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● Pope Francis lambasts violence against Christians Says only love will transform all

Leading pilgrims in St. Peter's Square last Sunday, in a moment of silence for those being persecuted because of the faith, the Holy Father Pope Francis, lambasted what he called the "intolerable brutality" being perpetrated against Christians in Syria and Iraq,

Meditating on the Gospel text of the day - the powerful story of the Transfiguration of Jesus, when Jesus momentarily takes on a transparent countenance and appeared to the Apostles alongside Moses and Elijah - Pope Francis said Christians must accept a message of love that transforms all.

"We also climb the mountain of the Transfiguration and stop in contemplation of the face of Jesus in order to accept the message and translate it into our

lives; because we too can be transfigured by love," the Pope told the crowd.

Breaking away from his prepared text, he then said: "In reality, love has the capacity to transfigure all. Love transforms all."

While the Pontiff did not specifically mention the so-called Islamic State during his remarks after the prayer, he said that the "dramatic news from Syria and Iraq about violence, kidnapping of persons and harassment against Christians and other groups does not stop."

Saying that he had offered Mass on Friday along with members of the Vatican bureaucracy for Christians facing such struggle, Pope Francis said: "We want to assure those involved in these situations that

we do not forget them, but we are close to them and pray insistently that very quickly the intolerable brutality of which they are victims is put to an end."

The Holy Father also said that he wanted to remember Venezuela, where ongoing protests against President Nicolas Maduro led to the death of a 14-year-old boy recently. He said that the country is "again living moments of acute tension."

"I urge everyone to reject violence and respect the dignity of every person and the sanctity of human life and encourage you to take a journey together for the good of the country, opening spaces for meeting and sincere and constructive dialogue," he said.

(Vatican Insider)



Prize-Day for Saints

St. Joseph's
College, Colombo



St. Peter's
College, Colombo



Chief Guest Dr. Gamini Gunatilleke and Mrs. Gunatilleke being welcomed by the Rector of St. Joseph's College, Colombo Rev. Fr. Travis Gabriel and members of staff

"Parents should be conscious and accountable regarding their responsibilities"

"Nearly half of a child's achievement in school can be accounted for by factors outside the school including parental support."

Reflecting on the above words by Ronald Ferguson, the Rector of St. Joseph's College, Colombo Rev. Fr. Travis Gabriel, presenting his Report at

the 113th Prize-giving of the School highlighted the crucial role parents are called upon to play in the educational development of the child and the need for them to be conscious and accountable regarding their responsibilities towards their children. A child, he observed, thrives on encouragement and

this encouragement in studies should come both from school and parents.

"Children whose parents encourage, fare well in their studies," he told the large gathering of academic staff, students and parents, Old Boys, Rev. Fathers and Sisters

Contd on Pg. 2 >>>



Chief Guest Rev. Fr. Travis Gabriel being welcomed by the Rector of St. Peter's College, Rev. Fr. Trevor Martin and members of staff

"Leadership Principles a must for quality life"

Rector of St. Peter's College, Colombo Rev. Fr. Trevor Martin presenting his Report at the 83rd Prize-giving of the College, laid emphasis on the importance of leadership principles for quality life in a child.

Schools, he said should focus on an effective teaching and learning process in the classroom by incorporating

leadership principles and providing a spiritual environment for the child. "I believe this is the right thing to do in all schools," Fr. Trevor Martin said.

Noting that leadership principles must focus on helping students to take responsibility for their lives, to work with others more effectively and to do the right thing even when no one is look-

ing, the Peterite Rector said that only then students will leave school with skills for life and be committed to change the society and the country.

Present at the Peterite prize-giving as chief guest was former Rector of the College and current Rector of St. Joseph's College, Colombo Rev. Fr. Travis Gabriel.

Contd on Pg. 2 >>>

Women and youth - the most oppressed

The World Movement of Christian Workers in a statement issued to mark International Women's Day which falls on Sunday, March 8 says that women are the first to feel

the impact of an evil capitalist system that oppresses. A system that leads many young people and teenagers away from the bosom of their families. A system that forces these

women to let their children go in search of a better life. Many times they end up in the streets and die prematurely as a result.

See Pg. XVII >>>

Please send in
your Articles
for the
Easter Issue.

Low-cost house for needy family



A low-cost house was constructed and handed over to a low income earning family. This was organised by the members of St. Vincent De Paul Society, Periyamulla under the patronage of the Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Ranjith Terry.

New Office bearers of Sacred Heart Society, Bolawalana



Picture shows Rev. Fr. Sarath Thirimanne together with office bearers of the Sacred Heart Society of Bolawalana after the recent election.

Annette Princy Fernando

NEWS BITS

Way of the Cross at Kalutara - March 22

The annual Lenten Way of the Cross of the Kalutara Deanery will begin at 8.00a.m. on March 22 from the Diyalagoda Junction, Galle Road. The faithful will follow the Stations of the Cross upto the Calvary Hill, Maggona, where the celebration of the Holy Eucharist will take place.

This is organised by the Priest of the Kalutara Deanery together with the Dean Rev. Fr. Lawrence Ramanayake.

New look for cemetery



The Catholic Burial Ground at Madampella was inundated each time there was rain, as it was situated in a low-lying area.

Recently, the Parish Priest of Madampella, Rev. Fr. Laknath Cooray, whose efforts should be applauded solicited the offices of the local authorities and this area was filled with many lorry loads of earth, making it a place where the departed can be laid to rest with dignity.

H.A. Caldera

St. Joseph Vaz Shrine at Palliyawatte



This is the Shrine of St. Joseph Vaz built and donated by Dr. Maithre Perera and handed over to the Parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Palliyawatte, Hendala.

This shrine was blessed by His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, Archbishop of Colombo on April 21, 2014.

Pix: Raymond Wannappa

Kalutara Deanery Youth Society Retreat



The Youth Society of Kalutara Deanery held a two-day retreat at 'Nimala Maria Daham Piyasa' at Maggona National Calvary Shrine.

Picture shows Rev. Fr. Kalana Inshara Peiris conducting the retreat.

D. Anselm Fernando

Distribution of Flood Relief

The parishioners of Queen of the Apostles Church, Dambadeniya donated a large quantity of rice packets to be distributed among about 500 families affected by the recent floods in the village in Giriulla, Maradagolla. The food was prepared with the assistance of people in the vicinity including Buddhists. Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Anselm gave his full co-operation. the SEDEC branch of the Diocese of Kurunegala too contributed dry rations and clothes for distribution.

ST. BENEDICT COLLEGE COLOMBO 13 APPLICATION FORMS FOR GRADE 1 (2016)

Forms will be issued on following days.

Date	Time
14th (Saturday) March 2015 -	9.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon
21st (Saturday) March 2015 -	9.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon

Application forms will be issued only to parents who produce the following documents.

- * Child's Birth Certificate (original) - (01.02.2010 - 31.01.2011)
- * Child's Baptismal Certificate (original)
- * Parents' Church Marriage Certificate (original)
- * Parents' National Identity Cards
- * Church Family Book
- * Documents to prove your permanent residence

*Rev. Bro. Director
St. Benedict's College, Colombo 13.*

Maggona - Kumarakanda celebrates Feast of Our Lady of Vellankanni



Fifth Anniversary of Our Lady of Vellankanni was celebrated at Kumarakanda-Maggona recently.

D.A.F.

Parents should be...

Contd. from Pg. 1

present at the Stanley Abeysekera Auditorium.

"Though the School undoubtedly plays a vital role in the education of the child, in actual fact parents have an equally major role to play...Hence parents need to analyse and understand their role and responsibility in the education of their child, The Josephian Rector said.

Fr. Travis Gabriel explained that in school as in life the constant support of the parents is a must and is crucial to boost the confidence and commitment a child needs to study well. "Many consider that the sole responsibility of providing a good education for a child rests squarely on the shoulders of teachers."

Focusing on the need to hit a balance in the thrust of responsibility between parental and school authorities on the development of the child's education, Fr. Travis said that although there is a responsibility placed on the teacher, it must be recognised that neither a teacher nor the school can give everything a child needs, even if the teacher may be the best qualified one. This, he noted was because there is no substitute for parental support since the child spends the greater part of the day in his/her home.

The Josephian Rector did not hesitate to state that due to the competitive examination system children face a life full of stress. In addition to this the parental pressure to perform well creates more tensions in the mind of the child. "Such a pursuit in the end only results in the child performing miserably at examinations...besides not been able to absorb such pressure these children invariably fall prey to vices which society liberally doles out," he said.

A distinguished Old Boy of the School, Dr. Gamini Gunatillake was the Chief Guest.

Leadership ...

Contd. from Pg. 1

Addressing the large gathering of students, staff, parents, Old Boys, Rev. Father's and Sisters, Fr. Trevor Martin said that while speaking to some parents and to some community leaders about what they expect from a school, the consensus was, "We want our children to grow up to be responsible, caring, compassionate human beings, to expect diversity and who know how to do the right thing when faced with difficult decisions."

He said that though most parents were concerned about examination results they were equally or much more concerned with their children's character and basic life skills - the ability to get along with others and to be responsible. Some parents wanted their children to be tolerant of people's differences, to become problem solvers and to learn to be creative.

'The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People' by Stephen Covey could be regarded as leadership skills and taught in schools under the subject 'Life Skills', which is already a subject in the curriculum. In some schools in USA, the Seven Habits are included in the curriculum and have become a tremendous success.

Fr. Trevor Martin also quoted His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith who had stated that Catholic Education is not limited to academic excellence only but it is above all, centred around spiritual, moral and disciplinary development of the students. The institutions must set an example for the whole country in setting high standards of academic excellence while developing the effective, psycho-motor skills along with cognitive skills and spiritual strength so that their students become rounded personalities.



Church in the Modern World

How Cardinal Tagle thinks the Church can better reach Asian cultures

EWTN - Asia poses unique challenges to the spreading of the Catholic faith and the Church must respond by evangelizing through personal encounters, insisted the leading Filipino Cardinal.

"We have to admit, even up to now, in some parts of Asia Christianity is perceived as alien to Asian cultures," Cardinal Luis Tagle of Manila said at a recent lecture at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

"It is part of the mission of the Church in Asia to show the richness of the Gospel in its univer-

sally valid truths, values, open to all human beings. But this should happen in human interactions," he continued. "Evangelization can never neglect concrete men and women."

Cardinal Tagle delivered the annual Cardinal Dearden Lecture at the Catholic University, speaking about "*Gaudium et Spes After 50 Years: an Asian Reception*." That document, which translates as "Joy and Hope," was one of the four main Apostolic Constitutions of Vatican II and focused on the Church and the Modern World.

The lecture honoured Cardinal Dearden of Detroit for his work in spreading the teachings of Vatican II.

Pope Francis' "Culture of Encounter" is crucial to Asia, where Christianity is a tiny minority and looked upon with suspicion by many, Cardinal Tagle explained.

Although Asia is the largest continent and holds two-thirds of the world's population, Christianity makes up a meagre three percent of the populace and half of that is in the Philippines, he said.



Pope says, solution to North African violence - dialogue and encounter



EWTN - Pope Francis last Monday encouraged Bishops from Northern Africa to dialogue with and encounter other groups, fostering hope for good relations between Muslims and Christians in the region.

"Interreligious dialogue is an important part of the life of your Churches," Pope Francis said addressing the Bishops of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya during their Ad limina visit to Rome.

"The most effective antidote to any form of violence is education in the discovery and ac-

ceptance of difference as richness and fertility. Therefore, it is essential that priests, religious and lay people in your dioceses are well-prepared in this area" he said, adding it is important to "deepen dialogue in truth and love between Christians and Muslims."

In each of these nations, Muslims constitute at least 97 percent of the population and in none of them are Catholics more than 1 percent, which suggests the importance of interreligious dialogue to the Christian communities there.

Pius XII film sparks new debate of old controversy

At a premiere screening in the Vatican, 'Shades of Truth' Director says the movie is an act of love for the Jewish people

VATICAN CITY - Under a gray sky in Saint Peter's Square, hundreds of pilgrims and tourists waited in line to visit the Vatican. Only metres away, a different queue formed as the Vatican played host to a movie premiere for a controversial Pope Pius XII film, "*Shades of Truths*."

Written and directed by Italian Liana Marabini, "*Shades of Truth*" was shown for the first time at the Catholic Institute Maria Bambina on March 2, the day that marks both the anniversary of the birth of Eugenio Pacelli in 1876 and of his appointment as Pope Pius XII, in 1939.

The film will be released in movie theatres all over the world in April and screened at the Cannes Film Festival in May. A September screening in Philadelphia at the Catholic World Meeting of Families will be attended by Pope Francis.

Pope Pius XII is a divisive

figure, described by some historians as "Hitler's Pope," and by others as "The Schindler of the Vatican."

The movie, full of inaccuracies and unlikely characters, portrays Pius XII as saving over 800,000 Jews all over Europe.

"*Shades of Truth*" features the actor portraying Pope Pius XII wearing the infamous yellow star sewn on the white Papal vest. This scene, which will likely be considered offensive by many, has also been chosen for the film's poster.

