



Archdiocesan Madhu Pilgrimage

The Archdiocesan pilgrimage to Madhu Shrine will be on 14,15, 16 & 17 of May, 2014. Let us keep these days free to pay our love and homage to our Lady of Madhu during the forthcoming Marian Year. All are welcome. More details will be published shortly.

All Souls' Day - Nov 2

Holy Masses

His Lordship
Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Fernando
Borella, Kanatte Cemetery
(Roman Catholic Section) at 4.30 p.m.
Rosary at : 4.00 p.m.

His Lordship
Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva
Madampitiya Catholic Cemetery
at 4.00 p.m.
Holy Rosary: 3.30 p.m



Messenger

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"O Mary, Mother of All"

"In every language in the world, the word that is closest to a person is 'Mother', - it reminds us of love. When there is pain, we cry out 'Amma,' (Mummy). Why is that? Why don't we cry out saying, 'Thaththe, Thaththe' (Daddy, Daddy)? This is how we feel deep down in our hearts about our earthly mother, who nourished and fed us. Therefore how can we forget our heavenly mother?"

(Daddy, Daddy)? This is how we feel deep down in our hearts about our earthly mother, who nourished and fed us. Therefore how can we forget our heavenly mother?"

(Contd on Pg. 2)

"Taken from among men" let us be marked by the "Odour of our flock"

The Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, called on the priests of the Archdiocese to change their strategies and make them more effective by taking a good look at themselves and their own pastoral options.

Addressing the first day of the Second

Presbyteral Meeting of the Archdiocese of Colombo for this year, held at the Blessed Joseph Vaz Centre in Borella, His Eminence said that the times were challenging as the country was facing a complex socio-economic, political and cultural paradigm shift in the aftermath of the War and "all this brings about



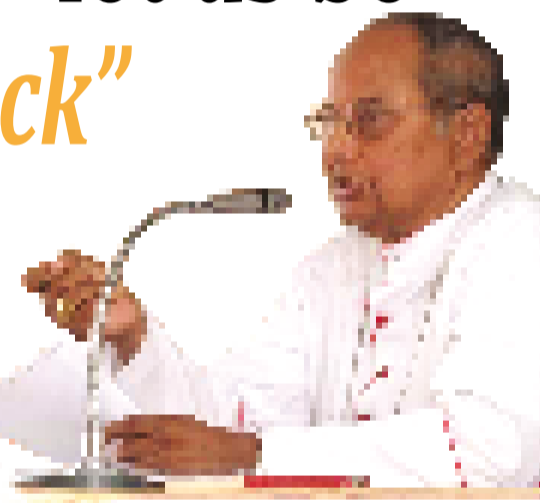
new challenges to our pastoral mission in the Archdiocese of Colombo,"

His Eminence observed. "Religion and moral values and the very

role of religion itself in society have begun to be questioned

and it will not be long before we will see the

(Contd on Pg. 2) >>>



Strong protest by religious leaders to legalizing casinos and gambling

Religious leaders in Sri Lanka have vehemently objected to the government's move to legalize casinos and gambling in the country.

Leaders of all religious groups in the country expressed their views at a news conference held last week at the Abhayarama Temple in Narahenpita, Colombo 5.

Leaders warned that they would be compelled to take to the streets when Parliament takes up the debate on



Rev. Fr. Sunil de Silva

new regulations under the Strategic Development Act that provides for tax holidays to casino projects.

The proposed legislation is to be presented to Parliament this week.

(Contd on Pg. 2) >>>

A Note of Caution to the Faithful

A Group calling itself the "Divine Mercy Mother" is carrying out a campaign against His Holiness Pope Francis, the Catholic Church and its doctrines specifically targeting the changes introduced by the Church after the Second Vatican Council. They are spreading these wrong and misleading ideas regarding such tenets of our faith through publishing and distributing handbills, pamphlets, books and through blogs on the Internet. They are designed to mislead the faithful and undermine various Catholic devotions and religious exercises.

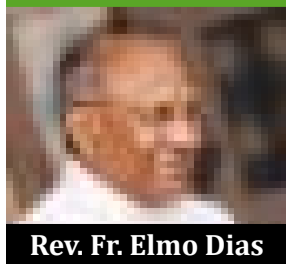
The tenets of Catholic faith and

its worship as well as its sacramental life are the spiritual heritage of the church revealed and lived under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the past 2000 years or so.

Therefore the Faithful are urged not to be misled by these erroneous interpretations and instead to uphold the authority of the Pope and be obedient to his leadership, to uphold the identity and integrity of the Catholic faith and its teachings.

+ **Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith**
Archbishop of Colombo
President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference in Sri Lanka

Many respond to the Call of the Master



Rev. Fr. Elmo Dias

The Rector of the National Seminary, Ampitiya, Rev. Fr. Elmo Dias said that this year all 12 dioceses have been represented by the Diocesan students while 14 Religious Congregations

have been represented by religious students.

Delivering the inaugural address at the solemn inauguration of the academic year (2013/14), of the National Seminary of Our Lady of Lanka,

Kandy, Fr. Elmo Dias said, "It is heartening to see the young men taking up the challenge and gradually climbing the steps towards the Priesthood and there are many who responded to the Call of the Master."

Fr. Elmo Dias also warned that "an uncaring, unloving person who becomes a priest to satisfy his dreams or the dreams of others could easily become a victim of careerism. "Do not fall into

the trap of careerism. It is a form of cancer," were the words used by Pope Francis to stress the meaning of being a true, good and a committed pastor.

(Contd on Pg. XVii) >>>

FROM THE DIOCESES

Annual Feast of St. Mary's Church, Katukurunda Moratuwa

The annual feast of St. Mary's Church, Katukurunda, was successfully celebrated on Our Lady's birthday September 8. Rev. Fr. Ananda Weerakoon from Katukurunda Parish who was the chief celebrant at the Festive High Mass said in his sermon that Mother Mary is honoured in many names such as "Our Lady of Perpetual Succour," "Mother of Sorrows," "Mother Most pure," by her devotees and that she is our Blessed Mother in this special 'Year of Faith'.

The statue of Blessed Virgin Mary was taken in procession along the roads of Katukurunda Parish and ended with the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Chrysanthos Fernando OMI blessing the large crowd of devotees with the Statue.

Vespers service was held on the previous day and the chief celebrant was Rev. Fr. Samantha Kurera, the former Parish Priest, who did a memorable service to



the Parish. A large number of parishioners along with many devotees from neighbouring parishes attended this service.

Asika Priyadharshana

Feast of St. Francis of Assisi in Maggona

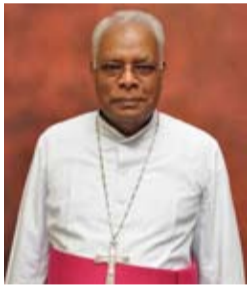


80th Annual Feast of St. Francis of Assisi Church, Maggona was celebrated recently. The chief celebrant at Vespers was His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Harold Anthony Perera, Bishop of Kurunegala. He was assisted by Rev. Dr. Camillus Fernando and Rev. Fr. Mark Fernando, Provincial Superior of Franciscan TOR,

All arrangements for the feast were made under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Jude Asantha, TOR Director Franciscan Home Maggona and Rev. Brothers.

D. Anselm Fernando

Anniversary of Episcopal Ordination



Prayerful wishes to His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph, Bishop of Mannar. **October 20 (1992)**

Ad Multos Annos!

Give him eternal rest, O Lord, and let him share Your glory

The funeral of Rev. Fr. Timothy Kollamunne, TOR, Franciscan Priest took place on Wednesday October 23, 2013, at Maggona.



Feast of Our Lady of Muthurajawela



First Annual Feast of Our Lady of Muthurajawela was held at Nilsirigama recently. Picture shows Rev Fr. Erinton Silva Parish Priest, being welcomed by the disabled father of a dead soldier.

S.K.J. Kurera

Strong protest...

Contd from Pg. 1

Co-Chairperson of the Congress of Religions, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, the Archbishop of Colombo, said the Catholic Church does not approve of casinos.

"We request the government to stop this programme immediately because this will not benefit the ordinary people of our country. The country can earn revenue through a well-managed tourism industry. We believe that Sri Lanka should not fall to a low level. The government should think of attracting investors to enhance the country's traditional industries. Investments should be encouraged in the country's agriculture sector and not allow foreign investors to exploit the country's national resources," His Eminence said.

(Archdiocesan Website) *(Archdiocesan Website)*

Taken from among...

Contd from Pg. 1

emergence of a generation of youth that will reject religious and moral values altogether and structural religion with institutions like churches and sacraments. Hierarchy may get marginalized and non structured religious ideologies and systems like Buddhism may gain ground."

His Eminence also pointed out the increasing challenge posed to the Catholic faith, from Christian

fundamentalist sects and the Sinhala-Buddhist extremists and also noted the "phenomenon of the lack of true reconciliation in the post war scenario between the Sinhala and the Tamil communities in Sri Lanka" which he said was a worrying factor for the future.

Basing his address on 'option for the people', 'respect for the poor' and 'loving unto the end', His Eminence clarified that the most urgent of options that need to be taken is that of being more people friendly and connected to the base.

Highlighting Pope Francis' keenness to be as close to the ordinary people as possible, His Eminence said that this good example of the Holy Father has brought about "a great change in the Church on that level."

"This reflects true pastoral charity which is the quality with which Christ loved the people and most specially the less privileged ones," His Eminence said.

"He (Christ), was a people's Redeemer if we can coin such a phrase and in the same way, we too have to be people's pastors. We cannot be cut off from the people but as shepherds we need to be profoundly connected to them – in a spousal sort of relationship. That's how Christ loved humanity," His Eminence explained and quoted Blessed John Paul II, Pastros Dabo Vobis, where the late Pope says, "The priest's life ought to radiate this spousal character which demands that he be a witness to Christ's spousal love and thus capable of loving people with a heart which is new, generous and pure and genuine self-detachment."

Therefore, His Eminence told the gathering of priests, "For this very reason, my dear Fathers, it is important to give everything to God and to your people, as the great pastors of the calibre of St. John Mary Vianney did, suffering with your people and for them with great joy and enthusiasm.

In conclusion His Eminence reminded the priests about 'some practical options' to improve priest-people relationships which he said he had brought to their attention earlier in the Archdiocesan Bulletin, Koinonia. Among these proposals are:

- Get out of the 'office day' mentality and be as available as possible for them in the parishes, throughout the week.
- Organise Cottage Group Masses with your Basic Christian Communities or ASIPA groups.
- Be available for sick calls day or night; listening to Confession and administering Holy Communion.

As a final request His Eminence told his priests, that as the Holy Father Pope Francis says, "We as shepherds should be marked by the 'odour of our flock'"

Senatus thanks...

We thank Our Lord and Blessed Mother Mary for the successful conclusion of the National Rosary Rally in Kurunegala on Wednesday October 16, 2013. We owe a debt of gratitude to His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Harold Anthony Perera, Bishop of Kurunegala, for joyfully accepting our request to host the Rally in his diocese. We highly value the leadership given by him and the logistical support extended by the Priests of Kurunegala, headed by the team comprising of the Vicar General, the Procurator General and the Diocesan Legion Chaplain.

Senatus is grateful to His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, the Archbishop of Colombo for his guidance and the presence on the day to preside over the Eucharistic Celebration at Maligapitiya. It thanks the Bishop in charge of the Legion of Mary and of Ratnapura, His Lordship Cletus C. Perera OSB, Their Lordships Bishop Norbert Andradi OMI of Anuradhapura, Bishop Joseph Ponniah of Batticaloa for their active participation and for the presence of the Auxiliaries of Colombo, Bishop Emmanuel Fernando, Bishop Maxwell Silva, Archbishop Emeritus Oswald Gomis and Bishop Emeritus Raymond Peiris of Kurunegala and the representative of the Apostolic Nuncio. We thank all other Bishops for their pledge of support, prayers and blessings. **(President- Senatus of Sri Lanka)**

O Mary...

Contd from Pg. 1

asked His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith addressing the National Rosary Rally last week.

Thousands of people from every diocese participated in the Rally which was held at the Maligapitiya Grounds, Kurunegala. His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith preached in Sinhala while His Lordship Bishop Joseph Ponniah, Bishop of Batticaloa, preached in Tamil.

"If we could love our mother so much in the same way how much would Jesus have loved His own mother? He would have loved her very much," said His Eminence. "Jesus must have been encouraged by the silent presence of His mother, while He was going on His mission preaching and healing people. When He offered His own precious life on the Cross and when He saw His mother at the foot of the cross, He must have recalled her great love and this must have been a great strength to Him at His moment of suffering," His Eminence explained.

Reminding the gathering of faithful that it was Christ on the cross who gave us His mother as our own, His Eminence said, "Therefore, we are all blessed to have as our mother, the Mother of Jesus and we are very fortunate to have a loving mother in heaven much more than our earthly mother and to address her as Our Blessed Mother Mary."

At the end of the Holy Mass, His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Harold Anthony Perera, Bishop of Kurunegala offered the consecration prayer to Our Lady and His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Norbert Andradi OMI blessed the people with the Statue of Our Lady, which is 397-years-old. The statue is presently kept at Metiyagana Church, Kurunegala. **(Archdiocesan Website)**



Church in the Modern World

Vatican's new top diplomat ready to make Church a champion for peace

A veteran diplomat, the Vatican's new Secretary of State, plans to put the Church's vast global diplomatic network into action as a champion for peace.

Archbishop Pietro Parolin said Pope Francis has already injected a new impetus into the Vatican's Secretariat of State structure and given a new push for Church-led diplomacy.

In an interview with the Venezuelan Catholic newspaper, *Diario Catolico*, Archbishop Parolin said, "The Pope's initiatives have given the Secretary of State an impetus and have also created a new diplomatic momentum."

When asked if he would be spearheading a new diplomatic offensive for peace, he noted that it was a complicated question but said, "Yes, I hope that we can recoup" that drive.

"We have this great advantage in respect to other churches, to other religions: We can count on an international institutional presence through diplomacy," he said.

Archbishop Parolin said the Vatican has to take advantage of its vast network of papal nuncios

around the world and all the contacts it has with international organisations. "They are precious instruments that can be used to help the world," he said.

