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Messenger

March

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International
Women's Day

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"The Lord will not let His Church sink"



His Holiness Benedict XVI delivers final address

His Holiness Benedict XVI held his last General Audience on Wednesday, February 27. According to agency sources an estimated gathering of 200,000 faithful were present at St. Peter's Square. Greeting the flock the Holy Father commented; "Thank you, I am truly moved! And I see the Church is alive!"

Following are excerpts of the address:

"When, on April 19, almost eight years ago I accepted the Petrine Ministry, the words that resounded in my heart were: 'Lord, what do You ask of me? It is a great weight that You are placing on my shoulders but, if You ask it of me, I will cast my nets at your command, confident that You will guide me, even with all my weaknesses'. And eight years later I can say that the Lord has guided me.

"He has been close to me. I have felt His presence every day. It has been a stretch of the Church's path that has had moments of joy and light, but also difficult moments. I felt like St. Peter and the Apostles in the boat on the Sea of Galilee. The Lord has given us many days of sunshine and light breeze, days when the fishing was plentiful, but also times when the water was rough and the winds against us, just as throughout the whole history of the Church, when the Lord seemed to be sleeping. But I always knew that the Lord is in that boat and I always knew that the boat of the Church is not mine, not ours, but is His. And the Lord will not let it sink.

"We are in the 'Year of Faith', which I desired precisely in order to strengthen our faith in God in a context that seems to relegate it more and more to the background. I would like to invite everyone to renew their firm trust in the Lord, to entrust ourselves like children to God's arms, certain that those arms always hold us up and are what allow us to walk forward each day, even when it is a struggle. I would like everyone to feel beloved of that God who gave His Son for us and who has shown us His boundless love.

"I would like everyone to feel the joy of being Christian. In a beautiful prayer, which can be recited every morning, say: 'I adore you, my God and I love you with all my heart. Thank you for having created me, for having made me Christian...' Yes, we are happy for the gift of faith. It is the most precious thing, which no one can take from us! Let us thank the Lord for this every day, with prayer and with a coherent Christian life. God loves us, but awaits us to also love Him!"

"The Lord has placed at my side so many people who, with generosity and love for God and the Church, have helped me and been close to me. First of all, you, dear Brother Cardinals; your

(CONTD ON PG. 3)

• Archdiocesan Children's Day

The Heavens hear the Children pray

Children from Daham Paasals, Schools, and Colleges from the Archdiocese of Colombo gathered together in prayer at the sprawling grounds of the Basilica of Our Lady of Lanka, Tewatte last Saturday (2), to celebrate Children's Day.

Presiding at the Eucharistic Celebrations, on this 65th Children's Day of the Archdiocese, His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo reminded the children that their prayers are heard by their Blessed Mother who loves children.

The world today has become a breeding ground for evil and temptation and it is the children who become the vulnerable victims of these forces. "Remain closer to God and God will remain closer to you," he advised the young faithful of the Catholic Church.

"God remains faithful



PHOTO: Fr. Samil de Silva

to the promises He made to His people. During World War II, His Grace, Jean Marie Masson OMI, Archbishop of Colombo, appealed to the children to pray to Our Blessed Mother to save Sri Lanka from the War. He told the children that Our Blessed Mother specially

hears the cries and the prayers of the children. Our country was saved from the War and in gratitude this magnificent Basilica was built in fulfillment of the vow made by Archbishop Masson," His Lordship explained.

(CONTD ON PG. 3)

Application to Colleges of Education

Applications are called from those who have sat for the 2011 GCE A/L examination to enter Colleges of Education to obtain teaching posts for 32 subjects including R.C. Religion, Sinhala, English, Primary Mathematics and Science. Candidates of the 2011 A/L can apply before March 15th.

Further details can be obtained from Chrishani of the Archdiocese Catholic Education Office on 011-2699129

Rev. Fr. Ranjith Madurawala
General Manager, Catholic Private Schools W.P.

Blessed Sacrament Chapel for Madhu



The Bishop of Mannar, His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph, laid the foundation stone for a new Blessed Sacrament Chapel in the premises of the Madhu Shrine.

The Chapel, which was a long felt need is due to be completed by the end of this year.

'Aquinas Walk 2013'

'Aquinas Walk 2013', will take place on the morning of Sunday, March 17, 2013. Highlights will be a sports festival and a lottery conducted by the National Lotteries Board to fund the erection of a Jubilee Block in the premises, marking 60 years of academic service to the nation.

Pontiff Emeritus pledges obedience to next Pope

VATICAN CITY (CNS) Hours before his resignation took effect, His Holiness Benedict XVI addressing the College of Cardinals on February 28, and calling for unity and harmony among the men who will choose his successor, pledged his 'unconditional reverence

Passion Play at Kotahena Parish by Centre for Performing Arts



"Kaviya Nayakan" (The Lord of History) is the title of a Passion Play to be staged in Tamil at St. Lucia's Cathedral Quadrangle, Kotahena on Saturday, March 9 and Sunday, March 10 at 6.30 p.m. on each day.

The participating artistes, musicians and technicians are drawn from among the members of the Centre for Performing Arts (CPArts) in Colombo, Jaffna, Illavalai, Vanni and Mannar.

His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Fernando Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo will be present on the first day "Kaviya Nayakan," written by Rev. Fr. N.M. Saveri, Founder Director of CPArts was

(CONTD ON PG. 3)

and obedience' to the next Pope.

"I will continue to be close to you in prayer, especially in the next few days, that you may be fully docile to the action of the Holy Spirit in the election of the new Pope," Pope Benedict told the

gathering in the Vatican's Apostolic Palace. "May the Lord show you what is wanted of you. Among you, among the College of Cardinals, there is also the future Pope, to whom today I promise my unconditional reverence and obedience."

Availing the Truth of a Highest Promise, Reflected under the Shadow of the Foster Father...

The Homecoming of Four Legendary Josephian National Cricketing Personalities

It is vintage for Cricket at St. Joseph's College. The legacy of the sporting exuberance of a century and more begins to redefine a new chapter that is earmarked by hard work, commitment and passion for the school. While we are deeply touched by the fact that our heritage of cricket is exceedingly way ahead, we are proud about our own 'sons of the soil' who have effortlessly and gracefully made way to national cricketing careers in different capacities. Their quickened entry into national sphere and supremacy in well balanced positioning never appeared out of the blues; rather, it resulted in a fair process which everyone embraced with obvious relish.

As Angelo Mathews, Thisara Perera, Dimuth Karunaratna and Chaminda Vaas, the four young men, studded with talent and expertise, dominate the territory of cricket, we are even elated as this entry was made in leaps and bounds to find the place that most befits them. We do not possess probable parameters, though; a single school's contribution to national cricket in this magnificence at one given period of time could be exceptionally rare. They are our children, carefully bred under the shadow of St. Joseph, instilling into themselves the true Josephian spirituality mingled with professionally planned correct doses of faith, academia, discipline and co-curricular involvement.

As Mathews progresses further as undisputed captain of the team and as the first ever Josephian to officially captain the National Team, the vivid memories of his cricketing career in the school just six years before now, spells out clearly and brings to the surface the fact that the able young man proceeds further in his professionalism in such quick succession. The apt statement of media analysts, "the selectors had no reason to look beyond Mathews" is a stepping stone for the young man to ascertain and begin the noble career with correct spirit, self confidence and fortitude. Thisara Perera,



the match winning finisher, clad with innocence and fitting personality gave much impetus to his career and proved lately the value of his aptitude when he was sought after as one of the most expensive players at the recently held auctioning for Indian Premier League. Seemingly a smart young cricketer who holds much promise, is a foreshadowing of Sri Lanka's venturing in greener pastures. Dimuth Karunaratna, the amateur cricketer, wrapped with talent and faculty, enthusiastic and energetic has just made his entry into the team and will surely spare no effort and have no stone unturned to go further up the pinnacle. Chaminda Vaas, the legend and the stalwart for left arm fast medium bowling is appointed as national fast bowling coach. His career record with an insurmountable wicket-haul is no mean feat which led him to the conferred honour. He gave promise of this with the first bowl he bowled when he played for the college.

The wonder-day dawned at St. Joseph's College on the 27th of February 2013 as every detail was carefully planned to welcome the four prospects of Mother Lanka. Stanley Abeysekera Auditorium which accommodates nearly 3500 persons was packed to the brim with young student Josephians who stood on their toes having their fingers crossed. For a moment, it was pin-drop

silence within the auditorium as the four guests made their entry. The moment they saw the four shining stars entering the hall, they immediately stood to their feet waving blue and white flags to offer to them their adorable felicitations. The face of each and every child was wrapped with emotions and excitement to see the cricket heroes in flesh and blood in their presence. After the fitting felicitation ceremony was over, the teachers embraced their loving 'sons' with love and affection. Probably, they relived for a moment the solicitude they experienced from them few years ago inside the classroom. Everyone indulged in emotional sharing while a few murmured to each other about the unassuming and sincere ways, enduring love and affection, abiding concern and affinity the four boys showcased while they were still students.