"The poster reflects the emotional reality of Pius XII's actions, because he acted as if he



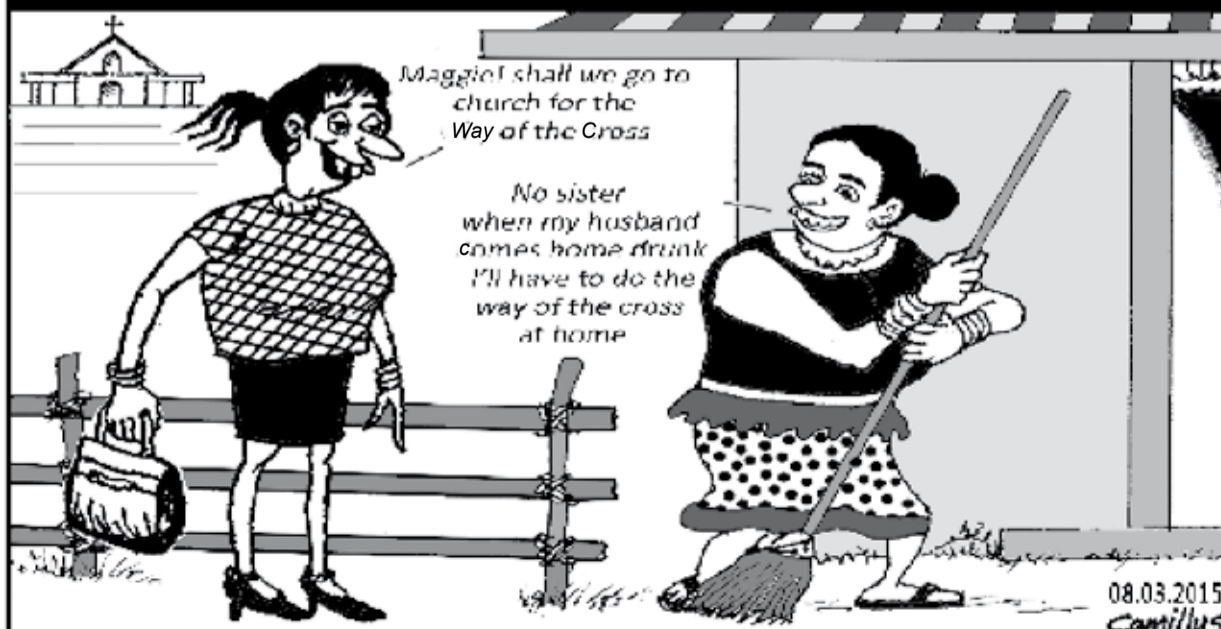
'Shades of Truth' Director Liana Marabini, centre, at the premiere screening in Vatican City.

himself was wearing a yellow star," Director Marabini told *The Times of Israel*. "The image appears to the protagonist in a dream toward the end of the movie, when after his extensive research, he is finally convinced that he was mistaken in assuming Pius XII colluded with the Nazis."

- *The Times of Israel*

SUNDAY PUNCH

by Camillus



Syria: Number of Christian hostages rises to more than 300

The number of Assyrian and Chaldean Christians of the villages on the River Khabur taken hostage and deported by the jihadists in their strongholds increases to more than 300. "If the first reports spoke of 90 seized - Archbishop Jacques Behnan Hindo tells Catholic News Agency, Fides - "Now we can say that the hostages in the hands of the jihadists are around 350."

According to what Samir Taji, a member of the Al-Nusra Front (Syrian jihadist group linked to al-Qaeda, ed) said to the Kurdish website ARA News, the militia of the Islamic State first held Assyrian prisoners - including women and children - in a detention centre at Mount Abdulaziz, then dispersed them in areas and centres under their control, including their stronghold of Raqqa.

Among the prisoners there are forty Kurdish soldiers and Assyrian militiamen of the Brigade of self-protection Sutoro.

SINCE FEBRUARY 1869
MESSENGER
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EDITORIAL

Email: cmmessenger2014@yahoo.com

Telephone: 011 2695984

March 8, 2015

What is not given is lost

The Sunday Mass readings last week - the second week of Lent focused on the need for faith and obedience to the will of God. Often, as Jesus stressed it, is a commandment to deny ourselves or the desires of our self-centred nature, take up our cross and follow the Lord. Following Him means obeying His main commandments to love one another as the Lord loves us.

The First Reading last Sunday focuses on one of the most widely quoted and dramatic encounters in the pilgrim journey of Abraham our father in faith. After God called him to leave everything, leave the past behind and follow Him, Abraham went through many cliffs and valleys. He gave a strong response to God on some occasions but often he behaved in a weak way. For instance he listened to Sarah and had a child from a slave girl and later he feared the king and said Sarah was his sister. So God wanted to test, purify and strengthen Abraham's faith. This happens to us also often. God allows some situations whereby our faith is tested but when we obey the Lord and do what He tells us to, even in a crisis situation we come out at a higher level of faith and stronger in the journey with the Lord.

Abraham lived in a time when child sacrifices to pagan gods were common. They believed that if the first born male was sacrificed as a burnt offering to the gods they would have many children. It was a time when there was no birth control or family planning and having many children was considered as a security or some sort of insurance policy for the future because the children would protect and promote the land and livelihood of the nomadic tribes.

It was in such a context that God who had asked Abraham to let go of his past now asks him to let go of his future. God had promised Abraham through Isaac he would be the father of many nations with his children numbering more than the stars in the sky or the grains of sand on the sea shore. The Bible passage in Genesis 22 does not tell us much about whether Abraham was disturbed but, as the Blessed Mother was during the Annunciation, Abraham's heart also may have been troubled. However he obeyed God and took Isaac to a mountain but just as he was about to slay his son an Angel of God stopped him and said, "Because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will bless you and, I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall take possession of the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice" (Gen 22 16-18).

What is the main message for us here? God may not ask us to sacrifice our only son but when we in faith obey God and do His will in times of trouble or tribulations, our families and generations to come will be blessed. That is the great reward of obeying God in faith or denying ourselves, taking up our crosses and following Him. Not only we but generations to come will be mightily blessed.

In the Gospel we read about the glorious Transfiguration on Mount Tabor. According to the Gospel of Mark, Jesus took Peter, James and John to the mountain after telling the Apostles that "some of them would not die till they see that the kingdom of God has come with power." In the previous chapter Peter had been disturbed when Jesus spoke of how much He must suffer and that He would be tortured to death. Peter said such a calamity should not happen and Jesus reprimanded him saying, "Get thee behind me Satan" in other words He was telling Peter to listen to what He says and follow Him without telling the Lord what to do.

The same message is given to us also in many events of our lives and if we do what the Lord tells us instead of telling Him to do what we want then great and glorious blessing, will come to us and many generations.

Sri Lanka needs a good Government of National Unity

In the days when each electorate had its Member of Parliament, the notion was that each one of them had to think and act locally as well as nationally, not forgetful of international implications of their decisions and actions and therefore international relations.

In practice however, even the Ministers seemed to think and act locally, thinking more of their electorates and voter base than of the larger nation and the national interest, sometimes completely ignoring international repercussions of their decisions. Lately this has deteriorated to the anti-social level of thinking only of themselves and their kith and kin and a few of their favourites. This attitude has had disastrous consequences on Sri Lanka and besmirched its good name. All this was due to the insular mindset that has affected even the political parties that forgot that we are a small nation of 21 million people in a world of over 7 billion people to whom we had to be necessarily connected for the sake of our own survival. Only a very few persons in each party had what could be called an international outlook. This was due to their constricted upbringing followed by a narrow education and lack of a comprehensive political philosophy that confined their thoughts and views to a subjective small world of their own.

New Political Concept

Now a new political concept has been proposed: All the Members of Parliament are to form the Government. Behind this notion is the very sane view of the people that when they are electing their representative, their wish is that he/she may not be ignored or marginalized but be part of the government and that his/her views be given attention to even though he/she may not be part of the group, the cabinet that orientates the final decisions.

When all the representatives are involved, sound short-term and long-term policy decisions affecting the whole nation could be taken. Study and deliberations whether on the economy, trade and finance, domestic and foreign policy, education and health, agriculture and industry, work-force and employment and all other matters of concern could be considered in view of the national common good. Whatever the political bent and particular ideology, the political parties have to be ready to transcend the nuances of their political brand for the sake of the Country as a whole.

Unfortunately, the major political parties, who have the numbers in Parliament but who are also burdened with the drag of many under-educated, questionable, unsuitable and abjectly corrupt characters, do not seem to propound and propose this outlook to the public. Perhaps only the JVP and Minister Champika Ranawaka perhaps with the JHU and General Sarath Fonseka, with the President and Prime Minister may be sharing this outlook that strikes a chord with the radical national needs. Therefore, it is up to the political parties not to put forward the uneducated corrupt ones as candidates for Parliamentary Elections. This may indeed be very difficult because the president and many prominent ministers of the former government coalition are accused of such corruption and abuse of power for selfish gain.



Finally from among the individuals put forward by the parties it is the people who have to choose the Member of Parliament to represent them. Though the party may not be totally free of corruption, the individual put forward by the party to a particular electorate may be acceptable. Such individuals should be chosen by the people. Then a more wholesome band of men and women of integrity will form the next Parliament.

Bishop's Statement

The Bishop of Badulla, His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Winston Fernando has recently put out a statement as follows:

"Many political parties rallied round one common candidate under a Common Symbol for the sake of the Country. Party politics in our country have been divisive, often vindictive and have led to corruption and violence allowing the country as a whole to suffer injustices, racial and religious discrimination and violation of human and civic rights.

A good majority of people however, have transcended political ideologies, interests and party agendas and voted for a just society. Therefore, it is wise and imperative to give the citizens another opportunity to further consolidate the 100 day programme for the sake of the country at the Parliamentary Elections. If various political parties under their respective symbols were to promote their narrow party agendas and pull in different directions jeopardizing the continuity of the spirit of the 100 day programme now accepted by almost all the political parties and citizens, it will undo the progress so far achieved, create a chaotic situation and confuse the people.

That politicians and their supporters in the main political parties have divided loyalties is a known and observable fact. Therefore, for the greater good of the country let the voters judge for themselves the fidelity and the ability of the present regime, with all the checks and balances in place, vote to form a stable government at the forthcoming parliamentary election."

Therefore, if the members of parties that came together to support the common presidential candidate and bring about a new political culture and set the country in a new direction, could again come together and put forward a common national vision and national policies with a programme for clear short term and long term goals, it would be a boon. Among those who came together to support the common presidential candidate, there could be many other decisive elements on which they could stand together. If they deliberate long enough, they could clarify to themselves many a knotty problem and find that there are more things that unite them than divide them. They will have to give the assurances to the people that what they propose for the common good will be surely implemented even though there may be hiccups and unavoidable delays of one kind or another.

If such a group could unite to contest under the symbol of the common presidential candidate, so much the better. The people will then be able to make a clear option supportive of a common programme.

**Rev. Fr. Augustine Fernando,
 Sevaka Sevana, Bandarawela.**

One People Under One Banner

May the gentle winds of peace caress our beloved land
 May the soft swishing waters that lap the golden sands
 Speak softly of the magic that had held us together
 for years
 Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim, Malay, Burgher, sans fears,
 sans tears

And as we unfurl the Banner once again
 Me thinks the early magic once more reverberates

Hope undying Hope—a nation's innate ardent wish
 Surfaces once more as the flag aloft so rich
 In inspiration declares;
 Spurn not this heritage
 Of amity love and peace that has been thy image.
 A noble freedom won; maintain the nobility thereof
 One people under this Banner of freedom that flies
 aloft

Jeannette Cabraal

Examining our own morphogenic field

Humanity alone is called to assist God. Humankind is called to create" (Hildegard of Bringen,+1179).

Jesus of Nazareth who lived about 2000 years ago, brought a radical newness to our earth, in an amazing advance in human consciousness that enabled humankind to respond fully and completely to the radiant love of the Holy One, whom we call our God.

In Jesus, we see a human being so radically and totally open to the divine, that the human and divine come to be inextricably connected, inseparably united. Jesus affirms our human capacity to live in conscious relationship with the Holy One whose essence, whose definitive characteristic is Love.

The Jesus- event is not simply an event in history that occurred 2000 years ago, that concerns just a single individual called Jesus; rather it is a tremendous advance that brought the entire human species to a new level of awareness. In Jesus, the divine became human, so that all humans could become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pt. 1:3-4).

Jesus the Holy One, activated an emergent potentiality and broke open, flare forth and transformed the cosmos. But this was not confined to Him alone. Those who believed in Jesus too are the light, called to become the light. We partake in his divine nature in concrete and tangible ways. We have a share in divine nature but the question remains. How do we live in fidelity to the gift of divinity? How to live this essential connectedness to the Creator given to us? Like St. Paul we often say "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want to do I do the very thing I hate (Rom.7:15). Often we feel our powerlessness over our personal lives.

Biologist Rupert Sheldrake has developed a hypothesis known as Causative Formation which speaks of an unseen force that preserves the form of a self-organizing system, a structure that maintains itself from within. A self organizing system a living and dynamic, preserving its internal integrity while evolving creatively in response to its environment. Since each has its own morpho-

genic field, our world is filled with such fields. They are not energy fields but they help to manage the energy, maintaining its wholeness. They are memory fields of our habits, activity and speech.

How can the idea of morphogenic fields help us claim the vision that passed on to us the dream of the reign of God in the world, with us as light?

We must first recognize that as self organizing fields are integral to the identity of each of us as individuals and as members of various groups the thoughts, behaviours and words that come from us contribute to the quality of the fields in which we are maintained. The universe having come to consciousness, we make choices that contribute to the condition of our field. These fields have formative power shaping and offering the quality of the energy around us.

Scripture tells us what our formative formation field is to be like. When we live in love we create peace, and gentleness and patience flow to all. When we are rooted in Scripture we allow His vision and values flow into the field of awareness. Our habits alter the morphogenic field and create an environment that enables others to respond as well. They are pulled in unable to resist the love around them.

Jesus ushered in a new way of connectedness that He called the "Kingdom," reign of God. He showed what this reign of God is by His life, words, actions, healing, association with outcasts, eating with sinners, etc. He lived and showed the depth and extent of God's love." The reign of God, Jesus envisioned not something of future, but a present reality here and now. This is the vision He passed on to His followers, to us.