He emphasised, however, that the Vatican's efforts are not always publicised, but often happen quietly behind the scenes.

Archbishop Parolin, who has nearly 30 years' diplomatic experience, said today's geopolitical landscape has gone from a world in which nations were clearly aligned into a few cohesive "blocs" to a world of widely divergent powers, some of which have no real national identity.

Instead of an era of greater unity and cohesiveness after the fall of the Berlin Wall, "the whole problem of terrorism was unleashed," he said. Because the world is so much more complex, he said the Secretary of State's role "must be to re-invent" the never-changing and universal goal of peace and human rights in varying and widely diverse contexts.

"This common ground is the dignity of the human person in all his dimensions," including the transcen-



Archbishop Pietro Parolin

dent, the spiritual, social and political, and that all people are created in the likeness and image of God.

Nowhere is this more important right now than in the Middle East, he said in an interview with another Catholic newspaper, *La Voce dei Berici*.

"The stability of the world is at stake, as well as the present and future coexistence of various religions and major ethnic groups," he said. "Either we head toward a world where we will know how to integrate our differences and turn them into an opportunity for growth or we will head toward total war."

Catholic Herald

Olympic gold medalist credits nuns for inspiration

EWTN - British Olympic gold medalist runner Jason Gardener credited Catholic nuns for encouraging him to succeed.

He recounted his first involvement in sports at age six at St. John's Catholic Primary School in Bath. There, he said, "I was given the opportunity to participate in sports days, and I remember crossing the (finish) line - trying my best and doing really well."

"That coincided with the Olympic Games in 1984 and I thought, 'wow, I want to be like that.' And my nuns (from my school) came to see me and brought some medals and said, 'you work really hard, and be a good boy, you may get some of these when you're older,'" he said.

The British athlete had been invited to participate in the "100 Meters of Racing in the Faith" sponsored by the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Culture. He won a gold medal for the 4 x 100 meter relay in the 2004 Athens Summer Olympics.

Boxing champion meets Pope Francis at the Vatican



Middleweight world champion Sergio Martínez met Pope Francis at the Vatican earlier this week.

The Argentinian boxer went to the Pope's weekly General Audience on Wednesday and gave him a replica of the WBC champion belt he won in September last year. It is believed that he spoke with the Pontiff about his 'It Gets Better,' anti-bullying campaign.

Catholic Herald

SUNDAY PUNCH

by Camillus



Retreat - 4

Date: Sunday, 3rd November -
Friday, 8th November 2013

Venue: Retreat House, Tewatta

Preacher: His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Norbert Andradi OMI

Name of Priest

Rev. Fr. Appuhamy Kingsley Ivan
Rev. Fr. Aruna Sri Kamal
Rev. Fr. Batepola Nicholas
Rev. Fr. Bodhiyabaduge Terrence
Rev. Fr. De Alwis Rohan
Rev. Fr. De Silva Ronald
Rev. Fr. Don Anthony Cyril
Rev. Fr. Don Benedict Joseph
Rev. Fr. Don Jude Nicholas
Rev. Fr. Don Julius Christopher
Rev. Fr. Don Sisira Priyashanta
Rev. Fr. Fernando Cyril Leslie
Rev. Fr. Fernando D. Chandana Lal Joseph
Rev. Fr. Fernando Edwin J.
Rev. Fr. Fernando G.L. Srikantha
Rev. Fr. Fernando Gregory
Rev. Fr. Fernando Indra Ratnasiri
Rev. Fr. Fernando M. Anthony Jayalath
Rev. Fr. Fernando S. Christo Viraj
Rev. Fr. Fernando W. Patrick Roshan
Rev. Fr. Fonseka Jude Suraj
Rev. Fr. Fonseka Lakshman Srilal
Rev. Fr. Fonseka Wickrama
Rev. Fr. Gabriel Travis
Rev. Fr. Hettiarachchi John
Rev. Fr. Jayamanne Preeya
Rev. Fr. Jesuthasan V.A.
Rev. Fr. Kulatunga Mervyn
Rev. Fr. Madurawela Don Ranjith
Rev. Fr. Nonis Gyom
Rev. Fr. Nonis Lakpriya Kumara
Rev. Fr. Nonis Lester J.
Rev. Fr. Palihawadena Hugo
Rev. Fr. Perera Gihan Ridley
Rev. Fr. Perera Hishantha
Rev. Fr. Perera Hyacinth
Rev. Fr. Perera Indrajith
Rev. Fr. Perera Kennedy
Rev. Fr. Perera Lalith Felix
Rev. Fr. Perera Merl Shanthi
Rev. Fr. Perera Tharanga Sampath
Rev. Fr. Perera U. Joseph Patrick
Rev. Fr. Ponweera Anthony Nimal
Rev. Fr. Prasanna Rohan
Rev. Fr. Ranasinghe Sylvester
Rev. Fr. Rodrigo Nishantha
Rev. Fr. Anton Ranjith (Jnr)
Rev. Fr. Samarakoon W. Sisira
Rev. Fr. Samarasinghe Athanasius
Rev. Fr. Silva Ruben Leslie
Rev. Fr. Silva S. Kirul Jayanath
Rev. Fr. Silva Sudath
Rev. Fr. Wanasinghe Claude Martinus
Rev. Fr. Wanigasena Chaminda
Rev. Fr. Weragoda Sunil
Rev. Fr. Wickremasinghe Basil
Rev. Fr. Wickremasinghe Ronnie
Rev. Fr. Wilathgamuwage Bernard Nishan
Rev. Fr. Ponnampereuma Prasad

Ordination to the Diaconate



Making a remarkable day in the history of the Catholic Church in Sri Lanka 38 Brothers from different dioceses were Ordained Deacons recently, at the National Seminary of Our Lady of Lanka, Kandy by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Raymond Wickremasinghe, Bishop of Galle.

The Ministry of a deacon in the Roman Catholic Church is exercised in three areas: Proclamation of the word, assisting in the Liturgy and helping in the charitable work of the Church.

Ashen S. Senaratne

EDITORIAL

October 27, 2013

Faith must be a commitment

In the general sense of the word, to have faith is to believe in something or someone, to fully trust such a person and to be so confident that we can base our actions on what we believe. To have faith is to be fully convinced of the truthfulness and reliability of that in which you believe.

Faith in God then, is having the kind of trust and confidence in God and in Christ that leads you to commit your whole soul to Him as Saviour-, Healer, Deliverer and Lord (Master, King).

The Bible says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1).

Faith is a spiritual substance. When you have this spiritual substance in you, it communicates to you a certain inner knowing that the thing you are hoping for is certainly established, even before you see any material evidence that it has happened.

Faith is a spiritual force. Faith in God is a response to God's Word which moves God to act. Jesus said in Mark 11:23, "For assuredly I say to you, whoever SAYS to this mountain, 'Be removed and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but BELIEVES that those things he SAYS will be done, he will HAVE whatever he SAYS." Words mixed with the real, pure faith can and will move mountains or any other problem that we face.

Faith in God must be from the heart. It is not merely intellectual. It is spiritual. "For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10)

Faith causes you to know in your heart before you see with your eyes. "For we walk by faith, not by sight." (2Cor 5:7)

Through faith we can know we have the answer to our prayer before we see anything change in the natural order (1 John 5:14,15). Jesus said, "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them." (Mk 11:24). God expects us, even commands us, to believe that our petitions are answered by God provided they are good for us. AT THE MOMENT WE MAKE SUCH PETITIONS WE MUST BELIEVE THEY WILL BE ANSWERED. We must believe that the response will be immediate WHEN we pray. Faith is like the acknowledgment we receive when we place an order for home delivery of our pizza order. We know that the pizza will be delivered although we have not yet paid the money. When we receive the pizza we know our order call has been answered. The manifestation of those goods, the answer received, comes later as long as we are patient. (Hebrews 10:35-39; Hebrews 6:12)

Faith is like a cheque. All you have to do is hold on to the cheque, go to the bank to present it and you can confidently expect the money to appear in your account after a certain time. If you throw the cheque away the money will not be put in your account. God is trustworthy and always has resources to back his promises.

Living faith always has corresponding actions. We talk what we really believe, and we act according to what we really believe. The heroes of faith like Abraham were considered men of faith because they acted on what God showed them. They acted on their faith. (Hebrews 11:17-38, James 2:21-23).

Faith is a gift from God to be nourished by our actions in accordance with God's word.

Share your Faith - During the 'Year of Faith' Our Memorable Pilgrimage of Faith Part Two: The Holy Land

My husband and I left the 'healing waters' of Lourdes, travelled overland to Toulouse, and then flew to Milan once again. Here we were met by another group of pilgrims, spiritual guide and leader from Rome. Together we arrived at Tel Aviv and proceeded to Bethlehem for our blessed pilgrimage. Many have written describing the Holy places, so I would not touch on every Church or place we visited. Everyone has had a different experience and I'd like to share our feelings and thoughts as Scripture came alive as we met Jesus in the Scriptures, and followed in His footsteps from His birth till His death..

When we bade 'farewell' to Lourdes, it was definitely not a farewell to Our Blessed Mother, for She continued being with us throughout our pilgrimage. In fact, She was there to greet us at the very first Church we visited - the Church of the Nativity - built over the Stable where Jesus was born. I felt the whole Christmas story unfold itself as we knelt and prayed before Jesus, the Holy Babe of Bethlehem, and it was with a feeling of awe and reverence we kissed the site of His birth marked by a star. It was walking distance to the Chapel of the Shepherd's Field - where the Angels proclaimed the Good News of Jesus' birth to the shepherds - and here we celebrated our first Mass. I must mention how surprised and happy we were to see a large picture of Our Lady of Schoenstatt here which brought back fond memories of our blessed pilgrimages to Our Lady's Shrine at Mulgoa (Sydney). At Ein Karem we visited the Church of John the Baptist - the site of his birth is marked by a star. It was so awesome to venerate these sacred spots - even as we did at other places. In the Church of the Visitation as I read the Magnificat - on plaques in several languages - these lines stood foremost: "Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." - this prophecy is fulfilled in the Rosary!

In Nazareth, we visited the Church of the Annunciation and then the Church of St. Joseph - the Church of the Holy Family - and here I visualised the Happy Child Jesus. Known as Mary's well - it is the only source of water supply to Nazareth. Just imagine, we were able to drink of the same water! Also, we drank from Jacob's well in Samaria. Here I met Jesus, the Messiah - who had revealed He was the promised Messiah.

"....But whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst again."

In the Church at Cana of Galilee, I met Jesus, the Great Miracle Worker who performed His first miracle at the request of His Mother. What a difference Jesus and Mary's presence can make to our weddings - if we invite Them! We recalled our own wedding and will treasure the renewal of our Marriage Vows here.

We experienced another special moment when we renewed our baptismal vows at the River Jordan - and who knows it may have been the same spot where Jesus was baptized. Here I recognized Jesus, the Lamb of God - even as John the Baptist testified.

The Sea of Galilee was Jesus' favourite spot, here again, we may have been on the same spot where Jesus calmed the storm or walked on the waters. And, I could picture Jesus, Our Lord and Master choosing His first disciples as He walked along the seashore - and hear Him say those same words to me: "Come, follow Me." At the Sea of Galilee, I recalled Jesus, the Great Teacher and Preacher as He sat in Peter's boat teaching the crowd on the shore and reflected on His parables. I also recalled Jesus, a Man of Prayer, who often sought to go away and pray in solitude. We walked along the path to the Church of the Beatitudes - the traditional site where Jesus delivered

His famous Sermons on the Mount. We read the immortal words of the Beatitudes - and it was as if Jesus Himself was teaching us.

It was in Jericho, at the Sycamore tree which Zacchaeus climbed, I met Jesus, the Friend of the Outcasts and Sinners. Along the road to Qumran, there is a spot of greenery and a pool of water in the midst of the desert where David was inspired to write the beautiful much loved Psalm 23, and I felt the presence of Jesus, my Good Shepherd.

At Mount Zion, alongside King David's tomb, is the place of the Last Supper. It was here Jesus, My Lord and My God instituted the Holy Eucharist.

At the Church of the Multiplication of the Loaves in Tabgha, I encountered Jesus, Our Compassionate Saviour who fed the hungry crowds and at Nainm where He restored the widow's son to life I saw Jesus, Our Divine Healer's Power even over Death.

At the ruined synagogue in Capernaum, I pictured Jesus, God's Chosen One as He read the Scriptures from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah. And I touched with sadness some of the stones still standing as I recalled the prophecy by Jesus, the Prophet.

We travelled by extended Mercedes taxis to reach the summit of Mount Tabor where stands the Basilica of the Transfiguration where Our Lord was transfigured revealing Himself as the Son of God. To reach the Mount of Temptations we went by cable car where Jesus revealed His humanity as the Son of Man - who was tempted.

It was the Suffering Jesus who touched me most. While we travelled in a luxury coach, Jesus not only had to walk these long distances, but also to hide from His enemies whilst teaching them, and my heart pained at Jesus' words: "The Son of man hath no where to lay His head." May we willingly take up our cross daily and follow Jesus.

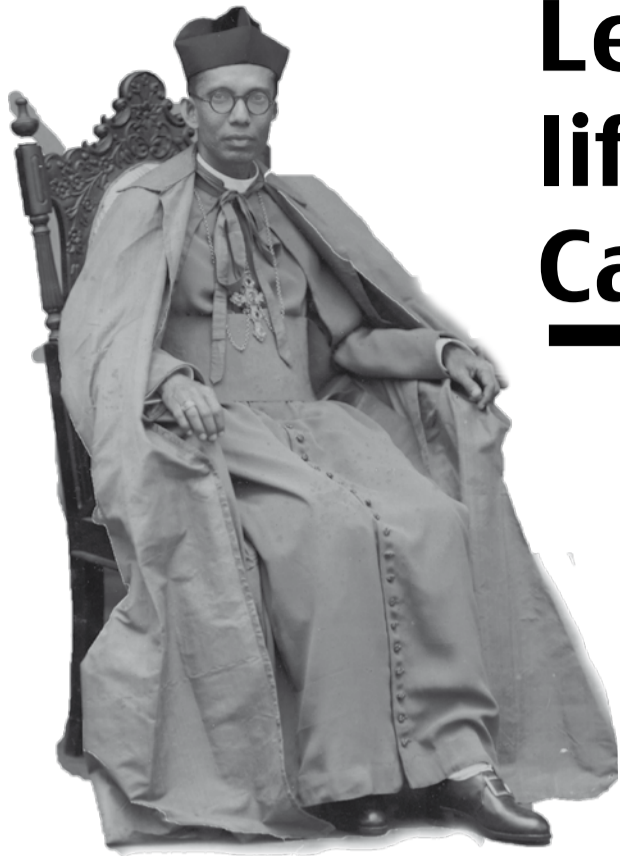
As we entered the Mount of Olives there was deep sadness to see the enclosed Garden of Gethsemane where I saw Jesus, the Man of Sorrows. At the close of the day we went to the Church here called the "Church of all Nations" for a quiet Holy Hour. Here I met the Heartbroken Jesus - like His three disciples who had fallen asleep, I too felt sleepy!

