writing skills



A programme on enhanced writing skills was held for Daham Pasal pupils from Grade Six to Eleven, at St. Francis Xavier Church, Sapugaskanda recently.

The programme was conducted by Mr. Kumara Nayanajith of the Lama Pradeepaya and Gnanartha Pradeepaya. (Pic: Niranjan Perera)

# Need to develop Catholic Schools in rural areas

"There are only a few Catholic teacher's in the Divulapitiya educational division. Most of the Catholic rural schools in the country are situated on the Kelaniya, Negombo, Kochchikade coastal boundary, but they don't have enough basic facilities.

"There are more Catholic teacher scarcity not only in our Minuwangoda Educational Zone but also in the whole country. 80% of the priests of the Archdiocese come from Catholic schools. Today as Catholic prefects of this school you

all must strive to focus attention on your education and be good citizens of this country. By doing so you can bring pride to your Alma Mater."

So said by Mr. Vajira Ranaraja Perera, Divulapitiya Divisional Director at the annual prefect badge pinning ceremony held at Pahala Madampella school.

"There are very few Catholic undergraduates appointed to the government schools so there are very few Catholics teachers. There is also a scarcity of Catholic teachers mainly in rural schools. So as of

ficers of the Education Department we have to face many difficulties. To top this trend both the Catholic Church and the government together with parents teachers and students must come together to develop the rural Catholic school and their standard. Otherwise there is no other way to change this situation."

Rev. Fr. Laknath Cooray and Mrs. K.M.P. Fernando principal of the school also spoke.

(Cecil Danicius)

## Drama artiste get Kalabushana award



Catholic Drama Artiste, Mr. Michael Peiris of Ratnapura was Awarded the 'Kalabushana' by Presidential Advisor A.H.M. Azwar at the John De Silva Hall recently. Mr. Peiris has worked in the drama field for the last 40 years.

(Theobald Samaratunge)

## Boys' Town Hotel Training School Nuwara Eliya



The Sri Lanka Technical Institute and Diyagala Boys' Town, Ragama, an apostolate of the Lasallian Institution of Sri Lanka turned a new page in its mission of education with the introduction of two aspects of training in hospitality at the Nazareth Retreat and Guest facility at

Nuwara Eliya recently.

Picture shows the new batch of Trainees with the Reverend Brothers, training staff and guests at the opening.

Inquiries: Mr. Benny 078-5661523 or Mr. Paul 072-3218014, 052-2222346

(DBT Correspondent)

## St. Euphrasia's Home Nayakakanda Flag Day 22nd February 2012

We appeal to you, to be generous in your contributions towards our Flag Day in aid of young girls and women who receive rehabilitation in our institution. Your generosity will help to bring a ray of hope to their lives.

## Jerome Chanmugam New Chairman of CBPPA



At the 13th Annual General Meeting of the Catholic Business Persons and Professionals Association held recently, Jerome Chanmugam was elected as the Chairman of the Board of Directors.

Other officers elected were:

**Deputy Chairman:**

Romesh De Mel

**Director Administrative**

**Matters:** Naomal Basnayake

**Director Finance:** Cecilton Philip

**Board Members:**

His Grace Most Rev. Dr. Oswald Gomis, Rev. Fr. Neil Karunaratne, Dudley Thambinayagam, B.R.L. Fernando, Shiran Dissanayake, Manik Pereira, Neville Athukorale, Susantha Fernando, Winslie Rodrigo, Michael Fernando, Adrian Perera.

The CBPPA comes within the ambit of the Archdiocese of Colombo under the patronage of His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith.

The new Board will continue the charitable, religious, professional and social activities, as in the past. Additionally, in line with the thinking of His Eminence the Cardinal, the CBPPA is looking to broaden their membership and make their professional expertise available to the Archdiocese of Colombo as and when required.

Businessman and Professionals interested in joining our Association may contact Mrs. June Perera, Administrative Officer on 5872189 or 0779393931 and obtain Application Forms.

## St. Peter's College....

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very best in life.

Mr. Timothy Ashanta Andradi, the principal donor is, a distinguished Old Boy who while at school was a brilliant student. The Library was his outright gift to his Alma Mater."

It is more blessed to give than to receive" says the Holy Bible and this was seen being put into action. Recollecting the days he had spent at College, Timothy said that it was his ardent desire to give back what he had received from his Alma Mater. His simplicity speaking more than words.

The Rector, Rev. Fr. Travis Gabriel urged the boys to make full use of the Library and cultivate the habit of reading. He added "At the library, knowledge is given free, take not one but many containers and fill it to the brim."

O give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever" (Psalms 136-1)

Imogen Mel

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# Message of Felicitation to the new Bishops with excerpts from the Papal Homily

In view of the Episcopal Ordination and Consecration of Bishops Msgr. Emmanuel Fidelis Fernando and Msgr. Maxwell Granville Silva, I send herewith the thoughts expressed by His Holiness Pope Benedict preached during the Mass celebrated on the occasion of the inauguration of His Pontificate on 24th April 2005, which I wish to share for the benefit, inspiration and guidance which I believe is applicable to their ministry, when they take up the responsibilities assigned to them as shepherds of the people of God, following their Episcopal Ordination and Consecration which took place at St. Lucia's Cathedral on 11th February 2012.

Before I quote from the homily preached by His Holiness, I wish to express my heartiest congratulations and prayerful best wishes to the two Bishops that God would grant them the opportunity and strength for rendering many years of fruitful apostolate in the vineyard of the Lord. I wish to take this opportunity to mention a few words in regard to Msgr. Emmanuel Fernando with whom my brother and I had the privilege of associating with, both as students at St. Benedict's College and also as Altar Servers at St. Lucia's Cathedral, being his contemporaries, and our families too were well-known to each other, during the years as parishioners of St. Lucia's Cathedral, Kotahena.

His piety and his commitment to duty nurtured by a family devoted to the values of the Gospel, as well as the education he received at the hands of the Christian Brothers, was undoubtedly the rich soil in which his vocation to serve God as a Priest grew and in which it was firmly rooted, and gained nourishment, and matured in knowledge and wisdom gracefully, with both God and fellow human beings, and has now blossomed forth, to attain the plenitude of the Priesthood.

The all-round disciplined formation that the Christian Brothers imparted, gave the Church many sons who distinguished themselves as outstanding Priests and Bishops and His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith as well, and so today the Christian Brothers would have another occasion to rejoice in their labours being richly rewarded, and thereby proudly add another feather to their caps, with the new Bishops Emmanuel Fidelis Fernando and I would not be wrong in saying, that Msgr. Maxwell Granville Silva also bears the stamp as a product of the Christian Brothers' schools, having received his education at St. Sebastian's College, Moratuwa, being the latest two as Bishops to be added to their number as their distinguished Alumni. Once again I wish them God's abundant blessings.

**Excerpt from the Homily preached by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, at the Mass for the inauguration of His Pontificate on 24.04.2005.**

"One of the basic characteristics of a shepherd must be to love the people entrusted to him, even as he loves Christ whom he serves. "Feed my sheep," says Christ to Peter, and now, at this moment, he says it to me

as well. Feeding means loving, and loving also means being ready to suffer. Loving means giving the sheep what is truly good, the nourishment of God's truth, of God's word, the nourishment of his presence, which he gives us in the Blessed Sacrament. My dear friends – at this moment I can only say: pray for me, that I may learn to love the Lord more and more. Pray for me, that I may learn to love his flock more and more – in other words, you, the holy Church, each one of you and all of you together. Pray for me, that I may not flee for fear of the wolves. Let us pray for one another, that the Lord will carry us and that we will learn to carry one another.

Peter's call to be a shepherd, which we heard in the Gospel, comes after the account of a miraculous catch of fish: After a night in which the disciples had let down their nets without success, they see the Risen Lord on the shore. He tells them to let down their nets once more, and the nets become so full that they can hardly pull them in; 153 large fish: "And although there were so many, the net was not torn" (Jn 21:11). This account, coming at the end of Jesus's earthly journey with his disciples, corresponds to an account found at the beginning: There too, the disciples had caught nothing the entire night. There too, Jesus had invited Simon once more to put out into the deep. And Simon, who was not yet called Peter, gave the wonderful reply: "Master, at your word I will let down the nets." And then came the conferral of his mission: "Do not be afraid. Henceforth you will be catching men" (Lk 5:1-11).

Today too the Church and the successors of the Apostles are told to put out into the deep sea of history and to let down the nets, so as to win men and women over to the Gospel – to God, to Christ, to true life. The Fathers made a very significant commentary on this singular task. This is what they say: For a fish, created for water, it is fatal to be taken out of the sea, to be removed from its vital element to serve as human food. But in the mission of a fisher of men, the reverse is true.

We are living in alienation, in the salt waters of suffering and death; in a sea of darkness without light. The net of the Gospel pulls us out of the waters of death and brings us into the splendour of God's light, into true life. It is really true: As we follow Christ in this mission to be fishers of men, we must bring men and women out of the sea that is salted with so many forms of alienation and onto the land of life, into the light of God. It is really so: The purpose of our lives is to reveal God to men. And only where God is seen does life truly begin. Only when we meet the living God in Christ do we know what life is. We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution. Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary. There is nothing more beautiful than to be surprised by the Gospel, by the encounter with Christ. There is nothing more beautiful than to know Him and to speak to others of our friendship with Him. The task

of the shepherd, the task of the fisher of men, can often seem wearisome. But it is beautiful and wonderful, because it is truly a service to joy, to God's joy which longs to break into the world.

Here I want to add something: Both the image of the shepherd and that of the fisherman issue an explicit call to unity. "I have other sheep that are not of this fold; I must lead them too, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd" (Jn 10:16); these are the words of Jesus at the end of his discourse on the Good Shepherd. And the account of the 153 large fish ends with the joyful statement: "Although there were so many, the net was not torn" (Jn 21:11). Alas, beloved Lord, with sorrow we must now acknowledge that it has been torn! But no – we must not be sad! Let us rejoice because of your promise, which does not disappoint, and let us do all we can to pursue the path towards the unity you have promised.

Let us remember it in our prayer to the Lord, as we plead with him: "Yes, Lord, remember your promise. Grant that we may be one flock and one shepherd! Do not allow your net to be torn, help us to be servants of unity!"

*Sent by Ridley Casie Chitty*

## Diploma in Catholic Education and Teacher Training - 2012

Applications will be received for "Diploma in Catholic Education and Teacher Training" organized by the Catholic Education Office and conducted by Aquinas Institute for Higher Education for the Teachers of Catholic Private Schools.

The application forms have been sent to all principals of Catholic Private Schools. Please fill the application with the principal's signature and return same to Catholic Education Office at Archbishop's House, Colombo -08, on or before 15th March 2012, together with money order for Rs. 250/- payable at Post Office, Maradana.