Jesus showed that the reign of God would unfold as the human species embraced a new way of living characterized by love, compassion, service and freedom. In Jesus of Nazareth the universe was transformed, something broke open, flared forth, breaking forth of life, light in a new way.

To live out of this awareness is to become what we are, to live the truth that is in the depth of our being. To do this we need to be empowered by the Spirit. This is the empowerment that has come to us through the life and death of Jesus.

Let us reflect: We may affirm that we have a share in divine nature. But how do we operate out of this affirmation? How do we affirm our essential connectedness with our Creator? How do we carry on the vision communicated to us by Jesus?

Morphogenic field can help us to find the answer. Morphogenic field is an invisible force both in and around a living organism. It is a field of energy, of information of influence around each being. Just as a magnet has a field around it, so we have a field of influence around us. Wherever we are or whatever we do, we carry this field with us; though invisible, it is detected, experienced by those around us. This along with the fact that we can think, reason, reflect, make choices, means that moment by moment, choice after choice, we can strengthen the morphogenic field of love, compassion, forgiveness, around us and thus strengthen the web of connectedness all over the planet. The fields strengthen as the number of participants increase.

How can the idea of morphogenic fields help us to claim the vision that Jesus passed on to us, the dream of the reign of God in our World?

How can we live and act as "the light of the world" Jesus says we are? (Mt. 5 :14-16).

First of all we must recognize that each of us, as individual persons has a morphogenic field, an invisible field of energy of influence around us. We must recognize the same that our community knowing the field strengthens as the number of participants increase. Secondly we must recognize thoughts, words, deeds, behaviour that come from us contribute to the quality of the field around us. Thirdly as conscious beings we can make choices that contribute to

the quality of our fields. That these fields have formative power shaping and affecting the quality of energy around us.

Therefore we need to examine our own morphogenic field of attitudes, behaviour, asking ourselves how closely our values go along with those that Jesus taught and lived.

"Love the Lord with your whole heart, whole soul, Love your neighbour as yourself."

"Love your enemies "Forgive not seven times but seventy times seven "These take us to to the heart of Jesus's vision in the reign of God. When we live committed to love, we create a morphogenic field of peace, gentleness, patience, recognising our connectedness to all.

Through our intimate personal relationship with Jesus, His vision and values become deeply embedded in our field of awareness and we become the place of the reign of God, reign of compassion and love, creating a morphogenic field, a favourable environment that enables others to respond as well, being pulled in, unable to resist the love that resonates around them. Such is the formative power that contributes to the transformation of the universe.

"When each of us vibrate love and compassion our energy mysteriously unites with the energy of love and compassion all over the planet, building a field of compassion, making a very powerful force for transforming and healing...Could there be any greater cause for hope in the community?!" *Judy Cannato, Field of Compassion.*

At the end of this reflection I invite you: to examine the quality of your connections. You cannot choose not to be connected, but you have some say over your connections.

Recognise that all together we can do what each of us cannot do alone, in order to respond as fully as possible to the invitation and command "You are the light of the world."

Let us become spark throwers, to send up sparks of love, of light from the spark... That blazing diamond each of us has within our being!!!

Rev. Sr. Rita Gunawardena, HF

Your Temperament

Characters of the Bible fascinate me very much when I think of the temperaments with which every man is born. I see a Peter who is always exuberant and optimistic, even ready to jump into the sea to walk on the waters like his Master. He talks without thinking and sometimes the Master has to scold him saying "Get thou behind me; Satan." At the Garden of Gethsemane he pulls out a sword and cuts the ear of a servant, The Bible manifests clearly that he is an extrovert and a lively temperament. While Apostle John or even Old Testament personalities like Moses, Elijah, Solomon etc. are shown as having opposite temperaments to Peter's. They seem to be reserved, slow, sensitive and very emotional. They manifest to be introverts - more turned on themselves.

Modern Psychology speaks of extroverted and introverted personalities. These two types can be basically divided into four types of temperaments. 1. *Extroverted Personalities can*

be SANGUINE and CHOLERIC. 2. Introverted Personalities can be MELANCHOLIC and PHLEG-MATIC,

In 400 BC Hippocrates thought that the temperament was determined by body liquids - Sanguine=Blood; Choleric=more yellow bile; Phlegmatic=Phlegm and Melancholic=more black bile. Today the psychologists discard this theory that the temperament is determined by body liquids.

At counselling, you will meet people who say, "Why am I like this? Often my emotions take the better of me! I want to avoid this weakness of mine but I am prone to fall into the same sin." St. Paul complains; in the same way "... for though the will to do what is good is in me, the performance is not, with the result that instead of doing the good things I want to do, I carry out the sinful things I do not want. When I act against my will, it is not my true self doing it, but sin which lives

in me" (Rom. 7:18-70). Here Paul seems to refer to the negative aspect of the temperament as "Sin, which lives in me." Every temperament has natural weaknesses inherited from parents ("Sin" as Paul calls them)—as well as strengths.

Temperament then is the combination of traits every man is born is with. It is the combination of traits that subconsciously affect man's behaviour. These traits are arranged genetically on the basis of nationality, race, sex and other hereditary factors. Since these traits are passed by genes, no person can have a hundred percent single temperament type - no one can be 100% Sanguine or 100% Melancholic. Everyone today is a mixture of four temperaments although usually one predominates. By knowing one's basic temperament type, one will know one's potential strengths and weaknesses. This certainly will help in the analysis of one's self and in counselling others.

Character formation is 'civilizing' one's temperament. It is the natural temperament modified by childhood training, education, basic beliefs, attitudes, principles and motivations. From birth, a child's character is formed by others helping him eradicate the weak sides of the temperament and by helping him strengthen the strong sides of the same, thus his character is formed. Character formation is a process that goes on till death, till he is formed into a fully loving, fully free and fully living personality.

True character of a person is seen through his personality. Personality is the outward expression of 'civilized' temperament or character. If one is sincere and genuine then he shows his character through personality. If he puts on a mask, then his personality is only the facade contrarily opposed to his character. This can cause great mental and spiritual chaos, because one, instead of being his own self, constantly tries to be

Know about yourself

Rev. Fr. Fraccid Anthony OMI

someone else according to what others want him to be. "Man looketh on the outward appearance and God looketh on the heart" — "Out of the heart proceed the issues of life."

When the Spirit of Christ is allowed to direct one, one becomes a fully grown personality. "Since the Spirit is our life, let us be directed by the Spirit. We must stop being conceited, provocative and envious" (Gal.5:25). Such a person will overcome the weak sides of his temperament and soon will manifest a sincere, joyful, and Spiritual Personality.

Rev. Fr. Fraccid Anthony OMI, Senior Lecturer of the Department of Psychology at Peradeniya - now Dean of the Diploma in the Department of Psychology at Aquinas University College, Colombo.



Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd



Year of the Consecrated Life - 2015

Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Sri Lanka (CMRS)

Religious Congregations in Sri Lanka 6



Charism of the Good Shepherd Congregation

To be a compassionate, loving, healing and reconciling presence of Jesus, the Good Shepherd in the world, reaching out to the victims of injustice, oppression and alienation, with particular attention to girls and women who are sexually abused and wounded by life's experiences.

Motto: "One soul is worth more than the whole world." (St. Mary Euphrasia)



Meaning of symbol:

The Cross - Our Congregation is rooted in the Cross. Away from suffering and from Jesus crucified, we cannot reach our goal.

Shepherd's Staff: Signifies the Good Shepherd charism. We are to walk in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd who said, "I lay down my life for the sheep."



The 2 hearts:

Symbolize the Hearts of Jesus and Mary on whose love our spirituality is based. Both St. John Eudes and St. Mary Euphrasia had a great love and devotion to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary from whose abundance of Love, Life, Mercy, Forgiveness and compassion flow.

The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd is a religious Institute founded in 1835 by Saint Mary Euphrasia Pelletier, at Angers, France. The foundress was a member of the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity founded in 1641 by St. John Eudes, at Caen, France, dedicated to the Mission of Reconciliation and Mercy. Besides the standard vows of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience, the Sisters take a fourth vow of Zeal, to pray and labour for the salvation of souls. The ministry of the Congregation was devoted to the care, rehabilitation and education of young girls and women wounded by life's experiences, exposed to moral danger; orphaned or abandoned by their families. Some had turned to prostitution in order to survive. At that time, each Convent of the Congregation was independent and autonomous and services restricted to that particular place in France.

St. Mary Euphrasia envisioned a mission that would be open to the rest of the world and when appointed leader of the community in Angers, France, she took the initiative to obtain permission from the Pope to establish a general government and in 1835 she branched out, founding the Order of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd. After many hardships, she succeeded in establishing 110 Good Shepherd Convents in almost all the continents before her death in April 1868. She formed two branches of the Congregation: Contemplative Religious and Active- Apostolic Religious.

Foundation in Sri Lanka

Responding to a request from Bishop Hilarian Sillani OSB of Colombo, she had also assigned Sisters for Sri Lanka.

In 1869, Sr. Peter de Coudenhove, her successor, sent four sisters to Sri Lanka and the first Good Shepherd Convent was established in Kotahena, Colombo, to provide Catholic education which was a dire need at that time.

As numbers increased, houses were opened in Nayakakanda and Kandy for the care of orphaned children and girls in moral danger. In 1938, a Home for single mothers and babies was also built in Nayakakanda to save both mother and child.

In 1957, under the instruction of the Vatican and with the approval of the Archbishop of Colombo, a Diocesan Order of Sisters of St. Francis Xavier that was managed by the Good Shepherd Sisters was amalgamated with the Good Shepherd Order. Education was one of the main ministries done by these Sisters.

Good Shepherd Mission in Pakistan

At the request of Bishop Bertrand Boland of Multan, Pakistan, four sisters were sent from Sri Lanka on September 17, 1975, to plant the seed of the Good Shepherd Mission in that land. On January 10, 1976, the first Good Shepherd Convent was officially opened in Fatimapur, a poor village in the Diocese of Multan. Today, both Sri Lankan and Pakistani Sisters work together in four dioceses: Multan, Karachi, Lahore, and Quetta.

In the Province of Sri Lanka/Pakistan, about 400 Sisters in 74 communities are engaged in various ministries such as:

- * Rehabilitation of Girls and Women - victims of abuse
- * Care of Single Mothers/ Babies; Daycare Centres
- * Child development (poor, orphaned boys and girls)
- * Education
- * Pre-school/ Montessori Education and Training of Teachers
- * Crisis Intervention
- * Psychological Counseling
- * Spirituality Retreat Centre - Spiritual Formation
- * Care of the Aged and the Sick; Nursing
- * Skill-Training- Youth Apostolate
- * Catechetical / Pastoral Work
- * Estate Apostolate,
- * Refugee Services (war-torn areas)
- * Prison Apostolate- programs for prisoners and their families
- * Migrant Workers
- * Upliftment of the Poor through a micro-credit system
- * Foreign Missions

Contemplative Life-style

Contemplative Sisters founded by St. Mary Euphrasia and given the name 'Sisters Magdalen' and known today as 'Contemplative Sisters of the Good Shepherd' form one Congregation with the Active Apostolic Sisters and uphold the Good Shepherd Ministries by their apostolate of prayer and solitude. They pray with people, for their needs and those of the world and give spiritual guidance too. Today, 373 Sisters are dedicated to this apostolate of prayer in many parts of the world as well as in Sri Lanka.

Lay Partnership

The Congregation had lay partnership right from its beginnings and today there are lay men and women who commit themselves to the Good Shepherd Mission, working hand in hand with the Sisters, being a great strength and support to them.

A Historic Change

A happy Reunification of 358 Sisters of Our Lady of Charity (founded in 1641) and of Good Shepherd Sisters (1835), took place on June 27, 2014 with the approval of the Sacred Congregation for Religious in Rome. We are now one Congregation united in the one Mission. With them, the Congregation today has a strength of 3,374 Good Shepherd Sisters serving in 74 countries. Praise God!

For further information browse websites:

www.buonpastoreint.org

www.gssslpk.lk

Contact address:

Sister Superior,
Good Shepherd Convent,
Nayakakanda,
Hendala, Wattala.

Glycemic Load

We were made to understand by our physicians that the consumption of foods with a high glycemic index will make us gain weight. Glycemic index measures how quickly a food breaks down into sugar in your bloodstream. High glycemic food turns into blood sugar very quickly. Starchy food like white rice and potato are examples of foods with high glycemic index, the consumption of which makes us gain weight.



Now, the health care experts are talking about glycemic load which they say will give us a better indication of our dietary intake and weight gain. Medical researchers like Dr. Al Sears indicate that glycemic load is a better indicator of foods causing weight gain than glycemic index. Glycemic load tells you how much carbohydrate is absorbed into your body by eating various types of foods. This is a better indicator of how much of weight gain a particular food can cause.

Dr. Al Sears who has done research on the difference between the glycemic index and glycemic load advises his patients to eat foods with less glycemic load than foods that have high glycemic index. He shows that foods that are "prohibited" by the physicians who calculate weight loss and weight gain by calculating glycemic index are chasing behind a wrong weight-gaining-devil. The following short chart indicates the difference between the glycemic index and glycemic load.

Food	Glycemic Index	Glycemic Load
Slice of whole wheat (brown) bread	70	7.7
2 tea spoons of sugar	68	7
1 Cup of soya milk	31	7
1 Cup of lentils	31	7
1 cup of whole milk	40	4.4
140 gram of papaya	60	6.6

When you look at the above chart we can see that without any guilt feelings we can add two spoons of sugar into our tea, can drink whole milk, eat papaya for our desert, brown bread for our breakfast and eat lentils with our plate of brown rice.