My dear cricket heroes, you have taken control of the international cricket arena. It is, by all accounts, an incredible achievement. If not for the Lord who brought you to this position, none of these things would have been possible for you. Be faithful to Him with singular devotion and love. May you never ever feel ashamed to profess the Lord as your Master. Never allow to remain obscure within you the fact that you are what you are, because of Jesus who had a plan for you. Set the correct tempo for your life, spirituality and Christian temperament. Where it will be necessary, learn to differ with courtesy in order to withstand what is against conscience. Never give up your gentlemanly Christian qualities just for the want of material and temporary excitements. Have clear lines of demarcations drawn up as per your personality and great human qualities. Work with zeal, zest and visionary pursuit. And, I assure you, you will be the greatest of all.

Dear Angelo Mathews, our pride today is much justified for it was St. Joseph's College that shaped the leader within you, which held you in goodstead throughout your schooling career. You join today the throng of the multitudes of great stalwart Josephians who over the long years blazed a trail of glory within our shores and beyond. Let the essence of Josephian Spirituality that was lit up within you, in your childhood days, be the penetrating hallmark of a sterling leader of a veritable calibre. Your colleagues, Dimuth, Thisara and Vaas join with you in holding aloft the torch you have kindled. Let it burn brightly 'till the mountains disappear'.

May Sri Lankan Cricket grow from stature to stature under your erudite and committed captaincy!

Rev. Fr. Gemunu Dias
Vice Rector - St. Joseph's College - Colombo

ISSUING OF APPLICATIONS TO GRADE 01 CLASSES FOR 2014 IN CATHOLIC PRIVATE SCHOOLS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE

Applications will be issued as follows: -

1. St. Jude's College - Negombo	March 8 - March 31	8.00 a.m. - 1.30 p.m.
2. St. Bridget's Convent - Colombo 07	March 11th, 12th and 13th	8.30 a.m. - 9.30 a.m.
3. St. Benedict's College - Kotahena	March 16th and 23rd	9.00 a.m. - 12.00 noon
4. Loyola College Branch - Bopitiya	March 18th, 19th 20th	2.00 p.m. - 5.00p.m
5. St. Joseph's Branch School- Negombo	March 18th - 22nd	8.00a.m. - 12 noon
6. Loyola College - Negombo	March 18th - 21st	2.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.
7. Holy Angels Girls' School - Payagala	March 19th	8.00a.m. - 1.30p.m
8. St. Joseph's Branch College-Enderamulla	March 20th, 21st, 22nd and 25th	9.00a.m. - 1.00p.m.
9. Holy Family Convent - Kalutara	March 21st and March 22nd	2.30 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.
10. St. Thomas' Catholic International College - Seeduwa	March 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th	8.00 a.m. - 2.00 p.m.
11. Ave Maria Convent - Negombo	March 22nd	10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.
	Ave Maria Montessori, Past Pupils & Sisters in School	
	March 23rd	8.30 a.m. - 12 noon 1.30 p.m. - 3.30 p.m. Other Applicants
12. Good Shepherd Convent - Colombo 13	March 22nd	8.00 a.m. - 11.00 a.m.
	Good Shepherd Montessori, Past Pupils & Sisters in School	
	March 23rd, 25th	8.00 a.m. - 11.00a.m. Other Catholic Applicants
13. Holy Cross College - Kalutara and Branch School Payagala	March 25th and 26th	8.00 a.m. - 12.00 noon
14. St. Joseph's College - Colombo 10	April 1st - April 5th	9.00 a.m. - 2.00 p.m.
15. Holy Family Convent - Colombo 04	April 2nd and 3rd	8.00 a.m. - 12.00 noon
16. Christ King College Branch - Waliveriya	April 2nd and 3rd	12 noon - 2.00 p.m.
17. De Mazenod College - Kandana	April 6th	8.00 a.m. - 1.30 p.m
	April /th	10.00 a.m. - 1.30 p.m.
18. Ave Maria Branch School - Akkarapanaha	April 8th and 9th	9.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.
19. Holy Cross College - Gampaha	April 19th, 20th and 21st	8.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.
20. Christ King College - Pannipitiya	April 22nd, 23rd and 24th	9.00 a.m. - 12.00 p.m.
21. Our Lady of Victories Convent- Moratuwa	April 24, 26th and 27th	9.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.
22. Maris Stella College - Negombo	April 27	8.00 a.m. - 12.00 noon
23. St. Peter's College - Colombo 04	April 29th and 30th and May 2nd and 3rd	9.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.
24. St. Peter's Branch School - Udugampola	April 29th and April 30th May 2nd and 3rd	9.00 a.m. - 2.00 p.m.
25. St. Lawrence's Convent - Colombo 06	April 29	12 noon - 2.00 p.m.
	St. Lawrence's Montessori, Past Pupils & Sisters in School	
	April 30	9.00 a.m. - 2.00 p.m. Other Catholic Applicants
26. St. Sebastian's College -Moratuwa	May 2nd and 8th	8.30 a.m. - 12 noon
27. St. Joseph's Boys' School - Nugegoda	May 2nd - 31st (only Weekdays)	10.00 a.m. - 2.30 p.m
28. Good Shepherd Convent - Panadura	May 8th, 9th and 10th	11.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.

Please forward your Family book, Baptismal certificate and Birth certificate of the child and any other documents requested by the School to obtain applications. Since there is no room in Private Schools to accommodate all the children who apply, please send your applications to vested and Government Schools too. We also warn you not to be deceived by the mediators who will ask for money assuring the admission of your child and request to you to give us information of such people.

Rev. Fr. Ranjith Madurawala,
Archdiocesan Director of Education and
General Manager of Catholic Private Schools

Thirty fifth anniversary of the Daya Seva Society



The 35th anniversary of the Daya Seva Society of St. Mary's Church, Nayakakanda was held recently under the patronage of Rev. Fr. Nicholas Batepola. Rev. Fr. Mahendra Gunathilaka Parish Priest of St. Mary's Church and Rev. Fr. H.D. Anthony former parish priest who also participated in the celebrations.

Nimal Perera

Paying tribute to the Founder Principal



A reception was accorded to welcome the newly ordained priest, Rev. Fr. Thilakasiri Fernando TOR by the students, parents and the staff of Loyola College, Bopitiya of which he was the Founder-Principal, Rev. Fr. Thilakasiri lights the traditional oil lamp while his mother looks on.

S.K.J. Kurera

Promoting healing and reconciliation

A group of nearly 500 men, women and children from the Dioceses of Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kurunegala, Anuradhapura, Kandy, Mannar and Badulla gathered at the Don Bosco Centre, Nochchiyagama in Anuradhapura Diocese for a service of healing and reconciliation. This was conducted under the Caritas program to promote reconciliation and healing among the communities.

A special reflection was delivered at this event by Rev Fr Eric Fernando, Director of Catechetics in Anuradhapura Diocese who spoke at length about the need for forgiveness, understanding and reconciliation.

The event in Nochchi-



yagama was hosted by the Caritas Anuradhapura Sethsaviya in collaboration with the SEDEC National Centre. Among those who graced the occasion were Rev Fr Paaris Jayamaha, Diocesan Director of

Anuradhapura, Rev Fr Bernard Regno, Diocesan Director of Jaffna and religious dignitaries of Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic faiths.

Ainsley Joseph

The Heavens....

Contd. from Pg. 1

His Lordship also stated that His Grace Archbishop Emeritus, Nicholas Marcus Fernando made an appeal to the children from the Basilica on Children's Day to earnestly pray three "Hail Mary's" to Our Blessed Mother daily to stop the brutal war that had engulfed our country. "The war at least was over but then we cannot forget the various incidents that are happening today," Bishop Maxwell observed.

"Today gathered in this hallowed Basilica let us pray earnestly, therefore, that Our Blessed Mother may keep us closer to God and that God will find favour with you my dear children, by calling you to serve the Lord in His Mission," The Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo said.

The Eucharistic celebrations were jointly presided by Their Lordships Maxwell Silva and Emmanuel Fernando together with Archbishops Emeriti Nicholas Marcus Fernando, Oswald Gomis, Rev. Fr. Indra Fernando, Director of Catechetics, Rev. Fr. Manokumaran Nagarathnam in charge of Tamil Catechetics, Episcopal Vicars, Rev. Fathers, Rev. Sisters, Religious and the Laity.

Passion Play....

