

Messenger

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In solidarity with Mannar Bishop



A solidarity meeting was held in the premises of St. Sebastian's Church, Mannar, in support of His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph, Bishop of Mannar, last Sunday, (27).

It adopted to:

1. Express deep and heartfelt appreciation for the Bishop's role for many years as a "voice for voiceless" to the victims of war, especially the political

aspirations of the Tamil, truth and accountability for the past and continuing abuses against the Tamil community.

2. Call on the government to ensure the Bishop's

safety in the context of serious concerns expressed recently.

3. Condemn the false and malicious allegations made against the Bishop by various individuals and groups, including Government Ministers and Government controlled media and those sympathetic to the Government.
4. Condemn the efforts made to intimidate organizers of this event and attempts by the Police to use the judiciary to suppress a legitimate and peaceful activity.
5. Appreciate the large number of people who had expressed support, solidarity and special prayers for the Bishop of Mannar in this difficult situation, including non Catholics, Sinhalese and those from outside the country and to continue to pray for the good health and courage of Rt. Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph, Bishop of Mannar.

The most recent attacks on the Bishop arose due to his public support for decisive action by the

PG 2 >>>

Welcome and a farewell



In a symbolic gesture, the outgoing Director of the Colombo Catholic Press, Rev. Fr. Rohan de Alwis hands over the keys of the Press to the new Director, Rev. Fr. Edrich Rodrigo, at a simple ceremony held last week.

Fr. Rohan who formally served as Parish Priest of St. Andrew's Church, Mutwal had been appointed as Director of Caritas-Sethsarana.

The new Director, Rev. Fr. Edrich Rodrigo was serving as Parish Priest of St. Mary's Church, Maharagama, prior to his appointment to the Colombo Catholic Press.

Convocation at Bl. Joseph Vaz Theologate

The 8th Convocation of Blessed Joseph Vaz Deva Dharma Nikethanaya affiliated to the Pontifical Urbaniana University, Rome, was held recently at the Bonjean Hall of St. Joseph's College, Colombo.

The chief guest was His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, Chancellor of the Institute. The guests of honour were His Excellency Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Spiteri, Apostolic Nuncio, and the two Auxiliary Bishops, His

Lordship Emmanuel Fernando and His Lordship Maxwell Silva. Very Rev. Fr. Daya Welikadaarachchi, the Rector of the Institute welcomed the guests.

There were 51 students from Colombo and the branches of Kurunegala, Chilaw and Tamil Branch who received the B. A. Degree in Christian studies at the Convocation. For the first time four Tamil students received the Degree. Rev. Fr. Leopold Rathnasekara OMI, lecturer at the National Seminary, Ampitiya, delivered the Convocation Address.

Subodhi donates general library to Jaffna



Subodhi Institute, Piliyandala, recently donated almost the whole of its general library (all English books) on a variety of subjects, to the Jaffna library as a token gesture of reparation for the wanton damage done to it by the South and as a contribution to rebuilding its collection of books.

The Mayor of Jaffna received the donation on behalf of the library and the people of Jaffna in the presence of His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Savundra nayagam, Bishop of Jaffna and the Chief librarian.

Speaking on the occasion the Founder-Director of Subodhi, Fr. Mervyn Fernando, said that the donation

symbolized the deep regret and sorrow about that unpardonable act of vandalism and also the sincere desire of the people of the South to be reconciled with the people of the North, so that all peoples of the country irrespective of race, language and geographical location feel equally at home as children of the same Mother Lanka.

Opening of Daham Pasal Building



His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith blessed and declared open the newly constructed 3-Storey building of the Daham Pasala and Vocational Training Centre of the

Seeduwa Parish, recently. The cost of the construction work amounted to Rs. 42 lakhs which also involved the work of beautifying the Church. The main sponsor of the project was Minister

Basil Rajapaksa.

The work was completed by Rev. Fr. Basil Wickremasinghe, presently Parish Priest Seeduwa before his transfer to the Wattala Parish.

Pic. T. Sunil Fernando

'Baptise them in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit'

Mt: 28: 19



HOLY TRINITY SUNDAY
3rd June 2012



Feast of St. Peregrine celebrated at St. Lawrence's



The feast of St. Peregrine, the Patron Saint of cancer patients, was celebrated on Wednesday 2 May 2012 at St. Lawrence's Church, Wellawatte. The Novena Mass was concelebrated by the Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Bob Rodrigo OMI and the Assistant Parish Priest, Rev. F. Sampath Perera OMI.

The festive Mass was held near

the statue of St. Peregrine in the open air.

During the celebration, Rev. Fr. Bob Rodrigo OMI, announced to those present that a devotee had promised to donate a statue of St. Peregrine which will be flown all the way from Italy, as an act of thanksgiving for a favour received.

I. Mel

St. Joseph's College Wattala gets Internet facilities



St. Joseph's College, Wattala, got five computers with internet facilities for the library.

This special facility was commissioned by Rev. Fr. Ranjith Andradi, Rector St. Joseph's College, Wattala. Rev. Fr. Ranjith Andradi urged the boys to make full use of the Library and cultivate the habit of reading. He also cautioned them to use information technology with wisdom.

Rev. Fr. Kamal Kumara, Pprincipal of the College, Information Technology staff and some students participated at this occasion.

Text: Padminie Nanayakkara
Picture Shewin Mahawatta

Solidarity support.....

Contd. from Pg. 1

member states of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva with regard to reconciliation and accountability in Sri Lanka. The Bishop supported calls for implementation of the LLRC recommendations and presentation of a plan of action regarding the same and an independent and international commission of inquiry to look into matters not addressed by the LLRC such as accountability.

The Bishop had never called for a separate country or renewed armed struggle and has rejected both these as not being viable options to be considered in the struggle for dignity and justice of Tamil people and broader reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

The Bishop had been cooperating and engaged with national and local level government officials, including the President, Ministers, The Secretary to the Ministry of Defense, Government Agents, Military officials and Police. He readily agreed to the request for questioning by the CID and was instrumental in taking the initiative to invite the LLRC to conduct hearings in Mannar. He had also cooperated and engaged with the international community, especially inter-governmental bodies, experts and staff of the United Nations, of which Sri Lanka is a member.

Negombo Catholics Madhu Feast



"Holy Mother-Our Lady of Madhu is the symbol of hope, courage, peace and unity and the faithful flock at the feet of Our Lady of Madhu with all their agonies, miseries, worries and sorrows for her intercession and solace."

So said, Very Rev. Fr. Patrick Perera, Episcopal Vicar, Colombo North during Holy Mass at the Madhu Holy Rosary Shrine at the Second Annual Pilgrimage of the People of Negombo, recently. His Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph, Bishop of Mannar officiated at the Saturday night Vespers' Benediction.

Fr. Patrick said that agonies and sorrows are common to everyone in this world and when we look at the life of the Holy Mother Mary we see a life full of agony and pain.

"The Holy Mary drags people out of their agonies and intervenes to unite the world about peace and harmony.

Around 20,000 people gathered at the Madhu Shrine with 12 priests to attend the spiritual needs of the Negombo Catholics.

Rev. Fr. S.Emalianuspillai, Parish Priest Madhu Shrine and his assistant Rev. Fr. Augustine Kariyakarawana, welcomed the Negombo Catholics at the Shrine Our Lady of Madhu. The Negombo Catholics got a separate feast at the Madhu Shrine last year.

The organising and all other arrangements were made by the Negombo Catholic Madhu Shrine Pilgrimage Organising Committee.

Quintus Perera

Society of Jesus completes 50 years in Sri Lanka



The Society of Jesus in Sri Lanka completed 50 years and the occasion was celebrated at the Kolping Centre at Deraniyagala with religious activities for two days. Provincial Superior of the Society (Sri Lanka) Rev. Fr. Jeyaraj Rasiah sj, was the chief celebrant.

Ven. Kotagala Chandrathana Thero, High Priest of Miyanawita Raja Maha Viharaya, is seen with Rev. Fr. Vincent Rosario sj lighting the oil lamp.

Picture shows Ven. Kotagala Chandrathana Thero with Rev. Fr. Winston Rosairo Parish Priest, Maliboda, lighting the traditional oil lamp while Provincial Superior Rev. Fr. Jeyaraj Rasiah looks on.

Text and Pic. by J. Antony

Children's Avurudhu celebrations at Bathgamulla



Ragama Bathgamulla, St. Joseph's Pre-school held its annual Avurudhu celebrations recently at the Bathgamulla grounds under the patronage of Rev. Fr. Liyanage Patick Perera OMI, Parish Priest, Peralanda.

C.R. Dickson Anthony

Statement issued by the Catholic National Association of the Laity

(On the Proposed legislation to amend the law relating to abortion)

We are deeply grieved at the proposal made by the Hon. Minister of Women's Affairs to bring in legislation to legalize abortion in the case of rape, incest and major congenital abnormalities in the foetus. It is a medically accepted fact that life begins with the fertilization of the female egg with the male sperm. The human heart starts beating 3 weeks after fertilization. Brain waves are seen in 6 weeks and all organs are formed at 8 weeks. Abortion is ending of pregnancy by killing the foetus. We Catholics firmly believe that life belongs to God, our Creator, and therefore, any attempt to destroy the fertilized egg is equal to murder.

A woman has no right to kill the child in her womb. The rights of the mother and the foetus are equal, and therefore, in the case of rape and incest no one can kill the innocent and defenseless foetus. Rather, the offender should be brought before the law. If we induce abortion for birth defects, this would necessarily have a tragic impact on the future of all differently-abled children. The proponents of this legislation mistakenly assume that relaxing the laws on abortion will reduce complications.

Rather than attempting to amend the law relating to abortion, the government should take all possible measures to control more effectively the commission of criminal offences such as rape and incest by amending the existing law and introducing more deterrent punishments for these offences.

In addition to the above course of action, it would be in the greater interests of society for the State to take effective steps to educate the people in regard to congenital abnormalities and provide guidance with a view to preventing circumstances which lead to such abnormalities. Yet another constructive step the state could take is to encourage religious and social organizations to establish homes that shower love and affection upon children (both normal as well as with congenital abnormalities) who are unwanted by their parents.

It is also known that abortion can cause physical complications in the womb of the woman who undergoes an abortion. More over there is convincing evidence that a woman who has agreed to an abortion will tend to suffer from psychiatric disorders, sometimes for the rest of her life.

In Sri Lanka abortion may be performed legally only to save the life of the mother. Any other attempt to induce abortion is totally unacceptable. Therefore we vehemently oppose the proposed legislation.

We denounce the efforts made by individuals and institutions to impose their views of morality on us. The teachings of all the major religions practiced in our beloved country abhor killing. Our position is that what is immoral and against the teachings of all the major religions practiced in our beloved motherland should not be legalized.

Therefore, we appeal to the government not to proceed with the proposed legislation to amend the law relating to abortion.

Victor Silva (FCA, MCIM)
Secretary

First Holy Communion Service at Kaluwarippuwa



The First Holy Communion Service at St. Joseph's Church, Kaluwarippuwa in the Katana-Halpe Parish took place recently with 34 children receiving their First Holy Communion from the Chief celebrant Rev. Fr. Amila Gomes, Parish Priest of Halpe and Dean of Katana.

The children pose here for a group photo with their Daham Pasal teachers and Fr. Amila Gomes.

C. Danicius

Four Hundred Children from Kandawala Parish receive the Sacrament of Confirmation



Around 400 children from the Kandawala Parish received the Sacrament of Confirmation, administered by His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Fernando, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo.

The children are seen in a group photo with His Lordship, the Bishop, Rev. Fr. Sarath Tirimanne, Parish Priest, Kandawala, Rev. Fr. Eric Madurawala, Asst. Priest, Rev. Sisters Sepalika and Shanthini.