We can understand what we should eat if we are concerned about losing weight. Dr. Sears advises us to consume foods with glycemic load of less than 10. He advises us to avoid grain such as corn, potatoes and other white foods such as white bread, white rice, sugar and salt. Try to make proteins such as (fatless) meat, poultry and fish the focus of your meal. Snack on fruits, vegetables and nuts. Avoid processed or canned foods, caffeine, trans-fats, such as margarines and butter substitutes. Real butter is better for your health than any other substitutes. Natural sugar consumed in moderation is much better than sugar substitutes some of which can even cause cancer. Always choose red rice and whole wheat (brown) bread instead of white rice or white bread. Drink lots of plain and clean (boiled or filtered) water.

Vegetables such as green beans, cabbage, broccoli, celery and spinach have zero glycemic load. We can understand why our vegetarian villagers keep their slim figure where as the city dwellers who depend on fast foods gain weight. Many nuts such as almonds (except cashew) have zero glycemic load.

White rice, white bread, potatoes or cashew could be eaten in moderation. If you are invited to a friend's place where there is no other substitute you may consume foods with high glycemic load in moderation. All nutritionists agree that locally produced fresh vegetables and fruits are the best foods that we can eat. Sri Lankans who eat village-grown fresh vegetables and fruits are consuming the most nutritious foods. These fresh foods have no preservatives or added sugar or salt substitutes which can enhance the glycemic load.

The devil put before me that I could not endure the trials of the Religious Life because of my delicate nature. I defend myself against him by alleging the trials which Christ endured.

St. Teresa of Avila

Art & Architecture in Liturgy

Compiled by: Kishani S. Fernando

Some pilgrim sites in Mannar

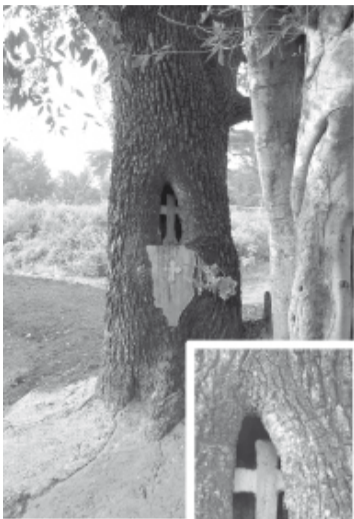
Today after the 30 year civil war, it is possible to visit many historic sites sacred to Catholics, situated in the north of Sri Lanka. Among these are many sites hallowed by the presence of Saint Joseph Vaz. We were blessed to be part of a pilgrimage tour organised recently under the leadership of Mr. Shelton Fernando and Mr. Angelo Trevon Lovendhal to visit some of these sites which for years had stood hidden and beyond access among the salt marshes and jungles of the Mannar District. It is hoped to give more details and pictures of these sites in the future. Pix from top to bottom.

Cheddikulam: where Fr. Vaz planted a wooden cross inside a hollow of a Palu tree for the protection of the village from wild beasts and snakes. South Bar: The cross tower marking the site where Fr. Vaz and John his servant first landed in Sri Lanka after being caught in a storm at sea.

South Bar: Across from the Cross tower another cross marks the site where Fr. Vaz rested to remove a thorn pricked on his foot. Thoddavely: the old church at Joseph Vaz Puram. A new church is under construction. Kallaikaddai: Fr. Vaz planted a cross designed in the like of the miraculous cross of Goa under a Palu tree. Now the cross is kept inside the church.

Manthai: Where the statue of the Madu church was first kept. Now a grotto dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes stands here built with the coral stone blocks of the original church. A new church is under construction.

Parapankandal: Oratorian Centre during the time of Fr. Vaz. Thoddavely: church dedicated to the Queen of Martyrs. Here are buried the martyrs of Mannar put to sword under King Sankilian in 1544.



The Mystery of Lent

Take up your cross and follow Jesus, and you will enter eternal life. If you die with Him, you will also live with Him and if you share His suffering, you will also share His glory.

Our daily life does not stop just because Lent is here. Every day is hectic, we often find ourselves too busy to take time needed to rest in God. The challenge is to observe the spirit of Lent and perform the works of Lent while living in a secular culture, to remain in the world but not become a product of it.

Pix on right: 14 wooden plaque Stations of the Cross in the Philosophate Chapel at the National Seminary of Our Lady of Lanka at Ampitiya, Kandy. These were carved by Fr. Treason Silva in 2003 when he was a student in the Seminary. His wooden stations of the cross also adorn the Theologate Chapel (published last week on this page) the Archbishops Private Chapel and Frangipani the Redemptorist House in Ampitiya Kandy.

At left: A figure of Christ used in the traditional Lenten Services at St. Anne's Church Beruwala.



Saint Andrew

Andrew was a resident of Bethsaida, a town in Upper Galilee near the Lake Genesareth. He was a brother of Simon (Peter) who too was a fisherman in the same town. It is said that Andrew is elder to Simon. Later on they had a house in Capernaum. When Jesus was preaching in this town, He stayed in this house. At the beginning Andrew listened to the sermons on penitence of John the Baptist and observed his instructions. When Jesus was leaving the River Jordan after being baptised by John the Baptist, Andrew heard the saying of John "Behold the lamb of God" and he became a witness to this. Andrew who understood the meaning of this mysterious saying had an affection to Jesus. With a few disciples of John the Baptist, Andrew went in search of Jesus.

Jesus, having recognised them asked "What are you searching for." They said that they would like to know where Jesus lives. He replied "Come and see." Andrew and his friends stayed the whole night with Jesus. No one knows what they were discussing during the night. Andrew could be the very first disciple to have recognised Jesus.

Andrew was restless and wanted his brother Simon (Peter) too, to know Jesus. Andrew brought him to Je-

sus. Thus Andrew may have become the very first Missionary to bring souls to Jesus.

When Jesus was preaching in Lower Galilee He saw Andrew and Peter engaged in their usual fishing trade. Jesus wanted to make them His disciples. He told them "Come follow me. I will make you fishers of men." Both at once left their belongings, their boats and nets and followed Him. From that moment they never left Jesus.

One day Andrew and Peter having failed to catch any fish all throughout the night came to the shore and were washing their nets. "Go deep into the sea and cast your nets" ordered Jesus. Andrew and Peter said, the whole night they failed to catch any fish, but "On your word we will cast our nets." The catch was so large their nets were near tearing, so they called James and John in the other boat to come for assistance. Both boats were overflowing with fish.

Jesus came to Capernaum and stayed in the house of Peter and Andrew. There at their request Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law who was suffering from an attack of very high fever. When Jesus wanted the disciples to supply the 5000 plus with food, the disciple Philip mentioned that they would need more than

two hundred silver coins to buy bread for them. At this time Andrew who had great faith in Jesus said that there was a boy who had five loaves and two small fish. All knew that was insufficient. But Andrew remembering the incident where Elisha fed one hundred men with just twenty loaves of bread, thought to himself that here is Christ who has power higher than Elisha.

Peter and Andrew, after Christ's resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit, started their first journey of evangelization. Through Asia Minor they came to the shores of the Black Sea. Both preached at Sinope and converted a large number to Christianity. From there they both separated. Peter left to Rome and Andrew came to Jerusalem through Pathia.

Andrew with John preached in Asia Minor and specially in Ephesus. Andrew in his third journey of evangelization came to Russia (then Phithia) and to Crimea. He preached the Gospel there. Later he went to Sogdiana and Colchis. St. Andrew is the Patron Saint of Russia.

Andrew preached at Greece, Epirus, Thrace, Macedonia and Ahaia. In Aragos he silenced the philosophers. From Pontus he went again to Greece. At Sinope his true picture and the preaching pedestal are still available. He also went to the bor-

ders of Poland and then to Bentine known as Constantinople. At Patras in Achaia St. Andrew's feast of the Holy See is celebrated.

During his preaching at Patras he was opposed by Labias the Governor. Labias was punished by God with an incurable disease on his body. Andrew not only cured him but also brought him to Christianity. In a short time the entire town of Patras was converted to Christianity. The people there destroyed all the statues of the pagan gods including their shrines. After the down fall of Labias, a new Governor was appointed. His name was Agiatus. Once his wife Maximilla was suffering from a severe disease, and Andrew performed a miracle and cured her. She was converted to Christianity. Her husband the Governor Agiatus having come to know this, was furious. He immediately scourged him and imprisoned him.

After scourging him several times he was ordered to be crucified. St. Andrew remained in the cross for three days before he died. The cross on which St. Andrew died was in the shape of a (X). Maximilla the wife of Agiatus, brought down the body of Andrew from the cross, anointed with sweet scent and buried in her own sepulchre. In the year 357 A.D. the



Emperor Constantine the great bought the headless body to Constantinople and buried in the Church of the Apostles.

When Constantinople was conquered by France Cardinal Peter of Capna brought the relics of St. Andrew to Italy in 1210 AD and placed them in the Cathedral of Amalfi in the Kingdom of Naples. In 1461 A.D. his head was placed by Pope Pius II in the basilica of St. Peter his brother. In the year 1250 A.D. St. Andrew's cross was taken to St. Victor's Convent at Marcells where it is exhibited even this day. The Knights of Burgandi wear St. Andrew's

cross as a symbol.

St. Andrew is also the patron saint of Scotland. In 369A.D. some relics of St. Andrew have been brought to Scotland and placed in a church dedicated to him. This area is called the city of St. Andrew. The symbol in the National flag of Scotland which is a part of Great Briton, is the cross of St. Andrew which has the shape of a (X).

The symbol of St. Andrew is shown as a cross in the shape of a (X).

(Feast November 30)

D.C. Jayasinghe
(To be Contd.)



Maha Raja Gemunu - Colourful and Innovative



Of late we have had the opportunity to watch some Sinhala films which spoke out the Sri Lankan History in various perspectives. They are all films based on true historical incidents. These historical films are high budget films needing time, talent, energy and a big cast.

'Maha Raja Gemunu' is one such historical film which manifests the creative thinking of its Director, Jayantha Chandrasiri who has brought something new to this movie which may not be seen in most movies.

After 'Samanala Sanduwaniya,' Jayantha has now taken to producing history-

based films and his efforts in this direction should be highly appreciated and commended. His directorial efforts create a landmark in historical or epic film-making, thereby proving his capability and passion to project something worthwhile and new to society.

In this debut venture in directing epics, Jayantha Chandrasiri recreates himself in the role of Dutugemunu - the best example to prove the inner thought of the Director himself. King Dutugemunu who reigned in the second century BC, wanted to bring Peace and Equality in the country. He was not happy with divisions

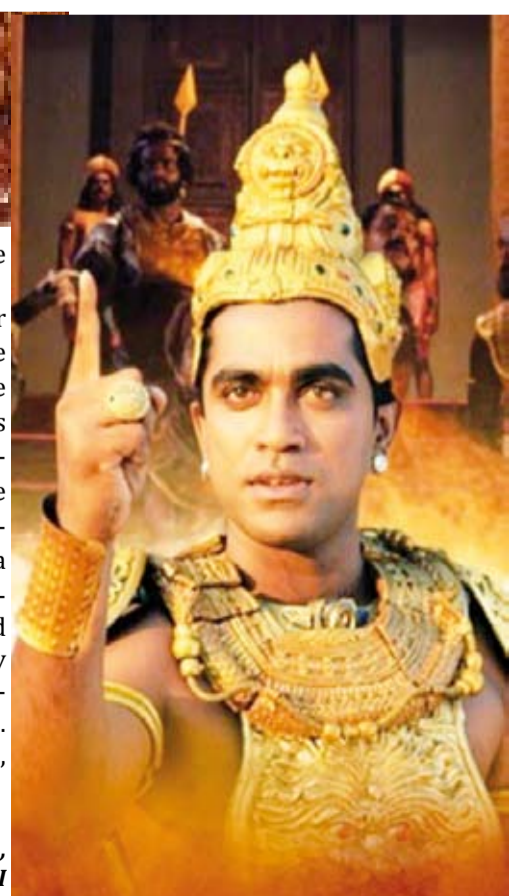
and vehemently opposed the killing of innocents. The film shows Dutugemunu taking many risks and winning wars without much bloodshed. His radical decisions for the good of the people went against his father, mother, brother and others. The Dharma was something he wanted to safeguard.

The film introduces Uddhika Premaratne, a new entrant in the role of King Dutugemunu and veteran Jackson Anthony, takes the role of King Elara. Other notable characters include Yasodha Wimaladharma, Sriyantha Mendis, Kusum Renu, Saranga Disasekara and Buddhada-

sa Withanaarachchi who gave of their best for the film.

The film is more or less a film of a person whose eyes explore the beauty of life through an inner need. In this magnificent venture, Jayantha does not seem to have dived into the pages of history books to create his Maha Raja Gemunu, rather, he depends on how history should be understood. What history wants us to do at present, before we enter into the future. The message is very simple, yet deep.

Rev. Fr. S. Randil Fernando,
OMI



The Gift of Tears

As the People of God begin the journey of Lent - the time in which we seek to be more firmly united to the Lord, to share the mystery of His Passion and His Resurrection.

Today's liturgy offers us first and foremost a passage from the Prophet Joel, whom God sent to call the People of God to repentance and conversion, due to a natural disaster (a plague of locusts) which was devastating Judea. The Lord alone can save us from the scourge and it is therefore necessary to entreat Him with prayer and fasting, confessing one's sins.

The Prophet emphasizes interior conversion: "Return to me with all your heart" (2:12).