**Last date to send the application forms is 15th of March 2012.**

*General Manager of the Catholic Private Schools  
Archdiocese of Colombo*

## Gift parcels to Don Bosco's Boys' Home Diyalagoda



Mr. K. P. Antony Silva member of the Beruwala Pradesiya Sabha, organized gift parcels to Don Bosco's Boys Home at Diyalagoda.

Picture shows Rev. Fr. Shiran Ranasinghe, Manager, St. Vincent's Home, Maggona handing over the gift parcels to Rev. Bro. Sahayanadan, Asst. Director of the Don Bosco Home, Diyalagoda, Mr. K.P. Anthony Silva also in the picture. (Pic. D. Anselm Fernando)

## SUNDAY PUNCH

by Camillus

### SCHOOL ADMISSIONS



**Church in the  
World**

## Thousands of Catholic children forced to convert to Islam

Thousands of Catholic children in East Timor, who were taken from their families over ten years ago, are being held by force in Indonesia, converted to Islam, educated in Islamic schools and naturalized, says Vatican news agency Fides.

Fides said, most of these children live and go to school in Western Java and are taught by Muslim "educators" who refuse to let the children return to their families. The situation was confirmed by some Catholic humanitarian workers.

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EDITORIAL

12 February 2012

## Uphold the right of peaceful protest by civil society groups

The Government seems to have adopted a tough stance with regard to protests by civil society groups. This was evident in the government's response to the decision of seven media organizations to stage a Black January protest in Colombo against the killings and disappearances of journalists that have taken place in different parts of the country, and it symbolized the several killings in the month of January. The victims included both Sinhalese and Tamils. There was a freelance photojournalist from Trincomalee, Subramaniam Sugirdharajan who contributed to "Sudar Oli". He was killed by an unidentified gunman on 24 January, 2006 in Trincomalee. He had provided photographs of the killing of the five youths in Trincomalee early January 2006, to the Tamil media. Other January attacks included the torching of the "MTV /MTB" media station, the killing of 'The Sunday Leader' Editor Lasantha Wickrematunga in 2009, and the disappearance of political columnist Prageeth Ekneligoda in 2010.

The new governmental approach towards dealing with civil protests is to organize counter-protests by its own supporters with the backing of the Police. On the day of the protest the government acting through the police sought a court order to stop the demonstration on the grounds of public security. It organized government supporters in a larger counter-demonstration at the same venue. While every support was given to the counter-protest, the journalists' protest itself was sabotaged.

The Government also resorted to the tactic of branding the protesting journalists as supporters of the LTTE, an organization which had been exterminated two years ago and celebrated with several victory parades. This reminds one of the sayings in the Wild West in relation to black people, namely to give a dog a bad name and hang him.

Any democratically elected government must accept the rights of the people to carry out peaceful protests against what they consider are violations of the fundamental rights of the people. The right to protest is a perceived human right arising out of a number of recognized other human rights. While no human rights instrument or national constitution grants the absolute right to protest, such a right to protest is a manifestation of the right to freedom of assembly, the right to freedom of association, and the right to freedom of speech.

Many international treaties contain clear enunciations of these rights. Such agreements include the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights, especially Articles 9 to 11; and the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, especially Articles 18 to 22. It is true that in these and other agreements the rights of freedom of assembly, freedom of association, and freedom of speech are subject to certain limitations. For example, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights contains prohibitions on advocacy of "national, racial or religious hatred."

Protesting, however, if it is peaceful is not a threat to the interests of national security or public safety. Nor does peaceful protest involve violating the laws of the state. The Protests of the Journalists is positively supporting a democratic and constitutional order. It is the duty of a democratic government to protect the rights of the people and a total failure to apprehend the culprits in a single case calls for such democratic protests.

Such protests help the governments to change course or abandon policies that have led to people's displeasure. Protests we see all over the democratic world and in favour of a diversity of causes such as opposition to globalization, or the waging of unjustified wars or women's rights. When people have nothing else to fight with, it is often their solidarity with each other - to stand together and be counted across communities and even across continents - which proves to be their most powerful weapon.

So, public protest should not be driven underground at a time of international political upheaval. Maintaining the freedom to express dissent remains a powerful indicator of the political health of a nation. The Government must take note of the cause of the protest which is the abduction and killing of journalists and take action to bring to book all those responsible for such crimes. Suppressing peaceful protests could drive the opposition underground as happened with the JVP in the late 1980s.

## An Open Letter to Fr. Emma and Fr. Maxi

# Our Newly Consecrated Auxiliary Bishops

*My dear Frs. Emma and Maxi, Your Lordships,*

Yesterday at a solemn ceremony you were raised to the apostolic college of Bishops for which we thank Almighty God the Father. It was after 1968 that we saw a double Episcopal Ordination. Last time the late Bishop Edmund Fernando OMI, and the Emeritus Archbishop Oswald Gomis were ordained to be auxiliaries of the then Cardinal Thomas Cooray OMI, and this time you are to be the auxiliaries of the new Cardinal, His Eminence Malcolm Ranjith.

History repeats from time to time and this time after 44 years. Since the new Cardinal took office there had been a number of new administrative structures put in place. And the Archdiocese of Colombo had been studying whether any structural adjustments were needed in the Administration. However the extensive consultation of the laity, religious and priests that followed revealed that what is more important is an attitudinal adjustment on the part of lay people, priests and bishops with regard to witnessing, strengthening and sharing our faith. It is in the availability and dedication of the parish priests and the bishops, to the flock entrusted to them, that a change was needed, it was agreed. And the study continues.

You are two priests who have played an active and responsible role in the vineyard of the Archdiocese for over 30 years.

*Dear Bishop Emma,*



You were already a lecturer in the major seminary when we were studying theology. You would leave your room to go for a walk but after 30 minutes you could be found talking to a brother in the seminary premises. Later as the Rector of the Seminary you spearheaded the Seminarists towards the new millennium with some vision and commitment. With double responsibility of being Parish Priest of Moratuwa and Episcopal Vicar of the Southern Region you were shepherding the flock entrusted with loving care. This became evident in the manner you looked after the tsunami-affected people. Your amiable ways and willingness to help others and dedication to the church teachings and commitment to the people entrusted have contributed to form you into the good shepherd you are called upon to be.

*Dear Bishop Maxi,*



From the Seminary days you were a silent worker, dedicated to the task given, never searching for personal honour or glory, a simple man with a colourful character and

a deep faith. Your story telling is popular not only now but also then when we were being trained together. When the sports meet came around you were at your best toiling for the victory of your house. After the priesthood, in 1983, you succeeded me in the parish of Tibbotugoda and the service you rendered there is carved in the hearts of those parishioners even today. Your famous-"cheena maha prakaraya" - long boundary wall at Mabole was similar to the fortress of faith you built in their hearts against many intruders. At Keralawapitiya though you were a resident priest you loved and looked after the parishioners, while doing your studies too.

It was in 2009 that I came to be your neighbour as Parish Priest of Kotte. You were the long standing Principal of St. Thomas' College, residing in the old mission house. We had the opportunity to share many things in serving the people of Kotte. You nurtured St. Thomas' as your child entering the school by 6.30 a.m., long before most students and teachers arrived. There were days when even at midnight you watered the newly laid grass on the College grounds. You were without doubt "feeding the students with the finest of wheat." Your support in the affairs of the parish are never forgotten and I am sure parishioners will miss your "stories and poetry," at the 6.30 am Mass.

*Dear Bishop Emma and Bishop Maxi,*

His Eminence the Cardinal will lead you to achieve the master plan he has prepared for the Archdiocese. You will be his collaborators. You may administer the sacrament which confirms the faith of thousands and thousands of students who will be the membership of tomorrow's church. You will preside at many a Jubilee Mass and Evening Service instructing people to be faithful to their Christian principles and the Ten Commandments. But remember, there are thousands and thousands of people in the Archdiocese awaiting your dedicated servant leadership. A leadership that the apostles of Jesus Christ were called upon to give. They are waiting to hear the sound of the footsteps of their shepherds leading them to greener spiritual pastures. Greener pastures where they will be called upon to be "the leaven in the dough" and "salt of the earth," sanctifying the world in which they live. Their baptismal vocation which calls them to be holy, needs to be revived and protected from onslaughts of worldly allurements and corrupting influences coming from secular and political spheres.

There are hundreds of priests who would like to share their pains and problems, failures and falls, anxieties and concerns, joys and successes with you. Together with His Eminence, the Chief Shepherd of the Archdiocese, now you will also be available to them, welcome them, and listen to them. Both of you have listening ears and understanding hearts. Just as much as you will ask the priests to visit their people, you may also drop in to see the priests who bear the burden of shepherding in the parishes. The Archdiocese is rich with a presbyterium of dedicated priests, committed lay apostolic men and women in the parishes, a volunteer force of catechists, a cluster of charisms in the men and women religious. These are the resourceful blessings we have received always.

It is now your opportunity and responsibility to assure that "the Lord is with the people" and that you will "nourish them with the finest wheat."

Wishing you the finest blessings from heaven,

Yours fraternally in the Lord,  
**Fr. Elmo Dias**

# The Call to a New Evangelization

## What are we building?

Pope Benedict XVI has called for a new evangelization, thus reinforcing a project that his predecessor John Paul II envisaged with the dawn of the second millennium. Though the Church was strongly committed to find ways and means of bringing the Gospel and its impact to the world and society of today immediately following the Vatican Council (1962-1965), and much has been achieved in the various areas of evangelization to be positively valued, yet the work of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ and bringing the work of evangelization to its desired perfect end is far from being achieved. Further, it is now fifty years after this great council which has provided us with new paradigms of understanding ourselves as Christians and as a Church, of discovering new paths of missionary enterprise.

Times in between have changed rapidly in the last few decades. The changes have ushered in social upheavals, political revolutions, cultural transformations and moral decadence despite the admirable advances made in the field of various scientific fields of research and discovery and also in technology which continues to develop. Yet the wisdom needed for meaningfully living our lives and managing our daily chores seems to be lacking in this highly secular and materialistically-oriented culture of our present age.

Humanity appears lost, confused and distracted from those important and crucial issues to which it has to give serious attention and concern. Are we able today to live with serenity and joy despite the enormous challenges that buffet us? Do we have the moral strength to walk tall as dignified human beings, experience communion and solidarity with one another and feel a common sense of brotherhood as belonging to the big human family? Does the present world of science and technology fully satiate our deeper aspirations for security and fullness of life that will make us feel that life is worth living even for a short span? How much do we succeed in harnessing the natural, social and spiritual resources at hand in experiencing a fuller life? Are we able to face the fundamental questions of birth and death, suffering and struggle which are increasing weighing heavy on us? It is here that evangelization should come in to give direction to life and its forward journey. It is a journey to be undertaken with faith and hope, goodwill and honesty with a spirit of endurance to match.