Contd. from Pg. 1

first staged in Jaffna in 2001 during the Season of Lent and thereafter in 2004 and 2007. The play, while portraying how Jesus epitomized the best of human qualities during His lifetime, also presents Judas and Pontius Pilate in entirely new perspectives.

In addition to the performance in Colombo, the play will also be staged in Jaffna for four days from March 21 to 24.

The arrangements for the Passion Play in Kottahena are being made under the guidance of Rev. Frs. Eustace Fernando IVD and Bernard Jeevarathnam OSB.

Ainslie Joseph

AGM of Sri Lanka University Catholic Students' Movement



The 30th annual general meeting of Sri Lanka University Catholic Students' Movement (Colombo Region) was held on February 24, at St. Paul VI Centre, under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Saman Maximus. This is a picture of the newly appointed committee for year 2013/4.

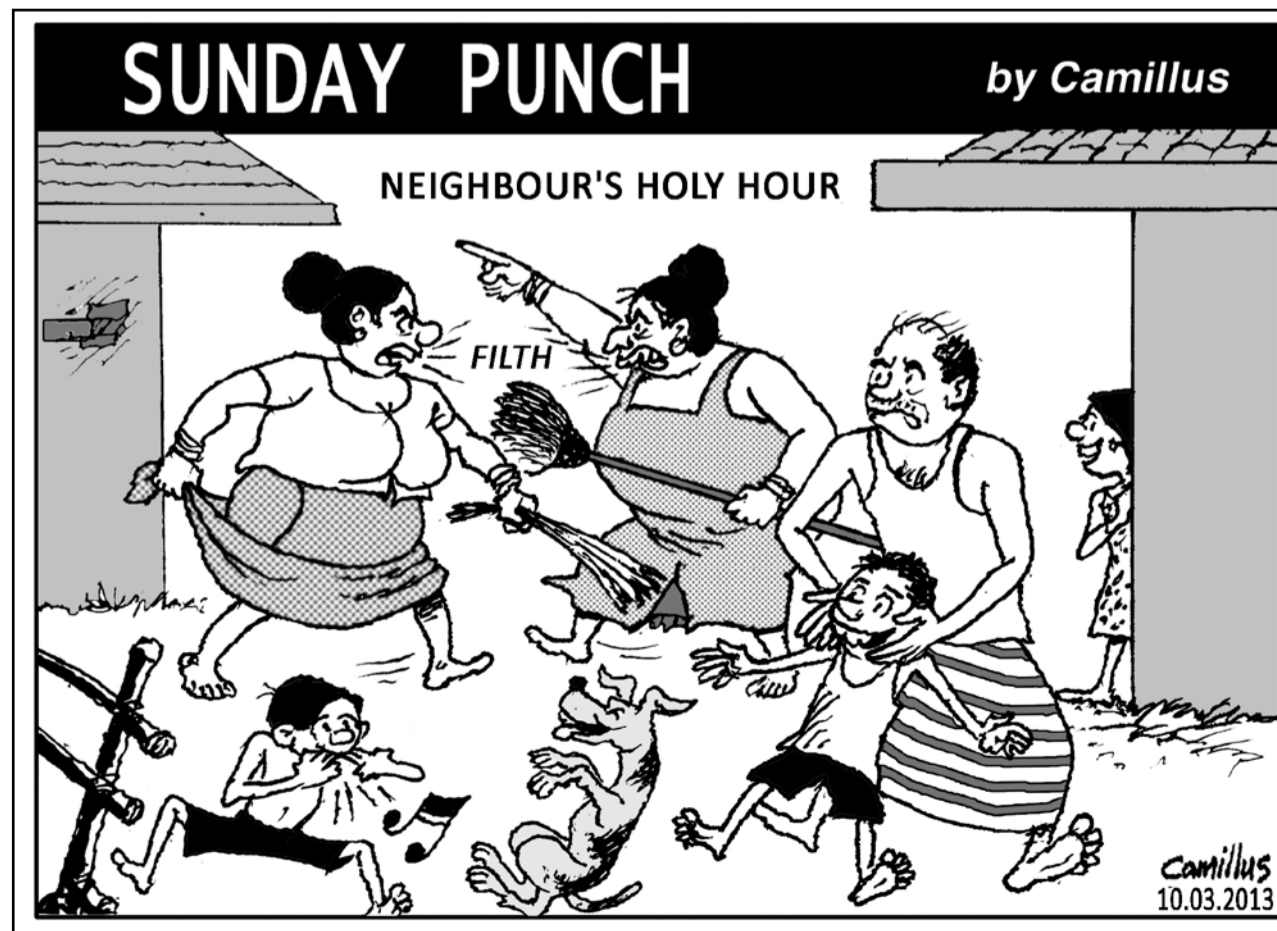
Marius Suranjan - *President*, Janath Fernando, Pradeep Darshana - *Vice Presidents*, Rosarydasan Giovanni - *Secretary*, Tharindu Fernando - *Vice Secretary*, Sampath Bernard - *Treasurer*, Sheril Fernando - *International Affairs Co-ordinator*, Dewmal Anicitus, Shenal Neomal - *Co-editors*, Sudaraka Tholkage, Dushantha Fernandazz, Sudheera Fernando - *Committee Members*, Rishan Akalanka, Ravi Tissera - *Mobilizers*.

Eucharistic Miracles' Exhibition

The Eucharistic Miracles' Exhibition was declared open last week at St. Lucia's Cathedral, Kottahena.

This week the Exhibition will be held from March 8 to 11, at All Saints' Church, Borella.

From March 15 to 18, the Exhibition will be at St. Anthony's Church, Kollupitiya.



The Lord.....

Contd. from Pg. 1

wisdom, your advice, and your friendship have been precious to me. My collaborators, starting with my secretary of state who has accompanied me faithfully over the years; the Secretariat of State and the whole of the Roman Curia, as well as all those who, in their various areas, serve the Holy See.

"I wish to send my greetings and my thanks to all: A pope's heart extends to the whole world. And I would like to express my gratitude to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, which makes the great family of Nations present here. Here I am also thinking of all those who work for good communication and I thank them for their important service.

"At this point I would also like to wholeheartedly thank all of the many people around the world who, in recent weeks, have sent me touching tokens of concern, friendship, and prayer. Yes, the Pope is never alone. I feel this again now in such a great way that it touches my heart. The Pope belongs to everyone and many people feel very close to him. It's true that I receive letters from the world's notables—from heads of states, from religious leaders, from representatives of the world of culture, etc. But I also receive many letters from ordinary people who write to me simply from their hearts and make me feel their affection, which is born of our being together with Christ Jesus, in the Church.

"In this you can touch what the Church is—not an organization, not an association for religious or humanitarian ends, but a living body, a communion of brothers and sisters in the Body of Jesus Christ who unites us all. Experiencing the Church in this way and being able to almost touch with our hands the strength of His truth and His love is a reason for joy at a time when many are speaking of its decline. See how the Church is alive today!

"In these last months I have felt that my strength had diminished and I asked God earnestly in prayer to enlighten me with His light to make me make the right decision, not for my own good, but for the good of the Church. I have taken this step in full awareness of its seriousness and also its newness, but with a profound peace of mind. Loving the Church also means having the courage to make difficult, agonized choices, always keeping in mind the good of the Church, not of oneself. "Allow me here to return once again to 19 April, 2005. The gravity of the decision lay precisely in the fact that, from that moment on, I was always and for always engaged by the Lord. Always - whoever assumes the Petrine ministry no longer has any privacy. He belongs always and entirely to everyone, to the whole Church. His life, so to speak, is totally deprived of its private dimension. I experienced, and I am experiencing it precisely now, that one receives life precisely when they give it. Before I said that many people who love the Lord also love St. Peter's Successor and are fond of him; that the Pope truly has brothers and sisters, sons and daughters all over the world and that he feels safe in the embrace of their communion; because he no longer belongs to himself but he belongs to all and all belong to him.

"Always' is also 'forever'—there is no return to private life. My decision to renounce the active exercise of the ministry does not revoke this. I am not returning to private life, to a life of trips, meetings, receptions, conferences, etc. I am not abandoning the cross, but am remaining beside the Crucified Lord in a new way. I no longer bear the power of the office for the governance of the Church, but I remain in the service of prayer, within St. Peter's paddock, so to speak. St. Benedict, whose name I bear as Pope, will be a great example to me in this. He has shown us the way for a life that, active or passive, belongs wholly to God's work.

"I also thank each and every one of you for the respect and understanding with which you have received this important decision. I will continue to accompany the Church's journey through prayer and reflection, with the dedication to the Lord and His Bride that I have tried to live every day up to now and that I want to always live. I ask you to remember me to God, and above all to pray for the Cardinals who are called to such an important task, and for the new Successor of the Apostle Peter. Many the Lord accompany him with the light and strength of His Spirit.