Returning to the Lord "with all heart" means to begin the journey not of a superficial and transitory conversion, but rather of a spiritual itinerary with regard to the intimate place of our person. The heart is, indeed, the seat of our feelings, the centre in which our decisions, our attitudes mature. That "return to me with all your heart" involves not only individuals, but is extended to the community as a whole. It is a convocation directed to everyone: "Gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber" (v. 16). The Prophet pauses particularly on the prayer of the priests, pointing out that it is to be accompanied by tears. It will do us good, all of us, but especially for us as priests, at the beginning of Lent, to ask for the gift of tears, so as to render our prayer and our journey of conversion ever more authentic and free from hypocrisy. It will do us good to ask ourselves this question:

"It will do us good, all of us, but especially for us as priests, at the beginning of Lent, to ask for the gift of tears, so as to render our prayer and our journey of conversion ever more authentic and free from hypocrisy." This was the Holy Father's recommendation during the afternoon Mass celebrated at Santa Sabine on Ash Wednesday.

"The Lord never tires of having mercy on us, and wants to offer us His forgiveness once again, inviting us to return to Him with a new heart, purified of evil, purified by tears, to take part in His joy"

"Do I weep? Does the Pope weep? Do the cardinals weep? Do bishops weep? Do the consecrated weep? Do priests weep? Is there weeping in our prayers?" And this is precisely the message of today's Gospel. In the passage from Matthew, Jesus again reads the three works of mercy called for by Mosaic law: Almsgiving, prayer and fasting. He distinguishes the external disposition from the interior disposition, from the weeping of the heart. Over time, these prescriptions were corroded by external formalism, or they even mutated into a sign of social superiority. Jesus highlighted a common temptation in these three works, that can be summarised precisely as hypocrisy

(He mentions it three times): "Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them.... When you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do.... And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray... that they may be seen by men.... And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites..." (Mt. 6:1, 2, 5, 16). You know, brothers, that hypocrites do not know how to weep, they have forgotten how to weep, they do not ask for the gift of tears.

When one performs a good work, the desire arises almost instinctively in us to be esteemed and admired for this good action, to gain satisfaction from it. Jesus calls us to perform these gestures without ostentation and to rely solely on the reward of the Father "who sees in secret" (Mt. 6:4,6,18).

Dear brothers and sisters, the Lord never tires of having mercy on us and wants to offer us His forgiveness once again — we all need it, inviting us to return to Him with a new heart, purified of evil, purified by tears, to take part in His joy. How should we accept this invitation? St Paul advises us: "We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor 5:20). This

power of conversion is not only the work of mankind, it is letting oneself be reconciled. Reconciliation between us and God is possible thanks to the mercy of the Father who, out of love for us, did not hesitate to sacrifice His only begotten Son. Indeed Christ, who was just and without sin, was made to be sin (cf. v. 21) when, on the Cross, He took on the burden of our sins, and in this way, He redeemed and justified us before God. "In Him" we can become just, in Him we can change, if we accept the grace of God and do not allow this "acceptable time" to pass in vain (6:2). Please, let us stop, let us stop a while and let ourselves be reconciled to God.

With this awareness, we begin the Lenten journey with trust and joy. May Immaculate Mother Mary, without sin, sustain our spiritual battle against sin, accompany us at this acceptable time, so that we may come together to sing of the exultant victory on Easter Day. And as a sign of the will to let ourselves be reconciled to God, in addition to the tears that will be "in secret," in public we will perform this gesture of the imposition of Ashes on the head. The celebrant speaks these words: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (cf. Gen 3:19); or repeats the exhortation of Jesus: "Repent, and believe in the Gospel" (cf. Mk 1:15). Both formulae are a reference to the truth of human existence: we are limited creatures, always sinners in need of repentance and conversion. How important it is to listen to and accept this call in this time of ours! The call to conversion is thus an incentive to return, as the son in the parable did, to the arms of God, gentle and merciful Father, to weep in that embrace, to trust in Him and entrust ourselves to Him.

L'Osservatore Romano

Fast for the Environment

Fasting in Lent is an age old practice in the Church, but on February 16, the Global Catholic Climate Movement added a new twist to the tradition when it announced that over 45 countries will take part in a 40-day Lenten fast for climate justice.

Beginning on Ash Wednesday, which fell on February 18, and running until Good Friday on April 3, people are being encouraged to pray for unity on climate change within the Catholic Church and ask world leaders to make a workable agreement at the Climate Change Conference to be held in Paris later this year.

Catholic organisations in 45 countries have signed up to promote the fast for the environment.

The newly-formed group is suggesting two types of fast. In addition to the traditional fast from food, it is suggesting people fast from carbon emission.

It suggested that on Ash Wednesday people allow the ashes to be their first commitment to their

carbon fast, then follow it up with a vegetarian day, a fish day, on which they ensure they eat a species that is harvested in a sustainable manner and a day when they go digital, refraining from printing out material from the computer.

There is a suggestion for each day, which can both contribute to the awareness of the size and nature of the carbon footprint each one of us leaves in our tracks on this earth, as well as how much food waste contributes to carbon emissions.

Ciara Shannon, the convener of Our Voices in Asia, said, "This gives us a great opportunity to think about the food itself, how it is grown, how

much water is used, how it is transported and then packaged. It always shocks me the amount of emissions that are involved."

She adds, "Pope Francis made it clear from the start that all people need to act as protectors of creation."

The group says, "Our collaboration echoes the global dimensions of the Catholic Church and a shared sense of responsibility to care for God's beautiful, life-giving creation. We are inspired by Church teachings and guided by the virtue of prudence—understood by St. Thomas Aquinas as 'right reason applied to action'."

Patrick Carolan, from the Franciscan Ac-

tion Network, explained, "We encourage Catholics around the world to unite, pray and fast in solidarity with those who are most affected by the changing global climate."

Yeb Sano, the Climate Commissioner from The Philippines, who captured the world's attention with his own fast during United Nation's meetings following Typhoon Haiyan, said, "The power behind fasting lies in its purity of purpose and the sense of selflessness necessary to embark on fasting. This is the power of the fast—because it is meant for our aspirations of a better world."

Martin Kopp says that on a personal note, "Fasting made climate change real for me, opened my eyes and brought me closer to my neighbours... It raises my awareness on a regular basis and not only when extreme weather events happen."

He added that sharing the commitment raises awareness and that gives a real community dimension to the fast.

Jacqui Remond,



'This is the power of the fast—because it is meant for our aspirations of a better world'

the Director of Catholic Earthcare Australia, added, "It is important that we call for a strong climate agreement that keeps global temperatures from

rising more than 1.5 degrees Celsius—the threshold recommended by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change..."



APPRECIATION

Noel Cruz: Priest of many ministries-man of many talents

As soon as he closed the door of his room and began the short walk along the 35 meter corridor to reach our classroom, we knew it. We knew it, by the echo of the sound of his well-polished black shoe heels.

Father Noel Cruz was a handsome priest, of very fair complexion, tall, lean, clean-shaven, hair well-vaslined and groomed, and of course, well-dressed in pure white soutane and dark cincture. He hailed from a burgher family in Galle and was educated at St. Peter's College, Colombo. As a teenager, he was convinced of a call to the priesthood and joined the Oblates who ran St. Peter's. He became a priest in 1948.

He was destined to be a great Oblate, who would be thought to be ahead of his time. He was affable, jovial and friendly.

It was, if I can remember well, the latter part of nineteen fifties and the venue was St. Joseph's Juniorate, Kohuwala, Nugegoda.

He was freshly assigned to the Juniorate after a remarkable if not a spectacular educational career in his alma mater St. Peter's and then at St. Joseph's, where his personal educative methods involving students in drama, filming and communications, were well appreciated both by the school and the parents.

Apart from his priestly ministry and teaching, he had a passion for filming. At the Juniorate, he was omnipresent with his Bolex 16mm camera. At every special event there, he was at the forefront recording those special moments on the celluloid for present and future generations....

He made a documentary about open-heart surgery, a first in medical history in Sri Lanka..... he shot documentaries on location during his adventure - filled expeditions to distant and undiscovered parts of the country of which the still photos decorated pages of national dailies.

All this lasted only a short while, as he had us farewell to go to another assignment.

Few years later, we were in the hill country and he was posted down south in the low country.

As a priest, he had obtained degrees and diplomas, he was trained in catholic communications in the BBC, he had read news on Vatican Radio, he had written weekly programs for the Sri Lankan State radio, international celebrities like Bing Crosby, Tyrone Power and Sophia Loren were on his friends' list..... He had to his credit several feature films and numerous documentaries....

He was already a priest, teacher, broadcaster, filmmaker, reporter journalist and newspaper editor...

What more things could one envy to be endowed with and to possess?

At that moment he was at the crest of fame and popularity! But, perhaps, God may have had other plans for him..... He had to take a different path in his life.....

He asked for laicisation and obtained it from Pope Paul VI who approved that process in the church.

For several years, he worked as the editor of two national dailies. Then he married Tirzah Cruz, a distant relative and emigrated to Australia in 1974.

In the first years as expatriate, he relaunched to journalism, but it did not last long. He went back to his first love, teaching, and that with Patrician Brothers for nearly two decades. At the same time he exercised the Lord's ministry by being close to the life of his parish, offering his services, being a catechist, filming weddings and organising events where he showed his great talents in drama and music. He was also a known ventriloquist and puppeteer. He professed a deep faith all the time.

In the last years of his life, he suffered from a kidney ailment of stress and severe pain.

Though attached to a dialysis machine with one hand, with the free hand he wrote encouraging letters to similar patients and friends. He also wrote articles to the printed press.

A man of many talents, he developed and used them for the Lord and for the other until the last throb of his heart.

Whenever I think of him, I can not but remember the refrain and some verses of a French hymn that we sing often at the chapel of Our Lady of Miraculous Medal in Paris:

*If the Heavenly Father calls you to proclaim his marvels,
If the world calls you to lead it to the light and the truth,
If the Church calls you to harvest its new wheat,
Blessed Are You!
Be filled with joy,
Because your names are already written in heaven!
Because your names are already written in heaven!*

May the Lord grant him eternal rest!

S. Dharmasena
France

Dr (Mrs) Navaratnam

117 Inner Flower Road, Colombo 3, is an address I will never forget, and the lovely old-fashioned house will live on in my memory for as long as I live. It is one that my family and I have visited for fifty long years. The occupants were two brilliant and dedicated doctors and their three children - Dr A T Navaratnam, Dr (Mrs) V Navaratnam and their two sons and daughter.

I was delivered by Dr (Mrs) Navaratnam, a petite but extremely strong and capable lady and thus began the long, trusting and loving relationship that developed between my family and doctor. For us, 'doctor'

meant Dr (Mrs) Navaratnam and whenever 'doctor' was mentioned everyone knew that it was her. For us there was no other doctor. We went to her for everything.

When I underwent surgery, she was there. Hers was the last face I saw when I drifted off and the first that I saw when I woke up. Need I say more. We loved her and as she grew older we got to know her better as she had more time on her hands. She loved to chat about our lives and keep up with what we were doing. Her face always lit up when she spoke of her children and grandchildren. She lived alone once her husband passed away but

she was not afraid.

She was a very determined, courageous lady and she was a doctor in the true sense of the word. She treated you in a very down-to-earth fashion and was never in a hurry to rush you off to the hospital for tests and scans and other modern diagnostics. Only when she was certain that something was beyond her ability to diagnose would she recommend a test done. I have to say that doctor was never wrong.

There were people who did not see eye to eye with her. She never tolerated foolishness and she was not afraid to tell someone if she thought they were wrong.

This was not taken well by some and it was not unusual to hear her scold a patient, while we waited outside. She was a straightforward person, she had high standards and principles and she was someone you could trust, with your life, literally. She was well-read and up to date on current affairs and had a lovely sense of humour. She was also very practical and realistic.

I could go on. And on. Suffice it to say, that doctor was one of our favourite people and there will never be another like her. We miss her very, very much. We loved her. May God bless her soul.

Ann and Jessica

sorrows, the triumphs, the joys that we faced with you by our side. I have much to be thankful for, a loving husband wonderful children, grandchildren and great-grand-children. You sent me to see many of the countries in this beautiful world of yours. I have tasted the most delicious cuisine and enjoyed the company of sincere friends and relatives. You know all this Lord because you gave them to me and in my turn I wish to say a Big Thank You Lord. You also bestowed good health but I am feeble now. I need help to move from one place to another. I do not wish to trouble anyone, but trouble I must. The past are just very sweet memories. Be with me now more Lord, I am all yours, let thy will be done, I accept whatever you have in store for me. I hope I served you well and sorry if I failed in any way. Thank you for all your blessings.

Your ever loving daughter
Thelma

Thank you for sharing your life in the Lord with our readers, even at the age of 91. The Messenger wishes you well.



(Contd from last week)

Chapter three (3)

The sacraments of Communion and Mission (248)

The sacrament of Holy Orders (249-259)

Through Holy Orders, a priest receives as a gift and a mission for his brothers and sisters in faith. "one mediator between God and man" (1 Tim.2:5)... an ordained priesthood only in Christ and through a calling and apostolic mission from Christ.

The sacrament of Holy Orders is gifted with these degrees (Bishop - Episcopate / Priest - Presbyterate / Deacon - Diaconate. The bishop who exercises his pastoral ministry together with priests and deacons as his ordained assistants, is the foundation of the local church (diocese). In priestly Ordination, the bishop calls down God's power upon the candidate for ordination. It imprints upon the souls of those men an indelible seal which can never be lost. As a collaborator with his bishop, the priest proclaims the sacrament and celebrates the Holy Eucharist.

In Diaconate Ordination, the candidate is appointed to a special service within the sacrament of Holy Orders. " as a minister of the Word of the Altar and of charity, a baptized catholic man who is called by the church to be a deacon, priest and bishop can be validly ordained to that ministry.