Cecil Danicius



Church in the World

Lombardi: Establishing truth key to Pope and Curia

Pope Benedict XVI is facing the "trial" that has ensued from the leaking of his personal documents and the subsequent arrest of a member of his household on charges of possession of said stolen documents with "faith" and "a great desire to serve the Church", said Holy See Press Office Director, Fr. Federico Lombardi Tuesday in a briefing with journalists. Emer McCarthy reports Fr. Lombardi began the briefing by underlining that while the situation the Vatican faces is "grave" it is "neither tragic or terrible". He then spoke of Pope Benedict's pain at the news of the recent massacre of innocent civilians in Houla, Syria and he also relayed the Pope's sorrow at news of another deadly earthquake Tuesday morning in Emilia Romagna, Northern Italy.

Turning then to the issue at hand, Fr. Lombardi said the second phase of investigations – whether to proceed to trial or not – is still at the preliminary stage and that the aim of the inquiry is to arrive at the truth based on the objective facts as they emerge. He told journalists that the accused, 46-year-old father of three Paolo Gabriele, is "serene", and is collaborating with investigators and has met with his wife and defence lawyer Carlo Fusco. A first formal interrogation of the accused will take place in coming days.

Fr Lombardi rejected recent media reports that other people had been detained, and Cardinals questioned by investigators. He stressed that while the Commission of Cardinals -set up in March last by Pope Benedict to investigate a series of leaks – were speaking with various Dicastery heads and Curial officials as part of their efforts, this in no way indicated these individuals were under investigation. He added that the Commission of Cardinals led by the Spanish Cardinal Julian Herranz is not a juridical body.

(Vatican News)

Farewell to Mother Eliza

After serving in Sri Lanka, for almost 25 years, Rev. Sr. Mary Eliza of the Missionary Sisters of Charity, returned to her homeland India, two weeks, ago.

Sr. Eliza served as the Superior of "Prem Nivasa" at Rawathawaththa, Moratuwa for about three years. Her service was a testimony of surrendering oneself to God and being a servant of servants.

An immense service was offered to those in the North and East, deserted during the brutal war. Even today the children who were made orphans by the war would testify how Sr. Eliza became a mother of mercy and compassion to them, in their adversity.

It is heart breaking to see a person of such great calibre face imprisonment due to a misunderstanding about the administration of "Prem Nivasa."

A lady who became a mother to the motherless and a companion to the abandoned mothers, converted her prison cell to a room of mercy till she was released from her charges and proven innocent.

There was never a hum from her side, despite the false allegations that were made against her. Along with her true Christian values, just like her master, she endured suffering for the greater glory.

Her sole objective in life was to serve God and His people.

On behalf of all those who were recipients of the love and mercy offered by this great servant of God, I offer my heartfelt gratification to Rev. Sr. Mary Eliza and I pray and hope that she continues to serve in the vineyard of the Lord withstanding all sorts of storms.

Douglas Cooray

Ecumenical gathering in Ratnapura

An ecumenical gathering was held at the Salvation Army Headquarters, Ratnapura, with the participation of several Christian denominations.

A Religious service was conducted on behalf of all denominations by Rev. Fr. Sergius Fernando.

Members of the Baptist Church, Anglican Church, Methodist Church, Salvation Army and Catholic Community participated.

T. Samaratunga

Statement by SL Movement for Truth, Justice and Reconciliation

The Sri Lanka Movement for Truth, Justice and Reconciliation has issued a statement on the media statement of the Catholic Bishops' Conference in Sri Lanka (CBCSL), published in the Catholic Messenger dated, May 13, 2012.

The Statement is as follows:

While endorsing the facts presented in the recent statement of the Catholic Bishops' Conference in Sri Lanka, on the implementation of the LLRC Recommendations, the Sri Lanka Movement states that proper reconciliation and peace building cannot be achieved by not giving the due rights of the minority ethnic groups who underwent a 30-year prolonged war, subjecting to numerous hardships. Towards reconciliation the government must address without further delay, the long standing grievances of the minority community (especially border villages and and displaced personnel in other areas.

We exhort the government to rebuild Sri Lanka as a matter of urgency re-establishing the supremacy of the Rule of Law and Order, eradicating bribery and corruption (as mentioned in the recent and previous Committee on Private Enterprises (COPE), reports), abductions and the politicization of public service.

The Sri Lankan Movement was able to send the Sinhala translation and the English and Tamil versions of the principal observations and recommendations of the LLRC to all our parishes in the Archdiocese and the Dioceses as the first phase of our campaign in support of the CBCSL initiative on the implementation of the recommendations of the LLRC.

The second phase would be to communicate with the Catholic Apostolate and the other Catholic Institutions and organizations. The Sri Lanka Movement has also testified at the LLRC Commission proceedings on November 22, 2010 on behalf of the Catholic Community.

Cerebral Palsy symptoms

For a child with cerebral palsy, treatment comes step by step

ඔබගේ දරුවා කෙසේ කෙරෙහිදී පොදු රෝගයෙන් පෙළෙන්නා විය හැකිය. එසේම ඔහුගේ දරුවාගේ අතහැර දැමූ SMS එකකින් හෝ ඇමසන්ග්වලින් දන්නා.

உங்களுக்கு தெருக்கமானவர்களுக்கு செரிபரல் பால்சி நோயி் காணப்பட்டால் கீழேயுள்ள தொலைபேசி இலக்கத்திற்கு அல்லது SMS மூலம் தகவல் தரவும்.

The first step: 071777355

7, Captain Kelum Rajapaksha Mawatha, Wattala. www.cplanka.org

The signs or symptoms of cerebral palsy may be clear soon after birth or take some months to become apparent.

Cerebral palsy is often classified into different types depending on the type of symptoms, which in turn probably reflect which parts of the brain are not working as they should. These include:

- Spastic cerebral palsy (about 70 per cent of all cases) - some of the muscles in the body are tight, stiff and weak, drawing the limbs in and making control of movement difficult.
- Athetoid (dyskinetic) cerebral palsy (10 per cent of cases) - control of muscles is disrupted by spontaneous and unwanted irregular writhing movements. These may be the result of muscles changing very rapidly from being loose and floppy to very tight and tense. The muscles used for speech may also be affected, interfering with communication. Control of posture is also disrupted.
- Ataxic cerebral palsy - problems include difficulty with balance, shaky movements of hands or feet, and difficulty with speech.
- Mixed cerebral palsy - a combination of two or more of the above.

There may be abnormal tone (stiffness or floppiness) of the limbs and odd postures.

DAD UNIVERSITY

A Joyful Toon by Mike Waters



He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children.

— PSALM 78:5-6 NIV

Make life better for those you love. Give them the Messenger

THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY OF SRI LANKA The Messenger

EDITORIAL

3 June 2012

The Release of General Fonseka - a harbinger of justice for the future?

The release of General Sarath Fonseka the former Army Commander was greeted with jubilation by people both here and abroad. The US Government considered him a political prisoner and had demanded his release. He contested Mahinda Rajapaksa during the last presidential election as the common presidential candidate and lost. Barely a fortnight after the election, he was arrested by the military police and subjected to a court martial on "military offences."

The first Court Martial, which began in March 2010, ordered that he be discharged dishonorably. A second Courts Martial imposed a 30-month prison term after finding him guilty of four charges related to alleged irregularities in military procurements during his tenure as Army Chief. In all, has served more than 2 years in prison and was convicted for another 3 years last November on the white flag case. In this case he was accused of telling the 'Sunday Leader' newspaper that Defense Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa had ordered to shoot the surrendering Tamil Tiger cadres during the final stages of the war. Fonseka has said the cases are a political vendetta because he dared to run against Rajapaksa in the 2010 election.

Fonseka has now been given a presidential pardon, the terms of which are not yet clear. The appeals against the convictions which he had filed in the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court had to be withdrawn before his release.

Many well-meaning, impartial and independent people consider that Fonseka did not deserve to be prosecuted or sentenced with such a harsh punishment. They point out that a court-martial is empowered to determine the guilt of members of the Armed forces subject to military law, and Fonseka had left the Armed Services when he was charged. Most militaries maintain a court-martial system to try cases in which a breach of military discipline may have occurred. Some countries, however, have no court-martial in time of peace; this is the case in France and Germany, for example, where ordinary, civilian courts are used instead. Courts-martial jurisdiction extends mainly to service members on active duty and prisoners of war. Lavish praise had been heaped on Fonseka by the President for his gallant victory over the LTTE. So many people thought the change in attitude to discharge him dishonorably was due to his contesting the President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Many people also thought that the Judiciary has lost its independence since the 18th Amendment to the Constitution as all powers of appointment over judges is with the President who can use his discretion absolutely. There are cases abroad where decisions of military courts have been upturned as in the case of Commandant Neil Donahue. Sri Lanka has faced growing criticism over alleged rights abuses in the final phase of the civil war. The US sponsored a resolution which was passed by the UN Human Rights Council in March to press Sri Lanka to conduct an independent probe into civilian deaths in the final months of the war. During her meeting with Foreign Minister G.L. Peiris on Friday, Hillary Clinton had discussed a range of topics, including accountability issues, civil war and ethnic reconciliation. Clinton had also stressed ... the importance of protection of human rights.

Many people have been pointing out the violations of the Rule of Law and the harassment of journalists and human right workers. But the Government has to taken enough effective action to investigate and punish those responsible. The Government promises an Action Plan for Human Rights but all this seems to be confined to rhetoric. Rhetoric alone is not enough, there must be action on the ground. We hope the release of Fonseka marks a change in attitude of the Government and is a harbinger of justice and good governance for the future. Let the Government and all in authority follow the Law and uphold righteousness. The Holy Bible says, "Physician, heal thyself." (Lk. 4:23)

To the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences on the fiftieth anniversary of John XXIII's Encyclical 'Pacem in Terris'

An open letter to the world

The Holy Father sent a Message to Mary Ann Glendon, President of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, on the occasion of their 18th Plenary Session, which was dedicated to the 50th anniversary of John XXIII's Encyclical 'Pacem in Terris'. The Message was written in English and dated 27 April 2012, the day the Plenary Session began.

At the height of the Cold War, when the world was still coming to terms with the threat posed by the existence and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Pope John XXIII, addressed what has been described as an "open letter to the world." It was a heartfelt appeal from a great pastor, nearing the end of his life, for the cause of peace and justice to be vigorously promoted at every level of society, nationally and internationally. While the global political landscape has changed significantly in the intervening half-century, the vision offered by Pope John still has much to teach us as we struggle to face the new challenges for peace and justice in the post-Cold-War era, amid the continuing proliferation of armaments.

"The world will never be the dwelling-place of peace, till peace has found a home in the heart of each and every human person, till all preserve within themselves the order ordained by God to be preserved" (*Pacem in Terris*, n. (165)). At the heart of the Church's social doctrine is the anthropology which recognizes in the human creature the image of the Creator, endowed with intelligence and freedom, capable of knowing and loving. Peace and justice are fruits of the right order that is inscribed within creation itself, written on human hearts (cf. *Rom 2:15*) and therefore accessible to all people of good will, all "pilgrims of truth and of peace." Pope John's Encyclical was and is a powerful summons to engage in that creative dialogue between the Church and the world, between believers and non-believers, which the Second Vatican Council set out to promote. It offers a thoroughly Christian vision of man's place in the cosmos, confident that in so doing it is holding out a message of hope to a world that is hungry for it, a message that can resonate with people of all beliefs and none, because its truth is accessible to all.