"Dear friends! God guides His Church, always sustaining her in difficult times. Let us never lose this vision of faith, which is the only true vision of the path of the Church and of the world. In our hearts, in the heart of each one of you, may there always be the joyous certainty that the Lord is beside us, that He does not abandon us, that He is near and embraces us with His love. Thank you."

(Courtesy: Archdiocese website)

THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY OF BRITAIN
Messenger

EDITORIAL

March 10, 2013

Let us ascend that holy mountain where God-Love dwells

We see a side of Jesus in the Gospel for the Third Sunday of Lent that's unusual - that He read the newspapers. Of course there were no newspapers in His time, but He knew all about the local newsworthy events. He knows about the Galileans killed by Pilate, and that eighteen people were killed when the tower at Siloam fell on them. But Jesus points to the eternal meaning of these calamities, great and small-whether they happen all of a sudden, or, like the fig-tree, give us time, they are all warning us of the need to see everything in relation to God, the One who exists beyond time, the I AM WHO I AM.

Many of the media have a wish list for the new Pope that would include agreeing with the moral fashions of our time, with abortion, euthanasia, IVF, allowing dissenting theologians to disagree on fundamental teachings, accepting homosexual activity and gay marriage as moral options, and of course, what they would call complete democratising of the Church. What they really mean would be that it would give up its role as the main voice in the modern world that fights what His Holiness Benedict once called 'the dictatorship of relativism,' the claim that there are no moral absolutes. Because for us, our unchanging morality comes from the unchanging I AM WHO I AM. Let us have a look first at his renouncing of the papacy, then at some of the responses to him as he left the Papal office:

In his Lenten message of a month ago he said: "The whole Christian life is our answer to God's love." From the beginning of his ministry, we have been struck by Benedict's simplicity in speaking of his relationship with Jesus, which we are all called to live. The word he has used for this very often is friendship, our friendship with Jesus.

Here are a few responses to his renunciation that give an idea of just how wide-ranging his influence has been: His departure was greeted with sadness by Israel's Chief Rabbi Yona Metzger, who stated: "During his [pontificate] there were the best relations ever between the Church and the Chief Rabbinate and we hope that this trend will continue," while the President of the World Jewish Congress, Ronald S. Lauder, stated, "The papacy of Benedict XVI elevated Catholic-Jewish relations onto an unprecedented level. Not only did he maintain the achievements of his predecessor, Pope John Paul II, and give the relationship solid theological underpinning but, more importantly, he filled it with meaning and with life."

After his famous Regensburg speech, where he criticized not only some Muslims, but also some Catholics and Protestants for using religion as a cover for violence, some 138 Muslim scholars joined in launching 'A Common Word', a letter to Pope Benedict (and other Christian leaders) calling for serious dialogue on what Islam and Christianity have in common, namely the call to love God and one another. That dialogue was one which Benedict took up immediately, with annual meetings after that.

"The Lord is calling me to 'ascend the mountain', and dedicate myself still more to prayer and meditation," Pope Benedict XVI said during his last Sunday at the Angelus. "But this does not mean abandoning the Church," he continued. Indeed, if God asks this of me it is precisely so that I can carry on serving the Church with the same dedication and the same love as I tried to do till now, but in a way that is better suited to my age and strength." He has certainly encouraged all of us, through his writings and his actions, to try to see everything from God's perspective, not just our own very limited ones. With him, let us ascend that holy mountain where God-Love dwells.

The Papal Conclave

Rev. Fr. Freely Muthukudararchchi

The first General Congregation of the College of Cardinals was convened on Monday, March 4, at 9 o'clock in the New Synod Hall. A second was held that same Monday afternoon at 5 o'clock. The Conclave to elect the new Pope may begin before March 15, decided after a vote taken by the Cardinals in the General Congregations, following the recent change which provided for the advancement of the Conclave by the Cardinals. The norms to be followed during the election of the Roman Pontiff are given in the Apostolic Constitution, *Universi Dominici Gregis* issued in 1996 by Pope John Paul II.



The Electors

The maximum number of voting Cardinals who can enter the Conclave is 120. At present there are 117 eligible Cardinals who are under the age of 80. However, two Cardinals have expressed their inability to attend the Conclave and the number of Cardinals who will be voting has come down to 115. There are 90 Cardinals who are above the age of eligibility for voting.

The forms of election known as 'by acclamation' or 'by compromise' are abolished. The only form of electing the Pope is by scrutiny, which is by the vote of the Cardinals. The right to elect the Roman Pontiff belongs exclusively to the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church. The right of active election by any other ecclesiastical dignitary or the intervention of any lay power of whatsoever grade or order is absolutely excluded (no. 33).

The Place

The Sistine Chapel is the place where the meetings of the Conclave take place and *Domus Sanctae Marthae* is the place where the Cardinals take lodging during the period of the Conclave. In order that the election of the Supreme Pontiff is carried out with due privacy and freedom, the premises of the Sistine Chapel and *Domus Sanctae Marthae* will be closed during this period to unauthorized persons.

In a special way, careful and stringent checks are carried out, with the help of trustworthy individuals of proven technical ability, in order to ensure that no audiovisual equipment has been secretly installed in these areas for recording and transmission to the outside (No. 52).

Pontifical Secrecy

The Cardinal electors, from the beginning of the election until its conclusion and the public announcement of its outcome, are not to communicate — whether by writing, by telephone or by any other means of communication — with persons outside the area where the election is taking place, except in cases of proven and urgent necessity (No. 44). Anyone while legitimately present in Vatican City, who happens to meet one of the Cardinal electors during the time of the election, is absolutely forbidden to engage in conversation of any sort, by whatever means and for whatever reason, with that Cardinal (No. 45). All persons discharging duties during the Conclave are obliged to maintain strict secrecy regarding the election process. There are two kinds of oaths that are to be taken before the beginning of the Conclave; one by those assisting at the Conclave procedures in the following manner: I will observe absolute and perpetual secrecy with all who are not part of the College of Cardinal electors concerning all matters directly or indirectly related to the ballots cast and their scrutiny for the election of the Supreme Pontiff.

They are also obliged to promise

that they will refrain from using any audio or video equipment capable of recording anything which takes place during the period of the election within Vatican City.

The other oath is by the Cardinal electors in the following manner: "We, the Cardinal electors present in this election of the Supreme Pontiff, promise, pledge and swear, ...In a particular way, we promise and swear to observe with the greatest fidelity and with all persons, clerical or lay, secrecy regarding everything that in any way relates to the election of the Roman Pontiff and regarding what occurs in the place of the election, directly or indirectly related to the results of the voting..."

The Cardinal electors are likewise to refrain from receiving or sending messages of any kind outside Vatican City. It is specifically prohibited to the Cardinal electors, for the entire duration of the election, to receive newspapers or periodicals of any sort, to listen to the radio or to watch television (No. 57).

They shall make every effort to preserve that secrecy by ensuring that no audiovisual equipment for recording or transmitting has been installed by anyone in the areas of the Conclave, and particularly in the Sistine Chapel itself, where the acts of the election are carried out.

Election Procedures

The Cardinal electors shall meet in the Basilica of Saint Peter's in the Vatican, in order to take part in a solemn Eucharistic Celebration with the Votive Mass *Pro Eligendo Papa* — for the election of the Pope according to the prescriptions of *Ordo Rituum Conclavis* — the ritual order of the Conclave.

From the Pauline Chapel of the Apostolic Palace, where they will assemble at a suitable hour in the afternoon, the Cardinal electors, in choir dress, and invoking the assistance of the Holy Spirit with the chant of the *Veni Creator*, will solemnly proceed to the Sistine Chapel of the Apostolic Palace, where the election will be held. There the Cardinals will take the oath of confidentiality.

Then the Retreat Master, previously chosen to preach to the Cardinal electors, will deliver the second meditation and leave the Chapel. Should the election begin on the afternoon of the first day, only one ballot is to be held; then, on the following days, if no one was elected on the first ballot, two ballots shall be held in the morning and two in the afternoon (No.63).

The Phases of the Election

There are three phases to the election called: Pre-scrutiny, Scrutiny and Post-scrutiny. In the Pre-scrutiny process, the ballot papers are distributed to the Cardinals by the Secretary of the College of Cardinals and Masters of Ceremonies. The ballot has two halves; on the upper half it is printed "*Eligo in Summum Pontificem*" (Election of

(Contd. on Pg. 5)

SHARE YOUR FAITH DURING THIS 'YEAR OF FAITH'

My faith was enhanced - not only by the Scriptures - but also by the beautiful hymns of faith which form an important part in our Protestant Churches. It is so uplifting to attend these services where the whole congregation - both young and old - whole heartedly participate in the singing of these hymns. They sing from their hearts raising their voices in praise of God, and these hymns have had a great impact and have been a source of inspiration. Sadly, in our Catholic Churches most of these old hymns of faith are not sung - and we depend on the choir for the singing, and so the congregation hardly joins in the worship of praise! This is something that we can emulate from our separated brethren!