### Why a New Evangelization?

The Church firmly believes that she possesses thanks to God's goodness, all the means she can offer to modern man to live a meaningful life. The Good News brought by Jesus Christ is really a panacea for all the ills of our world. It gives hope first to the world's poor who are identified in the great Sermon on the Mount as the first and privileged beneficiaries of the Blessings of God's kingdom. Jesus broke down all distinctions whether they be cultural, ethnic, gender, social etc to help people to come close to one another in solidarity and to share their joy and pain. He himself shared the human pain and moments of despair and sorrow of others. He drove out the sense of fear from the lives of people who found themselves in unfortunate circumstances.

He would even break the holy Sabbath to bring healing to a sick person in dire need of consolation. He would travel countrywide from south to the north of his homeland to announce the good tidings, to drive out evil forces from the heart of society, do good to those who were desperately in need of help and challenging the powers of evil. He even dared purify the great temple of Jerusalem from becoming a market-place, thus violating a place of the sacred and prayer. Strangely thought, it was the court area where the non-circumcised gentiles came to worship! Jesus was concerned about this space as well. We are told very clearly by St. Paul that in the blood of Christ Jews and Greeks are reconciled and are made to be one people. This reconciliation even crosses borders to unite the slave and the free and even to prevent gender from slashing the basic dignity of men and women. Jesus challenged the young to go beyond the ethics of the commandments with the call to follow him closely freeing themselves from all bonds that enslave them.

The story of the rich young man who could not respond positively because he had plenty of riches is a sad story indeed. Today many a youth due to one

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Superior,  
Oblate Scholasticate - Ampitiya*

or another attachment or addiction finds himself unable to adhere to the Lord. The World Youth Days are meant therefore to call youth to look at their faith as a challenge to live god-like lives and to rekindle in them the sense of belonging to the Church. The youth actually show forth the ever-youthful countenance of the Church that never gives way to aging or going out of date: Ever youthful and ever vigorous.

Many other areas of Christian life are being endangered as a result of inroads made by various phenomena of secularization where what is pursued is material well-being, personal comfort, pleasures of all kinds and forms of vanity, not to speak about various idolatrous forms of the worship of mammon- the love of money and accumulation of wealth that give people a false sense of security. Money is good and necessary but it is not to be worshipped in such a way that people are dehumanized in the process it is managed. Wealth creation is also creating the contemporary phenomenon of massive poverty and other forms of social unrest and organized crime.

The third-world phenomenon which is identified as the tragedy of the 20th century continues in a more widespread and extensive manner into the 21st century too. The eight millennial goals proposed by the UN of which reducing world poverty is one of the key imperatives seems still a distant and elusive dream. The Church recommends a world monetary body to oversee the fiscal transactions that are going on the global scale. One has to review the functioning of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund seen by many critics as a two-headed hydra that menaces the world's poor people by sinking them in dependence instead of empowering them along a steady and progressive path of self-reliance.

### The purpose of the New Evangelization

It is deemed that the new efforts, new in forms and zeal, are meant to achieve three ends. First, it is to re-evangelize the de-christianized western countries which at one time were so rich in faith and missionary-minded that they were able to evangelize other countries. Today however Christian life in terms of preserving one's faith, approaching the sacraments and creating a solid Christian domestic environment are speedily on the wane and that in an alarming rate. These therefore, need a re-evangelization by restoring the lost Christian ethos and culture and calling them to their Christian roots, as Pope John Paul II decried several times. Secondly, the new evangelization is meant to strengthen the faith of those who are practicing their faith but helping them to deepen it and mature in it in every way and becoming evangelizers in their turn. Thirdly, the new evangelization is meant to address those who for one reason or another have not had the Gospel message reach them. It is the mission to the non-Christians. They may not be expected to convert, but at least to make Christ better known and loved for his personal story and message. This would be done mainly by dialoguing with people of other faiths and joining with them in common projects and activities for human development, liberation for bestowing fullness of life to people. The challenge of the new forms of militant Atheism and religious fundamentalism also have to be met with courage.

The dream of the Church is to see a better human world emerge where truth, justice, solidarity and peace fills humanity. For the Gospel definitely has social implications. It has to be a form of engaged Christianity. The Church is called to be the sacrament of salvation, unity and freedom in the world and history. As Pope Paul VI said in his land-mark exhortation: "Evangelization means to renew mankind from within, upsetting as it were the criteria of judgment, values and perspectives, patterns of thought and behaviour that are not in conformity with the Gospel and our Christian faith". Pope John Paul II later spoke about the new "aeropagi" to be evangelized, namely the sphere of mass-media communications, the field of scientific experimentation, modern culture in general and new forms of religiosity through which people weighed down by the

Observing us, the ordained ministers in the Church and our priestly ministry in the parishes, one may ask, "what is our main focus?" What is our main aim and objective? The Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit ordained us as leaders of the faithful, above all, to know the people and feed them with the Word of God and the Sacraments. Imitating Jesus who became human to give abundant life (Jn 10: 10), we are called to make the faithful flourish and not diminish. We must emphasise the priority of the Word of God in our pastoral practice. Celebration of the Sacraments must be also proclamation and celebration of the Word of God. Unfortunately, one can observe poverty of inspiration regarding this ministry in some parishes. Isn't there a need to lead the parishioners from devotions to taste and be formed by the Word of God?

There is also another aspect which demands our attention. We were ordained also to be educators and formators of the lay faithful. To perform this task, we need to bring together also the excluded, the discarded and the disadvantaged, imitating Jesus who came to bring together the scattered (In 11: 52). How did Jesus form his followers into a fellowship, a corporate solidarity, his community? He mixed with them and established personal contacts. He understood their pains and needs. So, He ate with them and made them feel loved, valued and cared. Jesus brought dignity and a sense of community to them. Jesus was a builder of people and a builder of new relationships and community. Such action was a provocative and boundary-crossing ministry which invited anger, protests and rejection from the elders, the high priests and the Pharisees.

In the light of Jesus' ministry, what can one say about our pastoral practice? Are we builders of people and communities? We know that there are still established boundaries based on language, ethnicity, culture and social prestige which prevent the emergence of community spirit and community feeling in several parishes. There are many in our parishes who cherish their traditions and customs and feel comfortable with them. Moreover, the way religious practice is perceived and understood differs from place to place. Social psychology of people is also different in the parishes. For example the way the faithful in the coastal parishes react and respond is different from the way the faithful in the parishes in the interior or in the urban parishes behave. This does not mean that the faithful are ignorant, illiterate or obstinate. Hence, we need not feel discouraged.

We are believers. We follow Jesus and His missionary method. He came to proclaim God's Rule of unconditional love and to invite people to repent and change their ways. St. Paul too went to different cities and created communities of faith and love. We too must have faith in the message of Jesus Christ and its power to bring about desired change in the hearers.

Just as there were also categories of people who heard the Word of God from Jesus and Paul, and came together in fellowship, today we also will discover categories of parishioners in our parishes who want to hear the message of Jesus Christ and form Christian communities of mutual love. Such groups have much. Inspiration and practical wisdom, experience and knowledge about the history of the parish which we as pastors may lack. There are also enlightened lay faithful whose collaboration is needed to bring about better relationships and community spirit in the parishes. Our accumulation of theological, philosophical and sociological knowledge alone is not sufficient to exercise pastoral leadership in the fast evolving society.

To become pastors who understand also the legitimate aspirations of the lay faithful, we need to be leaders with much sensitivity and genuine love and respect for people, especially the weak, the ignorant, and the neglected. Study of social sciences can also help us to become catalysts, who know how to effect meaningful and desired change in the lay faithful in the parishes. By bringing the lay faithful together in small groups to read and reflect prayerfully and share the Word of God and under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, we need to lead them to have concern for one another, forgive one another and share their God-given skills, expertise, capacities and resources.

*Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Fernando OMI*

*(Contd. on Pg. 15)*



# Marriage in the Original Covenant Profound, Personal Union

The ancient Hebrews had not yet developed an idea of the body as distinct from the soul (in fact, they had no word for 'body' as such), and so 'flesh' is here meant to describe a union not only of bodies, but of persons. 'Flesh' is the bond between members of a family, just as we, today, might call family members our own 'flesh and blood.' This bond of 'flesh,' in marriage, is even stronger than the same bond that unites a man to his own parents [(for "a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one flesh" (Gn 2:24)]. It is strong enough, in fact, to be the source of the new bonds of flesh and family that will unite one's descendants for generations.

When the man calls the woman, "flesh of my flesh," and "bone of my bones," this union is thus linked inseparably to the common bond that unites all human persons, a bond of benevolent love. The man had already named all of the other creatures, as a sign of his dominion and mastery over them; when he saw the woman, however, he first recognised her equality, as 'flesh, of his flesh,' and so he gave her, instead, a special name, one that referred explicitly to the profound, loving relationship of intimacy and equality that the two of them immediately began to share. For Adam and Eve, it was truly, 'love

at first sight,' and Adam, who was 'a man,' called her 'woman,' to express this love.

The name 'Adam,' means 'man,' generically, as in 'human being.' The words 'man' and 'woman' that Adam used here, however, were specifically masculine and feminine, and he used them to specify the way in which he and his wife were one flesh. In rejoicing that she was "flesh of my flesh," Adam expressed his joy that he had found an equal, feminine spouse, a sign of God's loving presence in his life.

This original unity, experienced first by Adam and Eve, who were naked and felt no shame, there is



no need for shame - i.e. self-defence - in the sexual union of any married couple for whom sex is really an expression of true love.

*Continued next week)*

*(Courtesy: Marriage Together in Christ - Catholic Truth Society)*

# Valentine's Day

## The materialistic way

- A bouquet of red roses
- A gown for a queen
- A box of sweet chocolates
- A hairstyle never seen
- A limo with six doors
- The very best red wine
- A ring with diamonds
- That sparkles and flashes
- A card with few words



- A handkerchief soaked
- In a perfume so fine
- A necklace that glitters
- With a price-tag to match
- A restaurant that serves
- The day's finest catch
- Valentine's day that was

*But for a sad call  
And one can only wonder  
If true love was shared at all  
For we live in such times  
Where real love is so rare  
And this will always stay  
As long as cash and gifts are there*

**Ralph Alles**

# May Our Lady of Lourdes bless us

Oh! Blessed Queen of heaven  
We hail you with humble veneration  
Reminiscing the grace-filled day  
Of your first apparition to St. Bernadette

In 1958 you descended from heaven  
And appeared to an innocent child  
To divulge a great secret to this sinful world  
Id est - "I AM THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION."