In that same spirit, after the terrorist attacks that shook the world in September 2001, Blessed John Paul II insisted that there can be "no peace without justice, no justice without forgiveness" (*Message for the 2002 World Day of Peace*). The notion of forgiveness needs to find its way into international discourse on conflict resolution, so as to transform the sterile language of mutual recrimination which leads nowhere. If the human creature is made in the image of God, a God of justice who is "rich in mercy" (*Eph 2:4*), then these qualities need to be reflected in the conduct of human affairs. It is the combination of justice and forgiveness, of justice and grace, which lies at the heart of the divine response to human wrongdoing (cf. *Spe Salvi*, n. 44), at the heart, in other words, of the "divinely established order"



(*Pacem in Terris*, n. 1). Forgiveness is not a denial of wrong-doing, but a participation in the healing and transforming love of God which reconciles and restores.

How eloquent, then, was the choice of theme for the 2009 Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops: "The Church in Africa at the Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace." The life-giving message of the Gospel has brought hope to millions of Africans, sing them to rise above the sufferings inflicted on them by repressive regimes and fratricidal conflicts. Similarly, the 2010 Assembly on the Church in the Middle East highlighted the themes of communion and witness, the oneness of mind and soul that characterizes those who set out to follow the light of truth. Historic wrongs and injustices can only be overcome if men and women are inspired by a message of healing and hope, a message that offers a way forward, out of the impasse that so often locks people and nations into a vicious circle of violence.

Since 1963, some of the conflicts that seemed insoluble at the time have passed into history. Let us take heart, then, as we struggle for peace and justice in the world today, confident that our common pursuit of the divinely established order, of a world where the dignity of every human person is accorded the respect that is due, can and will bear fruit.

Pope Benedict XVI



CATHOLIC CHURCH – The Family of GOD

Victor Silva (FCA. MCIM)
Kandy

"How little do we know about the Catholic Church? Do we really know and appreciate the Mystery of our Catholic Faith?" These thoughts flashed across my mind as I read the book "ROME SWEET HOME" authored by the now famous Catholic lay evangelist, Professor Scott Hahn and his wife Kimberly, both of whom were ardent Christians (Presbyterians) who loved Christ but were diehard anti-Catholics because they were under the mistaken impression that the Catholic Church was unbiblical....."

(Continued from last week)

Scott wondered about what his professors had taught him and what he (as a Presbyterian Minister) was preaching to his congregation - about the Eucharist being a mere symbol, just a symbol. He remembered that he had already shown his parishioners that the one and only place where Christ used the word "covenant" was when He instituted the Eucharist - (Page 44).

Scott admits: "But after lots of prayer and study, I realized that Jesus could not have been speaking figuratively when He taught us to eat His flesh and drink His blood. The Jews in His audience would not have been outraged and scandalized by a mere symbol. Besides, if they had misunderstood Jesus to be speaking literally – when He meant His words to be taken figuratively – He could have easily clarified His point. In fact, since many disciples stopped following Jesus because of this teaching (verse 60), He would have been morally obliged to explain the saying in purely symbolic terms. But He never did. Nor did any Christian, for over one thousand years, ever deny the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. No wonder. So I did

what any pastor or seminary professor would do if he wanted to keep his job. I promptly stopped my sermon series on the Gospel of John at the end of Chapter 5 and basically skipped over Chapter 6 in my classroom lectures. Although my parishioners and students were getting excited about the rest of my teaching, I could not bring myself to tell them that what they were hearing – and responding so enthusiastically to – echoed ideas from Scripture that somehow, somewhere, the Catholic Church had discovered along the way" - (Pages 49 & 50).

Kimberly summarizes her faith in the Real Presence of Christ thus: "Catholicism was not a distant religion, but a presence-oriented one. Catholics were the ones who had Jesus physically present in churches and saw themselves as living tabernacles after receiving the Eucharist. And because Jesus is the Eucharist, keeping Him in the centre allows all the rich doctrines of the Church to emanate from Him, just as the beautiful rays stream forth from the Host in the Monstrance" - (Page 162).

8) HOLY MASS

Some Catholics grumble: "Oh, the Mass is boring" and some even question: "Is the Mass scriptural?" But, the experience of Scott and Kimberly, even before their conversion to Catholicism is totally different. Describing his first experience of attending Holy Mass, Scott says: "Then one day,I decided that it was time for me to go to Mass on my own.I took a seat as an observer in the back pew.Then a bell rang and a priest walked out toward the altar. I remained seated; I still wasn't sure if it was safe to kneel. As an evangelical Calvinist, I had been taught that the Catholic

Mass was the greatest sacrilege that a man could commit – to re-sacrifice Christ – so I wasn't sure what to do. I watched and listened as the readings, prayers and responses – so steeped in Scripture made the Bible come alive. I found numerous elements from the ancient Jewish liturgy that I had studied so intensely. All of a sudden I realized, this is where the Bible belongs. This was the setting in which this precious family heirloom was meant to be read, proclaimed and expounded. Then we moved into the Liturgy of the Eucharist, where all my covenant conclusions converted. I wanted to stop everything and shout, 'Hey can I explain what is happening from Scripture? This is great!' Instead I just sat there, famished with a supernatural hunger for the Bread of Life. After pronouncing the words of consecration, the priest held up the Host. I felt as if the last drop of doubt had drained from me. With all my heart, I whispered, 'My Lord and my God. That's really You! And if that's You, then I want full communion with You. I don't want to hold anything back'. And with that, I left the chapel, not telling a soul where I had been or what I had done, but the next day I was back, and the next, and the next. Within a week or two I was hooked. I don't know how to say it but I had fallen head over heels in love with our Lord in the Eucharist! His presence to me in the Blessed Sacrament was powerful and personal. As I sat in the back I began to kneel and pray with the others whom I now knew to be my brothers and sisters.I had found my family – it was God's family.Day after day, witnessing the entire drama of the Mass, I saw the covenant renewed right before

my eyes. I knew Christ wanted me to receive Him in faith, not just spiritually in my heart, but physically as well: Onto my tongue, down my throat and into my whole body and soul. This was what the Incarnation was all about. This was the Gospel in its fullness" - (Pages 87 & 88).

Similarly, Kimberly summarizes her experience of the Holy Mass when she attended the Ash Wednesday service (two years before her baptism in the Catholic Church): "I was amazed how deeply the liturgy touched me. The call to repentance was so clear, I wondered how several ex-Catholic friends had missed it when they said they had never been called to the Gospel in the Catholic Church" - (Page 137).

Scott says that since Kimberly's conversion they make an effort to attend daily Mass as a family: "With the Eucharist at the centre of our lives, we are able to show our children how the Bible and the liturgy go together – the menu and the meal" - (Page 166).

9) THE HOLY BIBLE AND THE INFALIBILITY OF PETER AND THE POPES

When Dr. John Gerstner, a Harvard-trained Calvinist theologian with strong anti-Catholic convictions said that Catholic Tradition, the Popes and Ecumenical Councils all taught contrary to Scripture, Scott asked the question: "Contrary to whose interpretation of Scripture? Besides, Church historians all agree that we got the New Testament from the Council of Hippo in 393 AD and the Council of Carthage in 397 AD, both of which sent off their judgments to Rome for the Pope's approval. From 30 to 393 is a long time to be without a New Testament. Isn't

it? Besides, there were so many other books that people back then thought might be inspired, such as the Epistle of Barnabas, the Shepherd of Hermas and the Acts of Paul. There were also several New Testament books such as Second Peter, Jude and Revelation, that some thought should be excluded. So whose decision was trustworthy and final, if the Church doesn't teach with infallible authority?"

When Dr. Gerstner had calmly replied: "Popes, Bishops and Councils can do mistakes. Scott, how is it you can think that God renders Peter infallible?" Scott responded: "Protestants and Catholics agree that God most certainly rendered Peter infallible on at least a couple of occasions, when he wrote First and Second Peter, for instance.Likewise, if God could do it with Peter and the other Apostles who wrote Scripture – then why couldn't He do it with their successors as well, especially since He could foresee the anarchy that would come if He didn't? Besides, Dr. Gerstner, how can we be sure about the 27 books of the New Testament themselves being the infallible Word of God, since fallible Church Councils and Popes are the ones who made up the list?"

Scott was very much surprised when Dr. Gerstner had then said: "All we have is a fallible collection of infallible documents!" After pondering about the logical inconsistency of Dr. Gerstner's response which faithfully represented the Protestant position, Scott finally responded: "Then it occurs to me, Dr. Gerstner, that when it comes right down to it, it must be the Bible and the Church – both or neither!" - (Pages 74 to 76). *(This conversation took place before Scott's conversion to the Catholic Faith).*

(Contd. on next week)

Joan of Arc, nicknamed "The Maid of Orléans" (1412 – 1431)

Feast 30 May

She is a national heroine of France and a Roman Catholic saint. A peasant girl born in what is now eastern France, who claimed divine guidance, she led the French army to several important victories during the Hundred Years' War, which paved the way for the coronation of Charles VII. She was captured by the Burgundians, transferred to the English in exchange for money, put on trial by the pro-English Bishop of Beauvais Pierre Cauchon for charges of "insubordination and heterodoxy,"[3] and burned at the stake as a heretic when she was only 19 years old.[4]

Twenty-five years after the execution, an Inquisitorial court authorized by Pope Callixtus III examined the trial, pronounced her innocent and declared her a martyr.[4] Joan of Arc was beati-

fied in 1909 and canonized in 1920. She is – along with St. Denis, St. Martin of Tours, St. Louis IX, and St. Theresa of Lisieux – one of the patron saints of France. Joan said that she had visions from God that instructed her to recover her homeland from English domination late in the Hundred Years' War. The uncrowned King Charles VII sent her to the siege of Orléans as part of a relief mission. She gained prominence when she overcame the dismissive attitude of veteran commanders and lifted the siege in only nine days. Several additional swift victories led to Charles VII's coronation at Reims and settled the disputed succession to the throne.

To the present day, Joan of Arc has remained a significant figure in Western culture. From Napoleon onward, French politicians of all leanings have invoked her memory. Famous

writers and composers who have created works about her include: Shakespeare (Henry VI, Part 1), Voltaire (The Maid of Orleans poem), Schiller (The Maid of Orleans play), Verdi (Giovanna d'Arco), Tchaikovsky (The Maid of Orleans opera), Mark Twain (Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc), Arthur Honegger (Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher), Jean Anouilh (L'Alouette), Bertolt Brecht (Saint Joan of the Stockyards), George Bernard Shaw (Saint Joan) and Maxwell Anderson (Joan of Lorraine). Depictions of her have continued in film, theatre, television, video games, music and performances.





Archbishop Dolan posted the following commentary on his blog, The Gospel in the Digital Age, on June 14, 2011.

The stampede is on. Our elected senators who have stood courageous in their refusal to capitulate on the State's presumption to redefine marriage are reporting unrelenting pressure to cave in. The media, mainly sympathetic to this rush to tamper with a definition as old as human reason and ordered good, reports annoyance on the part of some senators that those in defense of traditional marriage just don't see the light, as we persist in opposing this enlightened, progressive, cause. But, really, shouldn't we be more upset-and worried-about this perilous presumption of the State to reinvent the very definition of an undeniable truth-one man, one woman, united in lifelong

love and fidelity, hoping for children that has served as the very cornerstone of civilization and culture from the start?

Last time I consulted an atlas, it is clear we are living in New York, in the United States of America-not in China or North Korea. In those countries, government presumes daily to "redefine" rights, relationships, values and natural law. There, communiques from the government can dictate the size of families, who lives and who dies, and what the very definition of "family" and "marriage" means.

But, please, not here! Our country's founding principles speak of rights given by God, not invented by government, and certain noble values - life, home, family, marriage, children, faith-that are protected, not redefined, by a State presuming omnipotence.