All of us, carried a light wooden Cross as we wound our way along the Via Dolorosa, reminding us of Our Lord's painful journey and His heavy Cross. My saddest moments were when I stood in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre beneath the Cross at Calvary. I gazed sorrowfully at Jesus, Our Crucified Redeemer. May we too, forgive our enemies and love Him who suffered and died for our salvation. The empty tomb at the Holy Sepulchre reminded me of Our Risen Saviour - and that "our faith is not in vain."

Our last Holy Mass was at the Church of Our Lady of the Ark of the Covenant. Our priest who accompanied us for ten days, gave us a special blessing and anointed us with holy oil. And, unexpectedly, I met the meek and humble Jesus when he requested me to bless and anoint him as he knelt down. Jesus proved His ultimate humility by His death on the Cross - "Jesus, meek and humble of hearts make our hearts like unto thine."

Sacred are the treasured memories of our precious Saviour which lie deep within our hearts and; as we walked in Jesus' footsteps, may He continue to walk with us along our pilgrimage of faith to our Eternal Home!

"Glorious indeed is the world of God around us, but more glorious the world of God within us."



Hector Welgampola

December 29 marks the birth centenary of Cardinal Thomas Benjamin Cooray, the first Sri Lankan to be made Archbishop of Colombo, he was also a member of the Catholic Church's topmost council of papal consultors, the College of Cardinals. He goes down in history as the first Sri Lankan ever to participate in the election of a Pope. He voted in two conclaves that elected Pope John Paul I and Pope John Paul II. But he was no accident of history.

Born into a poor but virtuous family of rustic Catholics in Periyamulla, just north of Negombo, the young Benjamin was known as a child prodigy even in his early days at St. Anthony's Sinhalese School in Dalupotha.

Since his village did not have a school of its own, all boys and girls of the parish attended the Church-run schools in neighbouring Dalupotha, and the Cooray family lived on the Periyamulla-Dalupotha border. My father, just one year his senior in the school and parish, would often recall in later years about the brilliant contemporary of exceptional holiness who lived on the same "Weli paara," or gravel road, intercepted by the Chilaw Road.

Under the guidance of parish priest Father Paul Alles, Benjamin joined St. Aloysius' Seminary, Borella to begin his early training for the priesthood.

Rustic origin made him a lover of the environment

As a seminarian, the young Benjamin would trek on foot for

lessons at St. Joseph's College, Colombo. I have heard veteran Josephians recall with amazement the academic performances of Benjamin, who carried away most class prizes on College Prize Days.

From St. Joseph's College to University College and then to Rome for ecclesiastical studies, the village lad gained a Ph.D. *summa cum laude* before returning home after the priesthood ordination.

Father Alles welcomed young Father Benjamin Cooray for his first Mass at Periyamulla with prophetic words about a man made for greater things. Nonetheless, this was still the time of his "hidden life," and the young priest served in several positions beginning as a teacher at his alma mater St. Joseph's College, Colombo and Chaplain to Catholic university students.

It was during this period that the man of classics amply displayed his love for nature and the environment while helping Father M.J. Le Goc to write a book on "Tropical Botany." Although the book became a standard school text, very few knew the role Father Cooray played in collecting plant specimens and doing the spade work for the popular textbook.

In later years as Archbishop he took a keen interest in conserving the environment long before the environment became a public concern. He evinced a keen interest in the habitat of Church institutions and always insisted on the need to conserve nature.

On his travels overseas, he would sometimes bring rare botanical specimens and the Tewatta Basilica premises is rich in vegetation be-

cause of his great concern for the environment.

Many such facets in the late Cardinal's life and activities still remain as hidden as he was in the early years of his priestly ministry which were spent as formator of future missionaries of his religious congregation, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, better known as the Oblate or OMI Fathers.

Experience in training future priests is often considered an added qualification for the Episcopate, which involves working alongside priests. In those days of the foreign missionaries' administration, however, the young priest's appointment as the first native Rector of the Oblate Seminary would have gone unnoticed.

Thomist Theologian, man of destiny

But, unknown to the world and even to many in the Church, he was being watched. His one-time seminary Rector and later Oblate Superior, Father Aloysius Perrot, who spent his last years in my birth parish at Periyamulla, once told me that Father Cooray was watched by the Oblate leadership for many years. He was one of the first native seminarists hand-picked by the Oblate Missionaries for university education and later for higher studies in Rome.

Though the unassuming priest led a hidden life as the first Sinhalese Rector of the Oblate Fathers' seminary, he was a giant in his own right. A Thomist theologian and a man of prodigious memory, above all he was a man of God committed to the care of people, as he later pledged in his episcopal motto - "*Ministrare non ministrari*" - to serve and not to be served.

As Father Perrot said, Cardinal Cooray's greatness lay in his life of exceptional holiness and persistent love for the Church. His sense of the holy was rooted in the simple faith-based culture of his rural background and the rustic simplicity of his faith-filled parents and embellished by the Thomistic theology he imbibed in Rome.

Fragrance of sanctity

The personal holiness he radiated was a bonding link that kept him in communion with the faithful of the Archdiocese of Colombo and beyond. And that living fragrance of sanctity still continues to hold his memory sacred in the hearts and minds of simple Catholics of our country.

Whenever I visit my home in Ragama, I visit Cardinal Cooray's grave in the crypt of the Basilica of Our Lady of Lanka at Tewatta. Coincidence or not, on every such occasion I was not the only one to kneel in prayer at his grave.

Many of those who pray at his grave are simple village Catholics and every time I spoke with them I have gone away edified and impressed by the living legend of the "Ape Cardinal Unnaanse" as they still call him. Though many Church people have forgotten him and others speak of him only in hushed and embarrassed tones, his memory and fragrance of sanctity still continue to be cherished by his people more than a decade after his death in 1988.

Fidelity to a Predecessor's Legacy

The Basilica of Our Lady of Lanka, where his remains lie, is in many ways a symbol of the Cardinal's three-decade-long leadership of the local Church, which even his severest critics now admit was a golden era.

Building a Basilica, however, was not a matter of choice for the Cardinal. He was fulfilling a vow made by his predecessor. In the early days of World War II Archbishop Jean Marie Masson, the last Frenchman to be Metropolitan of Sri Lanka, made a vow in 1940 to the Blessed Mother to build a Marian shrine in her honour if the country was saved from the ravages of the war.

Our country emerged unscathed and Archbishop Masson obtained Pope Pius XII's approval to build the Marian Basilica in Tewatta. That was not all the ailing Archbishop discussed with the Vatican.

He reportedly requested the appointment of a Coadjutor Archbishop to assist him.

Although for the first time in the history of the Church in our country, a native Sinhalese, Bishop Edmund Pieris, had been appointed in 1940 to the newly carved out Chilaw diocese, many did not expect a native to be appointed Archbishop. The choice was considered to be limited to the numerous French missionaries holding high ecclesiastical positions in Colombo.

Pioneer of transition

But the Oblate superiors were thinking ahead of the times and Rome took most people by surprise by appointing a native son, Father Thomas Benjamin Cooray, as Coadjutor Archbishop of Colombo in 1946.

The following year, which marked the dawn of our country's political Independence, also saw the accession of Archbishop Cooray to the see of Colombo, following the death of Archbishop Masson. The first native son's accession to the country's main Diocese serving half its Catholic population was not all smooth sailing.

The nativisation process came "more hurriedly than some circumstances were prepared to move" as cautiously worded by Father Claude Lawrence.

It was not an easy transition from centuries of French missionary-led administration to that of a native Bishop leading French and native missionaries. The young Archbishop found a great source of strength in the Superior General of his Oblate congregation, Very Reverend Father Leo Deschatelets. With prayer-filled hope and the wisdom of his native genius, Archbishop Cooray set about his mission of service with a deftness that took many Church people by surprise.

Pastoral vision and indigenisation

Gracious and magnanimous to a fault, the new Archbishop appointed Father Fortin as first of three Vicars General. Just as he selected the episcopal candidate as first Vicar General,

thus ensuring continuity and honouring French missionaries, he named a Sinhalese and a Tamil as his two other Vicars.

While Father Fortin was responsible for overseeing the parish apostolate, Father D.J. Nicholas Perera, an educationist and patriot who in his student days in England had taken part in the country's freedom struggle, was appointed Vicar for relations with the State.

Father Peter A. Pillai, an intellectual prodigy, was Vicar for Catholic education. These initial masterstrokes were early signs of the new Archbishop's latent pastoral skills.

He knew the faith-beat of his people

Enrooted in the native Sri Lankan Catholic community's spirituality, throughout his life he had a symbiotic rapport with their simple faith. That was an innate strength of Cardinal Cooray that let him always act with supreme confidence, and one could always say that he knew the faith-beat of his people as much as they could relate to him on the same faithlength.

The Eucharist, Marian devotion and loyalty to the Holy See have for centuries been the base of our Catholic community's faith, and they were also the treasured consistencies of the late Cardinal's faith, the guideline of his three-decade ministry as well as his final legacy to his people.

Being well-integrated in the people's faith-culture, he had the capacity to lead them when leadership was needed and move hand-in-hand with them when their faith testimony needed only a facilitator as in the faith festival marking the Marian Congress in 1948 as well as in the critical times of the schools' takeover in the 1960s.

Marian congress and faith fiesta

The Marian Congress held at St. Joseph's College to mark the centenary of Oblate Missionaries' service leading to the appointment of a

(Contd. on Pg. 15)



Women are the world's 'pragmatic responders,'

EWTN NEWS - At a Vatican conference on the topic "God entrusts the human being to the woman," global female experts discussed the role of women in working towards restoring the dignity of the human person.

The three-day event held by the Vatican's Pontifical Council for the Laity drew approximately 100 women from across the globe. They arrived in Rome to discuss Blessed John Paul II's Apostolic Letter "On the Dignity and Vocation of Women" on the document's 25th anniversary.

"Women are pragmatic responders," said Vicki Thorn, founder of the US-based Project Ron Post-abortion Healing outreach, who likened her work with victims of abortion to that of a "field hospital."



Despite many people's negative view of the Catholic Church and women, Thorn said that history reveals a more positive story.

"The openness of the Church to women is there and it is important that we as women understand our role, looking back, historically, to the

saints: The women saints did incredible things in the Church," she said.

"Women ran educational institutions, long ago," Thorn explained. "They were educating: They saw a need. They were nursing the sick, they were feeding the poor. Now we're involved in issues of trafficking, we're involved in issues of other injustices, but it's a pragmatic response."

"We see it, we deal with it. That's the unique gift of women, I would say."

Thorn's ideas were exemplified by many conference participants, who listened attentively to panel sessions on theoretical issues such as "Sexual

differences and the concept of the person," but followed up with practical questions such as "How do we implement these ideas in our own work?"

Oana Gotia, Professor of Moral Theology at the John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and the Family in Rome, was asked, "Practically speaking, how do we help our young people?"

Gotia replied that youth are living in very "confused environments" and even in family life, "it's a very fragile context because there are so many broken homes."

According to her if we believe, theoretically, that God created the human being "good," we must begin from there on a concrete level, affirming the person, she said. "Every educational endeavour should proceed from the goodness of being: 'you are good,' because you exist...you are unique."

Catherine Soublin, of the International charitable organization Caritas France, spoke of her experience working with the poor. She described her work as a "ministry of friendship" rather than humanitarian aid.

Monsignor Livio

Melina, President of the John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and the Family in Rome, giving the seminar's opening speech on this theme noted how so many people today have a completely misguided concept of sexuality that stems from an "affective illiteracy."

Several participants noted the possibility for the Church to do more in supporting those who are trying to offer this credible witness to the world.

Professor Lucetta Scaraffia, who teaches contemporary history at Rome's Sapienza University, said "we need a less self-referential Church."

"We need to be a bit more self-critical, and listen to the truth of what our critics have to say," she continued.

Obianuju Ekeocha of Nigeria shared how 80 years ago, Reverend Sis-

ters from Ireland arrived in her home country to share the Gospel.

"The people's religion offered them practices like polygamy and infanticide," she explained. Were it not for the "loving persistence" of these religious women, "we would still be in darkness" she said.

"When we think about the Early Church, really the primary form of dialogue that Christianity had with the world was martyrdom. It was not simply trying to speak to the others. The word that Christians spoke was spoken first with their life and then with their death," she explained.

"And I think there is something of that that remains for any woman of Christian witness in the world. The word in which the intelligent believer can become most luminous is the testimony of a life that is given to the end."



The University of Motherhood

Pope Francis on Church as a Mother

First of all, a mother teaches how to walk through life, she teaches the right path to take through life, she knows how to guide her children, she always tries to point out to them the right path in life for growing up and becoming adults. And she does so with tenderness, affection, and love, even when she is trying to straighten out our path because we are going a little astray in life or are taking roads that lead to an abyss. A mother knows what's important for a child to enable him to walk the right way through life.

The Church does the same thing. She gives our life direction and instructs us so that we can follow the right path like a mother. The church wants what is good for her children.

Secondly, I want to tell you: When a child grows up, becomes an adult, he chooses his path, assumes his responsibilities, stands on his own two feet, does what he likes and at times he can also go off course, some accident occurs. A mother has the patience to continue to accompany her children, always and in every situation. It is the force of her love that impels her; a mother fol-

lows her children on their way with discretion and tenderness and, even when they go astray, a way to understand them, to be close, to help.

So also is the Church, a merciful mother who understands, who has always sought to help and encourage even those of her children who have erred or are erring.