Dear Holy Mother of God and man  
You set foot on the Rock  
Massabielle 18 times  
Earnestly requesting all of us  
To give priority to prayer and penance.

You were clothed in a robe and veil  
And a blue girdle round yur waist  
A golden rose adorned your feet  
All symbolic of your virginal love

Oh! Our Lady of Lourdes  
make us worthy to accede to your pleas  
And implore God's mercy through your intercession  
To respond to the signs of the times.

Sent by: Leonard Wijesiri

In the last half of the twentieth century religious congregations in the western world were deeply involved with educational, health care and social work activities. They ran prestigious schools and colleges. They established and maintained highly prominent hospitals and other health care centres around the world. They also established centres to help the poor and the destitute. They became efficient administrators of these organizations, proficient teachers, nurses and social workers. Their dedication and expertise were recognized by the whole world which sought their expertise in these fields.

These religious realized that they were proficient consultants and specialists in these secular fields. But their religious life lacked depth and they were not proficient in the subjects of prayer, meditation and Christianity. Many of them left their religious calling and became experts in the above-mentioned secular fields. The religious who stuck to their vocation searched ways of becoming experts in the religious life, in addition to their professional capability. They established what they called houses of prayer, in order to concentrate and develop knowledge of Christianity.

These houses of prayer became centres of reflection, meditation and retreats for the religious. Later on these became open houses for religious as well as laity. They went back to the Scriptures to find the meaning of prayer and meditation. In the sixth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew they found the essence of Christian prayer taught by Christ himself. Christ himself says to us to "pray like this":

*"Our Father who is in heaven hallowed be Thy name." Christ is asking us to call God our Father. The word He used, was the Hebrew term "Abba" which has the same meaning as "dad", "papa" "appa" and "thattha". This is a far cry from the concept of God in the Old Testament. Moses was not even permitted to look at Yahweh and was asked to remove his sandals in the face of God. (Exodus 3: 5-6)*

The first purpose of prayer is to **praise** and worship God our Father. The phrase *"Hallowed be Thy name"* indicates this. *"Thy kingdom come"* shows that we as the sons of the Father must work for the coming of His kingdom. It is our vocation to spread the kingdom of God on earth.

# Prayer



"Thy will be done" is reverberated in the life of Our Lady and Jesus Christ. At the moment of the annunciation, Mary, a virgin who is betrothed to a carpenter in Nazareth says these words: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done according to your word." (Luke 1:38) Here Mother Mary sacrifices her whole life to the will of God. In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus says,

"If this cup cannot pass unless I drink it, Thy will be done." (Matthew 26:42) Here Christ concedes to his agony and the ultimate sacrifice of giving up His life to the death on the cross.

Then there are three **supplications** or requests in the Lord's Prayer. They are, "Give us

# Bits and Pieces

Madi

*this day our daily bread," "Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil"* We ask our Father to give us food. We also request Him to keep us away from sin and temptations that will lead us to commit sin.

We are taught by Christ to ask forgiveness for our sins. *"Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who have sinned against us."* There is a **condition** for God's forgiveness. We are worthy of the forgiveness of God to the extent that we are ready to forgive our fellow human beings.

The main ingredients of Christian prayer are included in this prayer taught by Christ. It includes prayer of **praise** and **adoration**, **contrition**, **supplication** and the request to teach us to do the will of the Father.

## TAKE TIME FOR A MINUTE OF HUMOUR - SMILE!



In the Sunday homily the Parish Priest said, "I am sad to leave all of you, I am transferred to a drier climate." At the end of the service Carolyn came with tears in her eyes.

"Oh. Father Bob, please don't leave us." Father Bob patted her hand and said, "Now, now Carolyn, don't cry. The Pastor who comes might be even better than me". Yeah! she said, "That's what they said last time too."

**Rev. Fr. Raccid Anthony Fernando OMI**

# The Nagasaki Martyrs

Nagasaki, Japan, is remembered by everyone as the city on which the second atomic bomb was dropped, killing hundreds of thousands. But very few of us know that three and a half centuries before, twenty-six martyrs of Japan were crucified on a hill, now known as the Holy Mountain, overlooking Nagasaki. Among them were priests, brothers and laymen, Franciscans, Jesuits and members of the Secular Franciscan Order; there were catechists, doctors, simple artisans and servants, old men and innocent children all united in a common faith and love for Jesus and his church.

gave gifts when appropriate. They avoided loud laughter or boisterous behaviour which was a sign of a lack of self-control to the Japanese. Most importantly, the missionaries learned and used the Japanese language.

But the tide turned on the missionaries. Disturbed by the growing influence of Christianity, Hideyoshi, Nobunaga's successor, felt compelled to placate the Buddhist monks. Overly fanatical Christians also had not done themselves any favours: They had burned some temples before building churches. In 1587, Hideyoshi suddenly ordered Christians to leave Japan within 20 days.



Compiled by: Kishani S. Fernando

by the captain of a Spanish ship. But on a deeper level, the deaths were the result of the danger of professing the Christian faith in a Buddhist country torn by internal war and fear of foreign conquest.

The captain's ship, the heavily loaded San Felipe, was wrecked on the Japanese coast. The despot Hideyoshi ordered his officers to confiscate the ship and its goods. The captain angrily showed the officers a map of the world and pointed to the vast empire under control of Spain. He recklessly added that the Spaniards used merchants and priests as an advance guard before sending their conquistadors.

Hideyoshi, wary of any real or imagined threat to his power, was furious.

Crucified at Nagasaki were six Spanish Franciscans, 17 Japanese and Korean catechists and three Japanese Jesuits a priest and two brothers. Among the group were three young boys who had been altar servers. In addition to the deaths, 130 churches were burned down.

Unfortunately, the events further divided the Franciscans and Jesuits. Emotions ran high, and the Franciscans even claimed that the Jesuits had entertained the judges who decided the fate of the martyrs. Relations remained considerably strained until countrywide persecutions began in 1614, and the two orders put aside most of their differences.

The Nagasaki martyrs were canonized in 1862. The feast day for "Paul Miki and Companions" is February 6. Today, the Shrine of the 26 Martyrs in Nagasaki marks the site of the execution. The Japanese government, mindful that most of the victims were Japanese, recognizes it as a national monument.



## How it all happened

The story of the Nagasaki Martyrs began on the feast of the Assumption 462 years ago, on August 15, 1549, when Francis Xavier and two fellow Jesuits stepped from their ship in Kagoshima harbour and quickly waded ashore, the first missionaries to Japan. Before them lay a civilized country that knew nothing of Christ.

At that time, Japan was torn by constant strife among its dozens of feudal warlords. Some Japanese who lived under the close protection of the warlords enjoyed the fruits of education and wealth, but peasants in the countryside, oppressed by their feudal masters, were desperately poor. Buddhism was the primary religion, though Shintoism also claimed adherents.

St. Francis received a friendly reception from one of the more powerful lords. He was allowed to preach and convert. The priest's sterling character was pivotal to his success. The lords and their ministers were taken by the strength of his convictions. Influential monks visited by St. Francis also were charmed by his simplicity and piety. Political factors worked in St. Francis' favour, too. Merchants and cargo ships followed the Jesuits into Japan, and the shoguns warlords made sure they profited from the commerce.

During his two years in Japan, St. Francis oversaw the conversion of a 1,000 Japanese and laid the groundwork for the Jesuits who replaced him. Eager to proselytize in China, he left Japan in 1551.

The Jesuits who came after St. Francis, followed St. Francis' strategy and made inroads with some of shoguns' most trusted men, converting them and paving the way for evangelization among the masses.

Christianity grew quickly after 1569 when Nobunaga, a warlord who had triumphed over his rivals and consolidated power, issued an edict that gave the Jesuits a relatively free hand. He even gave the Jesuits a large tract of land and promised them an annual sum of money.

Converting the Japanese was no small feat. Their Buddhist faith was a vital part of their culture, and in the wider community accepting Christianity was viewed as a repudiation of their heritage. Yet by 1580, the Church in Japan counted 150,000 converts at 200 churches. Just 85 Jesuits were ministering in Japan. Their small numbers and large accomplishments were a testimony not only to the power of the Gospel message, but also to the skill and tenacity of its messengers.

The Jesuits' respect for Japanese culture also contributed to their success. As much as possible, the clergy observed local etiquette and customs. They addressed the various classes properly. They served sake to guests. They

But distracted by foreign intrigues, Hideyoshi never actually enforced his ban, and nearly all the missionaries stayed on. With much more discretion, they quietly continued evangelization. Japan eventually counted 300,000 to 500,000 Catholics among a population of 25 million.

Yet the Church itself was sometimes its own worst enemy there. The Jesuits and the Franciscans who had followed them to Japan now engaged in a bitter rivalry. The Portuguese Jesuits, distrustful of the Spanish Franciscans, had insisted they not enter Japan. But the Franciscans began arriving in 1593 and unwisely dismissed the official ban on Christianity by preaching and baptizing in the capital city under the nose of Hideyoshi. Further the rivalry between the Franciscans and the Jesuits confused the Japanese, who often discounted Buddhism because of its numerous rivaling sects. Still, the Church grew steadily despite internal conflict and the constant threat of persecution.

During this time, any political instability posed a danger to Christians. In Nagasaki in 1597, the threat became horribly real. Twenty-six priests and lay Catholics were rounded up and publicly mutilated by having their ears and noses cut off. Then they were crucified.

The martyrdom was prompted by a rash remark



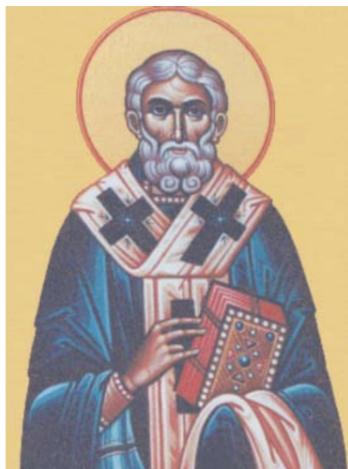
Shrine of the 26 Martyrs in Nagasaki

# Saints of the Blessed Sacrament

## The Eucharistic Saints

By Rev. Fr. John A. Hardon, S.J.

### St. Cyril of Jerusalem



This doctor of the Church, as Bishop of Jerusalem, (313-386AD) suffered deeply for his faith. He was the sworn enemy of the heretic, Arius, who denied Christ's divinity. His most important writing was the catechetical compendium which has become the standard for all catechisms since the end of the fourth century.