Please, not here! We cherish true freedom, not as the license to do



whatever we want, but the liberty to do what we ought; we acknowledge that not every desire, urge, want, or chic cause is automatically a "right." And, what about other rights, like that of a child to be raised in a family with a mom and a dad? Our beliefs should not be viewed as discrimi-

The True Meaning of Marriage

nation against homosexual people. The Church affirms the basic human rights of gay men and women, and the State has rightly changed many laws to offer these men and women hospital visitation rights, bereavement leave, death benefits, insurance benefits and the like. This is not about denying rights. It is about upholding a truth about the human condition.

Marriage is not simply a mechanism for delivering benefits: It is the union of a man and a woman in a loving, permanent, life-giving union to procreate children. Please don't vote to change that. If you do, you are claiming the power to change what is not into what is, simply because you say so. This is false, it is wrong, and it defies logic and common sense.

Yes, I admit, I come at this as a believer, who along with other citizens of a diversity of creeds, believe that God, not Albany, has settled the definition of marriage a long time ago. We believers worry not only about what this new intrusion will do to our common good, but also that we will be coerced to violate our deepest beliefs to accommodate the newest state decree. (If you think this paranoia, just ask believers in Canada and England what's going on there to justify our apprehension.) But I also come at this as an American citizen, who reads our formative principles as limiting government, not unleashing it to tamper with life's most basic values.

Catholic New York

Catholics often make the Sign of the Cross casually, just as a nice gesture for beginning and ending their prayers. But when we learn to take this act seriously, signing ourselves frequently with faith and reverence, remarkable results can take place. We find ourselves doing measurably better in our Christian life: Praying with more passion, resisting our bad inclinations more effectively, and relating to others more kindly.

The Sign of the Cross, after all, is not merely a pious gesture. It is a powerful prayer, a sacramental of the Church.

Scripture, the Church Fathers and saints, and Catholic teaching offer six perspectives on the Sign of the Cross that reveal why making it opens us to life-transforming graces. Once we grasp them, we can make the gesture with more faith and experience its great blessings.

Six Reasons to Make the Sign

1. A mini-creed. The Sign of the Cross is a profession of faith in God as He has revealed himself. It serves as an abbreviated form of the Apostles' Creed.

Touching our forehead, breast and shoulders (and in some cultures, our lips as well), we declare our belief in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We are announcing our faith in what God has done - the creation of all things, the redemption of humanity from sin and death, and the establishment of the Church, which offers new life to all. When we sign ourselves we are making ourselves aware of God's presence and opening ourselves to His action in our lives.

That much alone would be enough to transform us spiritually, wouldn't it? But there is much, much more.

SIGN- OF GRACE, SIGN OF GLORY Six Reasons Why We Make the Sign of the Cross

2. A renewal of baptism. First century Christians began making the Sign of the Cross as a reminder and renewal of what happened to them when they were baptized. It still works the same way for us.

When we sign ourselves we are declaring that in baptism we died sacramentally with Christ on the cross and rose to a new life with Him (see Rom 6:3-4



and Gal 2:20). We are asking the Lord to renew in us those baptismal graces.

We are also acknowledging that baptism joined us to the Body of Christ and equipped us for our role of collaborating with the Lord in His work of rescuing all people from sin and death.

3. A mark of discipleship. At baptism the Lord claimed us as His own by marking us with the Sign of the Cross. Now, when we sign ourselves, we are affirming our loyalty to Him. By tracing the cross on our bodies, we are denying that we belong to ourselves and declaring that we belong to Him alone (see Lk 9:23).

The Church Fathers used the same word for the Sign of the Cross that the ancient world employed to indicate ownership. The same word named a shepherd's brand on his sheep, a general's tattoo on his soldiers, a householder's mark on his servants, and the Lord's mark on His disciples.

Signing ourselves recognizes that we are Christ's sheep and can count on His care; His soldiers, commissioned to work with Him in advancing His kingdom on earth; and His servants, dedicated to doing whatever He tells us.

4. An acceptance of suffering. Jesus promised us that suffering would be a normal part of a disciple's life (see Lk 9:23-24). So when we mark our bodies with the sign, we are embracing whatever pain comes as a consequence of our faith in Christ. Making the sign is our taking up the cross and following Him (Lk 9:23).

At the same time, however, it comforts us with the realization that Jesus, who endured the Crucifixion for us, now joins us in our suffering and supports us.

Signing ourselves also announces another significant truth: with St Paul, we are celebrating that our afflictions as members of the body of Christ contribute to the Lord's saving work of perfecting the Church in holiness (see Col 1:24).

5. A two-edged move against the devil. When the devil watched Jesus die on the cross, he mistakenly believed he had won a great victory. Instead, the Lord surprised him with an ignominious defeat (see 1 Cor 2:8). From the first Easter morning through the present, the Sign of the Cross makes the devil cower and flee.

On one level, then, making the sign is a defensive move, declaring our inviolability to the devil's influence. But, more



By Sirohmi Gunsekera

The Holy Spirit

"I just can't go on. My whole world has collapsed. My beloved Daddy is dead," moaned Ilika.

"My dear, I am so sorry. I know how close the two of you were. You who lost your mother at a tender age grew up being dependent on your father for love. That is why you did not even have a boyfriend. Now you are thirty five and alone. Why don't you pray to God for help?" suggested Nalin.

"I try to pray but am overwhelmed by the sense of loss. Often, I burst into tears and feel bereft," confessed Ilika.

"You must keep on praying and the Holy Spirit will come to your aid. Remember how we make the Sign of the Cross? We say 'In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.' We know that the Father who is God loves us. Then we look to Jesus as the Son of God to show us the way for He too was a human being like us and knew despair and heartache. Then the Holy Spirit comes within us and gives us the strength and courage to go on," explained Nalin.

"So you think that it is from the invisible Holy Spirit that we draw our strength. That is why the Feast of Pentecost is depicted with Tongues of Fire over the heads of the apostles. The Holy Spirit enabled them to speak in different languages and gave them fortitude. Perhaps we need to recognize that we are totally helpless without the Holy Spirit to guide us. Maybe I too will get over the loss of Daddy and be able to cope," said Ilika.

"Just live for the moment and ask God to help you cope. You have to undergo 'Grief Work' and come to terms with the loss of your father. In time, you will heal and the Holy Spirit will be with you throughout," advised Nalin.

TAKE TIME FOR A MINUTE OF HUMOUR - SMILE!



It's strange isn't it, how difficult and boring when you want to read one chapter of the Bible but how easy it is to read the Newspaper for hours.

Rev. Fr. Fracaid Anthony Fernando OMI



Compiled by: Kishani S. Fernando

This Sunday in honour of the Feast of Trinity Sunday, we focus on a pretty little Anglican Church, dedicated to the Holy Trinity in Nuwara Eliya.

The cruciform Church surrounded by its churchyard of tombstones is a veritable page from our British colonial past while the tall cypress, pines and firs that gives shade to its garden and the colourful beds of flowering shrubs makes it picture perfect.

The Church dates back to 1852 when it was consecrated by Bishop Chapman on St. Matthias' Day, 24th February, dedicated to the Holy Trinity. It was a time when Nuwara Eliya was experiencing an influx of European settlers who were into coffee and then the tea plantations. It was a church built for the colonial planting community, designed very much in the style that they remembered back home.

The origin of the Church is attributed to a meeting held in 1845 where it was considered that a church was needed for the spiritual ministration of the fast expanding European community who had made Nuwara Eliya or its neighbourhood their home. The estimated cost of the building was 900 sterling pounds. The architect was a gentleman by the name of Nelson. Construction was carried out chiefly by men of the 15th regiment under the supervision of Major Bruncker Commandant of Nuwara Eliya. Major Bruncker was assisted by Corporal Moore who had a reputation as an expert builder. It is recorded that it took 7 years to complete the building.

The Church has been enlarged twice thereafter. However the Church retains its original architectural features and most of its valuable church furnishing is in good order and preservation. The first thing you notice as you walk into the Church is the rather unusual wooden screen that hangs half way down from the ceiling, up over your head. The said screen taken together with the wooden railing immediately below, which may be opened up, in effect separates the congregation from the sanctuary. This was once a common feature in most churches but has been removed in many today. In church architecture it is referred to as the 'rood screen'.



and is intricately carved and hangs delicately like a veil. Over this the dark polished wooden ceiling lends a quaint old world charm. While the supporting timber trusses add a near gothic effect. The choir stalls are of solid oak, I was told.

The Church windows are dressed with exquisite stained glass, in my view some of the best to be found in Sri Lanka. The centre glass over the high altar depicts angels glorifying God. The other glass on the sides and at the rear of the Church depict focal scenes from the life of Jesus. The large glass on the east wall of the Mary Chapel depicting the "Madonna" was installed to celebrate the centenary anniversary of the Church in 1952. The stained glass with The British Royal Emblem, placed in the right wing in 1954, with the inscription "Kings Shall come to the brightness of thy rising" was a gift to the Church from Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke who attended the Good Friday and Easter Morning Service in this Church on

A page from our British Colonial past



18 April 1954. It is recorded that a special Red Carpet ordered from England was laid along the aisle, from the Baptismal Font (at the bottom of the Church) to the High Altar to grace this special occasion.

The high altar is of white marble elegantly carved with miniature pillars highlighting a Trinitarian design. The cross at the center is set against a pink marble backdrop as the Greek symbols Alpha (beginning) and Omega (end) which flank it. Immediately below the altar is a railing with an intricate bronze floral design.

The heavily and elaborately carved pulpit has the name of its donor and the circumstances of its donation sculpted in intricate English letters of wood around it. The "Hawk Lectern" of Burnished Brass and its wooden counterpart are classic. The white marble baptismal font, is heavily carved and stand prominently at the bottom of the Church.

The ancient pipe organ that stands on the side is a gift to the Church, it appeared in more recent times. A small plaque tells us its story: "A gem of an organ that has served Stockton-on-Tees Unitarian Church England from 1895 2005. May its music bring joy to Holy Trinity Church."

The Church walls are set with marble, bronze and gold-plated plaques and tablets in memory of its once vast and distinguished congregation. Reading these plaques is like being whisked in a time machine to a time when an European colonial congregation lived and worshipped here. A time when Nuwara Eliya was the model hill station, a delightful health resort and

a busy English town in the tropics.

Amongst the more famous names was a plaque "To the gentle memory of Lina Lady Ridgeway wife of the Right Honorable Sir West Ridgeway, Governor of Ceylon 1896 -1903, who passed away at Bracknell Brooks 16 June 1907. The tablet was erected by her devoted husband and daughters in Nuwara Eliya which she loved so much."

Another was dedicated to "Dr. George Cardner, Late Supt. of the Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya. Born at Glasgow died at Nuwara-Eliya March 12. 1849."

Yet another was dedicated to the "Sacred to the memory of Thomas Farr of North Cove Bogowantalawa. A lover of nature and God." And the list goes on.

The churchyard also contains many interesting tombstones. Amongst them are those of Lady Olive Mary Caldecott, wife of Sir Andrew Caldecott, the last Governor of Ceylon, and the family members of Sir Samuel Baker explorer and pioneer settler of modern day Nuwara Eliya.