As I said earlier, it was John 3:16 that touched my heart, and on singing my favourite childhood hymn "There is a green hill far away," it was as if that Scripture verse became alive and I could visualize before my eyes our suffering Saviour on the Cross and experience His great love for us mankind in dying for us sinners, especially me. This hymn was written by Mrs. C.F. Alexander, 1828-1825. Unfortunately, I have never heard this inspiring hymn in any Catholic Church, so here is how it goes:

"There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all.

We may not know, we cannot tell,
What pains He had to bear,
But we believe it was for us,
He hung and suffered there.

He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good;
That we might go at last to Heaven,
Saved by His Precious Blood.

There was no other good enough,
To pay the price of sin;
He only could unlock,
The gate of Heaven and let us in.

O, dearly, dearly has He loved,
And we must love Him too,
And trust in His redeeming Blood,
And try His Works to do."

It is a great hymn set to music which has a calming effect. This really touched my heart for the words are so simple that I - even as a child - understood and experienced the greatness of Our precious Saviour's love for us; and knew I too should love Him, who first loved me - with a love I could never find elsewhere in this world.

God speaks to us in different ways and we can only appreciate and understand Christ's immense love for us and the gravity of our sins when we see Him at the foot of the Cross. I have never forgotten what my Sunday School teacher told: "Remember that every sin you and I commit, we are nailing Jesus to the Cross with our own hands."

Here's a story:

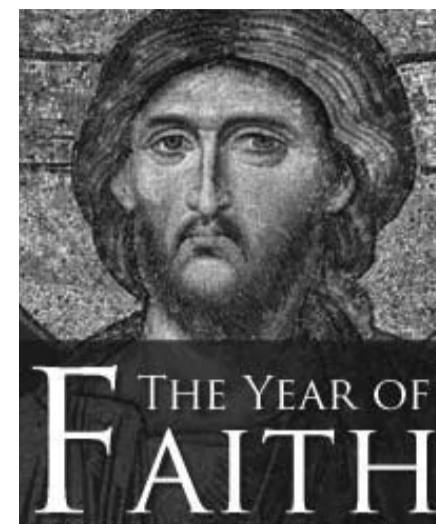
"A man who was deeply troubled by his sins was having a vivid dream in which he saw Jesus being savagely whipped by a soldier. As the cruel scourge came down upon Christ's back the onlooker shuddered, for the terrible cords left ugly, gaping wounds upon His bleeding, swollen body. When the one wielding the lash raised his arm to strike the Lord again, the man rushed forward to stop him. As he did, the soldier turned, and the dreamer was startled to see his own face!"

Yes, it is you and I who have nailed Jesus, the Lamb of God to the Cross - He, the innocent One paid the price for OUR sins!

The moving hymn, "When I survey the wondrous Cross" by Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, also endkindles within me the same emotions of Our Lord's suffering and death, "See from His head, His hands, His feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down; Did e'er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?" Indeed, "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all." And, as another similar favourite hymn of mine, "The Old Rugged Cross" by George Bernard, - which was based on John 3:16 - also touches my heart as I stand at the foot of the Cross, and believe in Him who died for me - and my faith in my Redeemer is strengthened.

The old hymns of faith are most inspiring - because not only the words, but the music too - have been written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and so all these hymns encourage us increasing our faith, and keep us close to Jesus. There is a great difference to hear some of these beautiful hymns sung to a different tune to give it a modern beat - the inspiration is completely lost! Some of the most popular hymns loved by most of us are, "Guide me O Thou Great Redeemer" - the Queen's favourite, "What a Friend we have in Jesus," "All Hail the power of Jesus' Name" (just to mention a few), and of course the all-time favourite, "Abide with Me," "In life, in death, O Lord, abide with Me!" - what a great hymn by Henry F. Lyte - and first sung at his own memorial service!

At school, we always sang, "O God our help in ages past" at the end of term, and it was a sad emotional farewell on the last day of our schooling career when we parted. However, I still keep in touch with some of my classmates in Australia. My husband's favourite hymns are, "Faith of our fathers" and "Lead Kindly Light." Thus with implicit faith we trust Him to lead us on our pilgrimage to our Eternal Home: "Lead,



kindly light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on: The night is dark and
I am far from home, Lead Thou me on;
Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see,
The distant scene; one step enough for
me."

Every Sunday, my husband and I tune in to the lovely, one hour radio programme, "Hymns of Faith" at 6am, and, also the Radio Mass at 7am - even though we attend the Saturday evening Mass, unless we are sick! Later, at 11.30 am we watch the beautiful T.V programme, 'Songs of Praise' - where once again I am with my Protestant brethren from whom our Catholics have much to learn - even, as they have much to learn from us! By God's grace may the day soon come when we 'all will be one'!

The impact of hymns is especially evident at Billy Graham's Crusades where tens of thousands who listened to his preaching, have been moved by the hymns and have surrendered their lives to God. The lasting hymn to his preaching was and continues to be one of the most favourite in our Churches, "How Great Thou Art."

Lilian Ferdinands

The Papal.....

Contd. from Pg. 4

the Sumprime Pontiff); in the lower half, space for writing the name of the Cardinal for whom one is voting, but not revealing the name of the one voting.

In the second phase of Scrutiny, the Cardinals one by one reach the Altar place the ballot on the plate and says aloud "I call as my witness Christ the Lord who will be my judge, that my vote is given to the one who before God I think should be elected" and drops the ballot in the box.

The Scrutineers sit at a table placed in front of the Altar. After the first two have recorded the name, the ballot is passed to the third, who reads it out in a loud and clear voice, so that all the Cardinal electors present can record the vote on a sheet of paper prepared for that purpose (No.69).

There then follows the third and last phase, also known as the Post-scrutiny, which comprises: The counting of the votes; the checking of the same. The Scrutineers add up all the votes that each individual has received, if it turns out that someone has obtained two thirds of the votes, the canonically valid election of the Roman Pontiff has taken place. If not a second ballot is to take place immediately. The burning of the ballots takes place either after a Pope has been chosen (white smoke) or after two unsuccessful sessions (black smoke).

Two Thirds Majority

The majority required to elect the Pope this time stands at 77 votes which is 2/3 and one additional vote out of the total of 115 votes. If at the time of the beginning of the Conclave the total number of Cardinals voting comes down, the majority could be less than 77. The requirement of a two third majority has been prescribed always. At any session of balloting, if a Cardinal receives 77 votes, or at least two thirds of the votes of that ballot, then the Roman Pontiff has been elected.

According to the revised norms of 2007, after the usual way of voting for three days if a decision has not been made, that is to say, that a Cardinal has not received a two third majority, the voting is suspended for one day. That day will be dedicated to prayer, reflection and an exhortation given by the Cardinal senior in the Order of Deacons.

Then the voting is resumed for seven more ballots. If still there is no result, another pause for prayer and reflection will be set aside with an exhortation given by the Cardinal senior in the Order of Priests.

Another series of seven ballots is then held and, if there has still been no election, this is followed by a further pause for prayer, discussion and an exhortation given by the senior Cardinal in the Order of Bishops.

This time too, the voting will continue for seven more ballots for the final time in the usual manner. If the balloting does not result in an election,

one day shall be dedicated to prayer, reflection and dialogue.

After the 33rd ballot, in the successive balloting, only the two names which received the highest number of votes in the previous scrutiny will have passive voice, that is to say, only the two Cardinals who got the highest number of votes will stand for election. In these ballots the two names having passive voice do not have active voice, that means, those two Cardinals will abstain from voting for themselves. In this case too, for a valid election to take place there must be a clear majority of at least two thirds of the votes of the Cardinals present and voting (new revised law).

According to the norms, there seem to be no limits set to the number of balloting in this final phase. It says 'in the successive balloting,' which could be stated as until one of the candidates gets the two third required. But all of the latter will take place only if a Pope is not elected in the first three days of balloting. Usually, in the recent past, an election had taken place on the second or the third day.

Acceptance by Elected Cardinal

When a ballot has resulted in electing the Pope, the Cardinal Dean, or the Cardinal who is first in order and seniority, in the name of the whole College of electors, then asks the consent of the one elected in the following words: Do you accept your Canonical Election

as Supreme Pontiff? And, as soon as he has received the consent, he asks him: By what name do you wish to be called? Then the white smoke will rise from the chimney over the roof of the Sistine Chapel following the burning of the ballots. After which the senior Cardinal Deacon announces to the waiting people that the election has taken place and proclaims the name of the new Pope, who immediately thereafter imparts the Apostolic Blessing *Urbi et Orbi* from the balcony of the Vatican Basilica.