Jesus lived as a celibate and in this way intended to show his undivided love for God the Father. To follow Jesus's way of life and to live in unmarried chastity 'for the sake of heaven' (Mt.19:12).

The sacrament of Marriage (260-271)

"No longer two, but one" (Mt.19:6). They are to live in love, be faithful and become a sign of God Himself, who is the fullness of overflowing love. The man and the woman mutually administer the sacrament of Marriage. The priest/deacon calls down God's blessings on the couple and witness that the marriage causes,

1. Free consent.
2. Affirmation of a life-long exclusive union.
3. Essence of love is mutual self-giving with out reservation.

It is an image of God's unconditional faithfulness to his creation. It represents Christ's devotion to his church unto death on the cross. Not everyone is called to marriage, even people who live alone can have fulfillment in life... invites them to remain unmarried 'for the sake of kingdom of Heaven". As a rule, a wedding has to take place publicly. The bride and the groom are questioned as to their intention to marry. The priest/ deacon blesses their rings. The exchange of the rings and promise 'to be true in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health.'

Chapter four (4)

Other liturgical celebrations (272-278).

Sacramentals are sacred signs/ actions in which a blessing is conferred. For instance; holy water, consecration of a bell, blessing of a house, blessing of the throat on the feast of St. Blaise, receiving ashes on Ash Wednesday, palm branches on Palm Sunday, the Easter candle and the blessing of produce on the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Popular Piety... expressed in veneration for relics/ processions, pilgrimages and devotions. The veneration of relics is a natural need.

One who goes on a pilgrimage prays with his feet and thus experiences with all his senses that his entire life is one long journey to God. We die in Christ so as to celebrate with him the feast of the Resurrection. Christian funeral is a service performed by the Christian community.

Letter to God

Dear Lord,

You have blest me with 90 long years, I am on my 91st. I celebrated 90 in Jan 2014. I was surrounded by family and friends from near and far. The lovely day dawned to the chirping of birds and fragrance of flowers around us. Everyone was busy preparing for the evenings celebrations. Everything went well that day. At the Eucharistic celebration I was very happy to receive you in my own home from the hands of our very own Parish Priest. My joy was complete. A belated thank you to everyone who made this possible.

90 is a long journey. The many hurdles, the many



'Handaya Giya Para'



"If it is the same moon that shines upon this whole world, how come the world burns with conflicts?"

This rhetoric question sung by a little child sets the thematic tone for the play *Handaya Giya Para*, an entertaining children's drama of tales, songs, dance, laughter and social message. It is a drama whose intention is pure and powerful: to retrace, locate, acknowledge and appreciate the beautiful diversity of Sri Lanka. Dramatized by an energetic caste of over 30 child actors, *Handaya Giya Para* held the entire Bishop's College Auditorium in suspended animation, last week.

The drama begins with a suspiciously clichéd announcement one would hear at a railway station: A trilingual dull monotonous imperative declaring the imminent departure of a train to a fixed location. However, that formulaic truism turns on its axis and becomes a metaphor as the human train comes on the stage. We are given glimpse of the very first sign of diversity inside the train. The passengers are by no means equal:

they are multi-cultural, multi-religious and trilingual: They are from different social classes; they focus on different aspirations - and they are all in the same space occupied by the train carriages. A journey has begun... if there is such a thing called a beginning.

The imaginary journey traverses through spaces that create meaning in a child's heart. In the school, the children engage in the diversity of Sri Lanka wholeheartedly as they lunge themselves into entertaining classroom group activities, where cultural and religious diversity is given meaning beyond their usual contexts. Group competition is tough, the teacher is kind and attentive, the classroom activities draw out their visual and verbal capacities. The common learning, we are made to understand, is social cohesion.

In the market place, nutrition takes on a new meaning. Children remind us about the true value of food, the grains, fruits and vegetables. Fast food is a nonentity in this space. The Vatti

Amma attains the magic status of pied piper as she hypnotizes the children with an assortment of fruits which capture the essence of nature's pure goodness. Using an awesome array of colorful costumes and lyrical folk ballads with soothing music, the child narrators bring to life the value of good food to a healthy lengthy life. One might be forgiven for extending the food metaphor to suggest that a healthy acceptance of diversity could also lead one towards a better life.

In the playground, the vitality, energy and the discipline come alive with lively sound tracks and the sounds of children. However, the games children play are not of the common stock. They play innovative games that borders on the main theme of the drama - appreciating diversity - with serious subtlety. The spirit of the game involves everyone, and it also, like an Olympic flame, carries the message of beauty in diversity into the heart of every participant.

The journeys in the drama are

many, and this review does not attempt to document them all - that would spoil the curiosity of the audiences at the next show. However, it is noteworthy to point out that *Handaya Giya Para* is a drama of songs and music conveying a timely message of social cohesion to children. It does so using Sri Lankan folk elements and music that recur in one's head and lyrics that are pregnant with meaning. It is obvious from the perfection shown by the caste that a lot of effort had gone forth during the pre-production stages. The backdrops with its stunning combination of colour and visual appeal only complemented the events on stage. It is the perfect antibiotic to conflict and possibly a best vitamin to nurture peace and harmony in a child's mind.

Drama: *Handaya Giya Para*

Script: Dr. Theodore Warnakulasuriya

Director: Pujitha De Mel

Review: Lal Medawattegedara

Practicing detachment

One of the more difficult sayings of Jesus is found in the gospel according to St. Luke, "If any one comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple" (14:26-27).

Does Jesus really expect us to hate our families? The 1970 edition of the New American Bible translated Luke in this way: "If anyone comes to me without turning his back on his father and mother..."

Jesus is not advocating hate, but Luke uses stark language to make the point forcefully. The issue really is who comes first in our lives.

The same point is made in the gospel according to Matthew, but here the language is a bit softer and perhaps clearer, "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me and whoever loves son or

daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me" (Matthew 10:37-33)

So the issue really is not hating, but loving less. Anytime that we love anyone or anything more than we love God, we have our priorities mixed, up. Jesus calls us to put God first, above everyone and everything else. And that's really the point of the virtue we call detachment.

Detachment is the opposite of attachment. If we get too attached to someone or something, we cannot let that person or object go, even when such letting go is necessary. So practicing detachment means practicing letting go.

Many Catholics have tried to practise detachment during Lent by giving up something they like or something to which they have become too attached. Giving up coffee or candy or smoking can be a way to

make sure that those things do not control our lives.

But we might want to look a bit more deeply at other things or habits or relationships that keep us from following Christ completely. It may be there that we really need to learn detachment.

The issue comes into focus when someone in our lives urges us to do something that pulls us away from God. Who comes first, that person or God? Or it may be attachment to our possessions that keeps us from helping the needy as Christ commands us. Again, what comes first, our wealth and possessions or the will of God?

So, do not hate anybody, but stay detached enough from everything and everyone who is not God that you can always put the love of God first in your life. Then love everyone and everything else as God loves

Courtesy: Sunday Examiner

"As Lent is the time for greater Love, Listen to Jesus' Thirst..."

**Repent and Believe' Jesus tells us.
What are we to Repent?
Our Indifference, our Hardness of heart.
What are we to Believe?
Jesus thirsts even now,
In your heart and in the poor -
He knows your weakness.
He wants only your love,
Wants only the chance to love you."**

-Blessed Teresa of Calcutta



I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord, whoever believes in me will never die.
(Jn. 11:25)

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR B
8th March - 15th March 2015

Sun: THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT
Ex.20:1-17 (or Ex.1-3,7,8,12-17);
1 Cor.1:22-25; Jn.2:13-25
Mon: 2 Kgs.51-15; Lk.4:24-30
Tue: Dan. 3:25,34-43; Mt.18:21-35
Wed: Dt.4:1,5-9; Mt.5:17-19
Thu: Jer.7:23-28; Lk.11:14-23
Fri: Hos. 14:2-10; Mk.12:28-34
Sat: Hos. 6:1-6; Lk.18:9-14
Sun: FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT
2 Chr.36:14-16,19-23; Eph.2:4-10;
Jn.3:14-21

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Response: Hear us Lord, we ask of you.

For the Pope and the bishops that they may teach God's people to walk in his commandments in a spirit of love and freedom. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Hear us Lord, we ask of you.

For all governments that they may respect the laws of God in all their decisions. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Hear us Lord, we ask of you.

For those who are walking in the darkness of error and sin that they may discover the light of Christ's truth and love. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Hear us Lord, we ask of you.

That when we examine our lives we may use no yardstick other than the teachings of Christ our Good Shepherd. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Hear us Lord, we ask of you.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

First Reading. Ex. 20: 1-17.

God out of love gives the Israelites a code of law known as the Ten Commandments. It is in two main parts and is designed to deepen the relationship between God and man and among men. They are to obey the law so that they will never fall away.

Second Reading. 1Cor.1: 22-25.

St. Paul speaks about the great message "Christ Crucified." This becomes an unfathomable message to the Jews as well as the Greeks who were expecting the Messiah to be of their ideal. But God is wiser and stronger than man.

Gospel. Jn. 2: 13-25.

Jesus comes into Jerusalem in order to celebrate the Passover. Seeing the trade that was going on in the Temple he takes a whip and cleanses it. There He takes the opportunity to speak about His death and resurrection.

Reflection.

For us who are engrossed so much in the world and are living in worldliness and also for us who are constantly challenged by temptations and local responsibilities because of the sins of the world; today's readings are a God given blessing to be faithful to

Him and the mission. The First Reading is about the Ten Commandments that God gave to the Israelites out of love so that they will be guided in the way of salvation. These Ten Commandments are not to be seen as a burden but as a help to live a life adhered to God. The Commandments are designed to deepen and protect the relationship between God and man and man and man. As we are constantly challenged by the world and temptations the Ten Commandments comes to our aid to keep us safe in the hands of God. In this manner the first reading helps us to be in touch with the Lord by following the Commandments to the letter.

In the Second Reading St. Paul reminds us the greatest truth and the sign in Christianity; "Christ Crucified." This indeed is a stumbling block for the Jews who demand signs. The Jews were expecting the Messiah who would be a powerful God on earth, one who will bring solutions to all their political, social, economic, spiritual and other problems in the way they desire.

But the way of the Lord was quite different. His was a way of love, surrender and obedience and not a way of hatred, disobedience, war, revolution or destruction. He died in silence and obedience in

order to save all mankind. Therefore, Christ Crucified on the Cross became a stumbling block to the Jews. On the other hand the Greeks were expecting the Messiah to be a great man of wisdom who could bring solutions to all man's problems. But the Messiah's great wisdom could not be understood by just human wisdom but by deep faith. Therefore for the Greeks it was folly. Therefore let us try to understand the way of the Lord and the wisdom of the divine by the help of a deep faith in the Lord. For Christ Crucified or the Cross is the only way of salvation for mankind.

In the Gospel passage in which we come across the incident of the cleansing of the Temple, Jesus is burning with the love of God. The Temple in Jerusalem; The Temple meant the entire area the building, the court yard, the garden,...etc. People from far away came to the temple to worship the Lord. It is quite understandable that they are not able to carry animals all the way. Hence there was the need to have sales centres attached to the Temple. People used different types of currency and there was a need for money changers in the Temple. Therefore there is no reason for us to waste our energy on arguing about the trade in the temple. Money changers

were necessary. But there were unholy transactions going on, in the process. Jesus reacted against this. What we understand by this is that fulfilling human needs are important but holiness should be preserved at any cost, while trying to meet their needs.

Our baptismal commitment too should be guarded as Jesus does in the cleansing story. The question that rises in the story is the reason for his action. But what Jesus speaks about, is the Good News about His death and resurrection. He is committed.

Therefore taking all these into account let us be committed to the Lord through the sign of the Cross to remain always in holiness, adhering to the commandments of the Lord.

Aid Story 1.

A man starting on a trip discovered that a nail was missing from one of his horse's feet, but paid no attention. "Bah," said he, "One nail more or less won't make much of a difference." He had gone very far when another nail came off, and another until the horse lost the shoe. The road was very rough and rocky and the horse was hurt so badly that he could scarcely walk. At that time some thieves came out, the man would have liked to gallop away but it was impossible, for the horse could only limp, and the thieves robbed him of everything.

The same thing happens with venial sins as with a nail.

Aid Story 2.

Three pastors from neighbouring parishes were having lunch at a diner.

The first said, "You know, since the summer started I've been having a lot of trouble with bats in the loft and attic of my church. I've tried everything - noise, spray, cats - nothing seems to scare them away."

The second pastor replied, "Me too, I've got hundreds of those things living in my bell tower and in the narthex attic. I had the whole place fumigated, but they still won't go away."

The third said, "I had that problem a while ago. So I baptized all the bats and haven't seen one back since then in church!"

Rev. Fr. Cisman De Croos

"Zeal for your house will consume me" (John 2,13-25)

1. The Psalmist in 69 suffers much. He is exhausted; alienated from family and Jewish community; falsely accused of theft and forced to make restitution. In extreme distress, he laments. But despite the pain and opposition, he is still committed to God's cause, "Because zeal for your house consumes me ..."

2. Jesus, who finds Himself in Jerusalem now, are oft opposed by the Jews: "Unto his own he came, but his own received him not" (John 1,11). He came to His own land - the Land of the Jews - and yet, the People of the Land - the Jews - have rejected Him. Despite their hostility, Jesus is committed to the cause of God like the Psalmist. In His zeal for the cause of God, He now cleanses the Temple (a historical event, mentioned in all Gospels). He drives out the sellers of animals and moneychangers out of the Temple area.