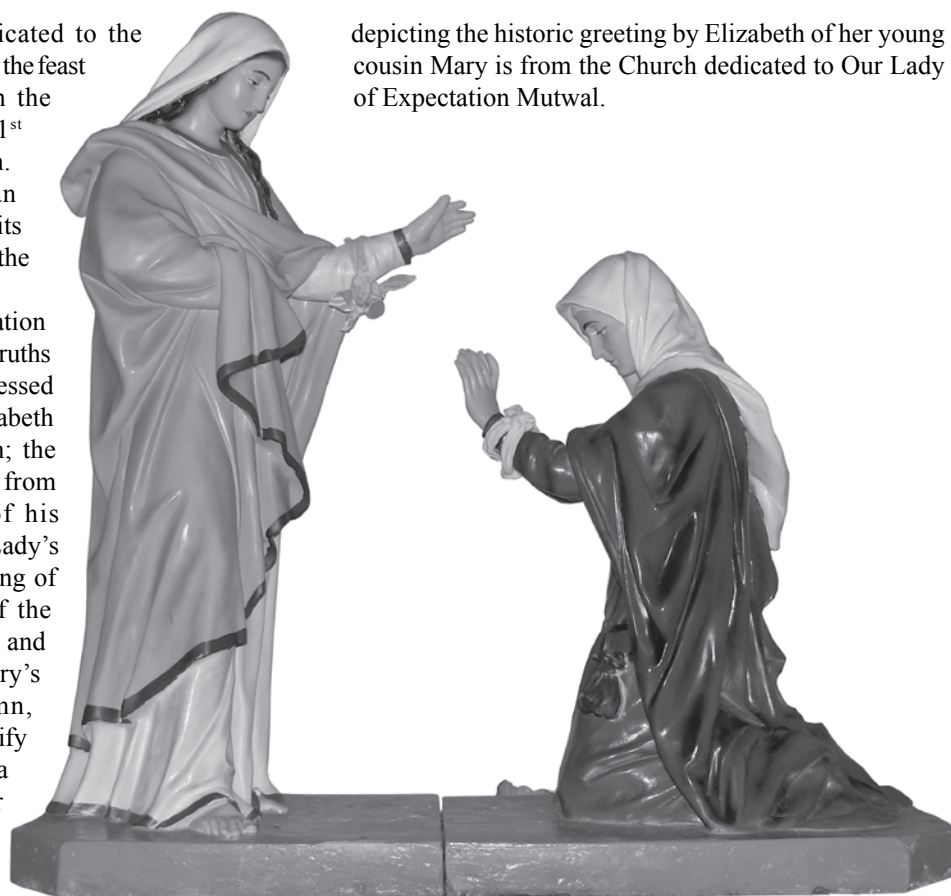
Virgin Blessed, Thou Star of the Fairest

The month of May dedicated to the Blessed Mother ends with the feast of the Visitation which the Church celebrates on the 31st of May is of medieval origin. It was kept by the Franciscan Order before 1263, and soon its observance spread throughout the entire Church.

The feast of the Visitation recalls to us the following great truths and events: The visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to her cousin Elizabeth shortly after the Annunciation; the cleansing of John the Baptist from original sin in the womb of his mother at the words of Our Lady's greeting; Elizabeth's proclaiming of Mary under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost as Mother of God and "blessed among women"; Mary's singing of the sublime hymn, *Magnificat* ("My soul doth magnify the Lord") which has become a part of the daily official prayer of the Church. The Visitation is frequently depicted in art.

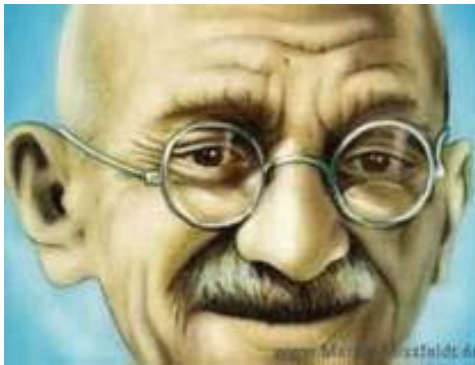
The statue here

depicting the historic greeting by Elizabeth of her young cousin Mary is from the Church dedicated to Our Lady of Expectation Mutwal.



Mahatma Gandhi's View on Christianity

Why I didn't become a follower of Christ?



If not for Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the Indian Independence struggle would have taken longer with more bloodshed, division and war.

When senior leaders of the Hindu political groups urged Gandhi to respond 'violence with violence' and 'sword with sword', he opposed insisting and exhorting the path of non-violence and peace, which was Gandhi's biggest sword to combat the trained and fully-equipped forces.

For sure this great man is one of the most respected leaders of modern history, for not only his life, but also his ideals and his message to the people.

Although Hindu, Gandhi had a very close connection with Christianity and admired Jesus very much, often quoting from his favourite 'Sermon on the Mount' Chapter in Mathew 5-7.

When the missionary E. Stanley Jones met Gandhi he asked him,

"Mr. Gandhi, though you quote the words of Christ often, why is that you appear to so adamantly reject becoming his follower?"

Gandhi replied,

"Oh, I don't reject Christ. I love Christ. It's just that so many of you Christians are so unlike Christ."

"If Christians would really live according to the teachings of Christ, as found in the Bible, all of India would be Christian today," he added..

Gandhi's closeness with Christianity began when he was a young man practicing law in South Africa. Apart from being attached with the Christian faith, he intently studied the Bible and the teachings of Jesus, and was also seri-

ously exploring becoming a Christian, which led him to his discovery of a small church gathering in his locality.

These strongly entrenched Biblical teachings have always acted a panacea to many of India's problems during its freedom struggle.

After deciding to attend the church service in South Africa, he came across a racial barrier, the church barred his way at the door.

"Where do you think you're going, kaffir?" an English man asked Gandhi in a belligerent tone.

Gandhi replied, "I'd like to attend worship here."

The church elder snarled at him, "There's no room for kaffirs in this church. Get out of here or I'll have my assistants throw you down the steps."

This infamous incident forced Gandhi to never again consider being a Christian, but rather adopt what he found in Christianity and its founder Jesus Christ.

In a speech to Women Missionaries in 28 July 1925, he said, "... although I am myself not a Christian, as an humble student of the Bible, who approaches it with faith and reverence, I wish respectfully to place before you the essence of the Sermon on the Mount....

There are thousands of men and women today who, though they may not have heard about the Bible or Jesus have more faith and are more God-fearing than Christians who know the Bible and who talk of its Ten Commandments..."

To a Christian missionary Gandhi once said, "To live the gospel is the most effective way most effective in the beginning, in the middle and in the end. ...Not just preach but live the life according to the light.... If, therefore, you go on serving people and ask them also to serve, they would understand.

But you quote instead John 3:16 and ask them to believe it and that has no appeal to me, and I am sure people will not understand it...the Gospel will be more powerful when practiced and preached."

"A rose does not need to preach. It simply spreads its fragrance. The fragrance is its own sermon...the fragrance of religious and spiritual life is much finer and subtler than that of the rose."

In many ways Gandhi was right, the intense proselytization by Christian missionaries in India through force and allurements forced him to make many scathing statements against Christian missionaries, which several times inspired them to retrospect and change the way of approach in 'Evangelism'.

"If Jesus came to earth again. He would disown many things that are being done in the name of Christianity," Gandhi said during his meeting with an English missionary.

Here I am remembered of Sadhu Sundar Singh who is said to have done more to "indigenize" the churches of India than any figures in the twentieth century.

"You have offered us Christianity in a Western cup... Give it to us in an Eastern bowl and we will drink of it," is a famous statement by Singh, who converted from Sikh to Christianity after his personal experience with Jesus, who appeared in his room on one morning in the year 1905, when he was just fifteen-years old.

Stanley Jones once asked Gandhi: "How can we make Christianity naturalized in India, not a foreign thing, identified with a foreign government and a foreign people, but a part of the national life of India and contributing its power to India's uplift?"

Gandhi responded with great



clarity, "First, I would suggest that all Christians, missionaries begin to live more like Jesus Christ.

Second, practice it without adulterating it or toning it down. Third, emphasize love and make it your working force, for love is central in Christianity. Fourth, study the non-Christian religions more sympathetically to find the good that is within them, in order to have a more sympathetic approach to the people."

"Therefore it is very important for Christians to practise Christianity among the non-believers so that they can know the real love of Lord Jesus"

Combining Humility of Intellect and Spirit

By Kuruvilla Pandikattu Sj

Richard Feynman is known as a cheerful eccentric who liked to "play bongos, chase women, and solve advanced problems in theoretical physics." He is one of the most famous physicists of the post-Einstein era. After his studies at the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Princeton in 1942, he worked during World War II at the Army Research Centre at Los Alamos, helping design the first atomic bomb of the United States. After the war he became closely associated with the celebrated California Institute of Technology, where he was a professor from 1951 until his death in 1988. He won the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1965 for his work on quantum electrodynamics. Physics students remember him even today for creating a visual representation of subatomic particles and pioneering work in quantum computing.

His first memoir, written in 1985, was quite whimsical, hilarious and anecdotal with the apt title: Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman. A second Feynman memoir, *What Do You Care What Other People Think?* was published after his death in 1988. The Feynman Lectures on Physics remain both a popular and classical text in the field.

He was both a serious researcher and a jovial human being. Typically, he is not considered a religious man. He holds: "Western civilisation, it seems to me, stands by two great heritages. One is the scientific spirit of adventure — the adventure into the unknown, an unknown which must be recognised as being unknown in order to be explored; the demand that the unanswerable mysteries of the universe remain unanswered; the attitude that all is uncertain; to summarise it — the humility of the intellect. The other great heritage

is Christian ethics — the basis of action on love, the brotherhood of all men, the value of the individual — the humility of the spirit." Such an evaluation by an "avowed atheist," as he called himself, is both an opportunity and challenge for religion in contemporary India. For in contemporary India more and more people are naturally turning to logic, beginning to doubt and pose serious questions.

So his comment is: "These two heritages are logically, thoroughly consistent. But logic is not all; one needs one's heart to follow an idea." Then he asks about the place of religion today: "If people are going back to religion, what are they going back to? Is the modern Church a place to give comfort to a man who doubts God — more, one who disbelieves in God? Is the modern church a place to give comfort and encouragement to the value of such doubts?"

His ardent desire is that "the humility of the intellect," with its scientific quest and "the humility of the spirit" with its spiritual openness will critique and reinforce each other. These two heritages are the prized possession of contemporary humans. So he asks: "How can we draw inspiration to support these two pillars of western civilisation so that they may stand together in full vigour, mutually unafraid? Is this not the central problem of our time?"

These two heritages drive our human quest forward. Respecting the distinction of these two searches, humans today need to support both these heritages and thus we can shape our collective destiny.

*Taken from Financial Chronicle,
Jan 23 2012
(Asia Journal for Priests & the
Religious.*

Archdiocesan "*Aggiornamento*" to be an effective and meaningful agent of Evangelization

I would like to place the renewal and revival of the Archdiocese of Colombo in the light of the Second Vatican Council. It was the inauguration of the Second Vatican Council in the year 1962, I was privileged to be at this occasion in Rome as I inaugurated my Theological Studies at this period. There were about three thousand Bishops from all over the world and also non-Catholic Religious Leaders. There were many experts in the fields of Religious and Secular Sciences who were there to facilitate the programme of the Vatican Council. It was fascinating to see thousands of Seminarians and nuns in various costumes and colours adding beauty and variety to the scenery at St. Peter's Square.

"*Aggiornamento*"

A word that echoed and re-echoed during this period was the word "*Aggiornamento*" which Pope John XXIII used, to explain the purpose of the Second Vatican Council. The '*Aggiornamento*' meant to bring about a positive self-criticism of the Church in the Light and inspiration of the Holy Spirit so as to make the Church meaningful and effective and assure the growth, vitality and vibrancy in the task of evangelization. There were various opinions and views expressed by the Universal Church about Papal Authority, rules and regulations regarding morality, population control, subsidiarity, liturgy and the very concept of the Church.