These are the words of encouragement that Pope John Paul II wrote as an exhortation to the new Pope, at the end of his Apostolic Constitution: I also ask the one who is elected not to refuse, for fear of its weight, the office to which he has been called, but to submit humbly to the design of the Divine Will. God who imposes the burden will sustain him with His hand, so that he will be able to bear it. In conferring the heavy task upon him, God will also help him to accomplish it and, in giving him the dignity, He will grant him the strength not to be overwhelmed by the weight of his office (no. 86).

The Universal Church, spiritually united with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, should persevere with one heart in prayer; thus the election of the new Pope will not be something unconnected with the People of God and concerning the College of Electors alone, but will be in a certain sense an act of the whole Church.



What do we feel when we hear this story? We resent the younger brother because he asked for his share of the inheritance prematurely and severed all connections with his father and his elder brother. According to Jewish law, a son would receive his inheritance at the time of his father's death. The request of the younger son for his share of inheritance is brash and akin to rebelling against his father and wishing that the father were dead.

We are unhappy at the property owner who sends the young man off to the pigs and is not mindful of his hunger. Pigs were unclean animals. The Jews were not even allowed to touch pigs. When the son took a job feeding pigs, even longing for their food to fill his belly, it reveals that he has fallen as low as he could possibly go. The son represents a person living in rebellion against God. Sometimes we have to hit rock bottom before we come to our senses and recognize our sin. Sin always promises more than it gives, takes you farther

than you wanted to go, and leaves you worse off than you were before. "Sin promises freedom but brings slavery." (John 6: 23)

We are also annoyed with the younger brother who comes home only because he is hungry for food and not because he is hungry for his father's love and care. He thinks he can go home and get himself hired onto his father's estate and get paid and eat well. Self-preservation is big with him. He is going back on his own terms.

We have trouble with a father who is so foolish, accepting the wayward son back, throwing a big party for him killing the fattest calf, and creating a rift between the elder

son. The forgiveness shown by the father is difficult to fathom, beyond anything rational or expected. Everyday the father goes out, waiting for his son to return, knowing that if he does, he will accompany him back and save him from the insults that would be thrown at him by those who knew him. The father humiliates himself daily in front of his family and servants, friends and villagers by going out and awaiting his son's return. His mind is not at rest until he brings his lost son home. When he sees his son from afar, coming back home, he runs out to him. The son tries to deliver his oft-pre-

Thoughts that haunt me

pared apology, but he is in his father's embrace. This is no occasion for words. They have no significance. The feelings overflow like a river that has burst its dams. The father does not care why he came back, he is overjoyed that he is back. He orders the servants to bring out the ring, the robe and the sandals. He tells him, with these gifts, that he never left, he is back as a son in the family. Then the feast begins.

The embarrassment is not yet over. After going out every single day

since the younger son left, now the father has to humiliate himself again. He has to leave the party, his guests and the younger son and go out to the other son, plead with him in the field and try to drag him in.

The younger son left the father, but the elder son has never really been with the father. He has been waiting for his father to die, thinking of himself as a servant, slaving for his father, and harbouring resentment. He seems to think in terms of "Law, Merit, Reward," rather than Love and Graciousness.

There doesn't seem to be any justice in this whole story. The father is too permissive. He lets his children control him. He lives only for his children. He settles conflicts through love, generosity and graciousness.

The elder brother is a sinner too. He was actually sorry that his brother had come back. He dissociates himself from his brother calling him, 'That son of yours.' It was his responsibility to go after his younger brother and not let something like this happen, not let his old father be humiliated in front of his neighbours, friends

and the servants.

The 'Parable of the Prodigal Son' indicates that we have the opportunity to make a change. We do not have to stay in our hopeless state. We can come to ourselves. Even recognizing our sinful, hopeless state is initiated in us by God himself. "Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance." (Romans 2: 4)

The 'Parable of the Prodigal Son' makes it obvious that God was at work: That he was able to see the younger son when he was still a long way off means that the father was watching for his son, waiting for him, longing for him. The father runs to him, embraces him. He seems totally oblivious to the fact that his son has disrespected him and lost everything. The father kills the fattest calf and celebrates over him.

This is a wonderful picture of the great love of God towards us. He seeks after us, reaches out to us. When we come to Him, He washes away all our evil deeds of the past not holding them against us.

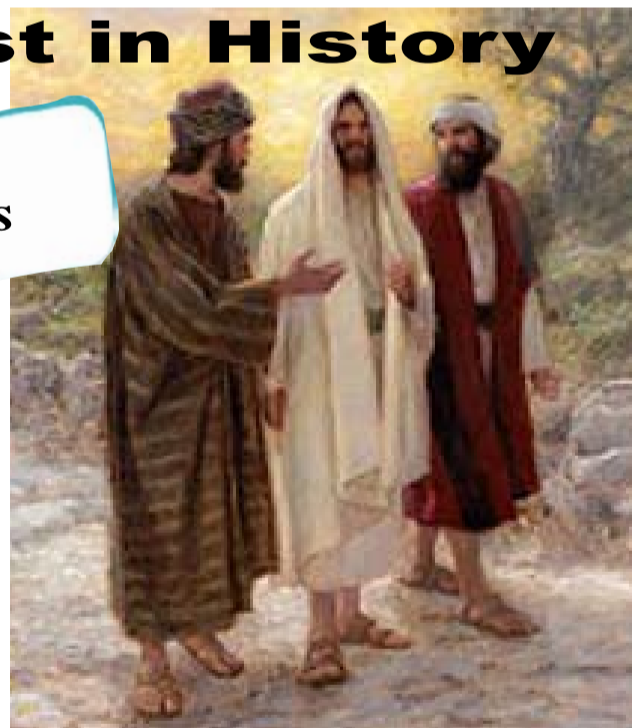
Ananda Perera

Ellen Johnson, the President of the American Atheists insisted, "There was no secular evidence that a person called Jesus Christ ever existed." I heard a repetition of this same affirmation a few days ago from a learned Sri Lankan. This made me dig into any secular evidence for the existence of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

I was surprised to find many world famous historians and archeologists who have written about the existence of a man called Jesus Christ in the then Palestine. Before that I found a person close to Christ denying that he even knew the person called Jesus. Only the most important events in the life of Christ are recorded in all the four gospels. This denial is recorded in all four gospels. "Woman I do not know him." (Luke 22:57) This person denied that he knew Christ three times. All four evangelists record this denial. (John 18:17; Luke 22; 54-65, Mark 14:66-72; Mathew 26:69-75). It is non other than Peter the head of the twelve disciples of Christ.

Flavius Josephus, a Jewish historian who wrote in the first century AD, not only talks about Christ in his books but also

Christ in History



about John the Baptist and James, a cousin of Jesus. He wrote:

"At this time there was a man who was called Jesus. His conduct was good, and He was known to be virtuous. -And many people from among the Jews and other nations became His disciples. Pilate condemned Him to be crucified. And those who have become His disciples did not abandon His discipleship. They reported that He has appeared to them three days after His crucifixion and that He was alive. Accordingly, He is thought to be the Messiah." This sounds like a quotation from the gospels.

Two Roman historians Tacitus and Suetonius who lived in the first century refer to Jesus.

Tacitus wrote that *Christus* (Christ) had lived during the reign of Tiberius and "suffered under Pontius Pilate, that Jesus' teaching has already

spread to Rome: and that the Christians were considered criminals and tortured in a variety of ways, including crucifixion." Does these sound like a quotation from the Apostles' Creed?

The Roman historian Suetonius, who lived in the first century too referred to *Christus* (Christ) and called Him an instigator. He also mentioned the fact that the Christians were persecuted by the Emperor Nero in 64 AD. Caesar, the Emperor of Rome was worshiped as a god. Christians who worshipped another God were considered enemies of

Caesar. Pliny the Younger, was an imperial magistrate under Emperor Trajan. In 112AD Pliny wrote to Trajan about his attempts to force Christians to renounce Christ "whom they worshiped as God." The Roman Emperor Trajan (56-117AD) and Emperor Hadrian (76-136 AD) wrote about Jesus.

Christ and the followers of Christ

The best proofs for the existence of the human Christ are the accounts of the New Testament. After the death of Christ oral traditions continued the story of Christ among the Christian com-

munities. His important teachings were memorized and passed down among the members of the early Christians. One of the earliest written records of the New Testament is the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians. Biblical scholars think that this was written around 55 AD, that is just about twenty two years after the death of Christ. In Chapter 12 Paul refers to and quotes from this oral tradition. "For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you that on the night before He was delivered ... " (1 Cor.11:23) Here Paul refers to the oral tradition that revolves around the Last Supper. "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received." (1 Cor 15:3)

Here he is referring to the death and the Resurrection of Christ.