A last thought: for her children a mother is also able to ask and knock at every door, without calculation; she does so out of love. And I think of how mothers can also knock at the door of God's heart! Mothers say so many prayers for their children, especially for the weaker ones, for those in the greatest need or who have gone down dangerous or erroneous paths in



life. A few weeks ago I celebrated Mass in the Church of St. Augustine, here in Rome, where the relics of St. Monica, his mother, are preserved. How many prayers that holy mother raised to God for her son, and how many tears she shed! I am thinking of you, dear mothers: how often you pray for your children, never tiring! Continue to pray and to entrust them to God; he has a great heart! Knock at God's heart with prayers for your children.

The Church does this too. With prayers she puts in the Lord's hands all the situations of her children. Let us trust in the power of prayer of Mother Church.

A CROSS The Way

By Sirohmi Gunasekera

Handling Anger

Mark was furious. The Mass was at eight o'clock and it was now ten to eight. Shirin was still not ready. He forgot that she had to make her ailing mother comfortable before leaving her in the care of the attendant. He tooted the horn and even yelled, "Hurry up. I have to find parking for the car."

Five minutes later, Shirin scrambled into the car with a muttered, "Sorry I am late." She adjusted her saree and listened to her husband's tirade. "You're always late. Why can't you plan ahead? You know the priest doesn't like when we walk in late."

Shirin desisted from telling him that the priest didn't have to cope with an elderly and sick old lady.

The couple arrived late for Mass and both were boiling inside. They went through the recital of the prayers mechanically. The words of the Gospel helped to calm Shirin down as she listened to the need for gratitude and she was thankful that her mother was still alive though sick. She decided that she would have a chat with Mark quietly and explain to him.

Mark however was in no mood for the sermon and went on in his mind about all his wife's failings. He did not feel in the mood to receive Communion and blamed it on his wife.

The Mass was soon over and husband and wife came out to be greeted by the priest. "I am sorry we came late, Father, my old mother is sick and I couldn't leave earlier," said Shirin. The priest was surprised and told Mark that he understood. Mark was nonplussed. So he had missed Communion for nothing!

After they reached home, Shirin took Mark by the hand and led him to her mother and blessed them both. "I love you both though you are difficult to handle. Next time you get angry, Mark, count up to twenty and say a prayer. We still have much to be thankful for," she said.

Art & Architecture in Liturgy

Compiled by: Kishani S. Fernando

With no thought for differences in race or religion a group of children from Vakarai spent three happy days as guests of a Colombo school.

How did this all happen? It was a project of the Familian Outreach the social service arm of Holy Family Convent Bambalapitiya. The school in Vakarai - Kandalady Arunthathy Vidyalayam is a government school. The link between the two schools was created by the Sri Lanka Army. Initially the students of the Familian Outreach visited the Vakarai school and stayed in the village for 5 Days. This is in August when they organized the Kandalady Arunthathy Vidyalayam's first ever sports meet with relays, a march-past, houses and tents. They even organized some assistance classes for the Grade 5 scholarship students taking tutorials and books from Colombo. Bonds were built, friendships established!

It was not long after that the Principal of the Vakarai school Mr. Mohanasundaram made a request to the Colombo Principal that he would like to bring his students to see Colombo. The Principal of Holy Family Convent Bambalapitiya, Rev. Sr. Chandani Jayasuriya, was keen to make their dream come true, giving priority to the program amidst an otherwise busy school schedule.

Within a few weeks the trip was organized. The traveling was sponsored by the Sri Lanka army. A bus load of children from Vakarai together with their Principal and teachers arrived at 5.45 pm at the school gate on Tuesday evening.

Rev. Sr. Chandani, Rev. Sr. Merita, the Primary School Principal, teachers, and girls who had waited after school greeted them warmly. The school was buzzing with excitement. The children from Vakarai recognized some of the friendly akkas who had come to their village school and organized the sports meet for them. "They even remembered our names" said one of the Colombo girls with surprise.



Led by the Familian Outreach and the prefects, the host school had everything planned for their little guests. Food, toiletries, beddings, extra clothes

and a Tamil dance and song entertainment staged in the school Auditorium. Some of the teachers of the host school had stayed back to help and with a few past pupils and parents who kept busy washing dishes, plates, cups, and on the whole keeping the premises clean and comfortable. It was also the akkas who washed and kept the toilets clean throughout their stay. They also washed the clothes of the little ones. The abundance of love and food offered to them made one child burst into tears. Amidst tears little Kadje said that he remembered his father and sister back home who did not have food to eat. Then there was Sinlukshan the youngest at 6 years who cried when his papadam – the most prized possession fell off his plate.

The next day the children were taken on a tour around Colombo. The children loved the zoo and even climbed up 280 ft to the harbor chaithya. The day ended with a visit to MacDonald's for an ice cream. It was also the first time they had been into a fully air-conditioned room, as it also was to go up an escalator and come down a lift!

Back at base obviously tired but happy they did not forget to entertain their hosts with song and dance. The most famous being the gangnam moves to the thundering applause of their hosts. It was obvious the children were talented and loved to perform. One little girl named Sanuja insisted that they listen to her few lines in English on her mother.

The next day at school assembly the Vakarai children met the rest of the school. It was also the time for gifts and speeches.

"It was like heaven to see their smiles"

The Principal from the Vakarai school thanked the Principal and staff of the Colombo school for making their dream to see Colombo come true. In an emotional speech he said "We go back full of memories and laden with gifts made possible by your generosity. We will never forget the warmth and hospitality showered on us until we draw our last breath". He further noted that during the stay he had seen teachers go above and beyond their vocation exemplifying what the true teacher should be. "This is the sort of interaction that is so important as we are one people" he said.

When requested to comment on the program Rev. Sr. Chandani said: "Yes, this is our vision, to teach our children that we are one family beyond all boundaries. I was very happy that the girls themselves had written on the welcome board "We are one family" instead of simply "welcome". Even today, if we share what we have, we can have another miracle of the multiplication



of loaves. We must teach our children through our example; to open their hearts and minds; to think of the poor and work for them. We hope that these moments shared together will wipe away the bitter feelings of the past and build up trust and relationships among the young generation. It is my hope that one day when these children hold influential positions in society they will become powerful agents of reconciliation. This is only one small effort towards a peaceful future".

The Primary School Principal Rev. Sr. Merita had this to say. "The project was also part of the First Holy Communion Program in our school. We invited the parents of the First Holy Communicants to contribute shoes, clothes, underwear to be gifted to the Vakarai children. The parents and children were very generous. And there were children who contributed from their own pocket money all they had like Rs. 250 towards the project.

And with regard to the organizing of the 3 days Rev. Sr. Chandani agreed that it had been a huge task. "At school assembly I invited the children and parents to contribute, we depended on providence and at all times we experienced the hand of God," she said.

The teachers who had helped on the three days observed that it was an eye opener for the Colombo children to be grateful for what they had received, which is often taken for granted. One teacher recalled how the Vakarai children had woken up as early as 3.30 am and were quick to wash, brush, dress and carefully mark their foreheads with pottu and holy ash with the aid of the small mirrors they carried. Another teacher remem-



bers a child pointing at an apartment building adjoining the school premises and asking what it was. This was a hard question to answer. The wonder in the eyes of the little ones never ceased as they were told that the twinkling lights from the skyscrapers were homes where families lived.

Many parents were also happy to be a part of the project. As one parent remarked "Experiences of this nature cannot be found in curricula or bought with money". There was one child who opted to wear her old shoes for the First Communion celebration so she could give an extra pair of new shoes to the Vakarai children. And another parent said "My daughter came home in high spirits literally dancing and said: "Amma it was like heaven to see the smiling faces of the Vakarai children".

And most importantly what did the students of the Out-Reach and the prefects have to say. All of them were of the opinion that language, race, religion were not a barrier for love and understanding. "Even

though few among us knew Tamil and they hardly knew Sinhala or English we communicated perfectly," they recalled. "They danced and enjoyed our songs and we danced and enjoyed their songs". "But now we know how important it is to learn Tamil". "They were wearing clothes that were old and faded but they did not mind they were content and happy". "The Vakarai children were quick to learn our names and even little phrases like 'good morning', 'thank you', 'good night' etc". We too will never forget the little ones from Vakarai: Kajai Praveen, the twins Nilakshana and Nilakshani, Sinlukshan, Sanjay, Dilan, Jeeva Sudan, Midushan, Nidushan, Kidushan, Sriman



Pioneering Work of Cardinal Cooray in the NCP

Francis Madiwela

Archbishop (later Cardinal) Thomas Cooray was spending lots of time in places like Alagollawa, Kekirawa, and Kala Oya. People thought that he was frequenting these places to take a break from his busy schedule in the Colombo Archdiocese. But it is revealed that Bishop Emilianus Pillai OMI, who took over the reins as the bishop of Jaffna in 1950, realized that his priests who were more fluent in Tamil than Sinhala and could not cope with the missionary activities of the Sinhala population, were scattered around the North Central Province. He sought the help of his friend Archbishop Cooray to send Sinhala priests to the NCP.

Both Archbishop Cooray and Bishop Pillai, were ordained priests for the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI). They were dreaming of starting a missionary territory managed by the OMI priests. The first Sinhala priest who was appointed by them for the NCP was Fr. Philp Dissanayake OMI, the then parish priest of Gampaha. He was stationed at St. Joseph's Church in the Old Town of Anuradhapura, which was taken over by the government to make way for the Buddhist Sacred City.

Fr. Reginald de Silva OMI, who was to follow Fr. Philip did not even have a proper mission house to shelter himself. He had to be satisfied with the meagre facilities in the Kekirawa sacristy which was attached to the back of the Church. Kekirawa was more than 35 kilometers south of Anuradhapura. The only added advantage that Fr. Reginald had was the use of a vehicle to cover the missionary activities of the whole area of the North Central Province. Fr. Reginald too got his preliminary "training" in the parish of Gampaha.

Buying land for the future churches



and schools and getting Catholics to settle down in the North Central Province from other parts of the country was one of the initial missions of Archbishop Cooray. These Catholics made use of the opportunities offered by the government in the opening of the colony schemes to expand agricultural production in these areas. Alagollawa was one of these Catholic centres where Archbishop Cooray established a mission station with a church, two schools and a mission house with needed facilities. After starting this centre Archbishop Cooray would spend a few days devoting his time to plan the development of this missionary area.

Because of the lack of proper roads and transportation he was unable to cover the whole area in a few days. Fr. Ignatius Perera who was a linguist, musician as well as an electrical and motor engineer, put together an abandoned four wheeler and donated it to the Archbishop to use it during his mission travels in the North Central Province (NCP). Archbishop Cooray as well as the missionaries who worked in these dry zone areas, with more gravel cart tracks than roads, were grateful to Fr. Ignatius for this kind

donation.

In 1959 Fr. Reginald got a new appointment in Kala Oya. He was put in charge of this parish dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes. A young priest in the person of Fr. Lawrence Perera OMI was appointed as the parish priest of Alagollawa. Unfortunately the NCP lost this missionary at the age of forty in 1962. Fr. Gilbert Perera OMI was appointed to replace him. During this time a parish priest had to celebrate up to eight masses in several mission stations every Sunday. Whenever the Archbishop was present he too covered a few parishes by visiting his flock and saying masses and administering the sacraments.

Archbishop Cooray too was involved in approaching politicians and civil servants of these areas to plead for better living conditions such as cleaner water, better roads, schools, healthcare facilities and means of communications. Because of these appeals not only the Catholics but all citizens living in these areas benefited from the improvements in their basic facilities.

Archbishop Thomas Cooray dedicated his time and energy to the apostolate of the NCP without neglecting his duties

towards the faithful of the Archdiocese of Colombo. He visited parishes, administered Confirmation, faced national crises such as the schools take-over of 1960, supervised the building of the National Basilica of Our Lady of Lanka, participated in the meetings of the Vatican Council II, in addition to his dedicated apostolate to the NCP. With the help of the OMI Provincials he made the way for Anuradhapura to be a self-sufficient diocese. He got some assistance from Rome only in the early sixties when the Holy See appointed an Auxiliary Bishop in the able person of Bishop Anthony de Seram who shared his responsibilities of administering the Archdiocese.

1957 is recorded as another crisis year for the NCP. An unprecedented natural disaster affected many areas in the form of a massive flood. Some elderly people who survived this disaster can recall how the Kala Oya church premises were inundated. The whole church structure was washed away. They recall how the confessional was found stuck on the branches of an ebony tree. They also recalled that the only structure that survived was the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes. Archbishop Cooray undertook to raise funds and transport dry rations, clothes and furniture to help the

survivors of the flood. Later the whole church compound had to be rebuilt.

The areas of the Anuradhapura District from the Jaffna Diocese and the Polonnaruwa District from the Trincomalee Diocese were amalgamated to make it into a Prefecture Apostolic of Anuradhapura. Father Michael Croos OMI and Julius Wijesooriya OMI were appointed successively as Prefects of this newly-formed

elevated as the first bishop of the newly established Diocese of Anuradhapura.

When we talk about Thomas Cardinal Cooray we forget the yeoman service he rendered to the present Diocese of Anuradhapura. With the help of the Oblate Congregation he bought land, built schools and churches and resettled people from other areas of the country to create an atmosphere so that this new diocese could be carved out. His



Prefecture. The construction work of St. Joseph's Church and the schools were completed in 1974. In the same year the then Prefect, Fr. Henry (Joy) Gunawardena OMI, was

pioneering service to the NCP should not be forgotten.

(The writer is grateful for the enlightening and valuable facts and figures that he obtained from Mr. Don Vincent Rupasinghe)



Church celebrates 25th Death Anniversary of first Sri Lankan Cardinal

Rev. Fr. Sunil De Silva

His Eminence Thomas Benjamin Cardinal Cooray from the Parish of Periyamulla, Negombo, born on 28th December 1901, was ordained a priest on 23rd June 1929 in the Congregation of Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Thereafter he was appointed as the Co-adjutor Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Colombo on 12th December 1945 and succeeded as the Archbishop of Colombo on 26th July 1947.

He was elevated as a Cardinal on 22nd February 1965 by Pope Paul VI.