St. Cyril wrote extensively on the Holy Eucharist as Sacrifice, Communion, and

Real Presence. His writings are not only clear and uncomplicated, they show us how unqualified was the faith of the early Church in the priestly powers of changing bread and wine into the living Jesus Christ. Among the classic passages that have been quoted over the centuries, the following is typical:

*The bread and wine of the Eucharist before the invocation of the holy and adorable Trinity were simply bread and wine. But after the invocation the bread becomes the Body of Christ and the wine becomes the Blood of Christ. (Catechetical Discourses, 19,7).*

The earliest Fathers of the Church never dissociated the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist from the priesthood, instituted by the Saviour at the Last Supper. So true is this that we may simply declare that Christian Patrology always associates two sacraments: The Holy Eucharist and the Priesthood. Without the priesthood there would be no Eucharist.

### St. Margaret Mary



Among the many visions Margaret Mary (1647-1690) received of Christ, the most important were those in which Our Lord told her she was to promote devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The writings of St. Margaret Mary are not extensive but they are eminently practical. Besides her autobiography, she wrote many letters to people who asked for her counsel. Among these is a long letter to a religious in which Margaret Mary describes the diverse lives of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Each is a method of honoring Christ during the Octave of the feast of Corpus Christi.

❖ *Today the Lord destines you to honour His glorified life in the Blessed Sacrament. That is why He wishes you to enthrone yourself on the Cross. He wants you to glorify Him by carrying lovingly all those crosses which He presents to you, without ever letting yourself grow weary or complaining of their length or weight.*

❖ *Today the Lord chooses you to honour His life of sacrifice in the Holy Eucharist. Therefore, you must offer yourself to His Sacred Heart as a victim of immolation before the Divine Sacrificing Priest.*

❖ *Today the Lord has chosen you to honour His humiliated life in the Blessed Sacrament. So you must offer yourself to Him as nothingness to its All. Your whole attention must be concentrated on annihilating self and rejoicing when others help you to do so.*

❖ *Today the Lord has chosen you to honour His active life in the Blessed Sacrament. As a faithful servant, you must do violence to yourself to labor fervently in the service of your master.*

❖ *Today the Lord wants you to honour His life wholly given to us in the Blessed Sacrament. You must be as a burning candle with no other desire than to be consumed in His honour. Surrender yourself to the Mercy of Providence and let Him do with you according to His designs.*

❖ *Today you will be the Sulamitess, the spouse of the Well-Beloved who wishes to honour the Life of love of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Thus you must attend carefully surrendering yourself pure and innocent to please this Divine Spouse.*

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### St. Alphonsus



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### St. Thomas Aquinas



Thomas Aquinas lived from 1225-1274 AD. By the thirteenth century, Eucharistic errors became so rampant that a special feast was instituted, called *Corpus Christi*. The Pope ordered Thomas Aquinas to compose the hymns for the Divine Office of this feast. Among these hymns was the *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, which is worth quoting at some length because it is such a treasure of our faith.

*Christ's followers know by faith that bread is changed into His flesh and wine into His blood. Man cannot understand this, cannot perceive it;*

*but a lively faith affirms that the change, which is outside the natural course of things, takes place. Under the different species, which are now signs only and not their own reality, there lie hidden wonderful realities. His body is our food, His blood our drink. And yet Christ remains entire under each species. The communicant receives the complete Christ - uncut, unbroken, and undivided. Whether one receives or a thousand, the one receives as much as the thousand. Nor is Christ diminished by being received. The good and the wicked alike receive Him, but with the unlike destiny of life or death. To the wicked it is death, but life to the good. See how different is the result, though each receives the same. Last of all, if the sacrament is broken, have no doubt. Remember there is as much in a fragment as in an unbroken host. There is no division of the reality, but only a breaking of the sign; nor does the breaking diminish the condition or size of the One hidden under the sign.*

Also to be stressed is the careful distinction that St. Thomas makes between the objective reality of Christ's presence and the subjective state of souls of those who receive Holy Communion. Those in the state of grace and those estranged from God both receive the same Jesus Christ. But the first to grow in God's friendship and the second deepen their sinful guilt.

## 50th International Eucharistic Congress

This year is a very important year for the Church here in Ireland. From Sunday June 10th - Sunday June 17th Dublin will host the 50th International Eucharistic Congress. This week-long programme of events will

endeavor to link faith and culture, with a particular focus on the gathering of people of every nation, language and way of life around the table of the Lord. The opening ceremony of the Congress will be celebrated in the afternoon of Sunday 10th June 2012 (The Solemnity of the Body and Blood of the Lord).

Most of the Congress will be held in the RDS in Dublin, and it will include a public Eucharistic Procession with the final Mass to be celebrated in Croke Park. The key events of the IEC20 12 programme will include the daily sessions of catechesis given by Bishops from different parts of the world, as well



as testimonies offered by Christians who have a story of faith to share. The Congress normally takes place every four years.

International Eucharistic Congresses began in France in 1881 as a fruit of the Eucharistic Apostolate of Saint Peter-Julian Eymard, "the Apostle of the Eucharist" (1811-1868) as well as other committed Catholics. Thanks to the insight and commitment of Miss Emilie-Marie Tamisier (1834-1910), her idea of "Eucharistic pilgrimages" gradually changed into Congresses of Eucharistic Works, which later came to be known as "Eucharistic

Congresses".

With the vision and enthusiasm of this committed laywoman behind the idea the Vatican backed fully the idea of these great international displays of devotion to the Real Presence of Our Blessed Lord in the Eucharist. The Vatican also saw these events as opportunities for teaching and reflection on this wondrous mystery at the centre of the Church. Throughout the late nineteenth and the twentieth Century International Eucharistic Congresses appeared as public events focused on stimulating the faith of Catholics in the "Real Presence", on

# Blessed Sacrament

*The Catholic Church has been deeply devoted to the Blessed Sacrament. There is no sanctity without the Eucharist. We focus here seven out of hundreds of saints, men and women who have been outstanding in their devotion to the sacrament of the altar.*

*What we would start with a saint from the fourth century. Why? Because in the fourth century that the Church first assembled what we now call a Eucharist. It is one of the principal doctrines of the Catholic faith. Then we will jump to the sixteenth century, when the first major heresies against the Real Presence began to appear in the Church. Our next choices will be from what is popularly called the post-Reformation Age when Protestantism deprived whole nations of their fidelity to the Blessed Sacrament. Finally we shall look at a few modern saints whose Eucharistic holiness is an inspiration for our day.*

## St. Alphonsus Liguori



eighteenth century, courageous defenders

who spoke and wrote extensively in witness of the Real Presence. Among these, the most famous was St. Alphonsus Liguori (1696-1787). During his long life he published some one hundred volumes on every aspect of Christian morals and spirituality. Among these, the most important for our purpose was his book on The Holy Eucharist. Once again the quotation will be extensive but deserves to be made.

*Our holy faith teaches us, and we are bound to believe, that in the Consecrated Host, Jesus Christ is really present under the species of bread. But we must also understand that He is thus present on our altars as on a throne of love and mercy, to dispense graces and there to show us the love which He bears us, by being*

*pleased to dwell night and day hidden in the midst of us.*

*There it was that St. Francis Xavier found refreshment in the midst of his many labours in India; for he employed his days in toiling for souls, and his nights in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. St. John Francis Regis did the same thing; and sometimes finding the church closed, he endeavoured to satisfy his longings by remaining on his knees, outside the door exposed to the rain and cold so that at least at a distance he might attend upon his Comforter concealed under the sacramental species. St. Francis of Assisi used to go to communicate all his labours and undertakings to Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament.*

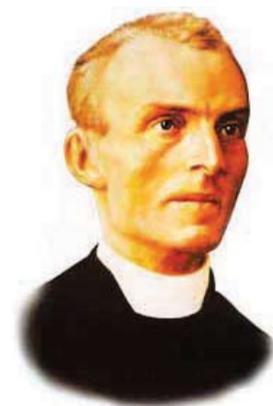
## and the Rosary



promoting increased zeal for devotion to the Eucharist outside of Mass, and on proclaiming the social Kingship of Christ.

(Courtesy: The Rosary Letter Magazine)

## St. Peter Julian Eymard



If there is one person who qualifies as a Eucharistic saint it is Peter Julian Eymard (1811 - 1868). He had been a member of the Society of Mary, but received a dispensation to organize the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament for men, and the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament for women.

His apostolate of the Eucharist met with widespread opposition, especially among priests of his own day. The focus of the opposition was Peter Julian's emphasis on the real, corporeal and physical presence of the living Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. What Eymard discovered was what the Church had always believed. But he contributed to a major development of doctrine in understanding the reality of Christ's Eucharistic presence now on earth.

St. Peter had his critics but he also had his friends. Not the least of his admirers was the Cure of Ars who knew Eymard personally. The Cure wrote of Eymard, "He is a saint. The world hinders his work, but not knowingly, and it will do great things for the glory of God. Adoration by priests! How wonderful! Tell the good Fr. Eymard I will pray for his work every day."

The published writings of St. Peter Julian are now popularly printed in small paperback volumes. I dare say they have been read by millions. One focus of these writings deserves to be specially emphasized. It is the virtues that Our Lord in the Eucharist is now practicing in order to inspire us to follow His example. Among these virtues, none is more basic than His poverty.

*Jesus wanted to be the poorest of the poor, in order to be able to stretch out His hand to the lowliest of men and say to them, "I am your brother."*

## St. Teresa of Avila



The Church in the sixteenth century was in desperate need of reform. So true is this that we may correctly speak of the Catholic Reformation which took place after the Protestant revolution. Among the Catholic reformers was a contemplative nun who has since been declared a Doctor of the Church, St. Teresa of Avila (1515 - 1582)

As might be expected, Teresa of Avila was one of the staunch defenders of the Catholic faith in her day. Unlike her contemporary, St. Ignatius Loyola, she did not organize an academic crusade to defend the teachings of the one, true Church. She was a contemplative who spent the latter half of her life restoring Carmelite spirituality to its historic authenticity. However, under obedience of her spiritual directors she published some of the deepest and clearest expositions of Catholic Christianity. Her published writings span the whole gamut of the Church's teaching.

*Once after receiving Communion, I was given understanding of how the Father receives within our soul the Most Holy Body of Christ, and of how I know and have seen that these Divine Persons are present, and how pleasing to the Father this offering of His Son is, because He delights and rejoices with Him here - let us say - on earth. For His humanity is not present with us in the soul, but His divinity is. Thus the humanity is so welcome and pleasing to the Father and bestows on us so many favours.*

What is St. Teresa saying? She is saying that God the Father bestows on us indescribable blessings through the humanity of His Only Son. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of this truth. Certainly the graces we receive come to us from God. But they come to us through the humanity which the Second Person of the Holy Trinity assumed when He became man.