Like the atheist that we mentioned at the beginning, there was another apostle who did not believe in the resurrected Lord. When the other apostles said that they saw the resurrected Lord, Thomas did not believe. He said, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails ... " (John 20:25) Eight days later Jesus appeared again to His disciples. Jesus addressed Thomas and requested him to put his hands on the scars of His wounds and believe that it is Christ. Jesus said, "Do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God." (John 20: 27-28.)

TAKE TIME FOR A MINUTE OF HUMOUR - SMILE!



After the christening of his baby brother in Church; little Bob sobbed all the way in the back seat of the car. His Dada kept on asking why he

was sobbing. Finally little Bob replied, "The priest said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, but Dada, I want to stay with you and Mama."

Rev. Fr. Fraccid Anthony Fernando OMI

Continued from last week

The Roman Pontiffs



73. THEODORE I

Born in Jerusalem. He was elected on 24 November 642 and died on 14 May 649. He added the title "Sovereign" to that of "Pontiff", and restored order to the internal jurisdiction of the clergy. There were grave disagreements between him and the Eastern Emperor Costans II. It is suspected that the Pope died of poisoning.



74. ST. MARTIN I

Born in Todi. He was elected on 5 July 649 and died on 16 September 655, a martyr. He condemned the Eastern bishops who enjoyed the protection of the Byzantine Emperor. Imprisoned and exiled, he died of suffering and hardship on the Island of Cherso. In this period began the celebration of the feast of the Immaculate Virgin.



75. ST. EUGENE I

Born in Rome. He was elected on 10 August 654 and died on 2 June 657. His election took place a year before the death of Martin I. He was strongly opposed to the intrigues of the Emperor and informed the other countries of Europe of the sad end of his predecessor. He decreed the observance of chastity for all priests.



76. ST. VITALIAN

Born in Segni. He was elected on 30 July 657 and died on 27 January 672. He sent Apostolic Nuncios to Gaul, Spain and England. He was the first pope to regulate the liturgical use of the organ, using it during religious ceremonies. In 671 the Lombards were converted to Christianity.



77. DEUSEDIT II

Born in Rome. He was elected on 11 April 672 and died on 17 June 676. By the use of missionaries he strove to bring about the conversion of the Maronites, a determined people of Armenian-Syrian origin. He was the first to use in his letters the formula "Health and Apostolic Benediction".



78. DONUS

Born in Rome. He was elected on 2 September 676 and died on 2 April 678. During his pontificate he succeeded in bringing to an end the schism of the Church in Ravenna. He encouraged the Bishops to support the new schools in Germanic Gaul and that of Cambridge in England.



79. ST. AGATHO

Born in Palermo. He was elected on 27 June 678 and died on 10 January 681. He maintained strong relations with the English Bishops and encouraged Ireland as a centre of culture. He organised the Sixth Ecumenical Council. He received the title of "Healer" because of the many miracles he worked.



80. ST. LEO II

Born in Sicily. He was elected on 17 August 682 and died on 3 August 683. He celebrated the sacred functions with great pomp in order to make the faithful more aware of the majesty of God, and introduced the sprinkling of the people with Holy Water during religious functions.



81. ST. BENEDICT VI

Born in Rome. He was elected on 26 June 684 and died on 8 May 685. He restored the privilege of Sanctuary, no longer respected by the different fighting factions who even penetrated churches in their search for their enemies. He succeeded in liberating the Church from the interference of the Emperor, introduced by Justinian.



82. JOHN V

Born in Antioch (Syria). He was elected on 23 July 685 and died on 2 August 686. His election was due to the interference by the Byzantine Court. He restored order to the dioceses of Sardinia and Corsica, insisting on the right of the Holy See to nominate bishops to the islands.



83. CONON

Born in Thrace. He was elected on 21 October 686 and died on 21 September 687. His pontificate was deeply disturbed by the anarchy which prevailed in the Church. He was often the victim of the sly followers of the Byzantine Emperor. He is supposed to have been poisoned.



84. ST. SERGIUS I

Born in Antioch. He was elected on 15 December 687 and died on 8 September 701. Nominated after two antipopes, he strove to extinguish the schism which had arisen in Rome itself, and succeeded in terminating that of Aquileia. He introduced into the liturgy the use of the "Agnus Dei."



85. JOHN VI

Born in Ephesus. He was elected on 30 October 701 and died on 11 January 705. In an extremely difficult period for Christianity, rejected in the East and in Spain by the Saracens, he defended the prerogatives of the Church against the Emperor, and ransomed many slaves.



86. JOHN VII

Born in Rossano di Calabria. He was elected on 1 March 705 and died on 18 October 707. He refused to consent to the ambiguous claims of the Emperor Justinian II who initiated those massacres which drove the Latin people to separate themselves more and more from the Eastern Empire.



87. SISINNUS

Born in Syria. He was elected on 15 January 708 and died on 4 February 708. There is hardly anything noteworthy to report in such a brief pontificate. He worried about the restoration of the walls of Rome, constantly menaced by the Lombards and the Saracens.



88. CONSTANTINE

Born in Syria. He was elected on 25 March 708 and died on 9th April 715. Carried off to Constantinople by force, he succeeded in bringing about some form of peace between the Church and the Empire. He encouraged the Christians of Spain in their fight against the infidels. As an act of obedience he encouraged the kissing of the foot St. Peter.



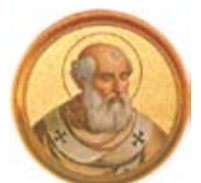
89. ST. GREGORY II

Born in Rome. He was elected on 19 May 715 and died on 11 February 731. In answer to the Edict of Constantinople which forbade the cult of images, ordering their destruction, the Italian provinces rose against the army of Leo III; the iconoclastic sect was rejected by Italy.



90. ST. GREGORY III

Born in Syria. He was elected on 18 March 731 and died on 28 March 741. He sought the help of Charles the Hammer, King of the Franks, against the Lombards. From this fact derives the title of "Most Christians" assumed by the Kings of France ever afterwards. Charitable donations are referred to as "St. Peter's Pence."



91. ST. ZACHARY

Born in Calabria. He was elected on 10 December 741 and died on 22 March 752. He strongly opposed Rachis, Duke of Friuli, who wanted to occupy all Italy. The latter, afterwards, became a monk. He consecrated Pipin the Short as King of the Franks. This is the first investiture of a sovereign by a Roman pontiff.



92. STEPHEN II

There were two popes of this name. The first reigned for only one day (23 March); the second was elected on 26 March 752 and died on 26 April 757. His election generated such enthusiasm that the people of Rome carried him on their shoulders, thus giving rise to the "sedia gestatoria."



93. ST. PAUL I

Born in Rome. He was elected on 29 May 757 and died on 28 June 767. He encouraged a deeper union with the Greek Church. He visited the prisons and freed those prisoners condemned for debts. He discovered the remains of St. Petronilla who, according to tradition, was the daughter of St. Peter.



94. STEPHEN III

Born in Sicily. He was elected on 7 August 768 and died on 24 January 772. Preceded by two antipopes, he immediately made good the harm caused by them. He corrected the conduct of Charlemagne, and encouraged in every way the Christians in Palestine.



95. ADRIAN I

Born in Rome. He was elected on 9 February 772 and died on 25 December 795. He restored the walls of Rome and the ancient aqueducts. The golden statue of the tomb of St. Peter and the silver pavement in front of the Altar of the Confession are due to him. He called the 7th Ecumenical Council.



96. ST. LEO III

Born in Rome. He was elected on 27 December 795 and died on 12 June 816. With the crowning of Charlemagne in St. Peter's on the night of Christmas 800, was reconstituted the Empire of the West known as the Holy Roman Empire. He founded the Palatine School from which was derived the University of Paris.



97. STEPHEN IV

Born in Rome. He was elected on 22 June 816 and died on 24 January 817. He tried to avoid internal riots and rebellion by the institution of an oath to the Emperor subject to the latter's loyalty to the pope. At Reims he crowned as Emperor, Ludovico, King of the Franks, and his wife Ermengarda.



98. ST. PASCAL I

Born in Rome. He was elected on 25 January 817 and died on 11 February 824. On his election he was given the islands of Corsica and Sardinia by Louis the Pious. He did tireless work in excavation of the catacombs, bringing about the translation of more than 2300 martyrs.



99. EUGENE II

Born in Rome. He was elected on 11 May 824 and died on 27 August 827. To him is attributed the institution of seminaries. He also formed a supreme council to put into effect the canons and ecclesiastical law. This is supposed to be the origin of the present Roman Curia.