Pope John XXIII felt that Divine Providence was leading the Church to a new order of human relations. He realized that the sacred traditions, our patrimony of truth received from the Fathers should be preserved. However the Church too should look to the present, to the new conditions and cultures, new life-styles and scientific developments that have influenced the modern world and the confusions and convictions that have trickled down to grass-roots demanding new responses and interpretations of our deposit of faith. A good example is our change of attitude towards other religions and our ecumenical approach after the Second Vatican Council.

There were the Progressives and the Conservatives exchanging ideas and views that some times created embarrassment to authorities and simple faithful. So in this confused environment the Holy Spirit inspired Pope John XXIII who was elected as a night-watchman or a stop-gap, to take this bold and courageous step of launching a General Council of the Church after the first Vatican Council held in 1868 for the *Aggiornamento* of the Church.

There were ideas and thoughts expressed vehemently from every part of the globe. Western Europe with their background of Reformations and Counter Reformations came belligerently and forcefully with their literary acumen on theology and philosophy to make an impact on the Council Fathers. One writer explained this flow of ideas as the Rhine flowing in to the Tiber. Some of the names that were in the air were Karl Rahner, Yves Congar, Henri Lubac, Edward Schillebeeckx, Hans Kung, and Piolanti.

Pope John XXIII

Pope John was serious and sincere in his quest for a solution and a relevant methodology for evangelization. However God had His own plans and it was for Pope Paul VI to see the conclusion of the Council due to the unexpected demise of Pope John XXIII. Pope John had a natural knack for pleasant and humane relationships. I can remember on the night of the Inauguration of the Council addressing the mammoth crowd present at St. Peter's Square, Pope John said, "Dear Parents, when you go home tonight, kiss your children and tell them that it is a kiss from the Pope." I had the opportunity of meeting the brother of Pope John XXIII in Bergamo when I visited his farm. When I went with Mr. Angelo Capelli, a famous Painter, the brother of the Pope came from the farm and gave us Cheese and Wine. He was a replica of the Pope with a big nose and a natural expression of friendship and warmth.

This affectionate, simple and outgoing mindset was in their family. Pope Paul VI came from a different background and was a little stiff and reserved in his expressions. He was from an upper class and an intellectual. He had to make some special and conscious effort to be somewhat like Pope John. I personally think that he was a great pope chosen by God as the successor of Pope John and to see to the conclusions of the Vatican Council and the implementation of it to a great extent. Some of us had the privilege of being ordained by him at St. Peter's Basilica at the end of the Second Vatican Council.

In the Vatican Council we experienced an openness and a desire to learn from the flow of ideas. There were a lot of arguments and many had the aim and the objective of the Council, the "*Aggiornamento*" of the Church in their mind and attempted to interpret them trusting in God and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Pope himself was humble and open. At the opening address Pope John said that the goal of the council was to eradicate the seeds of discord and promote peace and the unity of all humankind. He also said that with regard to doctrine that the Council Fathers should keep in mind the distinction between substance of doctrine and the way in which it is presented. He was keen to make the Church a World Church and not a Western Church. This direction and objective the Pope gave or the Vision he created went a long way for the Council to focus their attention in a practical and relevant manner.

Effective Instruments

In the Archdiocesan "*Aggiornamento*" too we need a practical and clear vision. Bishops and priests should be convinced and clear as to the vision and targets, it is important that our strategic planning is not vague but clear and practical, precise and measurable. At any stage we should be able to monitor and evaluate the progress and if necessary amend the plans.

Many bishops did their homework and attended the council with sincerity and seriousness doing their studies enthusiastically. Our late Thomas Cardinal Cooray whom we used

to meet often in Rome at the Oblate House used to show the documents they had to study and brief us as to what was happening at the Council. So in our restructuring and renewal we too should reflect and study why God has chosen us as Christians, Priests and Religious. How do we understand our vocation as Christians and as a people of God called and chosen to be sent to preach the Good News. "It was not you who chose me but I who chose you" (Jn.15:16). Let us be humble enough to accept our realities like lack of Vision and enthusiasm, dormant and indifferent commitment to our mission and calling because of our desire for worldly things and niceties, unconscious and unquestioning following up of modern day trends and forces. These do make us individualistic and selfish, constraining us of becoming good Christians and also good priests and religious. So the need for all of us in this period of "*Aggiornamento*" to look at ourselves and amend our ways so that we could be effective and efficient instrument in the hand of the Lord. I am sure that the Laity will see Christ in us priests and religious.

It is Providential at this period we have the enrichment of the Archdiocese with two Auxiliary Bishops and also the new appointments and transfers which give us the opportunity to start our priestly apostolates and missions with a new enthusiasm and change of mind in case if we have fallen to any unpleasant situations. It gives us an opportunity to dream dreams anew and choose right directions and dedications with a new discipline and devotion. Let us surrender ourselves to the Lord and renew and revive our commitment to Christ who called us to be with Him so as to come to know Him and then to be sent (Mt.4:4-6) so that we may bear fruit, fruit that lasts. (Jn.15:16).

Anchored

I want to share with you some experience I had. When I was a young priest. I used to be involved in youth and University student apostolates. Well I used run from place to place meeting them and having study sessions with them but I did not have much time to pray or to be with the Lord. I was convinced that working and meeting people too was prayer and it hardly occurred that Jesus who too was very busy found time to be with the Father and had time for that vertical relationship. Gradually I realized that my inner spiritual treasury was running dry. This can happen to many of us but there is no substitute for the time you spend with the Lord. It is the power house. It is that that gives efficacy and animation. So my dear fellow Christians and brother priests let us see whether we are anchored on the Lord as Christians, Priests and Religious. No '*Aggiornamento*' is possible without this connection.

The "*Aggiornamento*" of the Second Vatican Council in some areas was a failure because of our failure to study the documents and see to the implementation of the resolutions. If we are to see to the renewal or the revival of the Church, Priests, Religious and

Faithful should be aware of this process of renewal and become more familiar with the teachings of the Church and especially the Word of God. For this the Priests and Religious should have programmes to study the Word of God and also some of the social teachings of the Church together with the Lay Leaders, so as to be effective leaders of the community and efficient agents of evangelization. Today with the threat of Fundamentalism it is of paramount importance for the laity to be well aware of the Word of God and Ecclesiastical practices. So our "*Aggiornamento*" to be realistic and effective it is important to have programmes to build awareness for the Priests, Religious and Laity. The monitoring of the "*Aggiornamento*" with ongoing evaluations is important for its success. Taking into consideration our human weakness it is important to work as a group encouraging one another mutually so that they may be on the same wave-length in the implementation of "*Aggiornamento*" programmes. The administration too should make use of the network it has to encourage and animate the priests, religious and laity on the move with necessary inputs required for the successful implementation of the restructuring.

Planning

In this whole exercise one important factor is planning. Planning not only at Diocesan level but also at regional, deanery and parish levels so that planning would be realistic and achievable. The person at the grass-root will know how to apply the decisions according to the exigencies and resources available. Almost two years ago we spoke about strategic planning. The difference between strategic planning and long-term planning is that strategic planning makes greater emphasis on strategies in the achievement of the Vision or the long-term objective. Strategic planning go through periodical evaluations and remedy the strategies accordingly. Today things change very quickly and unexpectedly. Even in our missionary ventures there are so many changes that take place. The transfers themselves can be a constraint. Political system can be a hindrance to the work of the Church. Therefore there is a need of a monitoring mechanism or a team so as to intervene and remedy such situations.

So in our restructuring and "*Aggiornamento*" of the Archdiocese there should be constant monitoring and establishment of check and balances so that we may tread towards our goals which too should be clearly defined so that every participant may be well aware of it. In this whole process the Dean should be a catalyst of renewal and revival. They should be motivated and trained so as to animate and encourage both priests and laity. Let us with faith and confidence ask Blessed Virgin Mary to be with us as she was with the apostles in the Cenacle assuring us the help of the Holy Spirit.

Rev. Fr. Crispin Leo

APPRECIATION

*If tears could build a staircase**** Third Month Remembrance**

Her life in this world began as a daughter who brought happiness to her parents, late Charles Appuhamy and Mary Subasinghe and as a sister to three brothers - Gregory, Dr. Polycarp, Nemisius, and three sisters - Late Irene, Perlita and Susila who she doted on. They in turn were very fond of her.

She was a devoted Catholic, who never missed church services and prayers and who had an abiding faith in God and devoted her entire life to be a living testimony for Jesus Christ. She lived such an exemplary life as a human being who helped anyone when she felt they needed some assistance. She was more concerned about the welfare of others. There

were no words for her big loving heart. Her kindness, love, concern, greatness, generosity and hospitality lead to help others who are in need.

She was innocent, sincere, humble and honest and was never jealous of anyone. She was always with a smile, full of life, mannerism and courtesy. So she was loved by everyone.

She also excelled in sewing and gardening. The beautiful garden with foliage around the house in Negombo is a proof of her prowess in gardening. She was an authority on culinary matters and loved seeing everyone enjoying the delicious dishes she turned out. She was a woman with a deep sense

of responsibility who accomplished everything with devotion.

But life swayed proving it wasn't a bed of roses. All dreams collapsed with her cancer diagnosis last July. She hardly revealed her pain to others, never wanted her loved ones to go through the pain. She showed us how to fight an illness where there was no answer, really no cure. She passed away in the morning of 1st March 2012. An irreplaceable void was left in our hearts with her departure. The love she bore towards her family was reflected in the eyes of those who missed her.

If tears could build a stairway and memories a lane, we would walk right

up to heaven and bring you home again. No farewell words were spoken, no time to say goodbye, you were gone before we knew it and only God knows why. Our hearts still ache and secret tears still flow. But what it means to lose you no one will ever know. In our hearts you dwell with love, in God's care you rest above, deep in our hearts you are always near, still loved still missed and very dear. You have gone from our sight, but never from our thoughts. No words could ever say how much we love you and how much we miss you. The memories of the days you spent with us will remain forever.

There's a face that's ever before us, there's a voice we would



like to hear, there's a smile we will remember of one who is precious and dear. These are the treasures we tenderly hold today, tomorrow and our whole life through. In silence and prayers we always love and remember you. Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon her and may her soul rest in peace.

Fondly remembered with undying love and gratitude by beloved husband Eustace, loving daughter Shivoli and Son-In-Law Nishantha.

Jesus the Bohemian

*Man and Nazareth
Biblical Bohemian
Starring anew
God promised land
In retinue
Disciples diverse
Many made follow
New star divine
God he claims
In heaven the father
Teah he did
contradictions
Prevailing customs
Provocative, Outspoken
Preaching gathered
Crowds, Momentum
Jews, Highpriests
Rejection and anger
Resolute, Percevered
Death to rise again
Proving all world
Jesus is God
saved man
This Biblical King*

Sent by: Miran Perera

Catholic Church in Sri Lanka in an indigenous outlook

Last Sunday the Catholic Community in the University of Peradeniya celebrated the patronal feast of the Chapel of Mary, Our Lady of the Seat of Wisdom in collaboration with the Newman Society Alumni Association. This year's feast has added significance, since this year is the Diamond Jubilee of the formation of the Newman Society. Some of the founder members of the Newman Society like Rev. Fr. Derrick Mendis, Rev. Fr. Egerton Perera sj, Prof. Ashley Halpe, Rev. Fr. Joseph. Eustace Fernando, were present on this occasion.

The chief celebrant at the concelebrated High Mass held at the Chapel was His Lordship, Vianey Joseph Fernando, Bishop of Kandy. This unique Church is the first chapel with the indigenous outlook in Sri Lanka.

The European missionaries during the Portuguese times who established the Catholic Church in Sri Lanka in the 16th century imposed Western culture on people along with Christianity.

During the Dutch times, the Oratorian priests made an attempt to bring about a synthesis between Christian traits and indigenous cultural patterns. Nevertheless the art and architecture remained Western.

