



Feast of Chair of
St. Peter
February 22

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MESSENGER

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Pope tilts Church leadership towards developing countries

Developing countries (Asia, Africa, Latin America and Oceania) would now make up 40% of the total body of Cardinal Electors in a future Conclave. This is compared to 36.5% in 2013.

According to *Vatican Insider*, a website run by the Italian daily *'La Stampa'*, in the Conclave that elected His Holiness Francis as Pope in 2013, 8.7% of Cardinal Electors were Asian. Today this figure has risen to 11%, as has the proportion of Asian faithful out of the total number of Catholics in the world. Asia has gone from 11 Cardinal Electors in 2013 (8.7%) to 14 (11.2%) now.

In Asia alone, the percentage of Cardinals in proportion to the entire College and the number of Asian Catholics in proportion to the total number of Catholics in the world, correspond. Latin America has 18 Cardinals which is equal to 15% of the Electoral College. Paradoxically, given that the Pope comes from this subcontinent, there were more of them in the 2013 Conclave (19 out of 115 or 16.5%).

According to data recently published by Washington's *Pew Forum on*

Religion and Public Life there are 425 million Catholics living in South and Central America. That is almost 40% of the total number of faithful in the world (a century ago there were 70 million, with is equal to 24%). A century ago, 65% of Catholics lived in Europe, today this figure has dropped to 257 thousand, or 24%.

The number of Africans has gone from 12 in the Conclave (10.4%) to 15 today (13%). There was only one Cardinal (0.87%) representing Oceania in the Conclave whereas now it has three Cardinal Electors (2.4%).

The Wall Street Journal of the United States, also reports that Pope Francis created 20 new Cardinals, further tilting the Church's leadership toward developing countries as he enters a crucial period of reform of the Catholic Church.

In an elaborate ceremony in St. Peter's Basilica, the Argentinean-born Pontiff elevated the 20 men to become so-called "Princes of the Church," bestowing the biretta, or the square hat that is a vivid red meant to symbolize the blood, shed by martyrs for the Christian faith.



Pope Francis, left, greets Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Saturday before welcoming 20 new cardinals into the Catholic Church's leadership. Photo: Associated Press.

The choice of new Cardinals is among the most important decisions for a pope. The main task for the College of Cardinals is to elect a new pontiff. However, Cardinals also advise popes and Pope

Francis has actively sought their counsel as he seeks to tilt decision-making away from Rome and build support for a series of important reforms

Contd on Pg. 2 >>>

125th Jubilee Feast of St. Mary's Church, Bolawalana



Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith presided at the 125th Jubilee Celebration of St. Mary's Church, Bolawalana recently.

Vespers sung the previous day was officiated by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Fernando, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo.

(B. H. Livera)

WRITE TO US

The 'Messenger' wishes to open its pages for readers to contribute articles on various subjects ranging from religion to socio-economic, social justice, family, youth and subjects relevant to our readership. We would appreciate if the articles are based on moral and spiritual values.



The Editor

Egypt Bombs Islamic State stronghold in Libya after Massacre

Egypt carried out a second round of airstrikes in eastern Libya last Monday, in swift retaliation for the massacre of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians by Islamic State militants in Libya.

The bombings killed dozens of militants and several civilians in the Islamic State stronghold of Darna, according to Libyan military officials, 1,300 kilometres east of where the executions were reportedly carried out. Libyan warplanes joined the strikes, which targeted weapons caches and training camps.

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi had pledged an immediate response in a televised speech, calling the killings an "abhorrent act of terrorism."

Backed by Libya's internationally rec-



Egyptian Coptic men mourn for 21 Coptic Egyptian men slain by Islamic State militants in Sirte, Libya, at the Virgin Mary Church in the village of el-Aour, near Minya, 220 kilometres (135 miles) south of Cairo, Egypt.

ognised government, the Libyan air force joined the strikes, which targeted militant weapons caches and training camps.

The rival parliament based in Tripoli, which is supported by some Islamist groups, denounced the airstrikes as a violation of international law and Libyan sovereignty.

The air raids began after a video surfaced online last Sunday purporting to show the beheadings of the men, who had been taken hostage in Libya in recent months after being separated from their Muslim co-workers.

It remains unclear when the killings occurred.

The militant group's English language magazine published images from the grisly scene late last week. It is the largest staged mass killing outside of the Islamic State's base in Syria and Iraq that the militant group has publicised.

Voice of America

Issuing of Applications for Grade One class of 2016 in Catholic Private Schools in the Archdiocese of Colombo

KIDNEY PATIENT NEEDS HELP



Nineteen-year-old S.A.N. Rangani Fernando of 5th Lane, 52/21, P.M. Fernando Road, Moratuwa is suffering from chronic renal failure.

Consultant Nephrologist Dr. A.L.M. Nazar, Colombo National Hospital has recommended kidney transplantation.

As she finds it difficult to foot the medical bill, she appeals for public contributions to be emitted to A/c No. 100 208 875 553 National Savings Bank, Moratuwa.

Contd. from Pg. 1

Pope tilts ...

that have already generated friction and resistance within the Church.

Last month, the Pope announced the choices for his second batch of Cardinals since his election nearly two years ago. He nominated 15 new Cardinals under the age of 80, the threshold for eligibility to vote in a Conclave for a new pope. He named another five who are over 80 as Cardinals' Emeriti, an honorary title; they will not be eligible to vote in a future Conclave.

The Wall Street Journal states, that the choices of the Pontiff - the first to hail from the Americas - reflect his concern for the poor, his desire to give greater voice to local churches and his support for clerics working close to the faithful.

Nine of the new Cardinals hail from the emerging world, including Vietnam, Panama and Myanmar and include some countries - such as Tonga - which have never had a Cardinal.

The new batch of red hats could help the Pontiff push ahead with a series of reforms that will likely culminate this year.

New Cardinals are named when existing once turn 80 and lose their eligibility to vote in a Papal Election.

In His Homily, Pope Francis reminded the new Cardinals that being a cardinal is not a prize or fancy entitlement but rather away to serve the Church better in humility and tenderness.

No	School	Date	Time
01.	St. Joseph's College Branch ,Wattala	02nd 3rd 4th 5th and 06th March	9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.
02.	Loyola College Branch, Bopitiya	02nd, 03rd, 04th March	2.30 p.m. to 5.00p.m.
03.	St. Thomas' Catholic International School, Seeduwa	02nd and 06th March	9.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon
04.	Loyola College, Negombo	02nd to 05th March	2.00p.m. to 4.00p.m.
05.	St. Peter's College, Colombo 04	2nd and 3rd March - For Roman Catholic Children 04th March - Roman Catholic Children and Children of the Old Boys 09th March- For non Roman Catholic Children	2.00 p.m. to 4.00p.m.
06.	St. Lawrence's Convent, Colombo 06	04th March- - Children of St. Lawrence Convent Montessori, - Children of Past Pupils, - Children who have sisters in the School. 06th March - Other Catholic Children	9.00a.m.to 11.00 a.m.
07.	Holy Cross College, Kalutara	05th and 06 March	8.00a.m. to 12.00 noon
08.	Holy Cross Branch School, Payagala.	05th and 06 March	8.00a.m. to 12.00 noon
09.	Good Shepherd Convent, Colombo 13	09th March - Good Shepherd Convent Montessori Children - Children who have sisters in the School. - Children of Past Pupils - Children of non members of Past Pupils' Association. 10th and 11th March - All Catholic Children	8.00a.m. to 9.00a.m.
10.	Marist Stella College, Negombo	14th March	09.00 a.m.to 12.noon
11.	St. Benedict's College, Colombo 13.	14th and 21st March	09.00 a.m.to 12.00 noon
12.	St. Jude's College, Kurana	16th, 17th, 18th March	07.30 a.m.to 1.30 p.m.
13.	St. Bridget's Convent (Primary)	17th, 18th and 19th March	08.30a.m. to 9.30 a.m.
14.	Holy Angels School of Hope, Payagala.	20th March	11.30a.m. to 3.30 p.m.
15.	Ave Maria Convent, Bolawalana	23rd, 24th, 25th March	12.30 p.m to 3.00 p.m
16.	St. Joseph's Branch College, Kadolkele, Negombo	25th to 27th March	8.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m.
17.	Holy Family Convent, Kalutara	26th and 27th March	2.30 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.
18.	Christ King College, Weliveriya.	26th and 27th March	08.00a.m. to 10.30 a.m.
19.	De Mazenod College, Kandana.	28th March 29th March	8.00.a.m. to 1.30 p.m. 10.00a.m. to 1.30 p.m.
20.	Holy Family Convent, Colombo 04	06th and 07th April	8.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon
21.	St. Peter's College Branch, Udugampola, Gampaha	06th ,07th, 08th, April	2.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.
22.	Holy Cross College, Gampaha.	09th, 10th, 11th April	08.00a.m. to 12.00 noon
23.	Ave Maria Convent, Negombo.	17th April - Ave Maria Montessori, Children of Past Pupils and Sisters in School 18th April- Other Applications	08.30 a.m. 2.00 p.m. 8.30 a.m. 12.00 noon 1.30 p.m. 3.30 p.m.
24.	Christ King College, Pannipitiya.	23rd and 24th April	08.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m.
25.	Our Lady of Victories Convent, Moratuwa.	27th and 29th April	09.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon
26.	St. Joseph's College, Colombo 10	27th to 30th April	9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.
27.	Good Shepherd Convent, Panadura.	29th and 30th April	11.00a.m.to 1.00 p.m.
28.	St. Joseph's Boy's College, Nugegoda	01st to 31st May	7.30a.m. to 1.30 p.m.
29.	St. Sebastian's College, Moratuwa.	05th to 08th May	8.30a.m. to 12.00 noon

1. Please forward your Family Book, child's Baptism Certificate, Birth Certificate and other documents requested by the School according to their special requirements. Obtaining one original baptism certificate from the parish is sufficient since the baptism certificate will be returned with the application and you can forward the same baptism certificate in obtaining application from another school. Copy of the baptism certificate can be attached with the application and the original baptism certificate is to be handed over to the school which gives admission to the child.
2. Since it is not possible to give admission to all who apply we request you to apply for Catholic vested schools too.
3. Do not be deceived by fraudsters who claim money promising to admit your child to Catholic private schools.

Rev. Fr. Ranjith Madurawala
General Manager of Catholic Private Schools (W.P.)



Church in the Modern World

Papal telegram to China makes landfall

Beijing has replied to a telegram sent by Pope Francis to the President of China, Xi Jinping, as he flew through Chinese Airspace on his way back to Rome from Manila on January 19, the Vatican Insider reported on January 21.

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Hua Chunying, announced the news at a media briefing in Beijing.

He said, "We are willing to have constructive dialogue with the Vatican based on relevant principles."

He then reiterated the usual demands that diplomatic ties with Taiwan be cut and that the People's Republic of China

be recognised as the sole government representing China, as well as demanding that the Vatican stop interfering in China's internal affairs in the name of religion.

Hua added, "China is always sincere in improving ties with the Vatican and has been making efforts to this end."

This is the third time that Pope Francis has been allowed to fly through Chinese Airspace and had the opportunity to send a message to Xi.

The first two were when he travelled to and from South Korea last August for the Beatification of Paul Yun Jichung, who was martyred along



with 123 companions, and to attend the Asian Youth Day.

Pietro Cardinal Parolin, the Vatican Secretary of State

remarked, "There are signs that seem to indicate a mutual willingness and are therefore promising."

He said that it seems the fact that the Pope flew through Chinese Airspace again after his visit to Korea is significant.

The Cardinal expressed his hope that when rapprochement does happen, it would take place in a spirit of love and truth.

"It will undoubtedly be an enormous benefit for the Catholic Church in China, for life inside the Church in China and the role it is called to play—that of fostering evangelisation in that great and noble society—for the good of the country and in the interests of world peace," he concluded.

Sunday Examiner

New Cardinals boost developing countries

The Pope has appointed 20 new cardinals, boosting the number of men from developing countries in the group that will elect his successor. When he announced the appointments in January, the Pope said the naming of cardinals from 14 countries from every continent in the world showed the Vatican's "inseparable link" with Catholics around the world.

The new Cardinals include the first prelates from Myanmar, Tonga and Ethiopia.

Fifteen are under 80, making them eligible to vote for the next pope.

For the first time, there are more non-European than European cardinals in the electoral body as the Pope seeks to reflect the Church globally.

With the appointments, made during



Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI was invited by Pope Francis to attend the February 14, ceremony.

a colourful celebration at the Vatican, the Pope has underlined his determination to change the balance of power in the Church and make it more representative, says the BBC's Vatican correspondent, David Willey.

Variety of countries

One of the new

cardinals, Soane Patita Paine Mafua, hails from Tonga, a Pacific island where a tiny Catholic community of some 17,000 is threatened with losing its home because of climate change.

Another, Cardinal Francesco Montenegro, presides over an archdiocese that includes Lampe-

dusa, the first European landfall for tens of thousands of migrants crossing the Mediterranean.

Also notable among the new appointments is Cardinal Jose Luis Lacunza Maestrujuan from Panama, who has campaigned to protect indigenous peoples.

(BBC)

Asia has around 134 million Catholics

Director of the Italian Jesuit periodical *Civiltà Cattolica*, Antonio Spadaro, highlighted the significant figures that marked this year's Consistory – in which Pope Francis created 20 new cardinals. 15 of these are under 80 and eligible to vote in a Conclave – in an article published in the latest issue of the periodical which actually focuses on the Pope's recent visit to Sri Lanka and the Philippines. As of today, Asia is represented by five cardinals appointed by Pope Francis: "Of the 125 cardinal electors, as many as 14 are Asian and hail from 10 different countries. They will make up 11% of the total, against Churches of other countries whose faithful do not exceed 2-3% of the population. The latest figures in the Pontifical Yearbook show that Asia has 134 million Catholics, who make up 3% of Asia's population and 11% of the world's Catholic population which is equal to the percentage of Asian cardinal electors."

The Pontifical Yearbook which was published last year but refers to data from three years ago, confirms an important trend: Despite being a minority, on a yearly basis there are more Asian Catholics than European faithful: In 2012, there were 2.170.870 European Catholics and in Asia 2.581.870. Of the latter, 1.582.139 in the Philippines alone, the last country Pope Francis visited. And Pope Francis wants to work on these numbers as he looks at China with an open spirit.