His Eminence was called to Eternal Rest in the Lord on 29th October 1988 and his mortal remains were buried in the crypt chapel in the Basilica of Our Lady of Lanka, Tewatta, on 03rd November 1988.

New York Times issue of 01st November 1988, quoted, "During the years of suppression or limitation of religious freedom, Cardinal Cooray constantly affirmed the spirituality of his own mission and the loyalty of Roman Catholics to the Sri Lankan Government," the Vatican said.

His Grace the Archbishop Oswald Gomis, preaching at the Memorial Mass on 29th October 2008, recalled the exceptional holiness and simple, but deep faith of Cardinal Cooray. Archbishop Gomis said, "The fragrance of his holiness and faith spread throughout the Archdiocese of Colombo, when he became the first Sri Lankan Archbishop of Colombo and the first Sri Lankan of Sri Lanka and first Cardinal who had opportunity to vote in the conclave in electing the pope. In fact he twice had the opportunity to vote in the conclave. When he was appointed as the Archbishop of Colombo, he had a vision for the Archdiocese and for the Church in Sri Lanka. To serve and look after the faithful in the Archdiocese, he wanted spiritually well-equipped and virtuous priests. He developed the Minor Seminary and trained students with a missionary commitment. Seminary formation was a priority for His Eminence."

"In the 1960s our schools were taken over by the government, it certainly was not on purpose of providing better education to the children, but to attack the Catholic Church and to disrupt the religious education in the schools. His Eminence, deeply disturbed by the "School Takeover Bill", appealed to the government to leave at least the primary schools under the care of the Church. Government having realized that there were more students in the primary departments than middle schools, primary schools were taken over by the government. Then the Church in Sri Lanka had to find ways and means to educate our Catholic children and maintain religious education in the schools."

"His Eminence was also concerned about the economy of the Archdiocese. He purchased lands for future schools and churches and also several estates to strengthen the economy of the Archdiocese. He even convinced the Brothers to work in the estates during their holidays to support the Archdiocese. Look at the Basilica Watta, many trees that are planted here, are very rare and they were very carefully selected and planted by His Eminence. Not only he purchased lands for the Archdiocese, but also he was concerned about the welfare of the other dioceses as well. Once on his way to Mad-

hu Shrine, he met his friend Fr. Emilianus Pillai OMI, who later became the Bishop of Jaffna, inquired about the situation of the Anuradhapura district as well. Fr. Emilianus informed His Eminence Cardinal Cooray about a Catholic Community living in Alagollewa and who had no services of a priest. His Eminence not only arranged a priest to look after the Catholic Community at Alagollewa, but also personally visited the faithful at Alagollewa and those areas and purchased lands for the present diocese of Anuradhapura."

"Thomas Cardinal Cooray was truly a very committed and dedicated holy priest of God. Holiness of his life spread wherever he went. His unassuming life style, paternal way he spoke to the priests calling them "my sons", his pastoral zeal to visit his people very often in accordance with his episcopal motto - "Ministrare non ministrari" - to serve and not to be served, and all these qualities of his life brought much-desired changes in the transition of the Archdiocese."

"In early days of World War II Archbishop Jean Marie Masson, the last Frenchman to be Metropolitan of Sri Lanka, made a vow in 1940 to the Blessed Mother to build a Marian shrine in her honour, if Sri Lanka was saved from the ravages of the war. His Eminence Cardinal Cooray, kept the vow made by Archbishop Masson and started to build this beautiful Basilica, slowly but steadily, in spite of criticisms. Some were asking, why build a huge basilica instead of building houses for the poor. His Eminence not only purchased lands for the poor but also built houses for them. Amidst all the work, His Eminence completed the construction of the National Basilica of Our Lady of Lanka."

"Today we have come together to thank the Lord for the holy and committed life of His Eminence Cardinal Thomas Cooray and to pay our respect to him. More than our praying for him, ask him to pray for us and for our country."

Rev. Fr. Xystus Kurukulasuriya

DIACONIA OF THE CHURCH:

His Eminence Cardinal Thomas Cooray's Motto was "Ministrare non Ministrari" - to serve and not to be served unto.

He established the Social Development Center at the Joe Neth Studio which was later made into a National Socio - Economic Development Center. In order to train Lay Leaders he established Paul VI Center 1972 - 1974, amidst criticism by both government and Catholic reactionaries. He helped in establishing number of Homes for elders and orphanages. He gave guidelines for establishing Fishermen's Welfare Societies.

Sri Lanka received independence in 1948 from Colonial British Empire which left the country and the people divided because they ruled the country under the 'divide et impera' rule. The rise of nationalism and anticolonialism left the Catholic Church as an easy scapegoat for those who were seeking political power. Added to this, the threat of Marxist ideology and Atheistic communism made the Church look for solutions based on its own social doctrine. This too made the Church appear as being sympathetic to Capitalism. The Archbishop had to guide the Church of Sri Lanka amidst this turmoil. In 1951 he handed over to the Oblates the Complex of St. Vincent's Home. He expanded the rooms for the benefit of the servants at Archbishop's house and up-graded the facilities of the Archbishop's house for the benefit of the clergy.

EDUCATIONIST:

September 1931, he was appointed to the staff of St. Joseph's college as professor of Botany and Latin. 1934 -1937 he was appointed as warden of the Catholic Undergraduate Students' University Hostel, Aquinas Hall Colombo 5. Various administrative incidents with the students showed his love and patience, humility and holiness. He initiated the Aquinas University College by granting to Rev. Fr. Peter Pillai OMI the building complex of the former St. Bernard's Seminary. He established the Ragama Agricultural School.

He established Radio Electronic Laboratory for Technical Education under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Ignatius Perera. In the late forties (1948 -1950) he shifted the Sinhala Training College from Maggona to Bolawalana.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

In 1960 he had to face the crisis of Religious Education in schools. Having struggled to save the denominational schools, he was able to save a few private schools. Sunday schools were closed owing to the Poya holiday scheme. He organized the Daham Pasal (Catechetical Schools). He built up the Catechetical Training Center in 1972. He spearheaded the translation of the Bible into Sinhala. He established



the Joe Neth Communication's Center forseeing the new area of evangelization.

IN SOLDARITY WITH THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH:

In 1962 - 1965 Archbishop Cooray participated at the Second Vatican Council. He was nominated a member of the Commission for priestly and Seminary formation. On 22nd February 1965 he was created Cardinal by Pope Paul VI with the title to the Basilica of Sts. Nereus and Achilleus in Rome. He was appointed a member of the Cardinals' Commission of the Propaganda Fide, Oriental Churches and Revision of the Code of Canon Law. In 1969 he was named Papal Delegate to crown Our Lady of the Ocean at Fremantle. In 1967 he was a founder member of the central committee of Administration of the Asian Bishops' Conference. [F.A.B.C.]. In 1970 he welcomed Holy Father Pope Paul VI to Sri Lanka.

A TRUE OBLATE OF MARY IMMACULATE:

While consecrating himself to Mother Mary, in his personal prayer Father Thomas Benjamin writes "I salute thee O sure refuge of sinners whose mercy fails no one. Hear the desire of the divine Wisdom; and for that receive the vows and offerings which my lowliness presents to thee, I Thomas Benjamin, a faithless sinner, I renew and rectify today in thy hands the vows of my baptism, I renounce for ever SatanO faithful Virgin, meekness in all things so perfect a disciple, imitator and slave of the incarnate Wisdom Jesus Christ thy Son, that I may attain by thy intercession and thy example the fullness of His age on earth and of His glory in heaven. Amen".

On 15th February 1948 Mother Mary was declared as Our Lady of Lanka and declared as patroness of Sri Lanka on 11th June 1948 by an Apostolic brief of Pope Pius XII. The first pastoral letter of Archbishop Cooray was a call to consecrate the Archdiocese to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on 8th September 1947 and to close it with the feast of the Sacred Heart in 1948. On the 11th of May 1948 he called for a Marian Congress. On the 19th,20th,21st May 1950 the visit of the miraculous statue of Our Lady of Fatima, the Pilgrim Virgin to Sri Lanka was organized. In 1952 he received the statue of Our Lady of Lanka. Universal Marian Year was declared by the Pope on 8th September 1953. He organized in 1956 a Rosary campaign and public processions in reparation for insult done to Our Lady through a scurrilous pamphlet.



Our Lady: A Fount of Inspiration

by Justice C.G. Weeramantry



Justice C.G. Weeramantry has published a book titled, 'Our Lady: A Fount of Inspiration', which contains devotional verses on Mary, Our Mother, with a foreword by His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith.

After his magnum opus, where he applied his knowledge of law to Christian thinking in *Lord's Prayer: Bridge to a better World*, through these devotional verses, he attempts to highlight the role of Mary in the mystery of salvation. Taking different attributes in the life of Our Mother (such as obedience, purity, peacefulness),

Justice Weeramantry invites us to meditate how they affect our lives. Let me illustrate one such:

Verse 10:

EXULTATION OF MOTHERHOOD

While motherhood's glorious state
That fills the world with light
Our Lady lights up motherhood
And makes it yet more bright

Justice C.G. Weeramantry is an outstanding Sri Lankan who has risen to the highest echelons in the legal sphere, the only Sri Lankan elected as a judge of the World Court (International Court of Justice). We are very happy to commend this book to the reading public.

Rev. Fr. Noel Dias

Book Launch

A Sinhala book titled 'Adaraya, Adyapanaya saha Prema Sambandatha' (Love, education and love affairs) written by Ms. G.A. Nirmali Fernando will be launched on October 30 at the De La Salle Hall of De Mazenod College, Kandana, at 7.30 am. Rev. Fr. Ranjith Madurawela, General Manager Catholic Pri-



ivate Schools and Sri Lal Nonis, Director, Negombo Educational Zone, will be the chief guests. Mr. Vijith Rohan Fernando, Senior lecturer in Christian Studies at the University of Kelaniya will deliver the guest lecture.

Ms. G. A. Nirmali Fernando is a teacher at De Mazenod College, Kandana in charge of the Sinhala Debating and Oratory Society at the College. She is also the chief editor of 'Mazonodiya Ridmaya' and coordinator of the advisory teacher panel. Apart from that, she is the secretary of "SIGNO FIDE".

Nirmali has already written four books in Sinhala.

A proud son of Sri Lanka no more

Eymard de Silva Wijeyeratne (78), who died on Tuesday morning after a brief illness, was a man who watched over the interest of this country following his premature retirement from the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation. He did not tolerate the robber barons whose entry the J.R. Jayewardene regime facilitated with the liberalisation of the country's economy in 1977.



Eymard de S. Wijeyeratne

Being a keen observer of events and especially of subtle moves from various quarters against the better interest of the country, Mr. Wijeyeratne demolished the arguments of those vested interests with his rapier sharp intellect and fine use of the English language. A product of Peradeniya University during its golden era, his com-

mand of the Queen's language was second to none. Very unassuming and mild mannered as he was, when it came to defending the truth, no one was too big or powerful for him. Not that he belittled or destroyed them with crude arguments, but by putting across clear and simple logical answers backed by facts.

Those who have read many of his articles published periodically

in the Island newspaper from its inception in 1981 will know what a pleasure it was to read those, as they not only enlightened readers but also enriched us all.

It is said that a prophet is without honour in his own country. Likewise the talents of people like Mr. Wijeyeratne have not been made use of by those that matter. Nor was he given any national recognition! His talents and impeccable honour were recognised abroad; he served one of the oil kingdoms in West Asia soon after leaving CPC, but having three young daughters and a wife back home he had to return before long.

Earlier former Chairman of CPC, late leading lawyer E.R.S.R. Coomaraswamy and then

Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike had firmly stood by him when there were attempts to tarnish his reputation by those who failed to put through underhand deals.

A devout Catholic, he practised his religion silently. Although he was not rich by any stretch of the imagination, we can vouch for the fact that on numerous occasions he and his family helped those in need. Often when articles about people in difficulties appeared he would personally phone us and get their addresses to send contributions.

Mr. Wijeyeratne's remains were cremated at the Borella cemetery.

Our profound condolences go out to his family.

Courtesy: *The Island*.

A Tribute to my mother on her 100th birthday

The hundredth birthday of my mother, Evelyn Mendis falls on October 26, 2013. She departed from this life at the age of 79 on May 19, 1993. She was third in the family of two brothers and a sister all of whom predeceased her. She was the wife of Mr. M. P. Mendis, my father, who was at one time the principal of Wennappuwa Training College.

My father died in 1958 and my mother became a widow at forty five having the responsibility of bringing up a family of four girls and a boy, none of whom were settled down in life. My elder sister Marie was twenty three, a young graduate teaching at Holy Family Convent Wennappuwa. I was in my final year at Govt. Training College, Maharagama, and Hyacinth, the sister next to me, had just entered the University at Peradeniya. The two younger siblings Camillus and Swarna were schooling.

My mother's indomitable faith in God was put to a severe test. My sis-

ter Marie had a vocation to the religious life, but she did not have the heart to speak about it to my mother who was trying to get her settled in marriage. Eventually when I too came out of Training College and went to teach at Wennappuwa and Marie came to the Moratuwa Convent to teach, my mother was trying to expedite matters to get her settled and then it was that she came out with her intention of entering the Convent. Marie as the eldest in the family had been a pillar of strength to my mother after my father's death and now she was going to leave her.

With stoical courage she faced the situation and did not stand in the way of her vocation. This generous sacrifice of hers paid dividends because God helped her to get her other children well settled in life. One of her favourite sayings was "God's coffers are never empty." Yet there were times when she was tried like gold in the furnace.

The hallmarks of my mother's life were sin-



Evelyn Mendis

cerity, love, concern and an understanding nature. This combination of qualities she was endowed with endeared her to many. She took a personal interest in the spiritual and temporal affairs of those who came to her for solace and consolation. Anyone who came to her for help never went away without being satisfied. She fasted every Friday and she gave her breakfast away to a poor school-going boy.

My mother's apostolic work was done through the Legion of Mary and the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart. She also joined the Cursillo Movement. She was active in the apostolate and visited people who were

ill and in want and helped them in whatever way she could. She took with her a bottle of medicinal oil which she herself made and gave it to those who had aches and pains.