## St. Therese of Lisieux



We close this conference on Eucharistic saints with the Little Flower, better known as St. Therese of Lisieux (1873 - 1897). Her mother died when Therese was still a young child. She entered the Carmelite order at the age of fifteen and became directress of novices in 1895. The young Carmelite was remarkable for her humility, simplicity, piety, and patience in enduring the acute physical suffering caused by pulmonary hemorrhages.

There is one of her published writings that has been translated into all modern languages and has deeply affected the spiritual life of whole nations. Pope Pius XI had a great devotion to the Little Flower and canonized her in 1925 shortly after he began his pontificate.

*It was a totally heavenly happiness which words cannot express. And what shall our happiness be when we receive Communion in the eternal abode of the King of Heaven? Then we shall see our joy never coming to an end; there will no longer be the sadness of departings, and it will be no longer necessary to have some souvenir to dig fervently into the walls sanctified by His divine presence, for His home will be ours for all eternity.*

What the Little Flower is saying deserves to be memorized. The Eucharist on earth is both the anticipation and the promise of the heaven where the Christ, who is hidden in the Blessed Sacrament will be seen face to face in the heavenly home where He is awaiting us.

## A Memorial Tribute to Rev. Fr. Joseph Chianese S.J.

## An Apostle I met on the Highway of Life

Eymard de Silva Wijeyeratne

I was disturbed by the sad news of the death of Fr. Chianese who was the Parish Priest of St. Mary's Church, Dehiwela, in the 1980s. Though I was unable to keep in touch with his blessed presence, while he was resident in Lewella in the last days of his life, his influence on me compensated for this loss.

Fr. Chianese came to Sri Lanka as a young priest and lived and served the people as a fellow Sri Lankan citizen, as parish priest of St. Francis of Assisi, Church, Tangalla (1954-55) and Marawila, as Rector of St. Aloysius' College, Galle for a short period and in other places. Though he was orthodox in his practice and preaching of Christianity he was one among few Catholic priests, who did not cast me aside as a heretic because of my unorthodox view that Christianity as a value-system expressed in the Gospels along with a personal relationship with transcendent Jesus Christ, precedes decimally classified Catholic doctrines and definitive statements, in the same manner that one's existence precedes one's classified essence as presented in one's identity card or the qualifications cited after one's name as BA, BSc. PhD, Professor, Business advisor or Community worker.

Fr. Chianese was by popular accord the most lovable priest that ever graced the precincts of the Dehiwela parish. He had the ability to penetrate a person's mind and assay his or her mind. On one occasion, while engaged in a friendly chat with me, he gave me a line-drawing of Jesus Christ, saying this appears to be the vision of the Man, who fires your imagination and your life. I append this picture to illustrate the deep spirituality of this venerable and lovable man of God. Very often the work of a priest amounts to conducting divine services, especially that of celebrating the Eucharist, and administering a parish or handling a special assignment entrusted to him. While it is true that they, as a general rule perform these sacred functions with conviction and



The line drawing of Christ

sincerity, but often in a perfunctory manner, their minds are not burdened by their own human predicament and that of those whom they serve. Christianity is essentially a personal discipline involving moral and religious fervour that is designed to cope with the human predicament, which is a mixture of effervescent joy, contentment, disappointment, grief and sorrow. This inexorable path follows from the fact that Jesus, divine as he was, did not exempt himself from the human predicament. All those who followed him, his own mother, his apostles and his followers too were subject to the human predicament. There are priests, though not many, who carry that burden throughout a lifetime as an essential part of their apostolate. What they suffer is best described by the **GERMAN WORD 'ANGST' (ANGUISH)** as used by Danish philosopher and theologian Soren Kierkegaard. This word means dread or anguish not as a response to a particular issue or misfortune but as a response to the human predicament in general.

Fr. Chianese, who accepted his fallibility as a finite human person suffered the pangs of anguish in total obedience to the Man who matters – Jesus Christ. His life was a leap of faith that converted his anguish and that of others into joy, based on faith, hope and charity. Though he accepted the fact that obedience, acts as an agent that binds together human-bricks into a magnificent structure that forms the Church as the People of God, he believed that obedience if stretched to the point of abject servility, could have a devastating effect on society: especially on sensitive minds. I quote from his farewell message to the parishioners of St. Mary's Church, Dehiwela, when he was transferred to another parish, in order to illustrate the genial nature of this man of God.

*"It has been a real blessing to me to have had you as fellow travellers for 8 years in the pilgrimage of life, to share your joys and sorrows, your successes and failures, to wonder at the light of love shining in so many engaged and married couples, to welcome so many of your little ones to the waters of baptism,*



Rev. Fr. Joseph Chianese S.J

*to wipe away so many tears in the sacrament of pardon and reconciliation, to share with you the sorrow of parting from so many of your dear ones, mothers, fathers, sons and daughters"* (Source: Our Life, Monthly Bulletin of St. Mary's Church, Dehiwela, September 1990).

Your noble spirit Fr. Chianese, will not lie in a silent tomb, but sing as did your fellow Jesuit, Gerard Manley Hopkins, "Glory be to God for dappled things": your friends among us, whom you cared for and left behind.

## Angst

It was not until the middle of the 20th century that English felt the need to import the word **angst** 'anxiety' from German. There are sporadic examples of its occurrence before then, as a conscious Germanism or as an untranslated technical term in English versions of philosophers and psychiatrists such as Heidegger and Freud, but it was the 1940s that was the true foster-decade of **angst**. There is more to it than simple **anxiety** (a word to which it is distantly related); *it is a gnawingly persistent but unsettlingly ill-defined fear, often mixed with elements of guilt and remorse, which assails modern man, cast adrift in the existential void of an irreligious age.* An early and enthusiastic user of the term was Cyril Connolly. One of its commonest manifestations these days is in the compound adjective **angst-ridden**. (*Dictionary of Foreign Words in English*) - John Ayto

## February 3

## Ansgar, bishop

(801-865). Born in Bremen, Germany, Ansgar became known as the "Apostle of the North" for his great evangelical work in Denmark and Sweden. He was Bishop of Hamburg and then of Bremen. Gregory IV appointed him as his delegate to Denmark and Sweden. In reply to those who questioned some miracles attributed to him, he said, "**Were God to choose me to do such things, I would ask Him for one miracle only: That by His power He would make me a good man.**"

## "You are Fr. Moyses OMI from Belgium You are wise at a premium"

This is an article on Rev. Fr. Moyses OMI, who passed away from us on the 27th of January, 2012 at the "Marian Grove," Kohuwala.

He was an ardent and zealous person who loved the people of Sri Lanka as an Oblate Missionary from a foreign land. He was born on the 14th of February 1919 in Thimister, Belgium. Leopold Moyses and Maria Moyses were his parents. Having completed his preliminary studies in 1989 and seminary studies in Korbeekloo and in Valaines in 1942, he was ordained a priest on the 18th of June, 1944.

He arrived in Sri Lanka on 4th November 1946 and was sent to Moratuwa as the Assistant Parish Priest. In 1947, he was appointed as the Assistant Parish Priest of the Pamunugama Parish. In 1949, he was the acting parish priest at Dematagoda and in June of the same year he was appointed as Parish Priest of Katukurunda. The long standing missionary career was marked when he became the Parish Priest at Batagama. He was there for nearly 22 years (1955-1977). The people of Batagama would definitely vouch for the religious life of Fr. Moyses than anyone else. In the following years he was transferred to Pamunugama and Bollata in 1977 and in 1982.

From 1992 onwards he resided at vari-

ous places such as Midellawita, Ampitiya (Oblate Scholasticate) and Kohuwala (Marian Grove).

Being a foreign Oblate Missionary he served the Sri Lankan Church over 66 years. He was 93 years-old when he bid his final farewell. The remarkable characteristic of Rev. Fr. Moyses is his welcoming smile which attracted many. He was fully involved in the Sri Lankan Oblate mission which he loved. The Sri Lankans were his own and given by God. He never thought of going back to Belgium even during his last days he wanted to be buried here in Sri Lanka. His remains were buried at Batagama on his request.

*Dear Rev. Fr. Moyses omi  
You loved us and we ask "why"  
Leaving your lovely smile you die  
No doubt you will rejoice before God's eye..!*

Rev. Fr. S. Randil Fernando OMI  
Fatima Church, Maradana



Fr. Moyses OMI

### Upliftment of Women and the Poor - Protection of Environment

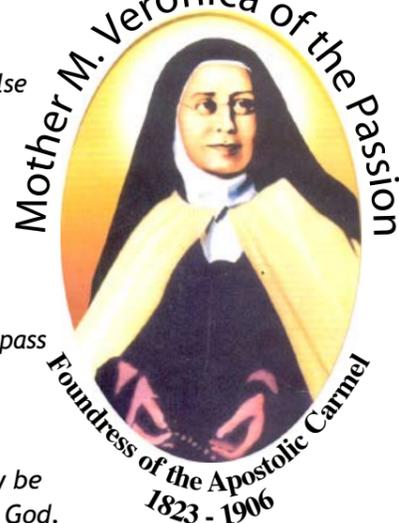
*I did not desire anything else  
but the will of God.  
All my ambition and my  
prayer was, to be the  
last and the  
least in Carmel.*

*The only ambition of a  
Carmelite should be to surpass  
the others in humility ...  
I beg of you and exhort  
you not to hurt  
charity that thus you may be  
recognized as children of God.*

*When I look back and see how the all Holy and merciful God  
has cared for such a grain of sinful dust as I am who may in  
very truth say she has been and is an unprofitable servant at  
least, I can only marvel at His godness-but still I trust He will  
accomplish His work and bring my poor soul to a happy end.*

*May you experience His Love and Care as you continue to  
witness to Him lovingly in your mission.*

Sr. Mirani A.C.  
Carmel Seth Pahana  
Katubedda, Moratuwa.





### Little Words of Inspiration

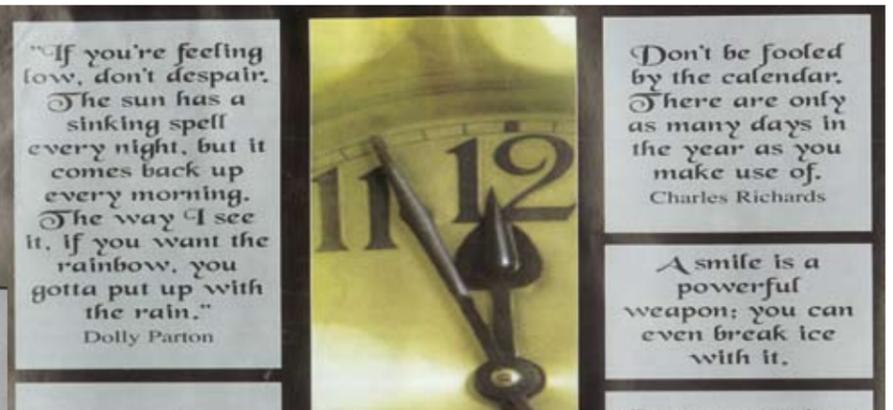
When we once begin to form good resolutions, God gives us every opportunity of carrying them out.  
St John Chrysostom

Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right.  
Oprah Winfrey

Your Merry Christmas may depend on what others do for you ... but your Happy New Year depends on what you do for others.  
Ralph Waldo Emerson

The merry year is born like the bright berry from the naked thorn.  
Hartley Coleridge

Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year.