According to Professor Fenggang Yang's calculations which British daily *The Telegraph* quoted only last year, with a Catholic "minority" estimated at 247 million people, by 2030 China could become the country with the largest Catholic population in the world. In actual fact this trend really began under Benedict XVI's pontificate with the last Consistory he held on 21 November 2012, just months before he stepped down as Pope. On that occasion, Joseph Ratzinger – who was present at today's ceremony – imposed the biretta on six new cardinals, only one Curia member and no European.

In the case of Asia alone, the percentage of cardinals in proportion to the entire College and the number of Asian Catholics in proportion to the total number of Catholics in the world, correspond.

Vatican Insider

Newspaper loses Allah case

KUALA LUMPUR: The editor of the Malaysian Catholic newspaper, *The Herald*, expressed disappointment on January 21 when a seven-member bench of the nation's Federal Court dismissed the paper's appeal against a ban on the use of the word *Allah* for God Malay-speaking Christians.

The Editor, Father Lawrence Andrew said that he fears this is but one more limitation being placed on minority groups in the country.

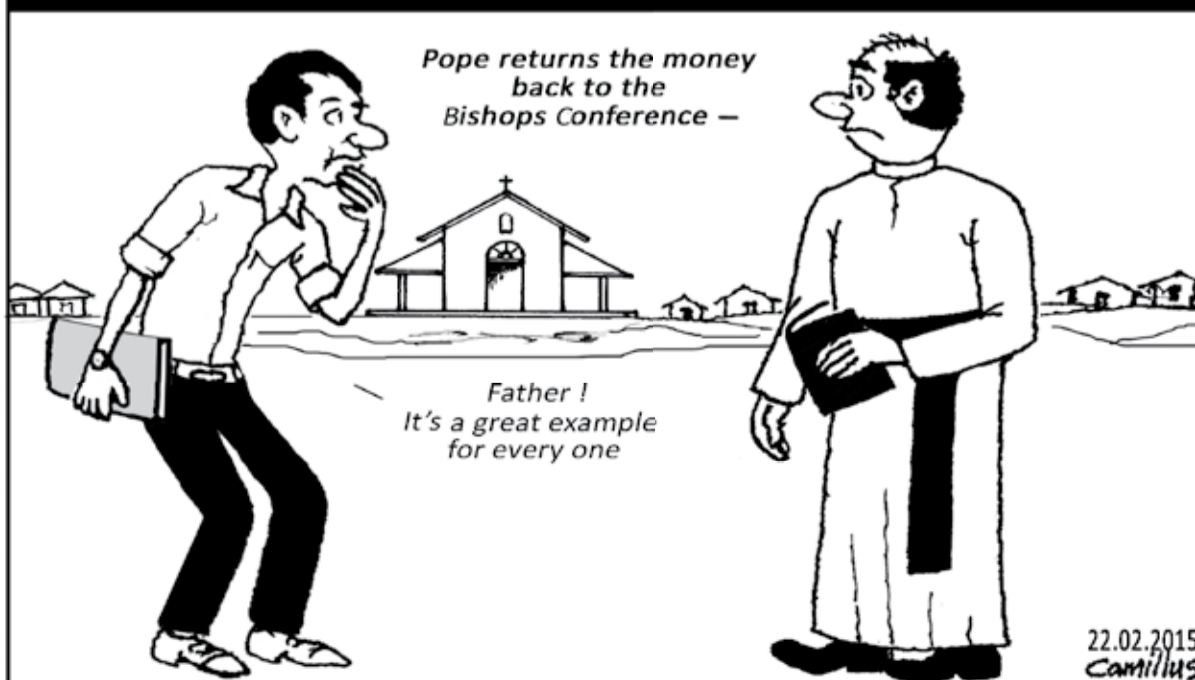
He said that he does not believe the argument put forward by a lawyer for the Muslim groups that oppose the use of the Arabic word for God by non-Muslim groups that it would open up old wounds.

He could not see that happening, as it had been used for so long by Malay-speaking Christians without any problem.

(SE)

SUNDAY PUNCH

by Camillus



MESSENGER

THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY OF SRI LANKA

EDITORIAL

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February 22, 2015

Let us lift each other's burden

With Sri Lanka being transformed into a political culture of multi-religious, multi-racial and multi-party unity in diversity, the Catholic Church has also entered the period of Lent. It is essentially a time for deep reflection, sincere repentance and a further transformation of our lives to be more in the image and likeness of Christ.

Last Sunday's Scripture Reading or the Liturgy of the Church could be one area for reflection and change. The Gospel Reading, Mark 1: 40-44 is the well-known meeting between Jesus and the leper. In the First Reading in Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46, we are told about the Jewish Law that the leper is defiled, unclean and alone. If he comes out of the colony he should rend his garment and shout, unclean, unclean so that no one would come near him. He was not allowed to come anywhere near the Temple.

But in the Gospel we see Jesus blatantly and openly breaking this Jewish Law and turning it upside down. The leper in his abandoned colony must have heard of Jesus and believed this was the Saviour who can heal and liberate him. So the leper with deep faith broke the Jewish taboos came to Jesus and said, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." That means he knew Jesus could heal him. Immediately we see Jesus giving a dramatic response. To touch a leper was not allowed by the Jewish Law. But the Gospel says Jesus touched the leper with deep compassion. The word given in the original Hebrew text is something beyond compassion. The word is similar to the burning sensation a mother would experience in the guts when she hears that something bad has happened to her child. With such a gut feeling, Jesus tells the leper that he is healed and go and confirm it with the priest by offering a sacrifice as required by the Law.

The Jewish Law laid down that a leper could not come into the Temple. But the Gospel tells us that Jesus proclaimed Himself as the new living temple of God. So while the Jewish Law prevented the leper from coming to the Temple, the Gospel tells us the spectacular story of the Living Temple coming to the leper and healing him. We see here a living example of what Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: And ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:29).

Jesus, in His love lifts and bears our burdens when we give them to Him as the leper did. Most of us may not be suffering from spiritual leprosy, an epidemic that has come under control today but most of us suffer from some form of spiritual or psychological leprosy - such as the lack of love, peace and joy, faith and hope or bitterness, jealousy unforgiveness and other vices. During Lent Jesus invites us to bring this leprosy to us so that He could touch and heal us. We are reminded of the beautiful song: "Shackled by heavy burden, neath a load of guilt and shame, then the hand of Jesus touched me and I'm no longer the same: He touched me yes he touched me and O! That joy that floods my soul. Something happened and now I know, He touched me and made me whole."

Just as Jesus lifts and bears our burdens He also tells us to lift and bear the burden of others in the family, in our communities and churches, work places and elsewhere. As St. Paul says, bear each others' burdens and you will be fulfilling the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2). So during this first week of Lent, let us reflect on some spiritual leprosy we may be suffering from. Let us in a spirit of repentance give the burden to Jesus as He will lift it. Let us also ask for the power of the Holy Spirit to lift each other's burden so that we will fulfill the main commandment of Jesus to love one another as He loves us (John 15:12).

Taking a few small steps towards God

The time of penance has come, the time of atone for our sins and seek our salvation, the Lenten call which beckons our return to the Lord voiced from the lips of the faithful within the Catholic Church. Lent is a Holy Season which invites Catholics and other Christians around the world to kneel before the base of the Cross, meditate upon the sins we have committed which caused our Saviour's suffering, and enter into a period of profound conversion and change. For this reason, Lent is a time of atonement and penance a period in which we acknowledge our sinfulness, turn away from our past life toward a life with Christ, and embrace the call to holiness. In order to fully enter into such a call, fervent repentance is necessary.

Lent is a time to take a few small steps towards God and experience God take grant leaps towards God and experience God take grant leaps towards us. Prayer, fasting and arms giving are ancient practices of self-denial. We begin with prayer. Prayer is the source of our strength, we pray as beggars before the throne of God. We are hurt and wounded by many things and our hearts easily resist God and harden. During Lent we dive into the ocean of God's boundless love and enjoy his tenderness. Lent is a time of prayer, or more intense, more diligent prayer, prayer that is able to look beyond and outside of ourselves, and to be aware of the needs of others.

Fast

Why do we fast? What is the point? We do not fast as simply an end in itself. No. We fast to remind ourselves of how much we rely on God. We fast so that in denying ourselves we may focus our hearts more on serving God and serving others. We fast too so we can have something of the spirit and heart of the Good Samaritan. Who bent down to reach out his hurt and wounded brother.

The Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes* #22 states by making himself poor, Jesus did not seek poverty for its own sake but, as St. Paul says, "That by his poverty you might become rich." This is no mere play on words or a catch phrase. Rather, it sums up God's logic, the logic of love, the logic of the incarnation and the Cross. God did not let our salvation drop down from heaven, like someone who gives alms from their abundance out of a sense of altruism and piety. Christ love is different! When Jesus stepped into the waters of the Jordan and was Baptized by John the Baptist, He did so not because He was in need of repentance, or conversion; He did it to be among people who need forgiveness, among us sinners and to take upon Himself the burden of our sins. In this way He chose to comfort us, save us, to free us from our misery.

Fast



Give



Prepare



Pray



Reconciliation

Reconciliation is what God does. We prepare for it by opening ourselves and reflecting upon the areas of darkness in our lives into which God so deeply desires to shine a light. It might begin with the simple question. When might God be offering me forgiveness and healing? If my answer is, "I don't know," then I have some reflection to do. I can examine my life - what I have done and what I have failed to do.

In the Beatitudes, Jesus taught us how to live, in the Lord's Prayer He taught us how to pray. The Beatitudes reveal what our attitude in prayer should be for blessed are the poor in spirit for their's is the kingdom of heaven. When we pray we discover that we are beggars before God. (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2560). The Beatitudes teach us to live in the Spirit; the Our Father to pray in the spirit. When we pray the Our Father we remind ourselves that God is Holy and we are in need of His mercy and healing. When we pray the Our Father we remind ourselves that God is Father, that we are His sons and daughters.

The more we repent the easier it is to repent. The less we repent the harder it is to repent. There is a tendency today to replace words that have been part of Christian tradition since the beginning. These words are associated with a sense of sin and include; the word sin itself, repentance, contrition and penance. This is to address what is often perceived as an historic imbalance where the accent was very much on sin and repentance and less on the love and mercy of God. However, the message of repentance and conversion cannot be adequately proclaimed without a clear proclamation of the profound love and mercy of God.

Other-Centred

They say charity begins at home and of course, it does. So too does repentance and forgiveness. The home is where we live out and put into practice the Beatitudes. Our nearest and dearest the people we live with, work with and know well, are the very people we need to ask forgiveness of and often forgive. It is here that our character and faith are tested, refined and purified.

Resentment and anger can often be directed towards the very people we love and care about most. We can let things fester and remain unresolved; we can be slow to confess and reluctant to hold out the gift of forgiveness. Lent can be a time of healing and reconciliation in our lives.

Our Holy Father Pope Francis said, "that we can sometimes seem to live our lives as Lent without Easter. In other words, because of a certain mind-set and way of thinking, we put the accent on the bitter not the sweet on the other hand, consists of the blessing of hope, the grace of the spirit in our lives and a real living sense of God's love and forgiveness. Blessed are those who count their blessings and not their woes"

Pope Francis is encouraging us to memorize the Beatitudes. His hope is that by putting them to memory they become embedded deeply in our hearts. Firmly placed there, and familiar to us, we can hold on to them as we move through our day. By doing this we learn to pray the Beatitudes and in praying them we learn to live them and put them into practice. How we pray is how we live and; how we love is how we pray. In prayer we learn to understand the meaning of the Beatitudes because when we contemplate them we are contemplating the face of Christ. In praying this way we are filled with the joy of Christ - the joy of the Beatitudes.

True Happiness

In God and God alone do we find true happiness. We are often tempted to find our joy in our next purchase, or in what we own or in our own achievements. We cannot resist this temptation by our own strength. God's grace leads us to contemplate the riches and blessings of the Gospel. God gives us grace of revelation so we can grasp more deeply that we are partakers in the divine nature. We have the hope of Christ living in us and the sure promise that one day we will enter into the joy of the life of the Blessed Trinity.

Lord, help me to understand that through Baptism, I immersed myself in your death and resurrection, that it is no longer I who live but you who live in me. Amen.

Eric Jeevaraj

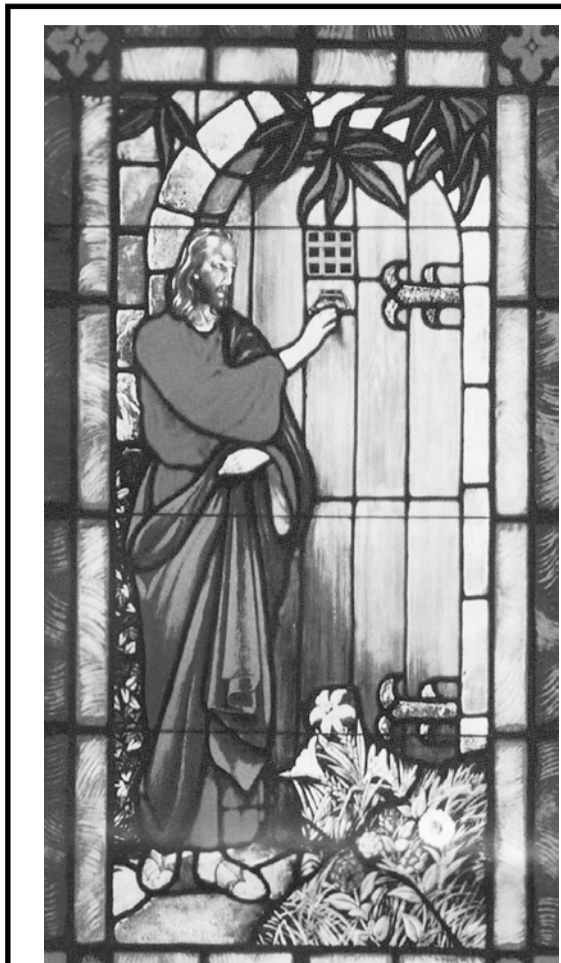
The God Who Knocks and Waits

Is Lying Ever Right?