My mother had a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin. The Rosary was very often in her hand and she recited it often. The last thing that she did before she lost consciousness was to recite the special Rosary she recited everyday for all her children and their families. God granted her desire of being surrounded by her children at her death. Even her eldest daughter Sr. Josephine Mendis arrived from Rome just in time to be by her death bed.

Now on her hundredth birthday we can recall what an exemplary mother she was and we earnestly ask the Blessed Lord to give us the strength and courage to walk in her footsteps. We also pray that God will grant her the crown in Heaven she richly deserves.

Priscilla de Silva

Appreciation

To my Mother

You did not teach me the value of gold
But in my heart you inscribed in Gold the value of charity
You did not teach me to cry for things I didn't have
Instead you taught me to share the things I have with those who cry
You did not teach me to complain when life was difficult
Instead you taught me to appreciate life in difficult times
You did not teach me to build mansions to live
Instead you taught me to make my heart a mansion so the poor could live in it
You did not teach me to crave for worldly desires
Instead you taught me to purify my world with divine virtues
You did not teach me to seek power or position
Instead you taught me that humility finds favour with God
You did not teach me to hate when the world goes against me
Instead you taught me against all odds to love the world
You did not teach me to lose hope in times of adversity
Above all you taught me in every situation what sustains us is faith in God!

(Thank you Mother for your wisdom and love for us! You were God's precious gift and He took you home six months ago. We miss you dearly).

Arundathy Gunawardena-

"Enough!"

Abba Father, I need not ask you,
For things to be given to me,
Today .. and each day.

Abba Father, I feel like telling you,
That things that "you"
Are giving me... Everyday,
is more than enough for me!

But Lord! above all these
Grant me, A 'Heart' and
'Mind' to share..'

With those who are needy and poor.

Rev. Sr. A. Christina Lourdes (HF)

The 'apocalypse' that will not come

"Today's crisis can become a time of purification and a time to rethink our socio-economic models," Pope Francis said to representatives of the academic and cultural world whom he met recently in the lecture hall of the Pontifical Regional Theological Faculty. The following are excerpts from the Pope's address which was given in Italian.

I prefer to offer a few thoughts aloud that come from my experience as a man and a Pastor of the Church. For this reason, I am letting myself be guided by a passage of the Gospel, by making an "existential" interpretation of the account of the disciples on the road to Emmaus: Two disciples of Jesus who, after his death, leave Jerusalem and return to the village. I have chosen three key words: Disappointment, resignation and hope.

The hearts of the two disciples are filled with suffering and bewilderment at the death of Jesus; they are disappointed by how things have ended. We find a similar sentiment in our present situation: Disappointment, disillusionment as a result of an economic and financial crisis, but also of an ecological, educational, moral and human crisis. It is a crisis that concerns the present and future of the history and life of man in our western civilization and that ends in affecting the entire world. And when I say crisis, I am not thinking of tragedy. When the Chinese want to write the word crisis, they write it with two characters: The character for danger and the character for opportunity. When we speak of crises, we are speaking of dangers, but also of opportunities. This is the sense in which I am using the word. Of course every age of history contains critical elements, but in the last four centuries, we have never seen the fundamental certainties that make up human life so shaken as in our time. I am thinking of the deterioration of the environment: This is dangerous, let us think ahead a little to the war over water which is to come, to social imbalances, to the terrible power of weapons - we have said so much about this in recent days - to the economic and financial system which puts money, the god of money, rather than man at the centre; to the development and the burden of the media, with all of its positive aspects, of communications and of transportation. It is a change that concerns the very way in which humanity keeps its existence in the world going.

What are the reactions in the face of this reality?

Let us return to the two disciples of Emmaus: Disappointed at Jesus' death, they show resignation and try to flee

from reality, they leave Jerusalem. We can read these same attitudes at this time in history too. In the face of this crisis, there can be resignation, pessimism about the possibility of taking any effective action. In a certain sense it is "calling us out" of the same dynamic as the present historical turning point, by denouncing its more negative aspects with a mind-set similar to that spiri-

The University as a place of discernment.

It is important to interpret reality by looking it in the face. Ideological or partial interpretations are useless; they only feed illusion and disillusionment. It is important to interpret reality, but also to live this reality without fear, without fleeing, without catastrophism. Every crisis, even the



tual and theological movement of the second century AD, that was called "apocalyptic." We are tempted to think in apocalyptic terms. This pessimistic understanding of human freedom and of the process of history leads to a kind of paralysis of mind and will. Disillusionment also leads to a kind of escapism, to looking for "islands" or a reprieve. It is something like Pilate's attitude of "washing his hands." It is an attitude which appears to be "pragmatic;" but which in fact ignores the cry for justice, humanity and social responsibility and leads to individualism and hypocrisy, if not to a sort of cynicism.

This is the temptation we are faced with if we go down the road of disenchantment and disappointment. At this point we wonder: Is there a way forward in our present situation? Should we resign ourselves to it? Should we allow our hope to be dimmed? Should we flee from reality? Should we "wash our hands off it and withdraw into ourselves? I not only think that there is a way forward, but also that the very moment in history which we are living urges us to seek and find paths of hope that open our society to new horizons. And this is where the role of the university is so very valuable. The university as a place for the development and transmission of knowledge, for the formation in "wisdom in the deepest sense of the word, for the integral education of the human person. In this regard, I would like to offer several brief points of reflection.

present one, is a passage, the pangs of a birth that involves struggle, hardship and suffering, but which bears within itself the new horizon of life, of a renewal, that carries the power of hope. And this is not a crisis of "change": it is a crisis of "the change of an era". It is an era that changes. These are not superficial changes of an era.

A crisis can become a time of purification and a time to rethink our socioeconomic models and of a certain understanding of progress that fed illusions, in order to recover what is most fully human. Discernment is neither blind nor improvised: it is carried out on the basis of ethical and spiritual criteria; it involves asking oneself about what is good, it entails thinking about our own values regarding man and the world, a vision of the person in all his dimensions, especially the spiritual and transcendent; the person may never be considered human material!"

This, perhaps, is the suggestion lurking in functionalism. The University, as a place of "knowledge" has a very important role to play in forming students in discernment in order to nourish hope. When the unknown traveller, the Risen Jesus, approaches the two sad and disconsolate disciples of Emmaus, he does not try to hide the reality of the Crucifixion, of the apparent defeat that threw them into crisis. On the contrary, he invites them to interpret reality so as to guide them to the light of His Resurrection: "O foolish men and slow of heart ... Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer

these things and enter into his glory?" (Lk 24:25- 26). To discern does not mean to escape, but rather to seriously interpret reality without prejudice

Another element:

A University is a culture of closeness. Isolation and withdrawing into one's own interests are never the way to

relationship with Him. Faith never restricts the space for reason; someone else's riches; it means not seeing Him with indifference or fear, but as an opportunity for growth. The dynamics that regulate relationships between people, groups and nations often do not involve closeness and encounter but rather conflict.

Final element:

The university is a place of formation in solidarity. The word solidarity does not belong solely to a Christian vocabulary. It is a word that is fundamental to human vocabulary. As I said today it is a word which in the present crisis, risks being eliminated from the dictionary. The discernment of reality, by taking on the moment of crisis, and the promotion of a culture of encounter and dialogue, orientate us to solidarity as a fundamental element for a renewal of our societies. The encounter, the dialogue between Jesus and the two disciples of Emmaus, which rekindles their hope and renews their life's journey, leads to sharing: They recognize him in the breaking of the bread. It is the sign of the Eucharist, of God who makes himself so close in Christ that he becomes a constant presence, that he shares his very life. And he says this to everyone, even to non-believers: It is precisely in solidarity unspoken yet practised that relationships change from considering someone as "human material" or "a number" to seeing him as "a person."

There is no future for any country, for any society, for our world, unless we are able to show greater solidarity. Solidarity, then, as a way of making history, as a vital context in which conflicts, tensions, and even those who oppose one another, attains a harmony that generates life. In thinking about this reality of encounter in crisis, I have found in young politicians another way of thinking about politics. I don't say better or worse, but different. They speak differently, they are seeing their music is different from our music. Let us not be afraid! Let us listen to them, They have an intuition: Let us open ourselves to their intuition. It is an intuition of young life. I say young politicians because this is what I have heard about, but the young in general are looking for this different key. To assist us in the encounter, it will help us to listen to the music of these young politicians, "scientists", young thinkers.

L'Osservatore Romano

Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom to mere children.

(Lk 19:38,2:14)

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR C
27th October - 3rd November 2013

Sun: 30th Sunday of Ordinary Time
Sir 35:15b-17,20-22a; 2 Tim. 4:6-8,16-18;
Lk 18: 9-14

Mon: Feast of Ss Simon and Jude,
Apostles
Eph 2:19-22; Lk. 6:12-19

Tue: Rom 8:18-25; Lk 13:18-21

Wed: Rom 8:26-30; Lk 13:22-30

Thu: Rom 8:31b-39; Lk 13:31-35

Fri: Feast of All Saints
Rev 7:2-4,9-14; 1 Jn 3:1-3;
Mt 5:1-12a

Sat: All Souls' Day

Sun: 31st Sunday of Ordinary Time
Wis 11:22- 12:2; 2 Th 1:11 2:2;
Lk 19: 1-10

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Response:: Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.

For all members of the Church: That we may never parade our good deeds before God or look down on other people. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.

For all in authority: That they may have the humility to acknowledge their faults, and resolve to correct them. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.

For all the fault-finders and begrudgers: That they may realise that it is not necessary to put out the other person's light in order to let one's own shine. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.

That we may come before God as we are, with all our sins and wounds; so that we may enjoy the benefits of his forgiveness and healing. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.

Less-known facets....

Contd from Pg. 5

native Oblate priest as the Archbishop of the country, was a spectacle of faith.

It showcased the missionary work of the Oblate Fathers as well as the Catholic faith's deep roots in the nation. The special hymn composed by Father Marcelline Jayakody OMI, for this Marian fiesta "Sri Lanka Rani Meeniyee" still sustains the memory of that faith festival as the hymn continues to be sung by young and old as the anthem of Marian devotees nationwide.

Though now forgotten by many, even the words of the English anthem composed by J.P. de Fonseka, a friend of G.K. Chesterton while in England, captured the mood of the times in words such as "Queen of this hour of Lanka's glory".

The young Cooray was a mother's boy. My father used to recall my granny rebuke him on several occasions citing the maternal devotion of Benjamin, the son of her friend, Marigidehaamine. All through his priesthood years until his last days as Archbishop, Cardinal Cooray never missed visiting his mother's grave whenever he passed through Periyamulla. Every time he recalled his mother, in public or in private, tears would well up in his eyes.

The Basilica became a people's project

His love for the Blessed Mother was even deeper and more profound. And he eagerly welcomed the honour of erecting the Tewatta Basilica in fulfilment of the vow his predecessor made in the interest of the country.

Cardinal Cooray did more than to erect a Basilica. He used the project as a nationwide networking of Marian devotion-based faith solidarity. The post-war years were a time when people had to tighten belts even more than in recent times. But unlike many current initiatives to go West with the begging bowl for everything and obtain foreign aid even to erect Churches, Cardinal Cooray appealed to the people and they shared of their meagre resources.

The Catholic newspapers ran a weekly column

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading:

Sir 35:15b-17,20-22a

God is being presented to us as just and fair. He is not partial towards the poor. He will listen to the weak and the fallen. To all those who turn to Him for help He will give His blessings. But He will have a special concern to the fatherless and the widow.

Second Reading:

2 Tim. 4: 6-8, 16-18

St. Paul mentions that his life is approaching its end. He is proud of himself for he has kept his faith alive. He recalls how the Lord has protected him and given him strength to preach the Good News.

Gospel: Lk. 18: 9-14

Jesus relates the parable of the two worshippers going to pray. One, a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The latter humbly repents before God. And Jesus says that the second one was the recipient of God's grace than the one who exalted himself.

Reflection.

The Readings invite us to be humble and place all our trust and hope in the Lord. They also invite us to open ourselves to the Lord and to turn to Him for help. For, He raises the weak and the fallen that turn to Him. He protects and guides those who are His. He blesses those who are genuine and humble. To those who are open, he opens himself up. Therefore let us humbly surrender ourselves to Him.

Today's First Reading

acknowledging every cent contributed by the people for the Basilica Building Fund. Thus he made the Basilica a people's participatory monument of faith.

Every rock stone in it had a story to tell and the Marian plebiscite of the Marian Congress was entombed in the foundation of the Basilica. I interviewed him on the eve of the consecration of the Basilica and the Coronation of the Statue of Our Lady of Lanka. He told me with a great sense of public accountability that "every bit of gold offered by people as votive offerings was saved for the Mother's Crown".

The story of the Basilica had its painful side as well. A few rootless urban Catholics who got carried away by Westerly winds of secularization and misread the teachings of the Second Vatican Council sneered at the Basilica project. Ignorant of the faith-beat of our people, they called the Basilica a waste of money and energy. Today, at least some of them have survived to see the reality of the Cardinal's vision.

If their barbs hurt the Cardinal in his later years, he was not shaken by them. He was a leader who both respected and accepted the people's wisdom, but he also was a no-nonsense man who knew to distinguish between wisdom and prejudice. Today the Basilica has come to stay as a national Marian Shrine and his successor Archbishop Nicholas Marcus Fernando himself vowed in public to complete the work on the edifice if the nation was saved from the ravages of the ongoing war in the North.

Cardinal Cooray was a paragon of integrity who knew when to act and how to act as a leader because he had no concerns other than the welfare of the Church and the nation. He was indeed "a servant of the Gospel and a sign of hope" to his people, decades ahead of the Synod of Bishops, which discussed that theme last October in Rome.

His memory was very much in my mind last month as I invited bureaus of my Church news agency

shows us that the Lord is just and fair. Therefore he is impartial. He will listen to the weak and the fallen and to all those who turn to Him out of faith and love. He will not ignore the supplications of the fatherless nor the widow when she pours out her story; the one whose service is pleasing to the Lord will be accepted, and his prayers will reach the heavens. We are weak and fallen, let us turn to the Lord with faith and love.

In the Gospel, through a parable, the Lord shows us how the humble and the gentle will receive God's blessings rather than the proud who boast of themselves. The parable is about two people who went to pray; one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed thus about himself. "God I thank Thee that I am not like the other man; extortioner, unjust, adulteress or even like this tax collector." Standing far off the tax collector would not even lift his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying. "God, be merciful to me a sinner. The Lord Himself says, "I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled. "Therefore let us genuinely and with all simplicity turn to the Lord to receive His graces.