"If you're feeling low, don't despair. The sun has a sinking spell every night, but it comes back up every morning. The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain."  
Dolly Parton

Don't be fooled by the calendar. There are only as many days in the year as you make use of.  
Charles Richards

A smile is a powerful weapon; you can even break ice with it.

Prayer requires more of the heart than the tongue.  
Adam Clarke

Practical prayer is harder on the soles of your shoes than on the knees of your trousers.  
Austin O'Malley

If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough.  
Meister Eckhardt

"He who has not looked on Sorrow will never see Joy."  
Kahlil Gibran

## DAVID *the* DARING

THE SHEPHERD BOY WHO BECAME A KING



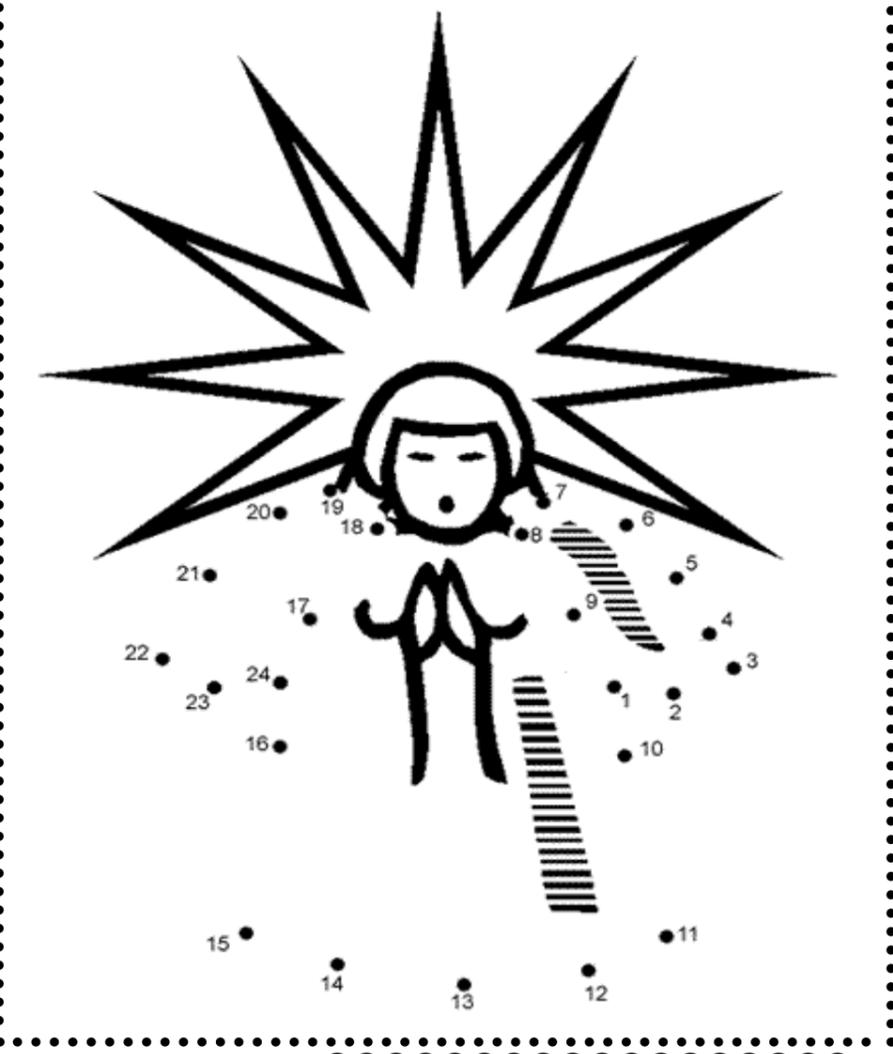
*Because he was the youngest in his family, and his brothers were all grown up, DAVID had the job of looking after the family's sheep.*

Even though he was just a teenager, David was fearless and skilful in using his weapons.




(Next week)

### Join the dots and colour




### Sunday Wit

The Pope goes to New York. He is picked up at the airport by a limousine. He looks at the beautiful car and says to the driver, "You know, I hardly ever get to drive. Would you please let me?"

The driver is understandably hesitant and says, "I'm sorry, but I don't think I'm supposed to do that."

But the Pope persists, "Please?" The driver finally lets up. "Oh, all right, I can't really say no to the Pope."

So the Pope takes

### A crucified Jew in every room!

the wheel, and boy, is he a speed demon! He hits the gas and goes around 100 mph in a 45 zone. A policeman notices and pulls him over.

The cop walks up and asks the Pope to roll down the window. Startled and surprised, the young officer asks the Pope to wait a minute. He goes back to his patrol car and radios the chief.