As we begin another Lent we set out on a journey and, as Martin Buber once wrote, "All journeys have a secret destination of which the traveller is unaware." We may have our own plans, our map for the journey but nevertheless we travel in faith with an openness to the happenings on the way. Remember the man travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho? (Lk 10: 30-37). Or the two downhearted disciples journeying to Emmaus? (Lk 24: 13-35). Prepare to be surprised at what this year holds for you.

"My time is in your hands." Trusting in God, we can journey onward with faith and courage. We may be overcome by an unknown dread. Perhaps we face a terrible ordeal, a frightening diagnosis, a killing virus, a loved child's waywardness, the loss of all we hold dear. God is right there, and will be with us at every turn in the road. If not even a sparrow falls without his knowing it, how much more should we trust him who holds us as close as a hen holds her chicks.

For much of our time we are unaware of His presence and look for the Lord in special places, at special times. But that He is really present in the run-of-the-mill happenings of our day, always there, can be hard to grasp. We meet our God in prayer,



"We meet our God in prayer, in Church, in holy places, but surely not when we are mucking about in the mundane? Look out! Look in! Who is knocking at our door?"

in Church, in holy places, but surely not when we are mucking about in the mundane? Look out! Look in!

Who is knocking at our door?

God is everywhere and the very ordinary experiences of our lives are a gateway to the divine. Every moment of life is a moment of divine revelation and to become aware of this, aware that God is right here, now, will change our life, our way of living. We forget the Gift that is ours, the Holy Spirit who will lead us, expanding our heart and our horizons as we journey through the day, through the year. It is He who will show us how to reach out and love others, love our fragile world and all in it.

Lent comes as a gift from our loving Father, and while we thank Him we ask, with the psalmist, "What return shall I make?" Instead of plunging straight into making resolutions let us instead think of how we can respond to the Lord for His unfailing goodness to us. What is He asking of us now? Will we give even ten minutes each day to sit in silence, call on the Holy Spirit and give thanks?

The Lord waits for us, standing at our door knocking (Rev 3:20), not forcing His way in, not coercing us. Just waiting.

Courtesy: Far East Magazine

St. Augustine wrote the first extensive treatise on lying (*De Mendacio*). In it he cites the case of a holy bishop, Firmus of Thagasta, who wished to protect a man who had sought refuge with him. The bishop was so careful of the truth that, rather than lying to the imperial officers who pursued the fugitive, he told them frankly that he would not reveal the man's location. Firmus maintained this resolve even under torture, with the result that he was eventually brought before the emperor himself. But the emperor was so impressed with the bishop's virtue that he both praised the bishop and pardoned the fugitive.

Augustine tells this story to provide a saintly witness for his argument that lying is always morally wrong, regardless of the circumstances and to note that God is perfectly capable of extricating from trouble those who stand fast in the truth. His treatise has been widely cited ever since and his viewpoint was endorsed by no less saintly a scholar than Thomas Aquinas. In the monumental *Summa Theologiae*, Thomas states the same position: "Therefore it is not lawful to tell a lie in order to deliver another from any danger whatever. Nevertheless it is lawful to hide the truth prudently, by keeping it back, as Augustine says" (II:110:3).

But Augustine and Aquinas were both aware that even many

good Christians disagreed with them. In fact, it seems likely that most people throughout history have held that not all falsehoods are morally evil. The issue has been debated intensely by moral theologians for well over 1500 years.

Can a Lie Ever Be Necessary?

Lying is held to be prohibited by the Eighth Commandment, but that Commandment literally condemns only the bearing of false witness (as in a legal proceeding), so lying and other verbal sins are included by extension, through moral reasoning. Indeed, the importance of speaking the truth is thoroughly rooted in the natural law. For this reason, it has been relatively easy not only for Christians but for most others to see that, at the least, it is intrinsically immoral to speak falsely in a serious matter for an unworthy motive (such as to gain something to which one has no right, or to avoid a punishment that is justly due). Philosophers have also pointed out the violation of human integrity involved in a lie, for when we lie we speak one thing while thinking another—a practice hardly conducive to integral personal development or growth in virtue.

And yet the problem of the "necessary lie" presents itself immediately, a problem recognized and discussed down through the ages not only by Catholic saints and moral theologians, but by other Christians, non-Christians, and even those of no religion at all.

Lets find Jesus

I search

The illusive

Godly being

In Church

Within hearts

In the souls

Near Priests

In Rome

Abandoned

Misled

I felt

Now I find

Jesus within

My heart

My soul

Resting on

My faith

Miran Perera



Significance of the Papal Visit 2015

The visit of his Holiness Pope Francis to Sri Lanka has been a great event of our recent history, bringing together all sections of the community in a national demonstration of our commitment to the ideals of peace, love, togetherness and understanding.

His Holiness has provided world leadership in some of the principle problem areas of our time ranging from nuclear weapons to interreligious understanding. His visit will certainly be a powerful catalyst in stimulating a resurgence of national harmony.

The event received much international coverage and showed the world how all Sri Lankans can come together in pursuit of the higher values

of peace, unity, love and togetherness that all religions teach.

This could be a seminal event resulting in bringing before all members of the Sri Lankan community the higher values in our national life - values which Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam have enshrined. We may have distanced ourselves from some of these values in recent years - but here is a call for national reawakening from one of the world's great religious leaders. The Pope is the only person on the planet who is the undisputed spiritual leader of over a billion persons. Let us heed his call and make this an occasion for putting behind us a period past that was riddled with anger and bloodshed and

for looking forward to a future illuminated by the high values of togetherness, forgiveness, understanding and love for our neighbours.

Christ left as one of His principle commandments, the principle that we should love our neighbours as ourselves. Hinduism extols dharmic conduct in such a degree of detail that detailed exposition have been written upon it since ancient times, explaining in detail how we should act towards our neighbours.

Lord Buddha's message was that the human family is one and love should be shown to every member of this family, rings down through the ages. Islam teaches its followers to say, "Peace be upon you," as their

greeting to everyone they meet. With these traditions behind us, war anger and hatred must become things of the past. As a nation with a multi-religious background we can show the world how peace can rise out of the ashes of war and love for ones neighbour override all other attitudes.

Hatred is not appeased by hatred but by love. This teaching of the Buddha must resound through our national consciousness, as it has reverberated down the centuries in Buddhist thought.

Attitudes across the world have strayed far from these fundamental values and it is time to focus attention on them as urgently as we can. His holiness' visit and his call to ac-

tion can stimulate us to do what we can to achieve this and rise triumphant over our recent past. Jesus taught us the importance of having a rock like foundation for any house we build. We are now building the future of this country and the values outlined above provide that sound foundation which will benefit our country both now and for generations to come. His Holiness' visit has provided us with much inspiration. Let us all rise to the challenge. Every citizen has something to contribute. Let us each do what we can and through our united effort make our nation rise resplendent over our war-torn past.

**Judge C. G. Weeramantry,
Former Vice President -
International Court of Justice**



The Sisters of the Holy Family of Bordeaux



Year of the Consecrated Life - 2015

Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Sri Lanka (CMRS)

Religious Congregations in Sri Lanka 4



The Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family was started in France, on Trinity Sunday - the 27th of May 1820, by Father Pierre Bienvenu Noailles. Its Foundresses were three young women.

The origin of the Holy Family Association dates back to 1818. When Fr. Noailles while praying before the statue of our Lady of Loretto received the inspiration to found a 'Holy Family' on earth. He was thinking of a new form of religious order more open, more flexible and better adapted to the needs of the time.

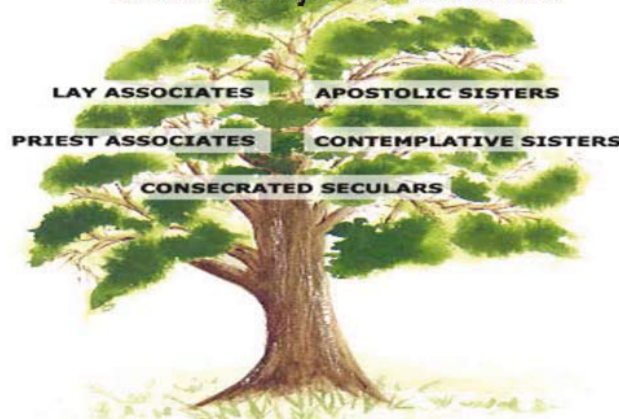
The aim of the Association is to spread and strengthen the faith in all milieus, to revive the witness of the first Christians who had but one heart and mind. The source of inspiration for the Association is the Holy Family of Nazareth. As the gentle image of the Trinity, this family was one because of its perfect harmony with the Father's will: Jesus, Mary and Joseph loved, sought and desired only God Alone in all things. As the Church in embryo, it opened out into the community of the apostles and first disciples who, impelled by the same love, went into the whole world to announce the Good News.

Moved by the spiritual and material conditions that prevailed in society and in the church of France, after the French Revolution, Fr. Pierre Bienvenu Noailles ventured in a task of forming a new society. This new society founded by Fr. Bienvenu with diverse vocations was to continue the mission of Jesus and proclaim by their lives and unity, and apostolic zeal that the whole human race is called to become God's family.

From its inception the Holy Family comprised of Apostolic and Contemplative Sisters, Consecrated Seculars, Lay and Priest Associates. All the members are called to live the same Spirit and mission. In solidarity and complementarity they bear witness to the primacy of God and Church as Family.

On Septuagesima Sunday 3rd of February 1822 during evening Benediction, when the Blessed Sacrament was exposed, our Lord Himself appeared, surrounded by a brilliant halo and stretched out His right hand and blessed the Congregation in the chapel. This is a significant event full of meaning and for Fr. Noailles,

One Family Five Vocations



it served to encourage him to go forward with the work God himself had shown him.

THE CHARISM OF THE CONGREGATION IS TO BRING TOGETHER INTO ONE FAMILY THE SCATTERED CHILDREN OF GOD THAT IS TO LIVE AND PROCLAIM THAT COMMUNION IS POSSIBLE.

Today the sisters of the Holy Family are in 24 countries in 4 continents; Europe, Africa, America and Asia.

The history of the Holy Family Congregation in Sri Lanka

The warmth of the blessing, reached Ceylon, as early as 1862, after the Founder's death, February 1861.

On the 16th of September 1862, the six Religious Sisters; Mother Marie Xavier Marchand (Superior), Sr. Marie Ligouri Roger, Sr. Marie Therese Van Murs, Sr. Marie Stanislaus Quinn, Sr. Marie Helen Winter and Sr. Marie Joseph Maroilles were selected to found a Congregation of the sisters of the Holy Family of Bordeaux in Ceylon. These valiant women said their humble 'yes' to the Lord and to their Superiors and left France. They studied the English language and strengthened their spirituality in 'La Solitude'. It was Bishop Stephen Samaria, O.M.I of Jaffna who had secured their services, for his Diocese.

On the 19th October they landed safely in Galle and from there they were taken to Jaffna, in the Colonial Steam, which reached its destination on All Soul's day, November 2nd 1862. A rousing welcome awaited these Religious Sisters, as they were the First women religious ever to set foot on the soil, of Sri Lanka.

These Sisters inflamed by the love of God and zeal for the salvation of souls endured the heat of the tropics and sacrificed themselves for the spiritual and temporal welfare of a people, whose language and culture were foreign to them. For seven years they lived with minimum facilities. On 22nd January 1870 the Sisters moved into the newly built convent. Under its first principal Mother Helen Winter the Holy Family Convent School became Jaffna's leading academy for girls. A refuge for poor abandon girls were begun. Here the sisters were very compassionate and zealous in instructing their children in their faith and imparting to them an elementary education and skills and thus prepare them to find a useful place in society. From Jaffna the sisters spread out to the neighbouring villages. In 1896 the Novitiate for the Tamil aspirants was established in Illavalai. Then moved to Sillalai Mannar, Point Pedru, Kytes etc. Amidst hardships, fears and privations they devoted themselves to instill in the hearts of these people the ideals of Christ. Their noble example inspired them. Their apostolate within a few years, expanded to other parts of the country.

In April 1868 two more sisters from France joined the little band in Jaffna and encouraged them to move out to another mission field. The place chosen was Kurunegala. There was a great demand for well conducted schools, especially for girls. Then the sisters began to collect destitute and orphaned girls and lavished on them all the tender care they needed. Also frequent visits to the sick in the Kurunegala hospital made the sisters aware of the pitiful condition of the poor patients in spite of the good will of the medical staff. At the request of Bishop Melizan and in agreement with the Government, the Holy Family Sisters offered their services at

(Contd on Pg. 14)

The Chair of St. Peter

HISTORICO-LITURGICAL NOTE

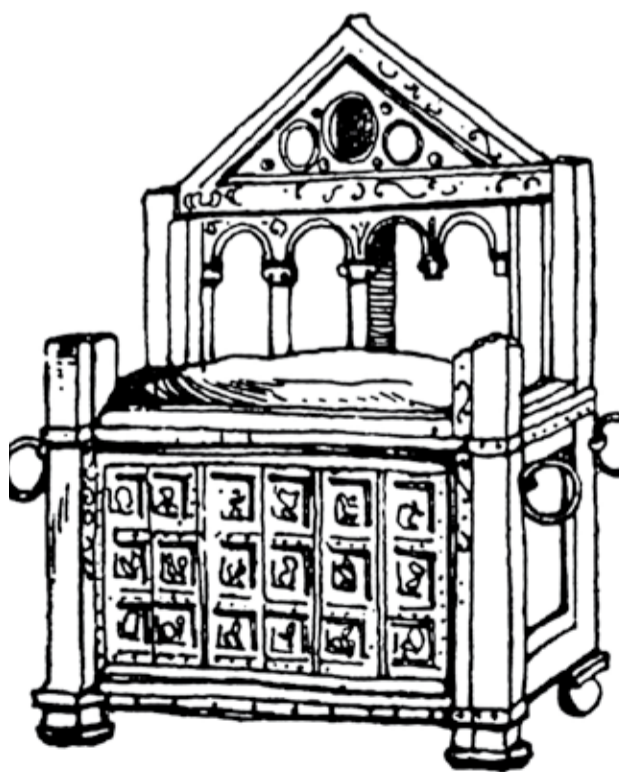
This feast is found in the oldest Roman Calendar of 394, assigned to February 22, the day on which the Romans commemorated the deceased. At one time there were two feasts of the chair of St. Peter: one on January 18, celebrated in France in the eighth century, and one on February 22 to commemorate the chair of St. Peter at Antioch, for he had been there before going to Rome. The most ancient date for the celebration of this feast in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome is the middle of the fifth century, and it was preceded by a night vigil over which the pope presided. Soon thereafter the cult spread throughout Europe; then, for some inexplicable reason, there was silence in the seventh and eight centuries. Finally it was again revived in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

MESSAGE AND RELEVANCE

The texts for the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours serve as an excellent catechesis on the role of the apostle Peter at a time when there are ecumenical discussion concerning the mission of Peter and his successors. This is a crucial difficulty in the promotion of Christian unity.