St. Paul in the Second Reading confirms God's blessings and protection on all those who place themselves in His hands through love and service. St. Paul here presents himself as one who has come

to the faith. And now he is ready to receive the reward of blessings and graces from God. He says "At my first defense no one took my part, all darted me. May it not be charged against them, but the Lord stood by me and gave me strength to proclaim the word fully, that all the Gentiles might hear. So I was rescued from the Lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever Amen." The same protection and guidance would be ours if we are faithful to Him.

Aid Story

The girl knelt in the confessional and said,



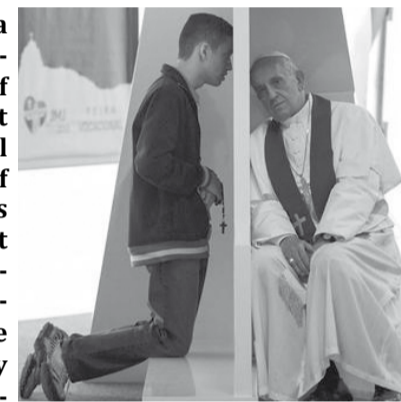
"Bless me Father, for I have sinned."

"What is it child?"
"Father I have committed the sin of vanity. Twice a day I gaze in the mirror and tell myself how beautiful I am."

The priest turned, took a good look at the girl, and said, "My dear, I have good news. That isn't a sin, it's only a mistake."

Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos

Confession to a priest is an essential part of the sacrament of Penance: "All mortal sins of which penitents after a diligent self-examination are conscious must be recounted by them in confession, even if they



Pope at the confessional in Brazil

are most secret and have been committed against the last two precepts of the Decalogue; for these sins sometimes wound the soul more grievously and are more dangerous than those which are committed openly."

When Christ's faithful strive to confess all the sins that they can remember, they undoubtedly place all of them before the divine mercy for pardon. But those who fail to do so and knowingly withhold some, place nothing before the divine goodness for remission through the mediation of the priest, "for if the sick person is too ashamed to show his wound to the doctor, the medicine cannot heal what it does not know."

(Catechism of the Catholic Church - No. 1456)

to survey people's opinions whether their Bishops live up to the above theme - which re-echoed Cardinal Cooray's motto, "To serve and not to be served."

Church celebrates....

Contd from Pg. 5

The glorious gift of Thomas Cardinal Cooray to Our Lady of Lanka was to build the Basilica and crown Our Lady's Statue, place in the hands, the Rosary gifted by the Pope and build the Grotto of our Lady of Lourdes with an environment of Lourdes itself by building a water tank and planting trees. Cardinal Cooray was a lover of nature, especially trees. Being a Botanist, he knew the trees by name. He planted various shady trees in the premises of the Basilica. Their branches still wave and give glory to God and a peaceful shady atmosphere for pilgrims who come to the shrine. His favourite tree was the NA tree which today is named as the national tree. Cardinal Cooray in his prophetic vision named the Na Flower as the flower of Our Lady of Lanka and placed it at the feet of Our Lady's statue long before the Na tree was named the national tree.

From 'Emmaus', while in retirement and while he was able to walk, Cardinal Cooray would come to the feet of Our Lady of Lanka and pray earnestly for the Country and the Church. In the Crypt he marked out the place where he was to be buried and mediated on death and resurrection. He lies there today waiting for his resurrection. From his tomb his holiness now spreads like a sweet scent as he offers his prayers for all of us. Many experience his powerful intercession before the Lord in union with Our Lady of Lanka.

Many respond to the Call of the Master

(Contd from Pg. 1)

Pope Francis - Beacon of Hope in Rome

The Government of the Church has shifted from Pope Benedict to that of Pope Francis. Pope Benedict, the "Scholar-Pope" wrote eloquent, faith-filled books about Jesus Christ and provided us with a searingly honest, profound critique of our modern secular culture and its possible dangers for humanity.

As Pope Emeritus he took pains to convince nations, that today we live in a world where there is an emergence of "a new atheism" and relativistic attitudes towards, questions of faith and morality, where religious beliefs and faith in God are challenged or rejected, marginalized or tolerated or at best relegated to a strictly personal sphere. We live in a country where thousands, if not tens of thousands of people show their religiosity at ceremonies of their faiths, but the truth is in this *Dharmadeepa* (land of faith) murders, corruption, violations of basic human rights and religious values and traditions are becoming a daily occurrence.

This decadence seems to be the hallmark of these times and probably that is why Pope Francis wanted us to be abreast with the realities around us. He said that, "We find Jesus' wounds in the body of your wounded brother, because he is hungry, because he is thirsty, because he is naked because he is humiliated, because he is a slave, because he is in jail, because he is in the hospital. Those are the wounds of Jesus today. We do not need to go on a "refresher course" to touch the living God, but to enter into the wounds of Jesus, and for this "all we have to do is, to go out onto the street."

Intellectual Formation - A future priest with a sound knowledge and wisdom of Theology and Philosophy

Studying Theology and Philosophy or theologizing and philosophizing by the young students of today, therefore, has to be done in the context of these realities, because theology helps us to understand the context in which we live, and throw light of God's Revelation into it by interpreting the signs of the times. "A criterion of Catholic theology is that, precisely as the science of faith, faith seeking understanding [*fides quaerens intellectus*], it has a rational dimension. Theology strives to understand what the Church believes, why it believes, and what can be known *sub specie Dei*."

As *Scientia Dei*, theology aims to understand in a rational and systematic manner the saving truth of God." Therefore it is important that we, teachers and students, always keep in mind that it is not a matter of studying Theology or Philosophy for the sake of studying them, but a prayerful effort to delve into the wealth of reflections in the light of divine revelation and of faith and of the contemporary social context.

In the year under review, in Theology we conducted the four-year course with vigour and with two theological updating seminars. The First under the theme "The Year of Faith" Joy of Believing, Celebrating and Living the Richness of Faith' was conducted by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Norbert Andradi OMI and the other was conducted by Rev. Fr. Camillus Cooray under the theme, "The Second Vatican Council: Reflections of the Winds of Change." On the part of research done by

the students, seminar papers, theses and others were given the equal emphasis as in the past. Re-structuring of some of the courses was done in order to avoid overlapping of the subject matter. The biblical languages Hebrew and Greek were also given a new emphasis in order to give the students some basic knowledge on them. Let me mention here, with gladness that this year two of our students were able to reach the highest achievement in the final year examinations of B.Th. and B.Ph. I wish to congratulate the two students who achieved a '*Summa Cum Laude*'; Rev. Fr. Anton Dinesh Priyasad of the Archdiocese of Colombo, for Theology and Bro. V. Ranjan Xavier of the Diocese of Mannar, for Philosophy, for their excellent performance.

We also congratulate those who achieved excellence with '*Magna Cum Laude*' six in Philosophy and five in Theology. During this Academic Year there were 32 candidates for Baccalaureate in Theology examination and 14 candidates sat for the National Seminary Diploma in Theology (NSDT) while another 61 candidates sat for the National Seminary Diploma in Philosophy (NSDP) examinations. Baccalaureate in Philosophy Examination was not held this year due to the introduction of the Triennial B.Ph. course.

Spiritual Formation of "Those who are called"

"To become a priest or a religious is not primarily our choice; it is our answer to a calling, a calling of love", said Pope Francis speaking to Seminarians, Novices and those on a vocational journey from across the globe.

Dear Brothers, Diocesan and Religious; You are here to begin another New Academic Year because you are called by the same Lord, who inaugurated the Church, and gave it the mission. Your spiritual formation will lead you to deepen your relationship with one who called you. In that relationship you become a believer. "A priest must be a believer, one who converses with God. If this is not the case, then all his activities are futile. The most lofty and important thing a priest can do for people is first of all being what he is: a believer. Through faith he lets God, the other, come into the world. And if the other is not at work, our work will never be enough"

For this reason, we insist on an intimate personal relationship with Jesus Christ as fundamental for a seminarian forming himself to priestly life and ministry. All priestly formation, we know, should lead to the fostering of this relationship. The future "priest should be a person who knows Jesus intimately, has met Him and learned to love Him. He needs therefore to be a man of prayer, a truly "spiritual" man. From the mystery of Christ he should also learn in his life not to seek himself nor his own promotion. He should learn to spend his life for Christ and for his flock." These are the thoughts of Pope Benedict XVI, which help us, to be focused on the spiritual formation we give.

We also encourage and recommend to each seminarian that by the end of the second year in Theology, which will count at least 7 to 8 years of Seminary life, to make a firm decision on whether he wants to proceed in the journey towards the priesthood or not. This means one does not wait till the final year to arrive at the all important decision. This I believe

will help a young man to make a serious evaluation of his life and vocation whether he is freely and without reservation ready to respond to the demands of the priesthood and accept it as a gift from the Lord, to be his "priest forever."

A special thanks goes to our 'Magister Spiritus', Rev. Fr. Alex Costa OMI and his two collaborators Rev. Frs. Cyril Joseph, Robert Jayatilleke and Boniface Mendis and others who played the role of Spiritual Director for their spiritual wisdom that help the students to grow in the matters of their internal forum. This valuable service is indispensable in the formation of the future priests.

Pastoral and Cultural Formation

It is no secret that there are growing concerns among the faithful about the priestly ministry. It is not rarely that certain comments by our own faithful can be heard or read even in the Catholic weeklies and other journals. While admiring the services of dedicated priests they feel led down by others by not being closer to them, serving, caring and loving them. Though this is not a general observation, it is important that the formators take such observations seriously. With a very offensive campaign by Christian fundamentalist-groups all over the country, if we leave the flock entrusted to us untended they can easily be attracted towards such sects, away from our communities. An uncaring, unloving person who becomes a priest to satisfy his dreams or the dreams of others could easily become a victim of careerism. "Do not fall into the trap of careerism. It is a form of cancer," were the words used by Pope Francis to stress the meaning of being a true, good and a committed pastor.

The re-structured Pastoral Practice for the final year students had taken these considerations seriously so that they will first of all understand what it means to love the Lord. Loving Lord Jesus for a seminarian or a priest means loving his people, feeding his lambs. Therefore, today the final year students reach out to weakest sections of society: The prisoners, differently-abled children, the elderly, the blind, less fortunate children and other marginalized groups we can find in and around the city of Kandy. Students in the fourth year of Theology reach out to the above mentioned groups every week-end. Some engage in running the Integral Education Centre where English and Life-formation is taught to less privileged young people, under the experienced guidance of Rev. Fr. William Liyanarachchi. We hope to expand and reach out to more marginalized and poor in the new year, with the cooperation of the Parish Priests.

There had been very successful Cultural Programmes organized by the three Cultural Academies, namely, the Gonsalvez Sinhala Academy, the Gnanaprasagar Tamil Academy and the Chesterton English Academy. The talents of the Seminarians in the fields of music, singing, writing and drama were given many an opportunity to improve and blossom. Sinhala Christmas Drama and Carol Competition organized by GO.Si.A. was held on December 16, 2012 and the Sinhala Academy Day Eucharist was celebrated by rev. Fr. Jude Sharman of Chilaw Diocese and the Cultural programme was presided over by the popular actor, Mr. Sanath Gunetilleke, on June 2, 2013. Gnanaprasagar Tamil Acad-

emy Day was held on December 9, 2012, with Very Rev. Fr. Michael Savundranayagam presiding at Holy Eucharist and at the evening Cultural Programme. Chesterton English Academy Day celebration fell on 16th and 17th March 2013. Mrs. Jean Arsanayagam, Playwright, Poet and Writer was the Guest Speaker, while Rev. Fr. Kennedy Perera, Rector of St Thomas International College, Seeduwa presided at the Holy Eucharist. "The Mikado" an English satire went on boards with a high standard of performance, under the distinguished presence of His Excellency John Rankin, the British High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, as Chief Guest.

My thankful appreciation to Rev. Frs. Sheron Dias, P. Christunayagam and Robert Jayatilleke for their guidance and dedication in the work and achievements of the Cultural Academies.

Talks, Seminars and Publications

Members of the Seminary staff regularly contribute to the life of the Church in Sri Lanka, by publishing Theological and Philosophical and other articles, conducting spiritual retreats and days of recollections, participating and conducting seminars and lectures and giving talks to the diocesan priests, religious congregations and the lay faithful, both in Sri Lanka and abroad. Rev. Frs. Alex Costa OMI, Boniface Mendis, Robert Jayatilleke, William Evans, Raveen Perera, Ajith Wellington, P Christunayagam, Anton Sriyan and Elmo Dias have given talks, written articles, conducted days of recollection, retreats and seminars outside the Seminary, while serving on the staff of the Seminary. This contribution, while being encouraged as a sharing of knowledge and resources within the Church, has to be balanced with utmost care without affecting the responsibilities entrusted to them as members of the Staff. Two issues of the "Living Faith" were also published during the year under review and I thank the Chief Editor Fr. Raveen Perera and other members of the editorial board for the hard work they did for the success of this, our own periodical.

New Entrants -

This 59th New Academic Year saw 42 new diocesan students and 30 religious students joining the Seminary for Philosophy and theology. 12 Diocesan students and 15 Religious students who interrupted their studies have re-joined the Seminary "leaving their familiar shores." This year's total strength of the student body will be 269, with 174 diocesan students and 95 religious students; in the Department of Theology total number of students will be 123 while in the Department of Philosophy it will be 146. This year all 12 dioceses in Sri Lanka are represented by the diocesan students while 14 religious congregations are represented by religious students.

Conclusion

Today we find a world moving fast towards secularism, materialism and relativism. These are some of the features of the emerging global culture. Rise of religious fundamentalism and persecution of Christians are not alien to Asian and Sri Lankan contexts. Today's seminarian therefore has to be formed to face such challenges.

Thank you and God Bless you!

Rev. Fr. Elmo Dias

Young World

Marawila youth celebrate feast of the Shrine of the Holy Cross



The Youth of the Marawila Parish erected a Pandal at the entrance to the shrine of the Holy Cross in celebration of the annual feast of the Shrine.