3. Do the sellers of animals and moneychangers not perform a necessary service to the pilgrims of the Temple? Every male Jew

above 19 years of age is obliged to make an annual contribution to the upkeep of the House of the Lord. Read Exodus 30,11-16: "Everyone who enters the registered group must pay a half-shekel ... Everyone of twenty years or more who enters the registered group must give this contribution to the LORD; Nehemiah 10,33: "We impose these commandments on ourselves: to give a third of a shekel each year for the service of the house of our God." Roman Denarii and Attic drachmas bear Gentile or imperial portraits and are not accepted to pay this Temple tax. So the moneychangers exchange these coins for acceptable coins of Tyre. Thus they perform a necessary service. Animals are also necessary for sacrifice.

4. However there are abuses in these two activities. Everything happens within the Temple precincts. Originally the animals for sacrifice were kept outside the Temple precincts for the danger of an escaped animal entering the Holy of Holies. But now animals are introduced into the

Temple area. Similarly, the Jews now carry unacceptable coins - those carved effigies - to moneychangers employed within the Temple area. Is it not blasphemous? The Temple has thus become a house of marketing. Its purity is at stake. Like the Maccabean heroes zealous for it, Jesus now burns with His passionate love for it. Hence He performs a prophetic symbolic action.

5. Jesus the Prophet par excellence performs a prophetic symbolic action on the model of Jeremiah. Standing at the gate of the Temple, Jeremiah proclaimed the message that the Temple would not serve as a place of refuge for the Jews against their enemies if they fail to reform their evil ways. "Has this house which bears my name become in your eyes a den of thieves?" (7,11). Describing the Day of the Lord in an apocalyptic genre, Zechariah the prophet ended his prophetic words as "On that day there shall no longer be any merchant in the house of the Lord of hosts" (14,21). After this prophetic fashion, Jesus now judges, "Take these out of here,

and stop making my Father's house a marketplace (Greek: emporion)." For Him, the Temple of Jerusalem is essentially the House of God His Father!

6. For us Christians, Jesus is the New Temple where we meet our God. "But he was speaking about the temple of his body" (2,21). He is the Holy of Holies where we can encounter the Father. "And the Word became flesh and spread a tent among us" (1,14). The Tent of Meeting was the place of God's presence among the People journeying in the wilderness: "They shall make a sanctuary for me, that I may dwell in their midst" (Exodus 25,8). Now the Incarnate Word, Jesus, is the new mode of Shekinah (Aramaic word for God's presence) among His New People. How sensitive am I to this indwelling? Do I talk with others about this divine presence with zest and zeal? Despite my lack of health and wealth, am I not still zealous for the cause of Jesus and His Gospel?

Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi



Sacrament of Reconciliation

* A Practical Examination of Conscience through the Ten Commandments

The Fourth Commandment

"Honour thy Father and Mother"

Commands: Love, respect, obedience on the part of children; care on the part of parents for the spiritual and temporal welfare of their children; obedience to civil and religious superiors..

Forbids: Disobedience and hatred of parents and superiors.

> Have I neglected to teach my children their prayers, send them to Church and give them a Christian education?

> Have I given them bad example?

> Did I neglect to watch over my children, the companions they have, the books they read, movies and TV shows they watch?

> Have I seen it that my children made their First Confession and First Holy Communion at around the age of eight?

For Children

* Have I been disobedient or disrespectful towards my parents?

* Have I neglected to help my parents in their need?

* Do I treat my parents with little affection or respect?



*Do I feel hurt and react proudly when I am corrected by them?

* Do I have a disordered desire for independence?

* Do I do my house chores?

* Do I quarrel with my brothers and sisters?

Next week Fifth Commandment



Women Building New Realities

8th March - International Women's Day

In our still patriarchal society, women, although discriminated, keep struggling, building new realities and make a difference. They suffer social discrimination, oppression, family pressure but they persist in the struggle for a world in which all have a voice and everyone has a decent life.

Women - mothers, girlfriends, sisters, partners. Godmothers, wives, aunts, grandmothers, women cooks, laundresses, nurses, teachers - women are present in lifetime. Women are involved and change situations. The world is full of the synergy of women and only they / we transform reality and weave new ways of brotherhood.

All this despite the situation of women in the world is still worrisome: Two thirds of the illiterate people in the world are women. Women constitute 60% of the workforce on the planet, but they do not earn more than 10% of global income. Only 1% of women own land. Domestic violence is the leading cause of death for women between 14 and 44 years.

The conquest of rights and solidarity with women in the workplace are the foundation to find

ways to a world of justice. In many countries women join together with other movements and organisations to commemorate the importance of their struggle for a just world without violence against women. A world where all, from their different approaches, are entitled to a decent life and without any oppression or repression.

In the World Movement of Christian Workers (WMCW), women, men and young people of all classes and professional categories are inserted and integrated into different types of actions to fight as women did in New York on March 8, 1857.

Many women in various countries assume responsibility as heads of households and are the first to feel the impacts of an evil capitalist system that oppresses. A system that leads many young people and teenagers away from the bosom of their families. A system that forces these women to let their children go

in search of a better life. Many times they end up in the streets and die prematurely as a result.

In many countries women work from sun to shade and in subhuman conditions in the field, in the informal economy or in precarious jobs. We see a strong presence of women in industry, in spite of being under-qualified for this. In this sector, women are frequently exposed to the risks of industrial chemicals and thus, to various diseases. All of them find hope in training offered by movements training and support groups such as in ECOSLO (Social and Solidarity Economy).

We highlight the efforts of the International Labour organization (ILO), which is always attentive to all types of violence suffered by women, and seeks ways, together

with other organizations, to improve the quality of life, mainly for domestic workers and the informal sector, whose category is composed mostly of women.

We note that in recent years, some countries have made progress in improving the quality of life of women. But we must remember that, despite these advances, in the world, every second a woman is a victim of violence or is killed.

Despite all the progress made and the work of training WMCW, in the gender issue continues the struggle with all its member movements in four continents and with sister organizations to find ways and viable solutions from the reality of every working woman.

World Movement of Christian Workers.



The Divine Romance

Enjoying Lord Jesus is so precious to find Moments many in thoughts refined His very nearness so profound I known only in goodness found For all days and circumstances A fulfilling presence in joy and in pain You'd find often times
you are immune from same When you dwell in His presence always; The wise will certainly not miss out on such pleasure To seek His peace and pursue it in full measure When we seek first His kingdom All else shall be added As real treasure

Jeanne Sittampalam

I Climbed a High Mountain with my Lord.....

My Mom and Dad fought a great battle to keep me alive, Even from the very first months of my birth. My mother fed the breast milk with a tea spoon, she said, And other things only sip by sip, she did wet my parched lips.

As I lay very sick, not much flesh, but skin and bone, They had to stroll down the road to see the Doctor each day, After much care was given, Doctor said there is no hope. God's protecting hand let them to another Doctor who cured me.

As I grew up I passed many dark tunnels. But He was there always to protect and guide me. Day by day I began to feel He was very close. Yet much grace is found in and through every pain.

True light of God did shine on me. He is my Lord and Master Jesus Christ. Still the storms of life and hardest pain I face Yet hand in hand I walked with Him each day.

It is only now I feel as if I have climbed a mountain with Him He knew I was weary so He made me to sit and listen to Him. Tune of His melody, soothe my soul, mind and body. As I gazed at His face I saw His beauty, I beheld His Glory.

Laurinda Jayasuriya





Annual English Day of St. Aloysius' Seminary, Colombo, 8



The 31st Annual English Day of St. Aloysius' Seminary, Borella was held recently, at the Auditorium of the Archbishop's House. The day's theme was "English, an effective medium for evangelization."

Very. Rev. Fr. Elmo Dias, Rector, National Seminary of Our Lady of Lanka, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. In his speech Fr. Elmo Dias stressed on the need for full commitment towards the learning of English and spirituality. He stated that, there is no short cut to learn English and the necessity of English is a

must to deal with the future world.

The beautiful items presented by seminarians made the day a colourful one and the drama directed by Mr. Haig Karunaratne brought the day's proceedings to a close.

The Annual Debate to mark the occasion was conducted the previous day with the invited school, Loyola College, Negombo on the topic of "Sri Lanka does have a ethnic problem." St. Aloysius' seminary who were the opposing team won the debate.

Warnna Devshan

New Superior for Oblate Scholasticate



Rev. Fr. Romesh Lowe, OMI assumed duties as the new Superior of the Oblate Scholasticate Community in Kandy on February 17. He is the 14th Superior of the Scholasticate.

Holy Eucharist on that day was presided by Very. Rev. Fr. Rohan Silva OMI, the Provincial Superior of the Oblate Colombo Province.

The day was also very signifi-

cant to the Oblates as it was the 189th Anniversary of the Papal Approbation of the Rules and the Constitution of the Oblate Congregation. On the same day Rev. Fr. Leopold Ratnasekera OMI, the outgoing Superior bade farewell to the Scholasticate Community.

The occasion was graced by the Bishop of Anuradhapura, His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Norbert Andradi, OMI.

WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is an important season in the Church's year Every year Christians use Lent to prepare themselves for the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, on Easter Sunday



In four steps with Peter to the Eucharistic Lord....

The Holy Eucharist, the Holy of the Hollies is the heart of the Church. However, according to the author of the 'Holy Hour' prayer, Jesus is a prisoner for us in the Eucharist. Thus we should spend time loving Him and being loved by Him.

Peter, the Apostle teaches us a prayer to be prayed before the Eucharistic Lord. It is the life-prayer of Peter. This prayer has only four steps and is to be done meditatively.

First Step

First is that we should have a desire to love and worship Jesus in the Eucharist. Like Peter once called, gave up everything and followed Jesus. (Mt. 4:20) He did not stop to think of his net, the only way of income he had. But went 'immediately' when Jesus called "Come with me." Also Peter went as he was. He did not go home to have a wash, after a night in the sea, nor to bid farewell to his family. Peter did not obstruct his way by worldly things, because the love of God penetrates through everything and sins, and the world is not a barrier for His love. Therefore let us resolve to go to Him, as Peter did at once and as we are, when He calls, "Come to me as you are my son, I love you."

Second Step

Peter made a confession in front of Christ - accepted his sinful nature and repented, after experiencing His love. At the incident where they caught thousands of fish, Peter knelt before Jesus and said, "Go away from me Lord! I am a sinful man' (Luke 5:8). I think Peter meant, Lord I am not worthy to be with you and to experience your love due to my sins. But Jesus replied, "Don't be afraid." Likewise Jesus replies to us too. However the second step, as mentioned, is to accept our sins and to reconcile with God.

Third Step

Peter surrendered himself to Jesus, 'To Surrender' is to totally depend on somebody and give the ownership of what he/she possess to the other. Simon Peter was able to surrender himself to his Master. "Simon Peter answered, 'Lord, to whom would we go? (John 6:69) This shows us that Peter was totally depending on Christ.

Therefore, as the third step of this prayer, we should surrender in front of God, as a soldier waves a white flag in front of his enemies. But we surrender

ourselves to our father, who knows everything, is good and Almighty. Once we surrendered ourselves, we have nothing in our hands. Even our authority to take own decisions should be surrendered. When we surrender ourselves to God, we accept to be filled and empowered with the Spirit of Jesus.

Fourth Step

The final or the fourth step of this prayer is to be filled with the Holy Spirit, Now, we are empty to be filled with the spirit.

"But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power... (Acts 1:8)

Peter experienced this fullness and power, in the day of Pentecost. Then he witnessed to Risen Lord in front of a massive crowd, as a result of his fullness and power.

The Four steps in brief are,

i) First, Jesus calls us 'Come as you are my son I love you.' He calls us to give what others cannot give, salvation, love, relief and everything.

Praise the Lord!

ii) Jesus says' My son, give me the truth of your life.' Jesus asks us to repent and give Him



the truth of our lives which are known only by ourselves and God. In a twinkling of an eye, all those thousands, of sins would be consumed as a drop of water cast into a blazing fire.

Praise the Lord for Him Mercy!

iii) "Let me take control over you - surrender to me. I will not let you want" says our Master. Jesus asks the ownership and authority that we hold to be handed over to Him, because He is Almighty and Holy, we can rely on Him.

Praise the Lord!

iv) Jesus says "Have my spirit, have it to the full."

Jesus gives us the Holy Spirit, the power of the Trinity, that we may go in peace and bring glory to God and bear witness to Christ. Praise the Lord!

But, one thing doubts me. How can we believe whether God has forgiven our sins or

taken what we handed over to Him or that we are filled with the Holy Spirit? There are two ways. One spiritual and the other is emotional. The first is that our Lord said, "Have faith." Yes, we should believe that God has forgiven and filled us with His Spirit. Each step should be accompanied with faith and trust. The second is the results of the prayer. The final step to be filled with the spirit. If we are filled with the Spirit we should have Love. Peace and Joy, within us also, The final step becomes successful only if the first steps were done successfully. Therefore, we can find it ourselves whether our prayer is fruitful or not. Peace and Joy will rush into our hearts with the Holy Spirit, when we have done our part. Praise the Lord.

*Deven Peiris
St. Joseph's Minor Seminary,
Kandy.*

English with Fun and Entertainment

Dear Readers,

In today's lesson which is our 66th let's learn about collective nouns, do a reading comprehension lesson with a traditional Lenten Prayer of Saint Ephraim the Syrian.

Your suggestions to improve our lessons are much appreciated.

God Bless You!

NJ

Def.- **A common noun** is a name given in common to every person or thing of the same class or kind. Common means shared by all. E.g. boy, town, country, dog, book

Def - A Proper Noun is the name of some particular person or place. Proper means one's own.