The Entrance Antiphon quotes Luke: "The Lord said to Simon Peter: I have prayed that your faith may not fail; and you in your turn must strengthen your brothers" (Lk 22:32) The prayers of the Mass then describe the mission of Peter.

The Opening Prayer is taken from the Galesian Sacramentary for June 29 and portrays a central characteristic of St. Peter: "You have built your Church on the rock of St. Peter's confession of faith." Peter is thus the rock of the community of Christ, as is stated in the Communion Antiphon: "You are Peter, the rock on the which I will build my Church." Because of Peter's confession, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," the "jaws



of death" (meaning of the attacks of evil) will not prevail against the Church (Mt 16:18). It is by the power of God ("No mere man has revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father: Mt 16:17) and not by his personal strength - much less because he had experienced the weakness of a believer - that Peter is constituted the sure point of reference for our apostolic faith and serves as a motive for fidelity to the word of God. In the numerous texts referring to St. Peter in the Liturgy of the Hours we find references to Christ's promise that Peter would have the primacy.

Another theme for catechesis is found in the Prayer over the Gifts: "With St. Peter as our shepherd, keep us true to the faith he taught and bring us to your eternal kingdom." The certitude of the apostolic faith is linked to his integrity, and precisely because he is the shepherd of the People of God.

In the Prayer after communion it is interesting to note the mention of the Eucharist which is the sacrament of unity and peace. The liturgy thus links Peter, the visible sign of unity in the Church, with the effects of the eucharistic sacrifice. Ultimately it is Christ, acting through this supreme sacrament, who guarantees the ministry of visible unity in the faith, but St. Leo says in the Office of Readings: "It is not without reason that the authority bestowed on all the apostles is entrusted to one. For Peter received it separately in trust because he is the prototype set before all the rulers of the Church."

Preface: *It is truly right and just to give you thanks, almighty and everlasting God, and to admire your greatness, especially in the saints that you raised up for the support of your Church. With remarkable wisdom the Church was prefigured in the Old Testament, and when the time was fulfilled, you established it on the foundation of the apostles. From among them you chose Peter, who was the first to recognize the divinity of Christ, and you made him the solid rock on which your Church would be built. You have constituted him as guide and custodian of your entire flock so that throughout the centuries he could strengthen his brethren. Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, gave him the keys of the kingdom so that whatever he decided on earth, you, O Father, would ratify in heaven. Today we devoutly celebrate the singular and provident charge that was committed to the head of the apostles, as we join the choirs of angels and sing a hymn to your glory.*

(From: Saints of the Roman Calendar)



Celebrating Christian Lives

by Kishanie S. Fernando

Growing Up with Sr. Josephine - Priscilla de Silva, (Sister)

"We are blessed with a baby daughter" ran the words of the telegram, which Rev. Mother Marie of the Sacred Heart, Superioress of Holy Family Convent Wennappuwa received when God gave Mr. M. Peter Mendis and Mrs. Evelyn Mendis their first child on February 21, 1935.



Mr. Mendis was the Principal of the Catholic Ladies Training College at Wennappuwa, which was run by the Holy Family sisters and he named his eldest daughter Marie, in honour of his Employer. Since then, all his children came under the loving guidance and influence of the Holy Family sisters at Wennappuwa. In fact Marie's vocation to the religious life could be attributed to the spirituality that she inherited from the dear sisters of that bygone era.

Going down memory lane, I recall with nostalgia my childhood days at Wennappuwa with my elder sister, Sr. Josephine whom we all called 'loku akka,' although she was senior to me only by one year and three months. My father who was a strict disciplinarian had instilled in her that as the eldest in the family she should set an example to the younger siblings. This she took seriously. When my sister Hyacinth and I indulged in pranks and quarrels, she it was who came and settled them before my father resorted to the cane. We always looked up to her and took our grievances to her. From the time she was a little girl, she was self-sacrificing, patient and understanding and I can't remember having ever quarreled with her. But this does not mean that she was a 'goody-goody'. She enjoyed her girlhood in the normal way. She was good at climbing trees and taught me also to do so. The cherry tree in our front garden with its spreading branches and ripe red fruits and the orange tree laden with luscious fruits in the backyard with its branches over-hanging the roof were our favourite haunts. We plucked the oranges and climbed on to the roof to eat them, and as my sister Hyacinth could not climb, we threw one or two to her from the roof top.

When my Father joined St. Joseph's College, Maradana, our house at Wennappuwa was sold to the convent and we shifted to Moratuwa, our hometown. Loku akka and I were boarded at the Wennappuwa Convent. Loku Akka was very popular among the students and the teachers because of her kind and gentle ways and the interest she took in her studies. She had endearing qualities and always wore a pleasant smile. I was proud to be called her sister.

Loku Akka had a vocation to the religious life even before she entered the university and I was aware of it. But it was after my Father's death that she revealed this to my mother. By that time I had come out of the Training College and was teaching at Wennappuwa and she was teaching at the Moratuwa convent. The separation was rather difficult for my mother as Loku Akka was a pillar of strength to her after my Father's death. Yet bravely she gave her first child to God. I too thought I had a vocation and Loku akka was aware of it and guided me, but finally when I decided to get married, she did not show any disappointment. Once when I was in Rome with her, she took me to a church where the body of Blessed Anna Maria Tai-gi was kept. She had been a married lady and Loku Akka told me that married people can also lead saintly lives and gave me a book where her life story was written.

When I retired prematurely from Collegiate teaching and decided to teach in a nursery school, most of my friends discouraged me. It was only Loku Akka who stood by me and said, "With your fertile imagination you will do wonders with the little children." She even gave me some helpful books. True to her prophecy, I enjoyed teaching kids and continued for 23 years.

February 21, 2015 marks Sr. Josephine's 80th Birthday. Although she was called to eternal rest, her memory and influence in the lives of many live on. In this Year of the Family in the Catholic Church, a reflection of her life's journey, values and actions sets an example to families and those in and aspiring to be in Consecrated Life. Below is a collection of memories shared by some of those who knew Sr. Josephine Mendis.

80th Birthday Tribute to Sr. Josephine Mendis who lives on in the hearts of many

It was Loku Akka who made me join the Holy Family Lay Associate group and my last trip with her was to Vavuniya with the Lay Associates. She was visibly moved when she saw the refugees living in sub-human conditions and after distributing the gifts we had brought, she told us that we must follow it up.

Her tenure in Rome as a Councillor was nearly over and she was hoping to return to Sri Lanka in a few years' time. I was eagerly awaiting her arrival so that we could get together and work in our apostolate and live the charism of the Good Father. But God took her away before that and her burial took place in the Eternal City of Rome.

Sr. Josephine and the Holy Family Order - Sr. Raphael de Silva (HF Provincial -Retired)

I remember Sr. Josephine as an outgoing, zealous, generous sister of the Holy Family. She was one who would never disappoint anybody but would try to be of help in whatever way she could. She was often misunderstood and got into trouble as a result. But that did not deter her from carrying on the good work she was doing. God must surely reward her amply for her enthusiasm for His Kingdom.

I saw her living her life as a true daughter of the Founder of the Holy Family Congregation who lived our Charism to its fullest. For me personally, she is a model of what a sister of the Holy Family should be. We remember her with much love and gratitude.



Sr. Josephine, the Mentor

- Sr. Chandani Jayasuriya (Principal HFC Bambalapitiya)
My first memory of Sr. Josephine was way back in 1973 when we welcomed her to HFC as our new School Principal. I was in grade 6 and I too participated in a dance performance to welcome Sister. She played a significant role in my formation as a student and my decision to become a nun.

One day, Sister stepped into our class when the Geography teacher was absent. I recall learning the concept of the earth's shape with a simple example of a ship sailing and disappearing into the horizon. She was able to make us understand complex concepts with simple examples.

In grade 9, Sr. Josephine became our Religious Knowledge teacher while serving the school as the Principal. She taught me many lessons but moreover she appreciated my responses. We were never afraid to speak our minds or express our thinking with her. One lesson I remember very well is the lesson on the Transfiguration. I was then just a young student, trying to understand this unique moment in our faith. I related this moment to our lives and shared with the class that in our lives too we can radiate through prayer. Sr. Josephine's appreciation of my contribution meant a lot to me as a student. Later on, she invited me to explore living in a convent environment for a couple of days and arranged for me to stay at Holy Family Convent, Chilaw for two days when I was just 13 years old. The 'trick' worked soon after my A/L exam. I entered the convent for religious formation.

It was God's wonderful plan and a blessing that Sr. Josephine was the Provincial Superior of the Holy Family Order, when I made my first vows in 1984. In this way she came in to my life in both academic life and religious life.

Simplicity and genuine concern in reaching out to people and connecting with them in creating strong spiritual relationships are some virtues that I admire in Sr. Josephine's life. She had a strong spirit of family and bonded with many people from all walks of life. She also made us

look at the world differently. She had innovative ideas in reaching out to marginalized citizens in society and also protecting our environment. Some of the seeds of the ideas she planted in us, have grown and still continue at Holy Family Convent.

After she became one of the General Councilors in Rome, I made it a point to visit her whenever she came to Sri Lanka. When I visited her last, her advice to me was, "you don't need to correct everything. If you see 10 things speak just about one thing". The lesson she gave me was as a leader you need to allow space for people to grow through their own mistakes.

I thank God for her life and wish that we, the Familiars may take into our lives at least one or two of the values with which she lived.

Sr. Josephine, the Teacher and Friend

- Kishanie S. Fernando (Attorney-at-law and Journalist)

Sr. Josephine never taught me a subject in school but it is not wrong to say that she awoke in me a social consciousness and a system of values.

As a student I was privileged to spend quality time with her in profound discussions that teenagers love to indulge in. She made me feel that my views on life were valued and thus began my writing career with lengthy letters to her when she left school to serve as HF Provincial and then to Rome. I shared with her my thoughts, my views, my exasperations on how the world should be, about school and campus politics, relationships, things that troubled and confused me and things that made me happy and unhappy. In some ways she was my sounding board, always encouraging me to find ways and means to make situations better. Once she took me on a visit to the Bandarawela Convent which included a visit to Fr. Michael Rodrigo's grave in Buttala. I had rarely seen her so sad and serious. It was the same look she had when she related to me of her meeting with Prabakaran and about the refugees in the north. I will always remember her as a beautiful lady with a radiant smile and piercing dark eyes that would look deep into your soul.

As a Principal she always emphasized on SIMPLICITY. At that time I did not understand the depth of the word, I still cannot define it but find that so many familiars who have been touched by her life reflect this beautiful quality - a lasting tribute to a magnanimous personality to be passed down the generations.

Reflections of a Niece

- Dilinika Peiris-Holsinger (World Bank)

"Look at her face...." yes my face may resemble my dear Aunt Sr. Josephine's but I don't think I can ever fit into her shoes or the image I have of her. To me, she was more than an aunt who was a religious person. She was a mentor and a role model. 'Loku Ammi' as we all fondly called her had the amazing ability to be an influence in our lives in a gentle manner. When my siblings and cousins were young she knew how to discipline us without making judgmental remarks. When we knew she was visiting, we would make sure to tidy our rooms and I recall being put to shame when she opened my cupboard to find clothes and things untidily stuffed away after a flash clean up.

As an adolescent I used to confide in her about relationships, ambitions and faith. She was an active listener with the ability to reflect thoughts and sort out confusion. She had a good balance of spirituality and social justice. She respected the views of others and engaged in inter faith dialogue based on love and understanding. She reached out to people from different ethnic, class and social groups. She made the 'marginalized' feel accepted and loved.

During her last visit to Sri Lanka, I traveled with her to convents visiting religious and laity. As a youth with many questions on life, truth and justice, Loku Ammi set an example through her actions. At every convent we visited, she had one to one conversations with the sisters and didn't leave out the support staff working in convents. Conversations during meal times were rich with social and spiritual insights. I never heard her complain about anything nor condemn anyone nor encourage or engage in gossip.

Today when I reflect on my journey through life, I feel her presence as I try to reach out to my friends, neighbors and colleagues from other religious and ethnic groups. I feel her influence in the career path I have selected, to work for an organization with a mandate to end poverty in the world. I may not have been able to make a change in the world the way people speak of Loku Ammi, but I can resolve to be the change I want to see in the world the way Loku Ammi practiced. She will always live in my memory and I thank God for her and the influence she had in my life's journey.

Church Built on the Rock

"Thou art Peter, a Rock and upon this rock I will build my church. The gates of hell will prevail against it."

Thus Jesus founded His Church, handed over the same to His Apostles, and made Peter to head. "Simon, son of Jonah...feed my lambs and feed my sheep...you all go to every corner of the world and preach to all nations. I shall be with you even to the end of the world." Thus Jesus showed how to progress with His Church in order to establish His message - the Kingdom of God.

Jesus once compared the Kingdom of God to a mustard seed. "A man once planted a mustard seed on earth. This mustard seed is the smallest of all the seeds. But once it is grown and becomes a tree, it is larger than the other plants, so birds of the sky come and rest on its branches."

Jesus Christ having thus established His Church on earth, selected and appointed twelve chiefs, twelve visible shepherds for His flock. They received from Him power to teach, rule and cleanse the souls. These twelve comprised of old, middle age and young men. Out of them some were married while others were bachelors. They were mostly uneducated humble fishermen who struggled with the sea for their daily living.

The Twelve:

- * Simon who was called Peter
- * Andrew, his brother
- * James; the son of Zebedee

Jesus Christ was born on earth. He lived on earth. He preached on earth. He selected His followers established a Church, a state of His own. He handed over the same to His followers and left this earth. This is historical fact. The New Testament only gives brief accounts of the lives of the Apostles, the men whom Christ entrusted his Church. The 'Messenger' today starts this column giving the inspiring life stories of St. Peter and the other Apostles.