Picture shows the youth with Rev. Fr. Dinesh Sovis assistant Parish Priest and Rev. Sr. Mary Sandamali, who are in charge of the youth.

Praying the Holy Rosary



Under the guidance of our English teacher Mr. Merrill Rajapakse, we started to say the Rosary earnestly on April 20, 2013. A few elders of unit 4 Ragama Parish, joined us from time to time. On October 5 (25th week), we partook in the Eucharistic Celebration at Poor Clare's Chapel, Tewatte at 6.00 a.m. This was followed by the recitation of the Holy Rosary and a fellowship organised by the elders.

Mother Mary has helped us to take this good habit home. Now we pray the Rosary daily at home with our family.

Hansani, Pavindu, Vidura, Shalini and Judith

Workshop by SVP Central Council



On account of Universal Children's Day, the Colombo Archdiocesan Central Council of St. Vincent de Paul Society held a 3-day Workshop on "Leadership and Decision making" at Sethsarana Model Farm, Galmuruwa, Madampe. 73 children participated in the programme, which was organized and conducted by the Archdiocesan Sethsarana Staff under

the guidance of its Director Rev. Fr. Rohan de Alwis.

The Archdiocesan Council President Mrs. Visaka Weliwita coordinated the event.

All participants were awarded with a "Certificate of Participation" at the end of the programme.

Photo: Anacletus Silva

Holy Communion at Katuwapitiya Parish



Fifty one children from St. Sebastian's Sunday school, in Katuwapitiya Parish received their First Holy Communion recently.

Holy Mass was presided by the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Srikantha Fernando.

Pic. Agnes Siyambalapitiya

Holy Communion at St. John's Church Mutwal



Forty Seven children from St. John's Church, Mutwal received their First Holy Communion.

The children are seen in the pic-

ture with the Parish Priest, Rev. Sr. Genieve and Mrs. Iresha Fernando, catechist.

Ranil Rajapaksa.

Holy Childhood Badge Ceremony at Katukurunda



The Badge ceremony of the Holy Childhood of Rose Flower cell of St. Mary's Church, Katukurunda, Moratuwa was held in Moratuwa recently. The chief celebrant of the Holy Eucharist was Rev. Fr. Freddie Shanthikumar, Regional Director of Formation of Youth, YCS, Holy

Childhood Society and Vocations of Colombo South Region. The Parish Priest of Katukurunda Parish, Rev. Fr. Chrishanthus Fernando OMI, was also present on this occasion.

Asika Priyadarshana

If you are lazy, you will meet difficulty everywhere, but if you are honest, you will have no trouble.

Proverb 15:19

English with Fun and Entertainment

Dear Readers,

In our fifth lesson we learnt the English Speech sounds (s) seal (z) zeal, a funny story about Elf's Ant, some exciting riddles, timely inspirational quotes about teachers, an innocent joke, a mild teaser and a couple of proverbs.

In this lesson we'll learn the English Speech sounds (f), (z), a funny story of how Nasreddin Goes Shopping, more proverbs, more inspirational quotes, kid's jokes, a brain teaser and some more riddles.

Thanks for the readers who made valuable suggestions and for using these lessons effectively. You are invited to share your experiences to enrich our lessons further.

With best regards!

NJ

Task 1
English Speech Sounds

Read aloud and practise

(f) ship sharp shop short should wish ash push
rush fashion pushing station ocean she shine shall

(z) measure as in measure pleasure leisure treasure
garage rouge decision usual occasion invasion

Read aloud

1. She saw Sherif's shoes on the sofa.
2. I wish to wash my Irish wristwatch
3. Zeena showed shiny sheets and soft sheets.
4. It's a pleasure to win such a treasure
5. His decision to spend his leisure in a garage is funny.

Task 2

Read the story aloud

Nasreddin Goes Shopping

One day Nasreddin went to town to buy new clothes. First he tried on a pair of trousers. He didn't like the trousers, so he gave them back to the shopkeeper. Then he tried a robe which had the same price as the trousers. Nasreddin was pleased with the robe, and he left the shop. Before he climbed on his donkey to ride home, the shopkeeper and the shop-assistant ran out.

"You didn't pay for the robe!" said the shopkeeper.

"But I gave you the trousers in exchange for the robe, didn't I?" replied Nasreddin.

"Yes, but you didn't pay for the trousers, either!" said the shopkeeper.

"But I didn't buy the trousers," replied Nasreddin. "I am not so stupid as to pay for something which I never bought."

Frame questions in order to get the answers given below.

- Q 1.....
A. Nasreddin went to town to buy new clothes.
- Q 2.....
He didn't like the trousers, so he gave them back to the shopkeeper.
- Q 3.
A. He tried a robe which had the same price as the trousers.

Answer the following questions in complete sentences

- Q 4. What did the shop keeper say?
.....
- Q 5. What was the joke?
.....
- Q 6. Write a dialogue between Nasreddin and the shop keeper and act it out?

Task 3

Underline the appropriate word within brackets and complete the proverb

1. Good (words / deeds / thoughts) are worth much and cost little
2. Where there is a will; there is a (path, way, road)
3. Walls have (eyes / ears /tongues)
4. Still waters (flow /run /gush /) deep
5. A (bird / cat/ plant)in the hand is worth two in the bush

Task 4

Read the inspirational quotations and prioritize them in order of your preference

1. Men are born to succeed, not fail. *Henry David Thoreau*
2. Try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of value. *Albert Einstein*
3. In order to succeed you must fail, so that you know what not to do the next time. *Anthony J.*
4. It's not whether you get knocked down; it's whether you get up. *Vince Lombardi*
5. A quitter never wins and a winner never quits. *Napoleon Hill*
6. No one can make you feel inferior without your consent. *Eleanor Roosevelt*
7. Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars. *Les Brown*
8. Never trouble another for what you can do for yourself. *Thomas Jefferson*

Task 5

Read kids jokes and enjoy the fun

Kids Jokes (Free download from the internet Fundoo Times : Jokes):

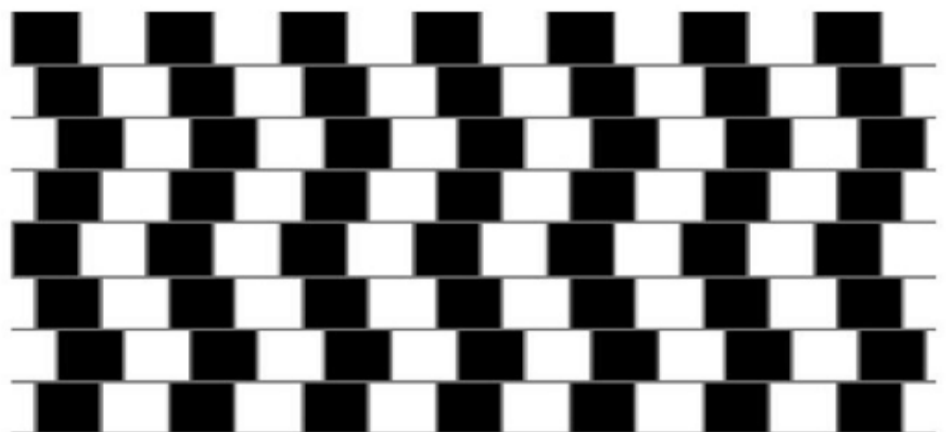
Kids often ask funny questions when you raise a query to them. These questions often end up creating a humorous situation. The simplicity of such jokes allows an individual, of virtually any age, to get a good laugh. Let's read some of them for fun and entertainment

1. Teacher: Why were the early days of history called the dark ages? Joe: Because there were so many knights! Ha. Ha. Ha.
2. Johnny to Celia: What kind of food do math teachers eat? Celia: Square meals! Ha. Ha. Ha.
3. Teacher: Where did the pilgrims land when they came to America? Student: On their feet! Ha. Ha. Ha.
4. Father: When was Rome built? Son: At night. Father: Why did you say that? Son: Because my teacher always says that Rome wasn't built in a day! Ha. Ha. Ha.
5. Nancy, the teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though a whale is a very large mammal, its throat is very small. Little Celia stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale. The teacher reiterated that a whale cannot swallow a human, it was impossible. Little Celia said, When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah? The teacher asked, What if Jonah went to hell?? Little Celia replied, Then, you ask him!? Ha. Ha. Ha.
6. Teacher: Join these two sentences together. I was cycling to school. I saw a dead body. Student: (thinking for a while) I saw a dead body cycling to school. Ha. Ha. Ha.
7. Jack: 'It's so cold in my town that we have to use ten blankets at night!' Smith: 'So what... in my town, it gets so cold that we have to use at least thirty blankets!' Little Johnny: 'That's nothing! In my town, it gets so cold that the cows give ice cream instead of milk!' Ha. Ha. Ha.

Task 6 Riddles: See whether you can find the answers

1. You throw away the outside and cook the inside. Then you eat the outside and throw away the inside. What did you eat?
2. I have holes in my top and bottom, my left and right, and in the middle. But I still hold water. What am I?
3. Give me food, and I will live; give me water, and I will die. What am I?
4. I am the beginning of the end and the end of time and space. I am essential to creation and I surround every place. What am I?
5. If you're in 3rd place and you passed the person in 2nd, what place are you in?

Task 7: Try this brain teaser: Take a look at this picture and see if you can tell whether the lines are straight or sloping? I couldn't figure it out!



Answers

Task 2 : Q 1. (i) Who went to town to buy new clothes. (Nasreddin)
(ii) Where did Nasreddin go to buy new clothes. (to town)
Q 2(ii) Why did he give the trousers back to the shopkeeper?
Q 3. What did he try? Q.4/ The shop keeper said that he didn't pay for the trousers. Q.5/ The joke was that Nasreddin said that he did not buy the trousers and he exchanged the trousers for the robe.

Task 3: words 2. way 3. ears 4. run 5. bird. Task 6: 1 An ear of a corn 2. Sponge 3. Fire 4. The letter 'E' 5. 2nd

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Compiled by Noel Jayamanne

QUIZ

On Catholic Themes

(..... from last week)

QUESTIONS

1. THE CHURCH AND CHURCH TEACHINGS

Holy Eucharist

446. What is the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist?
447. Why is the Eucharist called a "Thanksgiving Sacrifice"?
448. How is Jesus Christ present in the Eucharist?
449. When the Eucharistic Bread is broken is Christ broken up into pieces?
450. Who instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist?
451. When did Christ institute the Holy Eucharist?
452. Why did Christ institute the Sacrament of the Eucharist?
453. In what manner is Jesus present in Catholic Churches outside the Mass?
454. What is Holy Mass?
455. When did Christ give His priests the power to change bread and wine into his body and blood?
456. Who said the first Holy Mass?
457. What is Transubstantiation?
458. Who is the principal priest in every Holy Mass?
459. Why is the Holy Mass the same sacrifice as the sacrifice of the cross?
460. What is required for us to receive Holy Communion worthily?
461. How often can we receive Holy Communion?
462. What is the principal fruit of receiving Jesus in Holy Communion?
463. What is a spiritual Communion?
464. What is the significance of the lamp (sanctuary lamp) kept burning constantly in Catholic churches?
465. During the Offertory of the Mass what are the two essential items brought to the altar to be consecrated?
466. When are the bread and wine changed into the body and blood of Christ?
467. Where did the first Christians customate celebrants the Eucharist?

(contd next week.....)

God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission - I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next... I have a part in the great work; I am a link, a chain, a bond of connection between persons...

Blessed
John Henry Newman



Courtesy: Fraternity - Catholic Diocese of Kurunegala

ANSWERS

I. THE CHURCH AND CHURCH TEACHINGS

Holy Eucharist

446. It is the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ under the appearance of bread and wine.
447. Because the word "Eucharist" means thanksgiving. We express our gratitude to God for all His benefits, for all that He has accomplished, through creation, redemption, and sanctification.
448. In the Eucharist, Christ is especially present in the Eucharistic species. The body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ and therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really and substantially contained.
449. No. Christ is whole and entire in each of the species, and whole and entire in each of its parts in such a way that the breaking of the bread does not divide Christ.
450. Jesus Christ.
451. Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, the night before He died.
452. Christ instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the ages until He comes again.
453. In the form of bread which has become the Body of Jesus which is preserved in the tabernacle.
454. Holy Mass is the central act of worship in the Catholic Church. Through the Holy Mass, the sacrifice of Christ who offered Himself once on the altar of the cross on Calvary is renewed and offered in an unbloody manner under the appearances of bread and wine.
455. When He made the apostles priests at the Last Supper by saying to them: "Do this in remembrance of Me."
456. Jesus Himself at the Last Supper, the night before he died.
457. It is a change in the form or substance of something. With reference to the Holy Mass it is changing of the substance of the Eucharistic elements (bread and wine) into the body and blood of Christ at consecration.
458. Jesus Christ, who offers to His heavenly Father, through the ministry of His ordained priest, His body and blood which were sacrificed on the cross.
459. Because in Holy Mass the same Christ who offered Himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and offered in an unbloody manner; the victim is the same, and the principal priest is the same, Jesus Christ.
460. We must be in the state of grace.
461. The Church recommends that the faithful receive Communion each time they participate in the celebration of the Eucharist. The Church obliges the faithful to receive the Eucharist at least once a year.
462. An intimate union with Christ.
463. A fervent desire to receive Christ, when one cannot do so sacramentally.
464. It points to the living presence of Jesus in the Eucharist preserved in the tabernacle.
465. Bread and wine.
466. During Holy Mass at the consecration when the priest pronounces the words used by Christ at the Last Supper.
467. For the first three centuries of the Church, known as Early Christianity, Christians typically met in homes, for fellowship and worship (Philemon 1:2, Acts 1:13; Acts 12:12).

Courtesy: Clare Ukken fsp

FROM THE VATICAN DOCUMENTS

On Catholic Schools

"The influence of the Church in the field of education is shown in a special manner by the Catholic School. No less than other schools does the Catholic School pursue cultural goals and the human formation of youth. But its proper function is to create for the School

Community a special atmosphere animated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity, to help youth grow according to the new creatures they were made through baptism as they develop their own personalities and finally to order the whole of human culture to the news of salvation so that the knowledge the students

gradually acquire of the world, life and man is illumined by faith."

Gravissimum Educationis 8,
Declaration on Christian Education
Pope Paul VI
October 28, 1965