In 1940s when the administration of the Church began to be indigenised there was a renaissance in the sphere of Catholic cultural activity. The late Bishop Edmund Pieris revived some works of Oratorian missionaries.

Others like Rev. Fr. D.J. Anthony, Fr. Marcel-line Jayakody, Sunil Shantha and J.K.S. Perera produced outstanding religious literary works and hymns that contained both Christian traits and national outlook.

Until the 1950s the Catholic churches in Sri Lanka were built on Western models following Roman forms and Greek Gothic style. However the Basilica in Tewatta which was designed in

1940s deviated from the normal pattern and has elements of oriental architecture.

The first church in Sri Lanka to be built strictly adhering to indigenous art and architecture was St. Mary's Church, Badalgama. It was the brainchild Rev. of Fr. Henry Rodrigo OMI, which was begun in 1953 and completed in 1956.

In building St. Mary's Church, Badalgama, Fr. Henry Rodrigo adopted art and architecture, sculptural forms and decorative designs in the Anuradhapura period.

He followed Kandyan architecture in designing the outer structure, facade and the roof. St. Mary's Church Badalgama has proved that a beautiful church could be built following indigenous art and architecture. Now almost all the new Catholic churches in Sri Lanka are built with an indigenous outlook.

When the construction of the celebrated St. Mary's Church, Badalgama was in progress, though not in such a grandiose form, another Chapel with an indigenous outlook was taking shape in the foothills of Hantane. This was the Church of Our Lady of the Seat of Wisdom in the Peradeniya University Campus.

The Chapel was designed by the then Peradeniya University Catholic Chaplain and well known scholar Rev. Fr. Ignatious Pinto.

Its construction was initiated in 1953 and was completed within two years. It was blessed by Dr. Bernard Regno OSB, the Bishop of Kandy and was formally inaugurated in late 1955. In a way the Chapel of Our Lady of the Seat of Wisdom could be considered as the first church with an indigenous outlook.

The Arts Faculty of the University of Ceylon was shifted to Peradeniya in 1952. The Catholic Students who moved to Peradeniya University Campus formed the Catholic Students' Union there

in October 1952. In 1953, the society allied itself with University Catholic students world-wide and changed its name into Newman Society.

With the shifting of the Arts Faculty of the University Fr. Ignatious Pinto moved to Peradeniya as lecturer in European History and Chaplain of the Catholic students. Soon he conceived the idea to build a chapel and a hall of residence. After months of tenacious correspondence Fr. Ignatious Pinto managed to get a land within the University Campus.

While the construction of the project was in progress Fr. Ignatious Pinto took up residence in the site sharing part of the shed meant for workers and supervised it tirelessly making a tremendous sacrifice.

Due to his courage, determination and perseverance Fr. Pinto could make his dream a reality under two years. It was Fr. Ignatious Pinto who named the chapel with the inspiring choice 'Chapel of Our Lady of the Seat of Wisdom'.

Fr. Ignatious Pinto built the Chapel in accordance with national concepts with Kandyan elements and Lotus shaped lamps etc. to fall in line with the early University buildings in Peradeniya. The triumphant climax of his thinking is the Mosaic with Our Lady of the Seat of Wisdom in saree in an indigenous framework with a Kandyan arch at the top.

He commissioned the Goan artist Angela Trinidad to lay out the Mosaic. Such an outstanding Mosaic with an oriental flavour is not found in any other Catholic Church in Sri Lanka.

There is a tendency among some to depict Blessed Virgin Mary in cloth and jacket and St. Joseph in national dress to bolster up the national ethos.

This is absurd, for in that event in the West Our Lady should be presented in frock and

St. Joseph in coat and trousers. It should be emphasised that Our Lady appeared in Lourdes in France and Fatima in Portugal in her usual Jewish dress and not in Western frock.

As such the Blessed Virgin Mary has to be depicted in her usual garb even to depict her with a national outlook. This aspect is magnificently dealt within the Mosaic of the Chapel of Our Lady of the Seat of Wisdom.

At present the women in Sri Lanka except some Muslim ladies do not cover their heads with the saree. The Jewish custom of covering the head is retained in the Mosaic.

However the saree and the manner it is worn has the oriental touch. As a result Our Lady is presented in her usual appearance in an oriental outlook. Any Sri Lankan or an Indian looking at the Mosaic could find her in accordance with his own native background.

Besides the Mosaic of the Chapel of Our Lady of the Seat of Wisdom is a fascinating work of art pregnant with meaning. The authority of Our Lady is manifested with a throne laid upon a Lotus which symbolises purity. The crest jewel in her crown and angels worshipping her makes her a queen.

The seven lamps at her feet are interpreted as the light of the Holy Spirit endowing the gifts of knowledge, understanding, wisdom, counsel, fortitude piety and fear of the Lord. The light emanating from the Holy Infant on lap radiates 32 stars found in the background.

The Mosaic of the Chapel of Our Lady of the Seat of Wisdom encompasses all the virtues an undergraduate should possess when he or she comes out to the world. As a whole this Chapel is a masterpiece manifesting Sri Lankan national identity.

The Chapel of Our Lady of the Seat of Wisdom with its indig-

When I Die

**When I die
No weeping will
Comfort my soul**

**But Prayer will
Indeed be fruitful**

**When breath stops
The soul departs
from the body
When life ends
the body loses
All its glory**

**Hence, I plead
With you, please
Dispose my
Lifeless, soul less
body on the very day
My life ends**

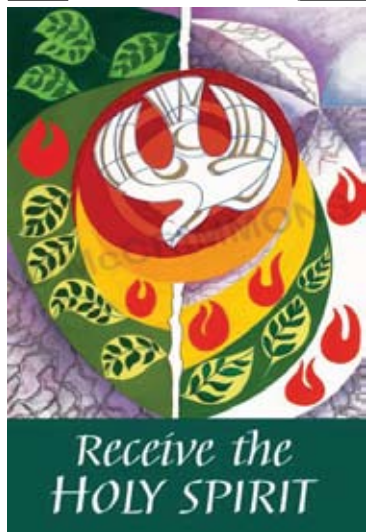
**Spending lavishly
for the funeral
for the sake of others
to please others,
is a SIN indeed.**

Seba

enous art and architecture and its wonderful Mosaic with an oriental outlook is a unique structure that adorns Peradeniya University Campus.

It stands as a monument to its creator the great and holy priest of God, erudite historian and founder chaplain of the Newman Society in Peradeniya, Rev. Fr. Ignatious Pinto.

(The writer is a former High Court judge and a vice president of the Newman Society Alumni Association).



Baptism and again at Confirmation. We also call on the Holy Spirit any time we want or need Him in our life: "...how much more will the Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Lk 11:13). When we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit we are known as the Temples of the Holy Spirit (cf. I Cor 6:19); that means the Holy Spirit resides in us.

The difference between the God's gift of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of Holy Spirit:

When the Holy Spirit is poured out upon a person, this one gift is manifested in different ways and we call them as gifts of the Holy Spirit: 'Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Knowledge, Fortitude, Piety, Fear of God.' These are the permanent dispositions which make a person docile in following the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Our spiritual life is sustained by these gifts. These gifts are of three categories:

The Vocal gifts:

The gifts of Prophecy, speaking in tongues, and interpretation of tongues.

Holy Spirit

The Power gifts:

The gift of faith, healing, and working of miracles.

The Revelation gifts:

The gifts of the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge and discerning of spirits.

How to know what gifts we have ?

"We must know that there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common Good" (I Cor 12:4-7). Usually the gifts of the Holy Spirit are discovered through our interests/desires.

We always feel being drawn to do certain things and we know that it pleases God: "It is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Phil 2:13). For example, you

wisdom and counsel. Likewise when you pray the Holy Spirit will give you the necessary gift according to your need.

The Holy Spirit gives us these gifts. But a gift that lies on the table without ever being unwrapped does us no good. Make good use of the gifts that the Holy Spirit has given you. by following the example of Jesus, and the heroes and Saints we learn about in the Bible and in the tradition of the Church.

Courtesy: Divine Voice



The Perfect Solution

Once upon a time there lived a rich man. He had 3 sons and 17 camels. When he died a problem arose about how to divide the 17 camels. According to the law of that land, the eldest son would receive half share, the second son - one third and the third son one ninth. After much squabbling and arguments the three sons finally decided to seek the advice of the king. The king listened to their story; then he led in one of his own camels

to where the 17 camels were lined up. Thus, 18 camels stood ready to be divided. The king called the eldest son and requested him to take his share. The eldest now had no problem he took 9 camels and went happily on his way. The second son had no cause for disappointment. His allotted share was one third he gathered 6 camels and went off. 3 camels remained. The youngest could not complain. His

fathers decree was that the youngest should get one ninth that is 2 camels. He took two camels and left for his home. One solitary camel remained. The King took the camel and returned to his palace. Are you faced with a situation that seems to have no answer? Don't waste time squabbling and fighting, fretting and fuming. Take your problem to the King of Kings. He will give you the perfect solution.



I Enjoy Teaching

I teach at Yamatho Lanka Montessori at Mahara- Nugegoda. I enjoy teaching very much. I love the children. The children love me too. There are six classes in the school they are Tharaka (star), Walakulu (cloud), Dedunu (Rainbow) Sandu (Moon), Hiru (Sun) Mandakini. I am in charge of the star class.

In May 2012 a teacher was absent for many days. I was burdened with that class too. I could not do proper teaching, not even in my class. I am sorry for the children.

Sanduni Prasadika, Tewatte

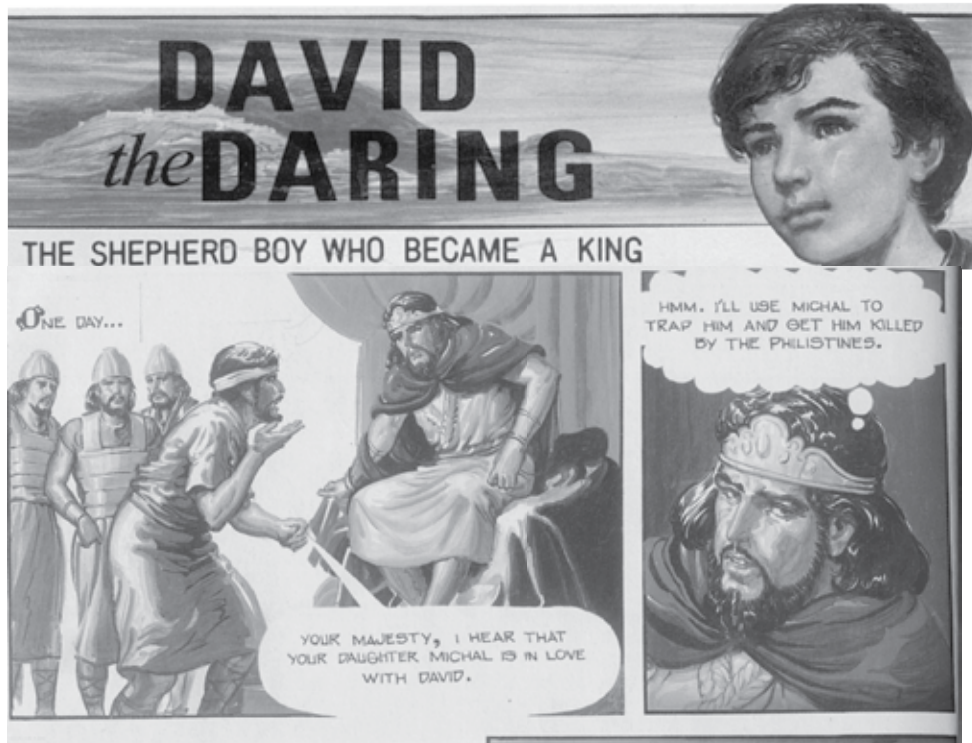


Giving up my Captaincy



I was the captain of the Cricket team of Jayakody Maha Vidyalaya. For the last three years. In February 2012 my team lost to Ananda College, Chilaw. So I had to give up my captaincy. That was a sad day in my life.