- * John, his brother
- * Philip
- * Bartholomew
- * Matthew - the publican
- * Thomas - the doubting
- * James - the son of Alphaeus
- * Jude Thaddeus, his brother
- * Simon - the Zealous
- * Judas Iscariot - the betrayer

Selecting the twelve was a difficult task. Before doing this, "He went out into a mountain to pray and He passed the whole night in the prayer of God. And when day came He called unto Him His disciples and He chose

Twelve of them whom He named Apostles." (Lk. 6:12-13) He trained them well for divine service and sent them forth to preach the Gospel to all nations.

He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of diseases, to raise the dead, cleanse the lepers. "Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven unto them. Whose sins you do not forgive, they are not forgiven unto them." Thus Jesus gave the Apostles the spiritual power to forgive the sins.

"I send you as sheep in the midst of

wolves. Be wise as serpents and simple as doves. Beware of men. For they will deliver you up in councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. And you shall be brought before governors and before kings for my sake. Take no thought how or what to speak, for it shall be given you in that hour what to speak... you shall be hated by all men for my name's sake... Fear not them that kill the body and are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him that can destroy both soul and body in hell...

Everyone that shall confess me before

men, I will also confess him before my Father.... He that loves father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me. ...He that takes not up his cross and follows me, is not worthy of me... He that finds his life shall lose it... He that receives you, receives me. (Matt. 10) you are the salt of the earth... you are the light of the world...let your light shine before men" (Matt 7).

These twelve who were once modest and humble and low in rule later became noble and eminent. These once illiterate because scholars and intellectuals. Once timid become fearless lions; once speechless became dignified orators even before the most cruel emperor; once those who hid themselves in closed doors for the fear of death, openly offered themselves for the cross; offered their neck to the sword; their heads to the club; their chest to the spear and the lance; their skin to the knife.

When Jesus Christ build His Holy Church on the Apostles, it was His wish that the Church lasts till the end of the world. Therefore we have to accept that Our Lord focused His attention on this before hand.

One of the chief characteristics of the 'True Church' is that it is Apostolic, which means the church has a continuous and unbroken line of descendants from the Apostles. It is not merely an external decoration. The truth and the falsehood of the Church mainly depends on this. The Apostolicity of the Church is not merely limited to the book. It matters even to our life.

We all have received the Sacrament of Confirmation from the Bishop of our Diocese. We receive other sacraments through the priests who are ordained by this same Bishop. A bishop receives his consecration from the Archbishop. The Archbishop receives his consecration from the Apostolic Nuncio or from a Cardinal. The Cardinal receives his consecration from the Holy Father the Pope, who is the visible Head of the Church. Holy Father is the follower of St. Peter the Apostle. And St. Peter received his power from Jesus Christ. That shows the unbroken links of the golden chain of Apostolicity.

We know that the Church is one, Holy Catholic and Apostolic. Since the Apostles are the foundation of the Holy Church, Catholics should have a thorough knowledge of the Apostles. Besides the information we have in the Holy Gospel about the Apostles, we can know about them from Tradition and ancient history. For this the Catholic encyclopedias are very useful.

D.C. Jayasinghe
(To be Contd.)

Diocesan Priests

By Rev. Fr. Vito Perniola sj

Every year with the ship that came for the cinnamon there usually came a priest, a diocesan priest, to attend to the spiritual needs of those who had remained behind for the collection of the cinnamon and for the ever increasing number of Portuguese who came in search of precious stones. The chapel in honour of St. Lawrence was also becoming too small. A more spacious church was built in honour of the same Saint in a more central place.

Those, who remained behind to receive the cinnamon, had very little to do and naturally started fraternizing with the people of the place, building up a language of their own, being a mixture of Sinhala and Portuguese words and of gestures. The priest who accompanied the ship started baptizing some who had come very close to the Portuguese.

Within a few years the influence

of the Portuguese became greater. The Muslims who had been deprived of the cinnamon along the west coast of the island, started creating trouble. Then from Goa they sent 200 soldiers to Colombo to defend the rights of the Portuguese. These soldiers had a chaplain of their own, a diocesan priest, available to anyone who wanted to become a Catholic.

News about these baptisms reached Manoel, king of Portugal who, in a letter of 5th March 1521 encouraged the Portuguese to work at the conversion of the people of Ceylon.. The Portuguese should make every effort to see that many of the country became Catholics and that those who became Catholics should be honoured; their children should be well educated and those in need should receive alms; religious services should be well performed and the church should be kept clean. All this would give great pleasure to the king. (VP PP I, 7-9)

Having so far seen only diocesan priests, King Bhuvaneka Bahu was surprised when in 1543 he saw the first Franciscans who had just come to the island. The King asked for an explanation and was told about the difference between diocesan priests and priests belonging to a Religious Order.

Very soon the diocesan priests had two main churches in Ceylon, two parish churches at the service of the people with the administration of all the Sacraments. The two churches were that of Colombo and Kotte.

This information is corroborated by St. Francis Xavier in 1546 when, writing to the Jesuits in Europe, he says that in Ceylon there were two Diocesan Priest in charge of two Churches. We know that Joao Vaz Monteiro was parish priest of Colombo from about 1530 to 1560, but we do not know the name of the priest in charge of Kotte. (VP PP, I foot note).

When in 1602, strongly invited by D. Andrea de Santa Maria, Bishop of Cochin and of Ceylon, the Jesuits came to Ceylon, the Jesuits were welcomed by the Vicar General, Father Rodrigo Pimentel, and by the diocesan clergy in charge of the parish church of the two. The Vicar General received the Jesuits to his house and gave them hospitality till they building a house of their own. As it was the holy week, the parish clergy invited them to preach on Maundy, Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday. On every Sunday the Jesuits celebrated their Mass in the Parish Church till the end of October when they had their house. Naturally during the Holy Week and later they were always available to the people to receive them at the confession.

(Fr. Perniola will be happy to receive from his readers critique and comments of his articles appearing in the 'Messenger' to enable him later to publish them in a book. Email: sri.provinces@gmail.com)

Time passes very swiftly in the onward progress of Christianity because landmarks and goals keep shifting when the temporal confronts the eternal. As a result the person and teachings of Jesus Christ get shifted out of focus. Hence, as a result, persons and institutions that follow Christ's teachings may in their efforts to stem the tide of change, paradoxically introduce changes that create more confusion and unrest among its adherents. Roman Catholics waited with bated breath to receive the outcome of the last papal conclave. Most of them were relieved and thrilled that Pope Francis had made a sweet dream come true. This humble man has grappled his master unto his soul with hoops of steel in two stages. In the first stage, he has reaffirmed his absolute faith in his master, whom he recognises as the Son of Man and Suffering Servant (Isaiah 51). In the second stage he has answered the call of St. Francis of Assisi to link the papacy to the throb of humanity: the sick, the poor and the neglected.

Vatican Council II

In his homily at an April 16 Mass at St. Martha's Residence, the Pope observed that the Holy Spirit always "moves us, makes us walk and pushes the Church forward." However, he said, we often respond by saying, "Don't bother us." "We want to put the Holy Spirit to sleep," the Pontiff noted. "We want to 'tame' the Holy Spirit. And that doesn't work, because He is God. He is the wind that comes and goes and we know not from where." "He is the strength of God,

the one who gives us comfort and drives us to continue forward," Pope Francis continued. But the idea of "going forward" is what often bothers us, because we want to "remain comfortable," he explained. "This temptation is still here today," the Holy Father observed, pointing to the Second Vatican Council as an example. "The Council was a beautiful work of the Holy Spirit," he stressed. "But after 50 years have we done everything that the Holy Spirit told us at the Council?" he asked, questioning whether the Church currently contains the Council's "continuity of growth." "No," he answered. Some Catholics want to "build a monument" to the Council without being willing to change, the Pope lamented. "And what's more, there are some who want to turn back." "This is called being stubborn, this is called wanting to tame the Holy Spirit this is called being foolish and slow of heart," he stressed. The same thing happens with our own personal lives, the Holy Father continued, explaining that we often resist when "the Holy Spirit pushes us to take a more evangelical path. "Do not resist the Holy Spirit," Pope Francis urged. "It is the Spirit that makes us free with that freedom of Jesus, that freedom of the children of God!" "This is the grace that I wish all of us would ask of the Lord; docility to the Holy Spirit, to that Spirit who comes to us and makes us advance down the path of holiness, that holiness of the Church that is so beautiful," the Pope concluded. ((Vatican City, Apr 17, 2013 12:09 pm (CNA/EWTN News)

Pope Francis! The Spirit Sets his Face Aglow



Pope Francis celebrates a mass where he ordained ten new priests in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, Sunday, April 21, 2013 (AP)

Francis of Assisi

The moment I heard that the new Pope was to go by the name of 'Francis', I was happy that the assonance, rhyming 'Pope' and 'Hope', may result in a reasonable consonance between the pristine purity of the teachings and ministry of Jesus Christ and the ministry of the Catholic Church. It is surprising that 265 Popes had to face conclaves before a Pope chose the name 'Francis'. It is a beatitude that Pope Francis has dared to walk on the turbulent sea in the way that Jesus Christ asked Peter to exercise his faith. We need to understand why the first Jesuit Pope's choice of name was influenced by St.

Francis of Assisi and not by St. Francis Xavier: who was a key figure in the Jesuit order. The significant difference between the life and service of St. Francis of Assisi and that of St. Francis Xavier cannot be quantified as a measurable intensity of saintly qualities. The difference is only reducible to an inexplicable spontaneity of manner that we call charisma that Francis of Assisi possessed. Pope Francis' explanation is found in another homily that he delivered. "Pope Francis spent his homily today reflecting on responding to God's invitations with the heart and not just the intellect, since this leads to ideologies that falsify the Gospel and weigh down the Church. "The ideologues falsify the gos-

pel. Every ideological interpretation, wherever it comes from - from (whatsoever side) - is a falsification of the Gospel," And these ideologues, as we have seen in the history of the Church, end up being intellectuals without talent, ethicists without goodness and let us not so much as mention beauty, of which they understand nothing". (Vatican City Apr 19, 2013 / 07:15 am (CNA/EWTN News). The faithful join in celebration to sing the hymn, which expresses the position taken by Pope Francis.

*"Lord, make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness,*

*light;
And where there is sadness, joy"* (A hymn authored by St. Francis of Assisi).

Bertrand Russell, a free-thinker and the author of the book "Why I am not a Christian", makes the following assessment of St. Francis of Assisi. "St. Francis of Assisi (1181 or 1182- 1226) was one of the most lovable men known to history. He was of a well-to-do family and in his youth was not averse from ordinary gaieties. But one day, as he was riding by a leper, a sudden impulse of pity led him to dismount and kiss the man. Soon afterwards, he decided to forgo all worldly goods, and devote his life to preaching and good works...Francis wished to interpret the vow of poverty in the strictest possible way; he objected to houses or churches for his followers. They were to beg their bread, and to have no lodging but what chance hospitality provided...In the matter of saintliness, Francis has had equals; what makes him unique among saints is his spontaneous, his universal love, and his gifts as a poet" (Bertrand Russell, History of Western Philosophy).

I prefer to communicate in English, but a little Latin may at times do no harm. Pope Francis is in essence "*Episcopus servus servorum Dei*" (A bishop-servant of the servants of God).

The above article was written by the late Eymard de S. Wijeratne who was a contributor to the Messenger.

Prayer in Christian Life

Rev.Sr. Rita Gunawardena H.F.

What is prayer?

Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or requesting of good things from God. For me prayer is a surge of the heart. It is a simple look turned toward heaven. It is a cry of recognition and embracing of both trial and joy.

"If you knew the gift of God "The wonder of prayer revealed beside the well where we come seeking water: there Christ comes to meet every human being. Whether we realise it or not prayer is the encounter of God's thirst with ours. God thirsts that we may thirst for Him. [c.c.c.2559]

Prayer is the response of faith and love to the thirst of

the only Son of God. Where does prayer come from? The heart is the dwelling place where I am. Where I live. According to Biblical expression the heart is the place, "to which I withdraw" It is our hidden centre, beyond the grasp of our reason and others, only the Spirit of God can fathom the human heart and know it fully. The heart is the place of decision deeper than our psychic drives. It is the place of truth where we choose life or death. It is the place of encounter, because as image of God we live in relation. It is the place of covenant.

Christian prayer is a covenant relationship. Between God and man in Christ. Springing from both the Holy Spirit and ourselves. Prayer is the living relationship of the children



of God with their Father. This communion of life is always possible because through baptism we have been united with Christ. The spiritual tradition of the Church speaks of prayer as a battle of faith and triumph of perseverance. [CCC 2573]

Prayer is indeed the raising of mind and heart to God .It includes worship, praise, thanksgiving, sorrow, reparation and, petition. It may be mental or vocal. It is to God we primarily pray because He is the source of all our good; but we ought to pray also to the saints, specially to our Blessed Mother in order that through their prayer and merit God may deign to hear us. Prayer is necessary for salvation; therefore it is to be made frequently during life. Prayer is by definition an attitude of mind. Petition is only one aspect of prayer; the highest form is that of adoration or worship. Public prayer of the Church excels any other but all prayers even those that made in

the most private way, have their dignity and efficacy and are of great benefit to the whole Mystical Body, for in that body there can be no good virtuous deed done by an individual, member which does not through the communion of the communion of saints redound to the welfare of all. {Pope Pius XII}

All who are striving to attain a substantial degree of holiness need to devote an allotted portion of time each day to mental prayer: Hence it forms a part of daily routine for the consecrated person. It is supremely important to those engaged in the apostolate, that they may not be as "sounding brass or tinkling symbols."

Contd on Pg. 14

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor

Well done Sri Lanka

With 2 major events within the short course of just a few days of each other, our tiny island proved that we are an exemplary nation that should be taken notice of.

First it was the peaceful and orderly election and transfer of power at the political helm. Many would have imagined a chaotic situation at the thought of a change at the top. The nation's gratitude is due to the former President, the Police and Army Chiefs and the Commissioner of Elections for the peaceful elections and transfer of power.

The formation of a National Government consisting of opposing political parties with diverse views for the sole purpose of resurrecting the country is unique and worthy of emulation to other nations.

The second event was the fantastic success of the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis. The success could be judged by the sentiments echoed by some foreign visitors. "... we did not expect this from a country that does not have a Catholic majority ..." said Rev. Fr. Frederico Lombardi, a Vatican spokesman. They had also been fascinated by the 40 caparisoned elephants, something that they had never seen before. Mary Lawrence from Bangalore had said "... we were impressed by the religious harmony in the country. People seem to be respectful of other religions..."