E.g. Smith, Swarna, Kandy, Australia, Laika, Treasure Island

Proper nouns are always written with a capital letter at the beginning.

Collective noun is the name of a number or a collection of things or gathering of persons taken together and spoken as one whole.

Look at the following collective nouns

- (1) A bunch of grapes
- (2) a herd of sea horses
- (3) a bouquet of flowers
- (4) a cache of jewels
- (5) a host of angels
- (6) a school of fish
- (7) a gaggle of geese
- (8) a mob of kangaroos
- (9) a herd of elephants
- (10) an army of ants

Activity 1 - Read the text and do the tasks given below



The **prayer** of **Saint Ephraim the Syrian** is little known among Roman Catholics, but it is an important prayer for Eastern **Rite** and Eastern **Orthodox** during Lent.

At the end of each verse, it is **traditional** to kneel or to make a **prostration**, which is when you **kneel** and then place your head to the floor. After the prostration, you should arise before reciting the next **verse**.

Eastern Christians say this prayer several times per day during Lent, and it is a good prayer for us to **adopt** as well.



The Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian



O Lord and **Master** of my life, keep from me the spirit of **indifference** and **discouragement**, **lust** of **power** and **idle chatter**. [kneel/prostration]

Instead, grant to me, your servant, the spirit of **wholeness** of being, humble-mindedness, **patience**, and love. [kneel/prostration]

O Lord and King, grant me the **grace** to be aware of my sins and not to judge my brother; for You are **blessed** now and ever and **forever**. Amen. [kneel/prostration]

(NB. the source of reference from the internet is acknowledged with due credit)

Task 1 - Learn the delicate shades of meaning of the following words from the text above and read it again carefully.

prayer	- supplication, entreaty, petition, appeal, plea, request, imploration
important	- key, significant, vital, imperative, central, chief, main, essential, crucial
Rite	- ritual, ceremony, service, sacrament, formality, custom, habit, observance
Orthodox	- conventional, accepted, traditional, mainstream, standard, approved
Fasting	- abstaining, refraining, desisting, withdrawing, ceasing, ending, starving
traditional	- old style, outdated, outmoded, old, old fashioned
prostration,	- bowing, kneeling, worship, adoration, abasement, kowtowing, genuflecting
verse	- stanza, canto, section, unit, poetry, rhyme, poem, jingle, ode, elegy
adopt	- accept, assume, approve, espouse, implement, embrace, agree
Master	- Christ, chief, principal, main, dominant leading, controlling, directing
indifference	- unimportance, insignificance, inconsequence, meaninglessness, irrelevance
discouragement,	- dissuasion, caution, warning, opposition, deterrence
lust	- desire, envy, covetousness, longing, yearning, hankering, thirst, hunger
power	- control, influence, authority, supremacy, rule, command, clout, muscle
idle	- lazy, indolent, shiftless, slothful, sluggish
chatter	- talk, gossip, chat, conversation, babble, prattle, rant
wholeness	- completeness, entirety, totality, unity, fullness, comprehensiveness
patience	- endurance, tolerance, persistence, fortitude, serenity, perseverance
grace	- elegance, refinement, loveliness, polish, beauty, style
blessed	- holy, sacred, sanctified, hallowed, consecrated, divine, revered
forever	- incessantly, persistently continually, endlessly, constantly

Noun - Prescriptive Grammar - Wren and Martin - High School English Grammar

Definition - A noun is a word used as the name of a person, place, or thing. Thing is anything that we can think of. Wren and Martin describe four kinds of nouns as

- (1) A common noun
- (2) A proper noun
- (3) A collective noun
- (4) An abstract noun

1. **Nouns** in the **collective** class can be used in either the singular or plural form depending on the context of the sentence. For **example**, family is a **collective** noun because it refers to more than one person sharing a relationship or camaraderie.

Task 3 : Complete the collective nouns with the appropriate word from the words given below -These collective nouns are commonly used under the category of people.

team gang bunch army crew class choir band crowd group troupe pack staff regiment tribe audience panel gang flock board

a..... of students	anof soldiers.	a of singers	a..... of sailors.
a musicians	a..... of crooks.	a of people/	a..... of thieves
a of dancers.	a of players.	a of artists	a of thieves
a of employees.	a of soldiers	a of natives	a of listeners
a of experts	a of labourers	a of tourists	a of directors

Task 2 - Answer the questions

1. What does the speaker ask the Lord to keep from him?
2. Instead of keeping him from such things what does the speaker ask the Lord to grant him?
3. Why does the speaker ask the Lord to grant him grace?

Answers: Task 2 -

1. The asks the Lord keep from him the spirit of indifference and discouragement, lust of power and idle chatter -
2. Instead of keeping him from such things the speaker asks the Lord to grant him the spirit of wholeness of being, humble-mindedness, patience, and love.
3. The speaker asks the Lord to grant him grace to be aware of my sins and not to judge my brother;

Task 3 - Answers -

- 1.a class of students.
- 2. an army of soldiers.
- 3.a choir of singers.
- 4. a crew of sailors.
- 5. a band of musicians.
- 6. a bunch of crooks.
- 7.a crowd of people/spectators.
- 8.a gang of thieves.
- 9.a group of dancers.
- 10.a team of players.
- 11.a troupe of artists/dancers.
- 12.a pack of thieves.
- 13.a staff of employees.
- 14. A regiment of soldiers.
- 15.a tribe of natives.
- 16.a audience of listeners.
- 17.a panel of experts.
- 18. a gang of labourers.
- 19. a flock of tourists.
- 20. a board of directors.



Are you a frequently erupting volcano?

By: Rev. Sr. Rita Gunawardena H. F.

"Anger (is a state) that starts with madness ends with regret" (Abraham Ibn Hasdai)

Do you get angry? Of course all of us now and then get irritated, annoyed and angry. The reason may differ the degree too. When we do get our way, when our expectations are not met, there are people and situations that provoke or offend us. They have a knack of getting on our nerves.

If we observe our reactions and responses in the course of a normal day we would find many instances, we lost our cool or was on the verge of losing it.

Anger is displayed in the way we speak, gesticulate, on our facial expressions, in the tone of our voice how we snap and raise it. We may even shout, slam down the phone, to name a few reactions. Our anger varies in its intensity. Some persons are hot-tempered others are cool-tempered. We categorise according to perception. However the past remains that we all succumb to this emotion.

I wish to share with you a practical way of managing this destructive emotion. We also must know that anger begins in the mind - the body joins it with emotion and it is energy.

Deepak Chopra the famous spiritual writer says, "We have two birds in us. 'True self' and 'Ego'. Ego is the bird that eats every fruit both bitter and sweet. True self (being) eats only sweet fruit." It depends on what we decide to take in. How are we to manage the not so good that comes our way. Of course we

need to manage the good as well. Here we deal only on the not so good rather the bad.

Of course you will say with patience you could curb anger. Here is a small parable to elucidate the point. "There was a lady in a town, who was gentle and good, spoke only loving words and beautiful in her ways. She had a housemaid who was skillful, punctual and well-organised.

As every person in the vicinity spoke of the goodness of the lady, the maid wanted to test her goodness. She decided to get up late than usual on the first day. The lady was irritated. She asked why? The maid replied, just....! One the second day she got up even later and the third day, very late and the sweet-tempered lady was furious; almost mad at the maid.

Mother Earth Patience

Patience on the surface level do not mean we are truly patient. When everything is smooth and nice and to our expectation we are gentle, kind and loving controlled by the outside'. To manage anger we need to be like the earth. Her patience with us is very large. We cannot make her angry or react. To manage anger develop patience as large as the mother earth.

Similarly, can we paint a picture in space? It does not take the paint, there is no contact. Be like the space, avoid contact with which makes you angry.

Can you warm the water in a river with a lighted fire in your hand how-



ever big it may be, but with it you could warm the water in a small container. Be like a river in your patience.

Here are four simple steps to manage anger on a daily basis. Some say when your anger is kindled count from one to ten. However I suggest

First: determine within your heart (I mean your being - true self) not to change the good, gentle, loving and beautiful 'you' - no matter what comes your way.

Second: Speak only the right word, for when you are angry it is anger that speaks. You cannot take back the wrong word. When you speak in anger it is not the beautiful, loving true self (your being) that speaks. It is not your true nature that speaks it is the ego.

Third: If you are blamed for something that you deserve, for some

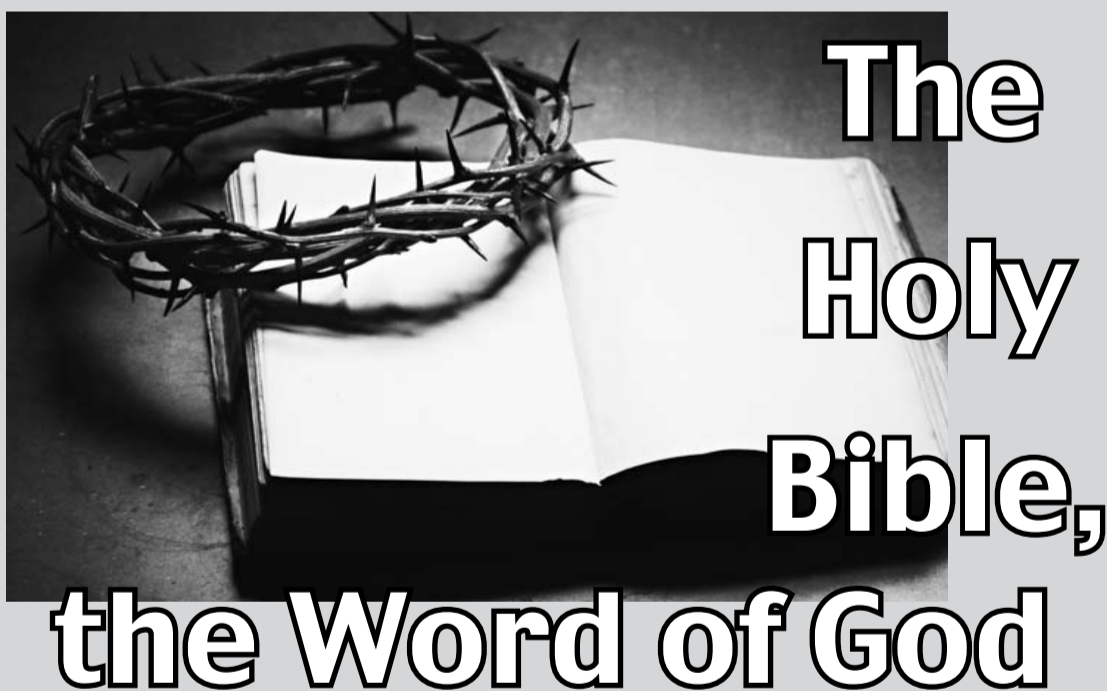
wrong you have contributed consider yourself fortunate. You are loved, Build a deep relationship with the person who blamed you. This is true love in disguise.

Fourth: If someone gets angry for no fault of yours be compassionate towards the person or the party that levels the blame on you. He/She or the party is ignorant of you. Who you are, why you do what you do, or say.

When the blameless one was crucified on the Cross He said "Father forgive them they are ignorant of what they are doing."

His act of loving kindness towards the enemy was so large, salvation to all mankind was made possible.

Shall we try the same during this Lent? Like Jesus our Lord and Master of Unlimited Love for the ignorant



The Bible is a book of instructions and guidance provided by the Creator for the benefit of mankind. Humans need guidance and wise direction. Although humans penned the words, God directed their thoughts. Therefore the Bible is the "Word of God," and reveals His knowledge that leads to everlasting life.

The Bible contains seventy six books in two sections. The Old and the New Testaments. Forty-six books were written mainly in Hebrew and twenty-even in Greek. The Greek text focus on the teachings and activities of Jesus Christ and His disciples. It was written over a period of sixteen centuries by over forty contributors and has been translated into over two thousand languages. It is without any doubt the number one best seller in the world.

The Bible should be considered a

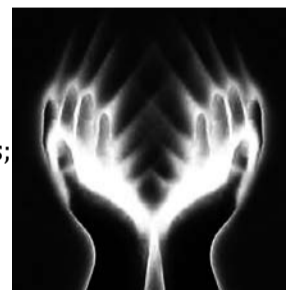
valuable possession of all Christians. It reveals God's personality. We learned that He has feelings and the choices we make matter to Him. (Psalm 78: 40-41) it tells us about His great power (Exodus 9:16), matchless wisdom and justice in meting out punishment and also that He is 'Merciful and Gracious'.

The Scriptures are beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight for disciplining in virtue, so that we as human beings may be fully competent and well-advised to do everything that is pleasing to God. The Bible in addition to being practical and up to date is dependable. It is prudent to have it read as often as possible. It is bound to bring rich blessings. Psalm 9:11 says of God's law, "In keeping of them there is a large reward."

Maurice Nanayakkara

HIS HEALING HANDS

Like His Master
He prays and
intercedes;
Absolves every sin
confessed:
<< Ego te, absolvo
peccatis tuis...>>



Lifts every burden from your chest
When in pain and sorrow you go to Him;
With His Lord, He addresses you:
"What do you want me to do for you"
Tell Him, ask Him, get it from Him...
His head, His heart, His hands
Anointed by the Holy Spirit
Imbued with the power of miracles:
Bread and wine at the Consecration
Becomes the Body and Blood of Christ!
You think, He could do no more?
You trust, His Word of Knowledge?
You submit to His Word of Prophecy?
Then, claim, receive and proclaim...
Every grace, every pardon, every cure:
Jesus in the priests - the "Alter Christus"
So, be surprised, be amazed
Believe and give thanks
For every priest, whoever he be:
He has Healing Hands!

Rev. Fr. Louis-Marie Navaratne O.S.B