**Cop:** Chief, I have a problem.

**Chief:** What sort of problem?

**Cop:** Well, you see, I pulled over this guy for driving way over the speed limit but it's someone really important.

**Chief:** Important like the mayor?

**Cop:** No, no, much more important than that.

**Chief:** Important like the governor?

**Cop:** Wayyyyy more important than that.

**Chief:** Like the president?

**Cop:** More.

**Chief:** Who's more important than the president?

**Cop:** I don't know, but he's got the Pope driving for him!

~~~~~

A Jewish couple has a son who is a holy terror. When he gets to be of age, he's kicked out of every school they put him in. Finally desperate, the father goes to the Rabbi for advice and the Rabbi says put him in the Catho-

### God answers the Cry

Everything everywhere is under Yahweh's care as told by Jesus Christ in St. Luke's share. About five sparrows for two pennies, fare Coining together the count of our every hair.

In a jungle abutting his native village. My uncle had noticed a clue for knowledge. Two birds perching on a bough of a tree. Had twittered making love very free.

While the leaves danced in the breeze Nigh above an eagle! The He bird freezed A hunter below, his mate saw, aiming to kill They were spell bound, struggling what to do.

The arrow drawn back the hunter held on the bow As he saw another bird near - WOW ! Two for one shot. Planning he altered pace His hind foot kept on cobra was bit with force.

In lightning speed thru branches flashed the arrow stray Aim missed sliced the eagle which lost his prey What a twist of fate! in the nick of time The birds' silent cry was heard on time.

*Malcolm Fernando*

# MARY AND THE EUCHARIST

My intention in writing this article is to draw a parallel between Mary and the Eucharist. I heavily depend on the writings of Pope John Paul II who will go down in history both as a Marian Pope and also a Pope of the Eucharist.

The sixth chapter of the Encyclical "*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*" is dedicated to a discussion on the profound relationship between Mary and the Mystery of the Eucharist.

In the gospels the presence of Mary at the Last Supper is not mentioned. Yet Mary was among the apostles who prayed "with one accord" (Acts 1:14), in the first community that gathered after the Ascension in the expectation of Pentecost. The Holy Father affirms that Mary must have been present at the Eucharistic celebrations of the first generation of Christian who were devoted to the "breaking of the Bread" (Acts. 2:42)

Prior to Mary's participation in the Eucharistic Banquets of the first Christian community, Mary lived her Eucharistic faith from the moment of the Annunciation. By her total submission to the plan of God, Mary offered her virginal womb for the Incarnation of God's Word. In a sense the Body of Christ present under the Eucharistic species is the same body that was born of Mary. The Annunciation is considered one of the most significant events in the history of salvation especially in the unfolding of the Eucharistic mystery.

## \* Mary's 'Fiat'

We call that moment her '*fiat*' "Be it done to me according to your word" Mary's resounding "Yes" paves the way for the Word to become flesh. The Holy Father presents to us an insight where he establishes a relationship between Mary's *fiat* in reply to the Angel and the Amen, which every believer says

receiving the body of the Lord during the Eucharistic communion. Mary was asked to believe that the one whom she conceived "through the Holy Spirit" was "the Son of God" (Lk. 1:30-35)

In conformity with the Virgin's faith in the Eucharistic mystery we are also called upon to believe that the same Jesus Christ, son of God and son of Mary, becomes present in his full humanity and divinity in the form of bread and wine.

## \* Mary the Tabernacle

The Holy Father also draws heavily from the mystery of the visitation in order to establish Mary's presence in the Eucharist. He says that Mary anticipated the Eucharistic faith of the Church in the mystery of the Incarnation. He further goes on to say that when at the visitation she bore in her womb the Word made flesh, she became in some way, "a tabernacle"-the first tabernacle in history - in which the Son God, still invisible to human sight allowed himself to be adorned by Elizabeth, radiating his light as it were through the eyes and the voice of Mary.

When we received Christ in the Eucharistic communion, we also become in a certain sense "a living tabernacle" because we become bearers of Christ we are thus "*Christi foroi*" We carry Christ within us, his Body and his blood.

Mary is presented to the eyes of the believers as a wonderful monstrance of the Body of Christ conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Father states that in a way the entire life of Mary was a "Corpus Christi Procession."

Thus Mary is the Model of the Church that carries the greatest treasure, the Lord, in the sacrament of his body and blood hidden in herself. The solemn procession on the feast of Corpus Christi

is a manifestation that the Church and every believer are called upon to be like Mary, The tabernacle and the living monstrance of the Saviour of the World.

What might be the reason that the Holy Father alternately speaks of Mary being a tabernacle and a monstrance? Is there any difference? Yes there is. The difference precisely is that the tabernacle is the place of the hidden presence of Jesus while the monstrance makes him visible. The Holy Father makes us understand that our heart should be a tabernacle where Christ can dwell, while our lives should be the monstrance through which his presence in us can be radiated to others.

## \* Mary's Sacrifice

Meditating on the presentation of the Lord in the temple, the Holy Father says that when Mary brought the child Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem "to present him to the Lord" (Lk 2:22), she heard the aged Simeon announcing that the child would be a "sign of contradiction" and that a sword would also pierce her own heart - (Lk. 2: 34-35), revealing the truth of her son's crucifixion. In her daily preparation for calvary Mary experienced a kind of "anticipated Eucharist."

The Holy Father also goes on to say that Mary was in a unique way associated with Christ in the work of salvation - the sacrifice on the Cross. By



submitting her will to the Father she expressed her willingness to sacrifice her son at calvary for the salvation of mankind. This is the Eucharistic sacrifice of Mary, our Mother. Hence, there is a close link between the crucifixion of the Lord on calvary and the presence of Mary at the foot of the Cross.

The Holy Father opens the chapter on Mary in '*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*' saying, "In my apostolic letter '*Rosarium Virginis Mariae*' I have pointed to the Blessed Virgin Mary, as our teacher in contemplating Christ's face and among the mysteries of light (The Luminous Mysteries), I included the institution of the Eucharist. Mary can guide us towards this Most Holy Sacrament, because she herself has a profound relationship with the Eucharist."

From the above reflection we can come to the conclusion that Mary and the Eucharist are two realities of Christian life. They are inseparably united because Mary is the Mother of the Church, leading her children to the Eucharist.

**Rev. Fr. Lylie Jayanth Fernando OMI**  
"Nazareth" Wennappuwa.

## Bishop Emmanuel

Bishop Fidelis Lionel Emmanuel Fernando  
It gives us pleasure to greet you  
Simple and humble you are in all you do  
Happy you'll be, to God be true  
On you God showers His blessings anew  
Praise the Lord for having chosen you

Emmanuel dear Bishop you've other names as well  
Many call you loving Father Emmanuel  
May God guide you always from above  
A good shepherd be with his love  
Nothing will stop you from serving the Lord  
Under all circumstances persevere we ask God  
Emmanuel-God with us your name  
Lord of peace, joy and love in you dwell

**Emilda Douglas**



## Bishop Maxwell Silva

Bishop Maxwell Granville Silva  
I and my family knew him 29 years ago  
Serving as assistant in Francis of Sales Parish  
Having dedication as a shepherd he did show  
Our Parish Priest was studying abroad  
Pleasantly he acted for Rev. Fr. Leo

Maxwell Granville Silva our bishop dear  
A big hug, our love and congrats we offer  
Xenophobia or racism you did not bear  
When helping the helpless with much care  
Extinguishing the flames of burning house  
Lovingly you helped so they raise their voices  
"Long live our Bishop Maxwell Silva"

Silva - silver or gold you don't seek  
In God's vineyard you'll help the poor and weak  
Lovingly serving God night and day  
Very fervently we hope and pray  
Always with Jesus, Mary and Joseph stay

**Emilda Douglas**



## What it says .... in the Readings

**May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our mind, so that we can see what hope his call holds for us. (Eph. 1: 17,18)**

### LITURGICAL - CALENDAR YEAR B 12th Feb. - 19th Feb. 2012

#### Sun: SIXTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

Lev. 13: 1-2, 45-46, 1 Cor. 10: 31-11,1,  
Mk. 1: 40-45

Mon: Jn. 1: 1-11, Mk. 8: 11-13

Tue: **SS Cyril, Monk, & Methodius, Bishop**

Jn. 1: 12-18, Mk. 8: 14-21

Wed: Jn. 1: 19-27, 8: 22-26

Thu: Jn. 2: 1-9, Mk. 8: 27-33

Fri: Jn. 2: 14-24,26, Mk. 8: 34-9,1

Sat: Jn. 3: 1-10, Mk. 9: 2-13

#### Sun: SEVENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

Is. 43:18-19,21-22,24-25, 2 Cor. 1: 18-22,  
Mk. 2: 1-12

### PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

*Response: Lord, graciously hear us.*

For the Christian community: That it may be warm and caring towards those rejected in society. Lord, hear us.

*Response: Lord, graciously hear us.*

For the world and all humankind: That God may bind the human family in ties of friendship, and mutual acceptance. Lord, hear us.

*Response: Lord, graciously hear us.*

For all those who feel rejected and unwanted: That they may realise that even if people reject them God never does. Lord, hear us.

*Response: Lord, graciously hear us.*

That we may realise how the quality of our presence, of our looks and words, affects others, bringing them happiness or misery, life or death. Lord, hear us.

*Response: Lord, graciously hear us.*

## What kind of Jesus?

This brief encounter between Jesus and the leper, with its strained exchanges and emotions, gives us a fascinating insight into the ministry of Jesus. It gives us the opportunity to ask ourselves; what kind of Jesus emerges from Mark's portrait? Mark, the author of the Gospel, first is well-known for presenting a very human Jesus. In his Gospel Jesus demonstrates human feelings and strong emotions; he is critical, angry, impatient, fearful. This portrait prompts questions about our own understanding of Jesus.

- Do you think of Jesus as a person who never gets ruffled!
- Is he the kind of person who never sweats over anything?
- Does Jesus have his own reactions to people and events?
- Does he ever blow up?
- Does his anger show when the people he tries to help question his good intentions?
- Does he ever become tired when people treat him like a magic wonder-worker, a mobile relic, without accepting his teaching that no amount of healing is going to exempt people from suffering and brokenness?
- Is he ever afraid of people's limitless expectations?
- Does he get annoyed when people misrepresent him, so that he tells them to stay quiet? Better say nothing than run around giving false impressions.

# Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

#### First Reading:

Lev. 13: 1-2, 45-46

The Lord gives Moses and Aaron certain rules which a leper has to observe. They are to show themselves to the priest, they should wear torn clothes, have their hair loose, cover their lips and cry "unclean, unclean" and remain outside the camp.

#### Second Reading:

1 Cor. 10: 31 - 11:1

St Paul requests the Corinthians to give glory to God in everything they do. They should not offend their neighbour. He also wants them to imitate him as he is of Christ.

#### Gospel:

Mk. 1: 40-45

A leper makes an earnest plea to Jesus and is cured of his leprosy. Jesus wants him to observe the commandments of Moses. He also wants him to keep silent. Instead the leper goes on to speak of Jesus in public.

#### Reflection

Today's theme attempts to show us the importance of giving glory to God, in and through whatever we do or say and the importance of the community and its benefits.

Leprosy in the Old Testament was treated as a disease which made a person both unclean and a menace to the health of his neighbour. Hence they had for the well-being of the community to live away from the rest of the people. They could not take part in their life or in the liturgy.

According to the understanding of that time the people thought that a leper is stuck by God and therefore unfit to worship Him. Hence they were not able to give glory to God in and through their lives. For this reason they were considered exiles, but



living in the vicinity. In the time of the Old Testament this was done purely for the benefit of both the community and the glory of God, so that the community will not be affected with the disease and also that they may be able to worship the Lord in purity.

In the second reading St. Paul is worried about the state of the life of the Corinthian community. He leads an exemplary life in imitation of Christ. This he has been doing for the sake of the community. Therefore he wants them to imitate him so that their lives too could be modeled on that of Christ. He wants the Corinthian community to give glory to God in and through whatever they say or do. He also is worried about the increase in the community. He doesn't want them to offend the Jews or the Greeks for that would hinder them from joining the Church. Neither does he want them to offend the Church fearing that the members would leave in discouragement. These instructions were laid down by St. Paul for the good of the community and for the glory of God.

Though in the Old Testament a leper is considered an untouchable, in the Gospel Jesus breaks this observance so as to give glory to God by way of curing a leper. This is also done for the

benefit of the community. But He breaks the rules only to give glory to God and for the benefit of the community. For we see that he wants the cured leper to observe the command of Moses. Sickness at that time was considered to be the result of sin. Here Jesus shows that he could even forgive sins.

Therefore he doesn't want the leper to speak about him. For His mission is far superior, than providing material benefits to the people. His mission is to save mankind from sin and to bridge the gap between man and God. This was his way of giving glory to God and working for the good of the community.

We ought to give glory to God in everything we do or say and it should always be for the benefit of the community.

#### Aid Story

Perillus asked Alexander the Great to help him get together his daughter's dowry, and the Macedonian king complied and ordered that 50 Talents be given to him. "10 would be sufficient sire," said Perillus, overwhelmed by the king's generosity. "That would be sufficient for Pirellius," said the king, "But it would be very little for Alexander."

#### Aid Story 2

Possible signs outside a church:

- Gambling is a sin. Bet you can't give it up.
- Let us help you study for your final exam.
- Speak well of your enemies. After all, you created them.
- The meek shall inherit the earth, that is if you don't mind.
- Happy Easter to our Christian friends. Happy Passover to our Jewish friends. Happy Ramadan to our Muslim friends. Happy Wesak to our Buddhist friends. To our Atheist friends, good luck.

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- Is he ever surprised at the trust people put in him?
- Does he get nervous when people begin to use him for their own peculiar causes?
- Does he bless God when someone gets his name right?
- Does the pressure ever become so intense that he makes for me where that has no addresses, because no one lives there?
- Do professional healers need time off?
- Does Jesus ever get tired of living in an emergency ward where people come to bleed him? So much that he goes to a lonely place where nobody can bleed him.

#### The Human Jesus

These are a few of the questions that are raised by Mark in his Gospel. They have a timeless quality about them, for they address our own understanding of Jesus. Mark's portrait of Jesus is often blunt and shocking, which is why Mark's Gospel was appointed to be read so rarely in the liturgies of the Church. The work of Mark has waited a long time before being accepted fully into the celebration of the Church's life; but its insight into the humanity of Jesus is one that touches many people more than the high theology of John or the brilliant teaching of Matthew.

Mark believes that Jesus is the Son of God, but he also portrays him in such a human light that everyone can identify with him. Immersed in the strengths and limitations of humanity, the Jesus we meet in Mark's gospel is alive, real, always struggling to be authentic. For many Christians, it is Mark who gives the most moving account of the Lord's commitment to a broken

and fragile humanity. In previous centuries Mark has been ignored; but now the Church is rediscovering his work, like a lost treasure.

And the good news is that when we rediscover the Gospel of Mark, we rediscover the person of Jesus.

## The call to.....

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materialism of the age, are seeking spiritual experiences or at least looking for peace of mind in a world that is filled with noise and putting them under manifold types of pressure.

The Church of today prays for a world at peace and bereft of violence, where men are led by truth and practice of justice. She wishes to see resources shared and the poor cared for and not marginalized in a mega world-economy. She wishes to see churches deeply involved and united in the task of effectively proclaiming the Good News of salvation which is also one of human integral liberation. She proposes a plan for an integral humanism; modern man progressing in all his dimensions. The Church believes that in her Gospel and in Jesus Christ her Lord, there is an answer to all human problems and a way out of all modern dilemmas that vex contemporary man and his preoccupations. To these ends the ever fresh Gospel message has to be addressed and in a language and manner that can reach the hearing and understanding of a world bent on material well-being. The new evangelization will now coincide and resonate well with the Golden Jubilee of the opening of the Second Vatican Council (1962) and with the Year of Faith declared by Pope Benedict XVI to mark this event, with greater enthusiasm to understand the spirit of this great Council and the commitment to put its teachings to practice.