The religious harmony in our country was 'projected by the Inter-Religious Meeting at the B.M.I.C.H. which I am sure was the cynosure of the "International eye." Popes have visited many countries for many purposes and even for International Religious Conferences. Nevertheless this epoch meeting, at the B.M.I.C.H. could be the very first 'internal' Inter-Religious Meeting His Holiness would have attended in a non-Christian country. It was indeed 'touching' to see many Buddhists priests clasping the hand of the Pope and presenting him gifts. The person who initiated the idea of a Inter-Religious Meeting, should be compli-

mented.

The "addresses" of the Buddhist and Hindu priests, which were in Sinhalese and Tamil was 'lost' on the visitors. They could have easily had an English translation of the speeches or even an address in English. What is the use of a 'language' if 'communication' to whom it is meant for is lost.

The historic visit of Pope Francis to the Sri Maha Bodhi Temple in Maradana where he walked in bare footed was indeed a reciprocal act of appreciation for the 'warmth' he received from both the Buddhist clergy and laity. It also speaks volumes for the sincerity of purpose of this simple holy man of God.

The teams of Government officials and that of the Services who were assigned different tasks in preparation for the Pope's visit and who worked tirelessly even during 'election time' richly deserves the gratitude and admiration of every Sri Lankan. The country is grateful to the former President who personally invited His Holiness and the former Defence Secretary for initiating the "ground work" preparations especially at Galle Face Green.

Before leaving Sri Lankan soil, His Holiness had remarked to Cardinal Ranjith, that our amiable new President is the most simplest Head of State he has met so far. What a compliment from a universally acclaimed holy man.

Thank God for the deep faith of Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith and his able assistants. During a time of uncertainty due to the evenly contested Presidential elections, they continuously said, ... 'Don't worry, the Pope is coming, let us pray...'

Thus we have proved to the world that we are a Nation to be 'looked up to.' Well done Sri Lanka, you are not only the "Pearl of the Indian Ocean", but that of the whole Universe.

M.V. Noel de Silva

2015 Cricket World Cup and our Team

The 11th edition of the International Cricket Council's Cricket World cup will be played in Australia and New Zealand from February 14 to March 29. Australia and New Zealand together staged the fifth edition of the cricket world cup in 1992 when Pakistan became world champions for the first time.

The 2015 world cup will be a special one for Sri Lanka where the whole country is hoping for another World Cup win. Led by probably the best All round cricketer in the world at the moment,

Angelo Mathews and his spirited team of players have to perform well this time to bring glory to our motherland.

The Sri Lanka team have five senior players in Kumar Sangakkara, Mahela Jayawardene, Rangana Herath, Tillakaratne Dilshan and Lasith Malinga. Their one day performances are highly commendable and the experience they count is a great asset for the team. When you take the past world cup tournaments Mahela has played 33 matches, Kumar 30 matches and

Dilshan 20 matches. So Captain Mathews have three superb senior players, who are past captains too in whom he can always count on.

The 1996 Sri Lanka's World cup win under "Captain Cool" Arjuna Ranatunga is still the biggest team win for Sri Lanka. With Arjuna the team had dedicated players like Aravinda De Silva, Asanka Gurusinghe, Sanath Jayasuriya, Chaminda Vaas, Romesh Kaluwitharana and Hasahn Tillak-eratne. Aravinda was man of the match in the finals against Australia

while Sanath was chosen man of the series.

Beside the senior players skipper Angelo has also a young set of players to do well for the team. Vice Captain Lahiru Thirimanne, Dinesh Chandimal, Thisara Perera, Suranga Lakmal, Sachithra Senanayake and Dimuth Karunaratne are players for the future. Up to now they have recorded good performances in one Day matches.

We wish our team all success in the 11th Cricket World cup.

Christopher Ranasinghe

Genuine unity and reconciliation!
A recipe

Our President in his Independence Day address expressed in no uncertain terms, the desire of a genuine National unity and reconciliation. We should all rally round him and ensure its fulfillment. In this regard, I humbly present my recipe, which is likely to help achieve the cherished goal and in addition boost our economy as well.

We Sri Lankans 'enjoy' too many holidays. In fact, we have the largest number of holidays when compared with the rest of the world. This affects adversely the smooth and efficient functioning of statecraft and economy of the country. Successive governments have made attempts to rectify this situation, without success.

The declared Public Holidays amount to 25. Since we have a five-day working week, we will be 'holidaying' for almost another five weeks, in addition to all the Saturdays and Sundays. Can we, a developing nation, afford such a large number of holidays, together with the 'holiday mood' (preparation for the holiday and its aftermath) that spreads beyond the actual 'holiday', further eroding into the working hours and days?

Further, can the declaration of a National Holiday, in commemoration of an event, where the majority of the people will do nothing connected with the event, be justified?

A closer look at the list of public holidays shows that 23 out of the 25 have ethno-religious commemorative significance, affording an ideal opportunity, only if used appropriately, to promote cross-faith interactions. There are only two days that are common to all sections of the society, i.e. Independence Day and the May Day. These two days and another eight days which are considered to be of the highest importance to the respective ethnic or religious group, namely *Thai Pongal*, *Sinhala and Tamil New Year* (2 days), *Vesak* (2 days), *Poson*, *Ramazan* and *Christmas* - a group of 10 need to be considered separately. During these 10 days, there are large scale religious observances, social events and/or family reunions. This group of 10 could constitute our 'Commemorative Holidays'.

The remaining 15 commemorative events consisting of ten *Poyas*, *Hadji*, Prophet Mohammed's birthday, *Maha sivarathri*, *Deepavali* and *Good Friday* could be made full working days, with the exception that the first two hours i.e. 8 to 10 be spent in an activity devoted to the significance of that particular day's event.

For example, on a *Poya* Day there could be a Bana preaching/meditation session; on *Hadji* and Prophet Mohammed's birthday, a programme on some aspect of Islam and the life of the Holy Prophet; on *Deepavali* and *Maha Sivarathri* Day a Hindu religious/cultural programme, and on *Good Friday* a Prayer Service, talk and discussion on the life of Jesus Christ. This will ensure that everyone will at least spend some time meaningfully, in observance of the particular event commemorated. It will also promote understanding of the different religions and cultures, and integration and harmony amongst the different religious and ethnic groups, as all separate groups will together be involved in making arrangements and participating in each other's functions, and getting back to work after partaking in fellowship and refreshments.

One should not forget the fact that comparatively a small number of Buddhists observe *'Ata-Sil'* 'on most Poya days. As *'Ata-Sil'* observance need not necessarily be on the Poya day, arrangements could be made to hold such observances on the Sunday following or preceding the *Poya*. In fact, most schools arrange their *'Ata-Sil'* observances on the school day preceding the *Poya*.

Since over the years we have been used to the idea of enjoying 'long week-ends', consideration could be given to declaring one Monday or Friday in each quarter of the year, simply as an additional holiday, to encourage people to take a longer break and engage in an activity of their choice, which is a healthy concept. This would make a total of 14 'National Holidays'.

Thus it will be seen that this proposed scheme, will curtail the number of holidays and increase the number of working days, thereby helping the country's smooth administration and economy; with a little give and take, it will also promote better understanding and appreciation of each other's cultures, build bridges, facilitate cross faith interactions and regain inter community trust which is essential for ensuring harmony and oneness - particularly important in the coming days of a rejuvenated effort at nation rebuilding.

Dr. L.A.W.Sirisena

Catechism for the Youth
YOUUGAT

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

(Contd from last week)

The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist

The liturgy of the Eucharist:

1. The preparation of the gifts which concludes with the offertory processions.
2. The Eucharistic prayer (which is introduced by the Preface and the Sanctus).
3. Doxology.
4. Lord's prayer.
5. Prayers for peace.
6. Agnus Dei, The breaking of the bread.
7. The distribution to the faithful.
8. Concluding prayer.
9. The final blessing.

Christ Himself acts in every celebration at the Eucharist (The bishop/priest represents Him). The celebrant stands at the altar in 'Persona Christi Capitis' (The person of Christ, the Head). Christ is mysteriously but really present in the sacrament of the Eucharist. The church fulfills the command of Jesus "Do this in memory of me" (1 Cor. 11/24). When the Church celebrates the Eucharist, she stands before the source from which she herself springs anew. By eating the body of Christ, the church becomes the body of Christ. God is truly present in the consecrated species of bread and wine. A baptized Christian is in a way obliged to attend the Holy Mass on all Sundays and holy days of obligation.

The Holy communion unites us more deeply with Christ, makes us living members of the Body of Christ and renews the graces that we received in Baptism and Confirmation. Holy Communion is the expression of the unity of the Body of Christ. To belong to the Catholic Church, one must be baptized. Hence, non-catholic Christians cannot be given the Holy Eucharist.

(To be contd)

Contd. from Pg. 9

Prayer in ...

How can we learn to be united to God in prayer?

The first step in this mystical union is called the state of quietude. Its characteristic is quietness. This prayer begins with recollection. We close our eyes and ears to all that happens outside although we may still hear them still. Keep the body still. But our minds and imagination will keep us wondering and the voice in the head very active. Here what we need to become aware of his the action of our mind and just become a watcher of the mind, of its thoughts and images and not pursue them.

The Lord makes a generous invitation to us "Come to me all who labour and are heavily burdened and I will give you rest"[Mt. 11:28] Without this rest, this peace the happiness Christ alone can give us what can we do for others? How can we become capable of serving others? Let us awaken the mystic within us through stillness and mindfulness maintaining silence in mind, and in senses which is the remote preparation for awakening the mystic consciousness.

In stillness of the mind we seek to be mind-less, thought-less, ego-less, time-less, free of all cravings and desires, expectations and live in the present without being trapped in the past or in the future.

We may at times wonder what this mysticism is. It is the sense of wonder in the presence of the mystery. We possess this sense of wonder. It is nourished when we open ourselves to the Spirit who intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. [Rom.8:26] It happens when we listen in silence. Curiously the word listen we can rearrange as silent. Within this silent listening are the predisposition to prayer to attain intimacy and mysticism. The great Christian mystic Meister Eckhart says "Let go...Let God" Be humble and detached close your eyes, like a child in his / her mothers arms.

"A Mystic is a person who knows God by experience. Only a vision of God can make us wise. Without such a vision our education is a farce, our civilization is a sham, our religion an opium, our liturgy a corpse, our theology a fad our apostolate the most popular and pietistic escape from God who said "Be Still and know that I am God"(Author unknown.)

(Contd from Pg. 6)

The Sisters of the....

Kurunegala hospital. On the 1st of May 1936 the Holy Family sisters went to Nawalapitiya and served in the hospital there too. Later the Holy Family Congregation found it almost impossible to provide the necessary personnel for the two hospitals, Kurunegala and Nawalapitiya. They, then informed the bishop of Chilaw and handed over to the Salvatorian Sisters the Kurunegala hospital and continued to work in Nawalapitiya hospital up to 1958, till the Government decided to dispense with the services of all religious sisters from state Hospitals. From Kurunegala the sisters went to Anuradhapura. Then it spread to other areas all over the country, mainly in rural areas.

Till 1958 the Holy Family Sisters in Sri Lanka was under one Directress. For administrative purposes it was divided into Provinces in 24th September 1958 as Jaffna and Colombo Provinces.

Present reality

In the Holy Family the five vocations are present in Sri Lanka; Apostolic Sisters - 513 (272 Sisters in the Colombo Province + 241 Sisters in the Jaffna Province), Contemplative Sisters - 18, Consecrated Seculars - 10 Colombo Province + 13 Jaffna Province, committed Lay Associates - 1344 Colombo Province +1100 Jaffna Prov-

ince, Priest Associates - 25 Colombo Province + 28 Jaffna Province. In Sri Lanka Colombo Province has 52 Communities and Jaffna Province 37 Communities.

At present the sisters are involved in different kinds of ministries such as teaching in Schools, Pre - schools, Counseling, nursing, pastoral work, social apostolate, looking after the orphans and the aged, adult education, prison ministry, differently able, with war victims especially with widows and orphans, relationship building with North and South, life education with skill formation. Also there are 51 sisters working as missionaries in different parts of the world.

"The Associates of the Holy Family dispersed throughout the world appearing in one form or another on all the ways trod by us poor travellers may be compared with the flower of the desert, with the flower that grows at the edge of an abyss or at the foot of ruins and tombs....

"You have not separated yourselves from those who live under the common law. As companions of their good angel, you follow them in the valley of tears and to bring them back or to keep them for Jesus Christ, you share with them as far as you can all the fatigues, the trials and the dangers of the journey." (P.B Noailles 1851)

Thoughts to Consider Today

Begin Again

No matter who you are or what your life has been like so far, the rest of your life's journey can be different. With God's help you can begin again.

- Billy Graham

Our Behaviour

Our conduct has a direct influence on how people think about the gospel. The world doesn't judge us by our theology; the world judges us by our Behaviour.

- Carolyn Mahaney



Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.
(Mt. 4:4)

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR B
22nd Feb. - 1st March 2015

Sun: FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT
Gen. 9:8-15; 1 Pt. 3:18-22; Mk. 1:12-15
Mon: Lev. 19:1,2,11-18; Mt. 25:31-46
Tue: Is. 55:10,11; Mt. 6:7-15
Wed: Jona 3:1-10; Lk. 11:29-32
Thu: Est. 4:17; Mt. 7:7-12
Fri: Ez. 18:21-28; Mt. 5:20-26
Sat: Dt. 26:16-19; Mt. 5:43-48
Sun: SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT
Gen. 22:1,2,9-13,15-18; Rom. 8:31-34;
Mk. 9:2-10

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Response: Create a new spirit within us, O Lord.

On this first Sunday of Lent; we pray for the discipline which will enable us to follow the example of Jesus in the desert, so that we too may be victorious over the evil one. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Create a new spirit within us, O Lord.

For all Christians that they may not be content with a superficial renewal of their lives but that they may strive after conversion of heart this Lent. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Create a new spirit within us, O Lord.

For the leaders of our government, that they may have the courage and the wisdom to tackle the root cause of poverty and crime in our society. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Create a new spirit within us, O Lord.