Nisshanka Archchilage Chathuranga Lakmal
Jayakody Maha Vidyalaya,
Welipillawa, Ganemulla



(Next week)

Kiddies Sportsmeet at St. Joseph's College, Wattala



St. Joseph's College, Wattala took another great initiative to teach children traditional values and games by organizing a colorful and eventful Avurudu Festival in the College Grounds. Teachers and parents took a lot of pain to create a traditional village atmosphere, the Govi Gedera etc.

The students of Grades 1 and 2 participated in Avurudu Games including Kotta Pora, Tug-O-War, Musical Chairs etc. The main feature was the selection of Singithi Avurudu Kumari and Kumara. The Sahan Ranwala Dancing Troupe added colour to the event.

Rev. Fr. Ranjith Andradi, Rector St. Joseph's College, Wattala thanked all primary school teachers in their effort to make this colorful event a success.

Text : Padminie Nanayakkara

Picture : Shewin Mahwatta

☞ "I am the Light of the World"

It's your Word that gives light to my parth.

☞ "I am the Vine"

Yes, Jesus you invite me to be with you in close intimacy



First ever Lenten Programme

Children of Moratuwa, St. Sebastian's Balika Maha Vidyalaya for the first time participated in a Lenten programme led by Rev. Fr. Tony Pinto

Doreen Pinto

New Prefects of Kandawala Parish Daham School



Fourteen students of St. Theresa's Daham School of St. Theresa's Church in Kadawela took their oaths last Sunday as prefects for the year 2012.

Here they are seen with Rev. Fr. Sarath Tirimanne, Parish Priest of Kandawela, Mr. Tony Nishantha and Mrs. Sumudrika Sanjeevani, Daham teachers.

Text and Pic by : Cecil Danicius

Dental Clinic for Pamunugama MV



When the media spotlighted the difficulties the school children underwent following the closure of the School Dental Clinic attached to the Primary Section of Pamunugama, MV, Mr. Merryl Perera member of the Western PC spent rupees two lakhs out of his funds to repair the building. Picture shows Rev. Fr. Jude Nicholas, an old boy of the school with some school staff before declaring open the clinic.

(S.K.J. Kurera)

Children get a glimpse of newspaper work



Children from the Daham Schools coming under the Nattandiya Parish had the privilege of undergoing a workshop on newspaper editing and writing.

The programme was conducted by Kumara Nayanajith, of the Gnranartha Pradeepaya, where the children were given an idea on how to write a short news report, a feature story and how news photography.

Pic. Shiyargani, Felicia

Daphne Lord

Birthday Remembrance

Born 31st May 1928

Called to Eternal Rest 16th August 2011



"You'll never walk alone"

Always in our minds and hearts

Alfred, Cherie, Raymond, Michael, Gloria, Jacqueline

(N0981)

New School Prefects of Kongodamulla MV



Around 31 Students of the Minu-Katana-Kongodamulla Maha Vidyalaya, took their oaths as school prefects for the year 2012. Rev. Sister. Preethika Fernando, Principal of the school was the chief guest. Picture shows the children with the teachers.

Text and photo by : Cecil Danicius

Jetwing
HOLIDAYS



HOLY LAND TOURS

Special Budget Pilgrimage - 06 Days

Now only **LKR 118,000/- p.p.** sharing DBL
Departure 03rd September
Register before 30th June 2012

Holy Land Tour - 09 Days

Now only **LKR 175,000/- p.p.** sharing DBL
Departures: 20th August, 17th September,
15th October, 19th November

Special Christmas Tour - 09 days

Celebrate Christmas mid night mass in Bethlehem.

Now only **LKR 178,000/- p.p.** sharing DBL
Departure: 23rd December
Register before 01st September 2012

Limited Seats

VELANKANNI CHENNAI



Rs. 40,000/- (Min 10 pax) p.p. inclusive Visa fee
Basilica of Our Lady of Good Health - Chennai
St. Thomas Mount. - 3 Star Hotel accommodation
with A/C - Air Ticket - Transfers on deluxe
coaches Breakfast & Dinner included
Group Departure 30th August, 25th September &
25th October

What it says in
the Readings

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of
your faithful, and kindle in them the
fire of your love.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR B
3rd June - 10th June 2012

SUN: THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

Deut 4: 32-34, 39-40,

Rom. 8: 14-17, Mt. 28: 16-20

Mon: 2 Pt. 1: 2-7, Mk. 12: 1-12

Tue: Memorial of St. Boniface, Bishop
& Martyr

2 Pt.3: 12-15,17-18, Mk. 12:13-17

Wed: Memorial of St. Norbert, Bishop
2 Tim. 1: 1-3,6-12, Mk. 12: 18-27

Thu: 2 Tim. 2: 8-15, Mk. 12: 28-34

Fri: 2 Tim. 3: 10-17, Mk. 12: 35-37

Sat: 2 Tim. 4: 1-8, Mk. 12: 38-44

**Sun: THE MOST HOLY BODY AND
BLOOD OF CHRIST**

Ex. 24: 3-8, Hebr 9: 11-15,

Mk. 14: 12-16,22-26

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Response: Father, hear us in your love.

For all Christians that they may be tireless in their efforts at spreading the good news of God's love and care for all the human family. We pray in faith.

Response: Father, hear us in your love.

For all rulers that God may grant them wisdom and love in their efforts at making the world a better place to live in for everyone. We pray in faith.

Response: Father, hear us in your love.

For those who have no belief in God that they may discover traces of his love in their heart and of his greatness in the world. We pray in faith.

Response: Father, hear us in your love.

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Trinity Sunday

First Reading:

Deut. 4: 32-34, 39-40

Moses reminds the people of the wonderful acts that God has performed on behalf of His chosen people. The Lord is God of heaven and earth. There is no other God. Therefore Moses wants the people to keep His commandments and be faithful to Him.

Second Reading: Rom. 8: 14-17

St. Paul tells the Romans that by receiving the Spirit, they have received the son-ship of God and share it with Christ. Therefore they became children of God and thereby heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.

Gospel: Mk. 28:16-20

Jesus instructs His disciples to go out to the nations, preach the Good News and baptize the faithful "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." He also promises to be with them to the end of time.

Reflection

Today we celebrate the feast of the Most Holy Trinity, three persons but one God. It has never been easy to grasp completely or to explain fully of God or of the Holy Trinity. Hence we call it a mystery. This is no matter to be alarmed; for if we humans could understand God fully, then God would no more be God or we become equal to God or even more powerful than God. We can understand only certain qualities of God. Even those facts and qualities which we are aware of are what have been revealed to us by God direct or through Jesus Christ His Son.

The Trinitarian aspect of God is revealed very clearly in today's Second Reading and in the Gospel and it occurs quite often in the New Testament, but is not in the Old Testament. This may be because in a polytheism background the Trinitarian aspect of God could be misunderstood as another form of polytheism, God therefore did not bring in the Trinitarian aspect of Him to the fore at that time. This does not mean that the Trinitarian aspect was not there from the beginning. In the creation story God is mentioned as the Creator, God-Head. The Spirit is also mentioned when it says "The Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters." The Son too is mentioned when God speaks, "Let there be.... etc. Those are words and it is the

word that was made flesh in the person of Jesus. Occasionally it was revealed from the heavens. There were times when the Israelites asked for the guidance of the Spirit, either to choose or to anoint a leader, king or a prophet. The Son is promised as the Saviour yet to come in the future.

Therefore it is wrong to say that the Trinitarian aspect of God is not mentioned at all in the Old Testament. May be it was not so clear, but was mentioned in the way that could be acceptable to the people of that time.

It may be even that with Christ things were revealed clearer and in concrete form. On this feast day; what we ought to do is not to break our heads trying to understand or grasp fully the Trinitarian aspect of God which is a mystery even for the greatest scholar, but find the qualities that are there in the Holy Trinity and try to adopt them into our lives and thereby become more and more Christian in nature and Christ like in our day to day lives. We can get at these facts through Jesus Christ, for he reveals things better and clearer, we also could get at these facts through the Word of God, the Bible. We could even pray that God would reveal them to us direct. For example we could adopt Trinitarian unity into our lives. Three equal forces united together, which we cannot see on our present day lives or society. It is love that binds them together so that no evil forces can separate. The fact that though they are powerful still makes them able to love the powerless and make them powerful. The sacrifice which they do so as to come down into the world in order to raise the fallen and the down trodden into the grace of God. The shearing of the same blessings with the unblest...etc.

But one very important fact we ought to remember is that the idea of the Holy Trinity is not a creation by a council or the Church, but is there throughout the Bible and it is mentioned at least in today's Second Reading and in the Gospel which are taken respectively from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans and from the Gospel of Mathew.



Aid story

An explorer had returned to his people, who were eager to know all about Amazon. But how could he ever put into words the feeling that flooded his heart when he saw flowers of breath taking beauty and heard the frightening sound of the forest at night? How to communicate what he felt in his heart as he sensed the danger of wild beasts or peddled his canoe over the treacherous part of the river? He said go and find out for yourselves. There is no substitute for personal risk and personal experience. To guide them however, he drew a map of the Amazon. They seized upon the Map. They framed it in their Town Hall. They made personal copies of it. And everyone who had a copy considered himself an expert on the Amazon though he did not know every turn and bend of the river, and how broad it was and how deep it was, where the rapids were and where the falls were? The explorer lived to regret the map. It might have been better if he had not drawn anything.

It is said that the Buddha steadfastly refused to be drawn into talking about God. He was probably acquainted with the danger of drawing maps for the potential scholars.

Aid Story 2

An atheist was spending a quiet day fishing when suddenly his boat was attacked by a monster. In one easy flip, the beast tossed him and his boat high into the air. As the man sailed head over heels, he cried out. "Oh my God! Help me!" At once the ferocious attack scene froze in place and as the atheist hung in midair, a booming voice came down from the clouds. "I thought you didn't believe in me."

"Come on God, give me a break!" the man pleaded. "Two minutes ago I didn't believe in the Monster either."

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH



CCCB

Faith and Baptism

1253 Baptism is the Sacrament of the Faith. But faith needs the community of believers. It is only within the faith of the Church that each of the faithful can believe. The faith required for Baptism is not a perfect and mature faith, but a beginning that is called to develop. The catechumen or the godparent is asked: "What do you ask of God's Church?" The response is: "Faith!"

1254 For all the baptized, children or adults, faith must grow after Baptism. For this reason the Church celebrates each year at the Easter Vigil the renewal of baptismal promises. Preparation for Baptism leads only to the threshold of new life. Baptism is the source of that new life in Christ from which the entire Christian life springs forth.

1255 For the grace of Baptism to unfold, the parents' help is important. So too is

the role of Godfather and Godmother, who must be firm believers, able and ready to help the newly baptized - child or adult — on the road of Christian life. Their task is a truly ecclesial function (officium). The whole ecclesial community bears some responsibility for the development and safeguarding of the grace given at Baptism.

Who can Baptize?

1256 The ordinary ministers of Baptism are the bishop and priest and, in

the Latin Church, also the deacon. In case of necessity, any person, even someone not baptized, can baptize, if he has the required intention. The intention required is to will to do what the Church does when she baptizes, and to apply the Trinitarian baptismal formula. The Church finds the reason for this possibility in the universal saving will of God and the necessity of Baptism for salvation.

(Catechism of the Catholic Church)