For those who are struggling with temptations: that the grace of Christ may help them to be victorious. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Create a new spirit within us, O Lord.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

First Reading. Gen. 9: 8-15

After the destruction of the world by water God makes a covenant with Noah. Never again will the world be destroyed by water; promises God. The sign will be the rainbow. God is moved out of mercy and love to protect man.

Second Reading. 1Pet. 3: 18-22

Christ offered His life for the salvation of mankind out of love. This is effected through our baptism. Hence we are saved by the resurrection of Christ which is shared through baptism.

Gospel. Mk. 1: 12-15

Jesus is tempted in the wilderness. But the angels are there to minister to Him. Jesus overcame the temptation and goes out to preach the Good News.

Reflection

Today is the first Sunday of Lent. The Church sets apart this season that we may prepare ourselves to experience and celebrate the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Being the first Sunday of Lent, we are called today to reflect on the merciful love of God. This enables us to go through our day-to-day lives with courage and hope. It is a fact that we go through lots of challenges and temptations, but God wants us to be assured that we are not alone and that His merciful love is with us to help us out.

The Israelites were living in sin at the time of Noah. Except those that entered the Ark. All were destroyed by flood.

In the first reading, God out of mercy makes a covenant with Noah. This covenant is that the world will never again be destroyed by a flood. The sign is the rainbow. This is not because of our worthiness but because of the sheer merciful love of God.

It is God's mercifulness which prompts Him to send His only Son to the world in order to save all mankind. Jesus too out of His love offered His life for our salvation. God raised Jesus from the dead and there by saved all mankind. Today we enjoy this salvation in full measure through the baptism, which once again is a sign of God's merciful love.

In today's temptation story we see God's love. After baptism Jesus is led to the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil. Here Jesus is not left alone. Because of His peaceful and harmonious life with God and nature, angels were there to minister and look after Him.

Not only in the wilderness even outside before Jesus began His public ministry, He was tempted in a subtle way. John the Baptist is arrested. There's the temptation and an invitation for Jesus to become a political revolutionary to save John. But Jesus goes Into Galilee preaching the Gospel of God saying "the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the Gospel." Most probably He is being guided by the Spirit. This again is a sign of God's love. These facts are laid before us in order to help us to face life with courage and hope.

They invite us to a true conversion, for God out of mercy is all out to help us, forgive us and protect us.

Therefore let us surrender ourselves to the Good Lord during this season of Lent so that we too will become full sharers of His resurrection.

Aid Story 1

During the Spanish civil war an old lady confronted the soldiers who had come to the town to burn down the beautiful church. The anarchist wanted to destroy everything that reminded the people of God and religion. "Well," argued the courageous lady, "You might as well tear down the sun. the moon and the stars, because as long as they are shining up there, we will be reminded of our God who put them there."

Aid Story 2

An overweight businessman decided to reduce his weight. He took a new diet seriously, even changed his driving route to avoid his favorite bakery. One morning however he arrived at work carrying a gigantic coffee cake. His co-workers all scolded him, but he explained. "I accidentally drove by the bakery this morning, and there in the window were lots of cakes. I felt this was no accident, so I prayed, "Lord if you want me to have one of these delicious coffee cakes, let me have a parking place directly in front of the bakery." He continued, "And sure enough the eighth time around the block. There it was!"

Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos

"Tempted by Satan" (Mark 1,12-15)

In the Desert

The Holy Spirit that descended upon Jesus at His Baptism (Mark 1,10: "... the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him") leads Him into the wilderness - i.e. the desert of Judea which lies between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea. Therefore it is the Holy Spirit who makes Him confront and defeat evil.

Tempted by Satan

Jesus stays in the wilderness for forty days just as the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years during the Exodus: "Remember how for forty years now the LORD, your God, has directed all your journeying in the desert, so as to test you by affliction and find out whether or not it was your intention to keep his commandments" (Deuteronomy 8,2). In their wilderness wandering, the rebellious Covenantal People of God failed not a few times. They murmured against God and went against their leader Moses. They opted against God. In the wilderness, Jesus reenacts these temptations of His people. His unique relationship with God as His Son is being tested. Will He, the newly proclaimed Son of God (Mark 1,11: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased") too fail? The tension mounts!

Jesus stays in the wilderness, just as the ancient prophets like Elijah met and decided with God alone far from the world. In deep communion with God,

He is making His choice for the ministry. This becomes the fertile ground for the devil. Will He too opt against God? The tension mounts!

Among Wild Beasts and Angels

Jesus is with wild beasts (= forces of evil) and angels (=forces of good) in the Judean desert (= abode of demons and various wild animals). He is in a place of horror and danger. But He is sustained and protected by God through His angels. In the days of yore, an angel guided Israel in the desert for forty years in the first Exodus (14, 19; 23,20: "See, I am sending an angel before you, to guard you on the way and bring you to the place I have prepared"); an angel nourished Elijah who walked in the wilderness for forty days to Horeb (1 Kings 19,5-7: "... but then an angel touched him and ordered him to get up and eat). Now angels sustain Jesus, the New Israel!

The Suffering and Dying Messiah

Over the waters of the Jordan, Jesus was identified as the Suffering and Dying Messiah recalling Psalm 2,7 "You are my beloved Son" and Isaiah 42,1 "with you I am well pleased." Psalm 2 is a coronation Psalm. When the king is crowned, he is made the adopted Son of God. Isaiah 42 is the first of the



four Songs of the Suffering Servant. The Servant conquers nations for God, not through war, but through his suffering and death. God is well pleased with him. When Psalm 2,7 and Isaiah 42,1 are combined, this Jesus, who is already baptized, is King and God's Son. But He will exercise His kingship, sonship, not through war, but through His suffering and death like the Suffering Servant.

For forty days, satan tries to

frustrate God's plan - Jesus' mission as His Son to be the Suffering and Dying Messiah. But Jesus manifests His unique Sonship of God. He holds on to God's will. He is deeply committed to the messianic mission entrusted to Him by the Father. He prefers the way willed by the Father - via crucis, the way of the cross! Which is the path of the Church today?

We are never alone in time of testing. At this point, we have the example of Jesus. Though the People of God had given into various temptations; Jesus, the personification of the New Israel, opted for God. This example strengthens us in our trials.

In times of testing, we have Jesus' active compassion: "Because he [Jesus] himself was tested through what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested" (Hebrews 2,18); "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4,15). What was one of the biggest temptations I ever faced and overcame with the compassionate help of the Lord?

Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi



Lenten Season as a Family

An Interview with Catholic Author Meredith Gould

Catholic families have a unique and precious opportunity to share with their growing (and grown-up) children the beauty and importance of the Lenten Season. By instilling in our children a sense of love and anticipation during Lent, we can overcome any negative stereotypes they may have related to the sacrificial nature of this time of the year. Meredith Gould, author of *The Catholic Home* and *Come to the Table: A Catholic Passover Seder for Holy Week* speaks out her expertise on embracing the Lenten Season with our families.

Q: How can we, as parents, share the season of Lent with our children without making them feel that it's something punitive?

A: I think it makes sense to do this by discussing the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. First, remember to note that this is a Sacrament of Healing. Then, consider that this Sacrament is as much about consciousness as it is about God's mercy. After all, we have to

become aware of the ways we have become disconnected before we can fully return to God's embrace - even though the arms of God are always open to embrace us. Awareness requires willingness and focus.

Q. So what does this have to do with Lent?

A. Like Advent, Lent is a penitential season during which we have yet another opportunity to check our spiritual fitness.

Q: How can families reinforce the concept of almsgiving during Lent with young children?

A. I suggest parents teach good stewardship by asking children to set aside a portion of their allowance for a charity the kids choose. Lent is a great time to either start or enhance this practice with a parental matching fund.

Q: For young children and those who are physically unable to ob-

serve Lenten fasts and abstinence, how can parents teach the concept of fasting or sacrifice?

A: Since your children will (hopefully) notice what adults are doing (or not) during Lent, you will need to create opportunities to discuss these practices. See if you can instill a respect, if not reverence, for the way sacrifice sharpens perceptions on all levels—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual.

Catholic News Agency



A Time for Everything

There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven." The writer of the Old Testament Book of Ecclesiastes, from which this verse is taken, touches upon an essential truth. Look at the world around you; see how the landscape changes through winter, spring, summer and autumn. Each season brings its own hopes and expecta-

tions. Often these hopes remain unfulfilled. The long-awaited summer ends up a damp squib. But for Christians, our hope has already been fulfilled in the Resurrection of Christ. The Church's 'high summer' is Easter. But to appreciate fully the Easter Season of light and joy, we have to pass through the Season of Lent. *Catholic Truth Society*



A CROSS

The Way

By Sirohmi Gunasekera

Sacrifice

"Ash Wednesday is a day of Penance, Fasting and Abstinence," remarked Marcus.

"I know. I understand that one has to do Penance and Fast but I don't agree with Abstinence. You see, I prefer fish to meat so it is no problem for me to abstain from eating meat," said Julia.

"Well, meat covers beef, chicken, pork and mutton so there is a wide range. In the Western world, most people are meat eaters and that is why it is a sacrifice for them to abstain. You are a rare 'fishitarian' similar to being a vegetarian," commented Marcus.

"Anyway, why are we only thinking of food as a sacrifice?" chimed in Paula, adding, "Maybe you enjoy watching a particular teledrama and perhaps you could give that up as a sacrifice for the Lenten Season."

"Oh dear! That is really hard. It is easier for me to give up eating chocolates or ice cream," said Julia.

"There you are! I think that you and I cheat ourselves by sacrificing something that is not too difficult. After all, you have to sacrifice for forty days in Lent and that is a long time," said Paula.

"It's more than a month so it is better to sacrifice something you can really adhere to for five weeks!" remarked Marcus.

"Anyway, it all depends because if you have someone to cook for you, you can give up eating beef perhaps simply by telling your cook. That is if you have regular home-cooked meals," said Paula.

"You are right. I have to find my own food and I am dependent on the cooked food available in the shops and restaurants," said Marcus, adding, "Anyway, the main thing is to sacrifice something you like as a Penance for Lent,"

Sacrament of Reconciliation

* A Practical Examination of Conscience through the Ten Commandments

Penance (Confession, Reconciliation) is the Sacrament by which sins committed after Baptism are forgiven through the absolution of the priest. It was instituted by Christ when He said to the Apostles (and their successors, the bishops, who in turn are helped by their priests): "Receive the Holy Spirit: Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven: And whose you shall retain they are retained" (John 20:23). The Apostle and Evangelist St. John inspired by the Holy Spirit, writes: "If we acknowledged our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins to cleanse us from all iniquity" (1 John 1-9).

The First Commandment

"I am the Lord thy God: Thou shalt not have strange gods before me."

Commands: Faith hope, love and worship of God; reassurance for holy things; prayer

Forbids: Idolatry, superstition, spiritism, tempting God, sacrilege, attendance at false worship.

Have I performed my duties towards God reluctantly or grudgingly?

- > Do I recite my usual prayers?
- > Did I receive Holy Communion in the state of mortal sin or without the necessary preparation?
- > Did I miss the one-hour Eucharistic fast?
- > Did I fail to mention some grave



sin in my previous confessions?

- > Did I seriously believe in superstition or engage in superstitious practices (fortune-telling, horoscope, faith healing etc.)?
- > Did I seriously doubt in matters of faith?
- > Have I committed the sin of sacrilege (profanation) of a Sacred person, place or things.

Next week 2nd and 3rd Commandments

Keeping safe what is private

Proverbs 11:13 says, "A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret." Secrets can be wonderful and therapeutic. They can bring us great joy and emotional release. They can strengthen the

bond between people and allow them to share in happiness.

Sharing of confidence also means that people trust you enough to make themselves vulnerable. When that happens, there is great virtue in keeping

the confidence. Protecting the secrets others confide in you is an expression of love. It is a guarding of relationship and a privileged responsibility.

This reward of keeping our lips sealed is a good night's

sleep, strengthened character as well as constant friendship.

So do keep your friends' secret safe. You will be rewarded as a good and trustworthy friends.

Courtesy : Sunday Examiner

Young World

Annual De Mazenod College Holy Mass at Tewatta Basilica



Every year De Mazenod College, Kandana offers a Holy Mass consecrating the School, the students and staff to Our Lady at the Tewatta Basilica. This year too a Holy Mass was held with Rev. Fr. Lalith Expetidus as the Chief Celebrant. Picture shows the procession leading to the Church.

Anton Jayasuriya

Let's plant a tree in our garden



The Lions Club of Negombo made a presentation of Jak plants to the residents of St. James' Housing Scheme, Madampella. Picture shows a young resident receiving a Jak plant on behalf of his family.

H. A. Caldera

CRICKET SEASON



St. Peter's College a good 2014-15

St. Peter's College, Bambalapitiya recorded two fine wins over Royal College and Trinity College in their Under 19 Inter-School Cricket matches played recently. St. Peter's beat Royal by 8 wickets and scored a convincing innings win over Trinity at the Asgiriya Stadium. St. Peter's team enjoys a good 2014-15 Cricket season by their very good performances including all-round efforts.

Christ King Performs well

Christ King College, Pannipitiya played two matches in the Inter School Under 13 Division III, third round, winning one match and losing the other. Christ King team beat Kelaniya MV, in the first innings but lost to Pinnawala CC in the next match on first innings. Christ King team coached by Jayantha Weerasinghe did well this year to enter the 3rd round. They ended first and second round stage matches with an unbeaten record.

Christopher Ranasinghe

Welcoming First Years



First Year students at Our Lady of Lourdes School, Madampella were given a warm welcome by the students and staff of the School.

Shriyangani Felicia

Donation of desks and chairs



On a request made by the Dehiowita Pradeshiya Sabha, Opposition Leader Sestus Arsakularatna, the only Catholic holding office in the local government in Sabaragamuwa Province, Deputy Minister of Industry and Commerce Champika Premadasa allocated necessary funds for the purchase of desks and chairs to be distributed to Daham Schools and pre-schools in the Dehiowita District area.

J. Antony

Bicentenary of the Birth of Don Bosco



The bicentenary birth anniversary celebrations of St. John Bosco founder of Don Bosco Salesian Congregation commenced all over the world in January this year and will continue until August this year.

St. John Bosco was born on August 16, 1815 to a world of misery, in Italy where children and youth were neglected to the point of destitution with no home to live in. St. Bosco became the father and teacher to these destitute children and youth. He collected these children and led them to a decent life. He also gave them vocational training in order to help them find employment.

The celebrations in Sri Lanka too commenced on January 31 with Holy Mass followed by a grand vari-

ety entertainment by all the branches of the Don Bosco Salesians spread all over Sri Lanka. There was drama and song depicting the way Don Bosco Salesians serve themselves, the community and the world at large.

Archbishops Emeriti, Their Grace Most Rev. Dr. Nicholas Marcus Fernando and Most Rev. Dr. Oswald Gomis, His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Norbert Andradi, Bishop of Anuradhapura and His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Fernando, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo also participated.

John Amaratunga, Minister of Christian affairs was also present.

Quintus Perera

MY PET

My pet is a dog. Its name is Teena. It is a female dog. Teena's breed is Labrador. She is very beautiful. Teena is one-year-old. Her colour is golden. Teena can run very fast. Teena plays with me everyday. She eats all her food and likes to drink milk. When Teena sees a cat or a person she barks. I love Teena a lot.

Shenaya Fernando

Grade 6

Holy Family Convent, Bambalapitiya



English with Fun and Entertainment

Dear Readers,

From this lesson, a section will be included on raising awareness of the Teaching Knowledge Test of the Cambridge University (TKT) to enable our readers, teachers and teacher trainees to do the test and obtain a recognized certificate for teaching from the Cambridge University.

In today's lesson the concept of word classes in modern grammar is discussed. The reading section is dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes.

Certificate Course in English Medium Teacher Development (CEMTD Batch 6) organized by the Archdiocesan Education Commission will commence on 01st March 2015 at 9.00 a.m. Contact officers in charge (Sharmalee 011 2699129) (Noel, 0112291540, 0718004580) for enrolment and academic guidance.





Your suggestions to improve our lessons are much appreciated.

God Bless You!

NJ

Modern Grammar - The traditional grammarians prescribed the words of the language into eight parts of speech including articles. Some grammarians advocated nine parts of speech considering articles as one part.

Nouns

			
a baby (i)The baby in the picture is Aurelia.	a cat (ii)The cat in the picture is Kitty.	a book (iii)The book in the picture is 'Holy Bible'.	a park (iv)The park in the picture is Victoria.

A prescriptive definition of noun is that it is a name of a person, animal, thing or a place. The images show visual examples for a common noun with the indefinite article 'a' indicating the singular form. The sentences in the pictures have specified them with definite article 'the' using a proper noun

A modern descriptive explanation of the word classes of the sentences can be illustrated thus:

Definite Article	Common Noun	Preposition	Definite Article	Common Noun	Verb	Proper Noun
(i) The	baby	in	the	picture	is	Aurelia
(ii) The	cat	in	the	picture	is	Kitty
(iii) The	book	in	the	picture	is	Holy Bible
(iv) The	park	in	the	picture	is	Victoria

Words that describe nouns are adjectives. Underline the descriptive words in the following example.

(i)Aurelia is a cute baby. (ii) Kitty is a nice cat (iii) Holy Bible is a sacred book (iv) Victoria is a beautiful park.

In communicative grammar nouns name people, places, things, qualities, ideas, and activities

Reading - Reading is a receptive skill. It involves making sense of text

Activity 1: Read the text and identify words underlined there. Match them with parts of speech given below. One extra part of speech is given

I want (1) **you** to prepare a (2) **delicious** cup of tea (3) **for** me. Do it (4) **carefully**. I want to see whether you can really do it.(5) **If** you (6)**complete** this task well, I'll give you (7)A (8)**reward**.

Noun	Verb
Adjective	Adverb
Preposition	Article
Pronoun	Interjection
Conjunction	

Activity 2; Study the delicate shades of meanings of words. Read the text and answer the questions given below (Text adapted from Victor Cembellin)

- (a) **ageless** - youthful, fresh, unfading, unspoiled, timeless, eternal, unchanging
- (b) **apparition** - vision, ghost, spirit, phantom, specter
- (c) **conviction** - belief, persuasion, opinion, faith, view, sentence, verdict
- (d) **appearance**- arrival, entrance, advent, attendance, presence, look, form
- (e) **dressed** - robed, garbed, outfitted, decent, clad
- (f) **pleats** -creases, folds, tucks, gathers, crimps, corrugations
- (g) **traumatic** - shocking, disturbing, upsetting, distressing, hurtful, harrowing

Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes

Incorrupt body of St. Bernadette



Lourdes is a village in France .Our Blessed Mother appeared eighteen times to Bernadette Soubirous in 1858. Her messages to Bernadette are **ageless** and apply to all of us today. The text given below is how Bernadette explained her **traumatic** experience of the first apparition

The First Apparition - Thursday, February 11, 1858:

Bernadette could not sleep that night. The face of the Lady, so good and so gracious, returned incessantly to her memory. Her **conviction** of this was unshakable. She went on to describe the Beautiful Lady in detail:

"She has the **appearance** of a young girl of sixteen or seventeen. She is **dressed** in a white robe, girdled at the waist with a blue ribbon which flows down all around it. A yoke closes it in graceful pleats at the base of the neck. The sleeves are long and tight-fitting. She wears upon her head a veil which is also white. This veil gives just a glimpse of her hair and then falls down at the back below her waist. Her feet are bare but covered by the last folds of her robe except at the point where a yellow rose shines upon each of them. She holds on her right arm a rosary of white beads with a chain of gold shining like the two roses on her feet." On Sunday, Bernadette's mother allowed her to return to the grotto.

.Note: According to a book by Ruth Cranston, originally published by Doubleday in 1955, amazing *testimonies* and accounts of thousands who have claimed healing due to the *miraculous* waters of the Grotto of Massabielle in Lourdes France had been given. Hundreds of cases have been *reviewed* by the Medical Bureau of Lourdes and *deemed* to be of a *supernatural* nature. The water from the Grotto still *flows* today, and people continue to attest to the *healing* powers of this God-given grace.

- Q1) How many times did the Blessed Mother appear to Bernadette?
- Q 2)When was her first apparition ?
- Q 3)Why couldn't Bernadette sleep that night?
- Q4) How does she describe her veil?
- Q 5) What do the people attest with the water still flowing from the Grotto?

Match the similar words given in column A with their delicate shades in Column B

Column A

- (a) healing
- (b) flows
- (c) supernatural
- (d) deemed
- (e) reviewed
- (f) miraculous
- (g) testimonies

Column B

- (i) amazing, astounding, incredible
- (ii) testaments, evidences, verifications
- (iii) studied, reread, revised
- (iv)paranormal mystic ghostly
- (v)Thought, believed, considered
- (vi)movements, currents, drifts.
- (vii) curative, remedial, therapeutic

Answers Activity 1 :(i) noun- **reward**. (2)Adjective- **delicious** (3) Preposition- (4)**for** Pronoun (5) **you** Conjunction (6) **If** Verb (7) **complete** (8)Adverb **carefully**. Article (9) Interjection -nil

Activity 2 : (1)Blessed mother appeared to Bernadette 18 times (2) Her first apparition was on Thursday, February 11, 1858: (3)Bernadette couldn't sleep that night because the face of the lady, so good and so gracious, returned incessantly to her memory. (4) The veil gives just a glimpse of her hair and then falls down at the back below her waist.(5) People attest to the healing powers of the God given grace of the miraculous waters of the Grotto of Massabielle in Lourdes France- Matching (a) - vii (b) - vi (c) - iv (d) - v (e) -iii (f) - I (g) - ii

Contact us on: 071 8004580
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Compiled by Noel Jayamanne

LENTEN OBSERVATION

Prayer of Offering to the Suffering Lord

I Praise, Thank and Worship Thee my Lord for the Crown of Thorns that was placed on Thy Sacred Head, for Thy Precious Blood that flowed from therein and for the untold pain Thou suffered for love of me. Thank You Jesus, for loving me.

I Praise, Thank and Worship Thee my Lord, for **Thy Eyes** that were filled with the blood that flowed from the crown of thorns and the bitter tears Thou shed for love of me. Thank You Jesus for loving me.

I Praise, Thank and Worship Thee my Lord, for **Thy Ears** that were filled with the blasphemes, the cruel and false accusations, but said nothing because Thou wanted to go on that road to Calvary for love of me. Thank You Jesus, for loving me.

I Praise, Thank and Worship Thee my Lord, for **Thy Lips and Tongue** that tasted the bitter gall and vinegar, when Thou said "I THIRST," Thou thirsted my precious Jesus for a sinner like me. Thank You Jesus, for loving me.

I Praise, Thank and Worship Thee my Lord, for **Thy most beautiful Face** that was slapped, spat upon, for no reason at all, but Thou turned the other cheek and said nothing. Thank You Jesus, for loving me.

GLORY BE TO THE FATHER.....

I Praise, Thank and Worship Thee my Lord, for **Thy Limbs** that were dislocated, for **Thy Knees** that were bruised and for the untold pain thou suffered each time Thou fell on that road to Calvary. Thank You Jesus, for loving me.

I Praise, Thank and Worship Thee my Lord, for **Thy Hands and Feet** that were nailed to that Cross, for Thy tendons that snapped making the hanging on that cross so unbearable. Even though Thou couldst have shortened Thy agony, Thou did not as Thou wanted to wait till the very bitter end to appease the just wrath of the Divine Father so that once again we may be called His children. Thank You Jesus, for loving me.

I Praise, Thank and Worship Thee my Lord, for Thy most painful wound on **Thy Shoulder** on which Thou bore the weight of my sins to Calvary and nailed it to that Cross. Thank You Jesus, for loving me.

I Praise, Thank and Worship Thee my Lord, for **Thy Body** that was cruelly lacerated, scourged and covered with wounds right from the crown of Thy Head to the very soles of Thy Feet, that there was not one spot on Thy body that was not in torment and yet Lord, forgetting all Thy sufferings Thou did not cease to pray to Thy Heavenly Father for Thine enemies saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Thank You Jesus, for loving me.

GLORY BE TO THE FATHER.....

I Praise, Thank and Worship Thee my Lord, for **Thy Most Merciful Heart** that was pierced with a lance. For the last drop of blood and water that Thou retained to shed on that soldier who pierced Thy heart to open his eyes to see Thee as the Son of God. Open my eyes Lord to see Thee and see Thee in all whom I meet. Open my mind Lord to know Thee and to discern all that is not of Thy Kingdom. Open my ears Lord to hear Thee and to follow Thee. Open my lips Lord to praise Thee unceasingly. Help me to guard my tongue Lord, so that I may never offend Thee with my words. Open my hands Lord to serve Thee, guide my feet Lord to walk in Thy ways, purify me Lord that my body may be a fit dwelling place for Thee each time I receive Thee in Holy Communion and open my heart Lord to love and console Thee and console those whom I meet as Thou love and console me and be a blessing to all those around me.

GLORY BE TO THE FATHER.....

I Praise, Thank and Worship Thee my Lord, for **Thy Soul** which was sorrowful from the Garden of Gethsemane to that Cross on Calvary, where Thou ex-



claimed "My Soul is Sorrowful unto death." Lord, as poor as my soul is, let it be a place of consolation for Thee, a nest of love.

GLORY BE TO THE FATHER.....

I Praise, Thank and Worship Thee my Lord, for Thy most sorrowful agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Thou was abandoned by Thy Father, forsaken by the Disciples Thou loved, foreseeing all that Thou had to go through, the lacerations, the scourging, the falls, the blows, the crowning of thorns, the crucifixion, Thy sweat became as drops of blood and turning to Thy Father, Thou said, "If it is possible, take this chalice away from Me, yet not My Will, but Thine Be Done." Lord help me to accept Thy Holy Will no matter what it may cost me, but Lord, be my Strength.

THANK YOU LORD FOR LOVING ME

JESUS THOU ART MY GOD, JESUS THOU ART MY LORD, JESUS THOU ART MY LIFE, JESUS THOU ART MY ONLY LOVE, JESUS THOU ART MY ALL. AMEN (say this three times)

Sent by Marina Faiz

Feeling good about yourself

What is Self-Esteem and Why Do You Need it?

Self-esteem is feeling good about who you are. Make a list of things you are good at, like painting, running, or taking care of your dog. Getting a parent or teacher to help is a good idea if you have trouble thinking of things. You can even add things you would like to be better at and then figure out ways to make it happen! When you feel great about yourself, the sky's the limit.

How to Handle Teasing

You might get teased if your mom kisses you at the bus stop or if you trip in the hallway. Most everybody gets teased, and it could be about anything. The trick is to learn to keep your cool. Getting upset gives the person teasing you power. Lots of kids tease because they are unhappy or not feeling

good. Next time you are teased, laugh it off - say, "So?" - or just walk away.

What to Do About Bullies

Lots of kids are bullied. When more than 1,200 kids were asked, about half said they had been bullied. Bullying is when a person is being mean on purpose. If someone is picking on you, telling an adult is the best thing to do. It lets other kids know it is not cool to bully. You can also practice what to say to the bully at home, so you will be calm and prepared if he bothers you again.

Healthy, Comes in All Shapes and Sizes

It is more important to be healthy than a certain size - thin, tall, short, or muscular. Pictures of models or actors rarely look the way they do in "real life." As you grow, your body changes. If you are worried about your looks or weight talk to

your parents, a friend, or someone you trust. They will help you see you are great like you are and you can plan ways to be healthy together.

Learning at All Speeds

There is a good chance that you or other kids in your class don't all learn things the same way. Some kids might have trouble paying attention, listening, or reading. They may learn so fast they are bored by what the teacher teaches. By realizing we all learn at different speeds and have different strengths, it is easier to understand why some class work may take longer for you or your friends to finish.

Getting Used to Glasses

If you are having trouble reading or seeing the blackboard, you may need glasses. Lots of kids wear glasses, and it's great not to have to sit in the front row



or squint to see. Don't be embarrassed about your glasses. You will be able to pick out cool frames you like, and you will get used to your new look soon. Chances are your friends will want to try them on.

Cool Clothes and Stuff

Did you know some companies want you to think you will be more popular if you buy their clothes, shoes, or electronics? But a lot of times the only difference between two brands is the price. It is not about what you wear but how you wear it - with confidence is best. And when you see an advertisement with your favourite star showing off something, ask yourself, "Do I really like it, or do I want it just because a celebrity has it?"