100. VALENTINE

Born in Rome. He was elected on 1 September 827 and died on 16 September 827. He was loved by the people, the nobles, and the clergy for his goodness and charity. The beginning of his very brief pontificate was greeted by manifestations of great joy as an indication of his well known pious character.



101. GREGORY IV

Born in Rome. He was elected on 20 September 827 and died on 11 January 844. He organised a powerful army under the command of the Duke of Tuscany which defeated the Saracens in Africa five times. These, however, having landed in Italy destroyed Civitavecchia and Ostia and threatened Rome.



102. SERGIUS II

Born in Rome. He was elected in January 844 and died on 27 January 847. During his pontificate the Saracens laid siege to Rome and sacked the Basilica of St. Paul and other churches. They were finally defeated at Gaeta. He reassembled the stairs of the «Pretorium» known as the "Holy Stairs."



103. ST. LEO IV

Born in Rome. He was elected on 10 April 847 and died on 17 July 855. He was the first pontiff to put the date on official documents. He confirmed the Venetians in their right to elect the Doge. He built walls around the Vatican Hill and the Leonine City.



104. BENEDICT III

Born in Rome. He was elected on 29 September 855 and died on 17 April 858. Beloved by the people because of his virtue, he was bitterly opposed by the Emperor and by the antipope Anastasius who held that "office" for only one month. He tried to unite the different factions in the struggle against the Saracens.

Cardinals under 80 years of age

Who will be the 266th Pope...?



Giovanni Battista
Cardinal Re,
30 January 1934
Italy



Tarcisio Pietro
Evasio
Cardinal Bertone,
2 December
1934
Italy



Antonios
Cardinal
Naguib,
18 March 1935
Egypt



Béchara Boutros
Cardinal
Raï O.M.M.,
25 February
1940 Lebanon



Godfried
Cardinal
Daneels,
5 June 1933
Belgium



Joachim
Cardinal
Meisner,
25 December
1933
Germany



Nicolás de Jesús
Cardinal López
Rodríguez,
31 October
1936
Dominican
Republic



Roger Michael
Cardinal
Mahony,
27 February
1936
United States



Julius Riyadi
Cardinal
Darmaatmadja,
S.J. 20 December
1934
Indonesia



Jaime Lucas
Cardinal
Ortega y Alamino,
18 October
1936
Cuba



Jean-Claude
Cardinal
Turcotte,
26 June 1936
Canada



Vinko Cardinal
Puljić,
8 September
1945
Bosnia &
Herzegovina



Juan Cardinal
Sandoval
Íñiguez,
28 March 1933
Mexico



Antonio Maria
Rouco Cardinal
Varela,
24 August 1936
Spain



Dionigi
Cardinal
Tettamanzi,
14 March 1934
Italy



Polycarp
Cardinal
Pengo,
5 August 1944
Tanzania



Christoph
Cardinal
Schönborn, O.P.
22 January
1945
Austria



Norberto
Cardinal
Rivera
Carrera,
6 June 1942
Mexico



Francis Eugene
Cardinal
George, O.M.I.
16 January 1937
United States



Cardinal
André
Vingt-Trois,
7 November
1942
France



Zenon
Cardinal
Grocholewski,
11 October
1939
Poland



Crescenzo
Cardinal
Sepe,
2 June 1943
Italy



Walter Cardinal
Kasper,
5 March 1933
Germany



Ivan Cardinal
Dias,
14 April 1936
India



Geraldo Majella
Cardinal
Angelo,
19 October
1933
Brazil



Angelo
Cardinal
Bagnasco,
14 February
1943
Italy



Audrys Juozas
Cardinal
Bačkis,
1 February
1937
Lithuania



Francisco
Javier Cardinal
Sandoval,
5 September
1933
Chile



Julio Terrazas
Cardinal
Sandoval, C.Ss.R.
7 March 1936
Bolivia



Wilfrid Fox
Cardinal
Napier, O.F.M.
8 March 1941
South Africa



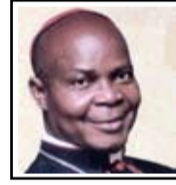
Oscar Andres
Cardinal
Rodriguez
Maradiaga,
S.D.B.
29 December
1942
Honduras



Juan Luis
Cipriani Cardinal
Thorne,
28 December
1943
Peru



Claudio Cardinal
Hummes, O.F.M.,
8 August 1934
Brazil



Olubunmi
Cardinal
Anthony Okogie,
16 June 1936
Nigeria



José da Cruz
Cardinal
Policarpo,
26 June 1936
Portugal



Severino
Cardinal
Poletto,
18 March 1933
Italy



Karl Cardinal
Lehmann,
16 May 1936
Germany



Angelo Cardinal
Scola,
7 November
1941
Italy



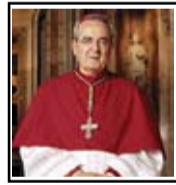
Telesphore
Cardinal
Placidus
Toppo,
15 October 1939
India



Gabriel Zubeir
Cardinal
Wako,
27 February
1941
Sudan



Carlos Amigo
Cardinal
Vallejo, O.F.M.
23 August 1934
Spain



Justin Francis
Cardinal
Rigali,
19 April 1935
United States



Keith Michael
Patrick Cardinal
O'Brien,
17 March 1938
Scotland



Ennio Cardinal
Antonelli,
18 November
1936
Italy



Peter Kodwo
Appiah
Cardinal
Turkson,
11 October
1948
Ghana



George Cardinal
Pell,
8 April 1941
Australia



Josip Cardinal
Bozanić,
20 March 1949
Croatia



Jean-Baptiste
Cardinal Pham
Minh Mân,
5 March 1934
Vietnam



Philippe
Cardinal
Barbarin,
17 October 1950
France



Péter Cardinal
Erdő,
25 June 1952
Hungary



Marc Cardinal
Ouellet, P.S.S.
8 June 1944
Canada



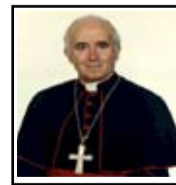
Agostino Cardinal
Vallini,
17 April 1940
Italy



Jorge Liberato
Cardinal
Urosa Savino,
28 August 1942
Venezuela



Jean-Pierre
Cardinal
Richard,
25 September
1944
France



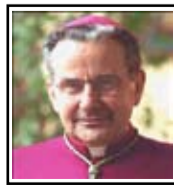
Antonio
Canizares
Cardinal
Llovera,
10 October
1945
Spain



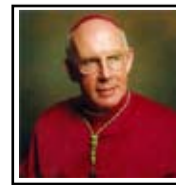
Seán Patrick
Cardinal
O'Malley,
O.F.M.Cap.
29 June 1944
United States



Stanislaw
Cardinal
Dziwisz,
27 April 1939
Poland



Carlo Cardinal
Caffarra,
1 June 1938
Italy



Seán Baptist
Cardinal
Brady,
16 August 1939
Ireland



Lluís Cardinal
Martínez
Sistach,
29 April 1937
Spain



**Théodore-Adrien
Cardinal Sarr,**
28 November
1936
Senegal



**Oswald Cardinal
Gracias,**
24 December
1944
India



**Francisco Robles
Cardinal
Ortega,** 2 March
1949
Mexico



**Daniel Nicholas
Cardinal
DiNardo,**
23 May 1949
United States



**Odilo Pedro
Cardinal
Scherer,**
21 September
1949
Brazil



**John
Cardinal
Njue,**
1944
Kenya



**Raúl Eduardo
Cardinal
Vela Chriboga,**
January 1934
Ecuador



**Laurent
Monsengwo
Cardinal Pasinya**
7 October 1939
Rep. of
the Congo



**Paolo Cardinal
Romeo,**
20 February
1938
Italy



**Donald William
Cardinal
Wuerl,**
12 November
1940
United States



**Raymundo
Damasceno
Cardinal Assis,**
15 February
1937
Brazil



**Kazimierz
Cardinal Nycz,**
1 February 1950
Poland



**Patabendige Don,
Albert Malcolm
Cardinal
Ranjith**
15 November
1947
Sri Lanka



**Reinhard
Cardinal Marx,**
21 September
1953
Germany



**George
Cardinal
Alendcherry,**
19 April 1945
India



**Thomas
Christopher
Cardinal Collins,**
16 January 1947
Canada



**Dominik Jaroslav
Cardinal
Duka, O.P.**
26 April 1943
Czech Republic



**Willem Jacobus
Cardinal Eijk.**
22 June 1953
Netherlands



**Giuseppe
Cardinal Betori,**
25 February
1947
Italy



**Timothy Michael
Cardinal
Dolan,**
6 February
1950
United States



**Ranier Maria
Cardinal
Woelki,**
18 August 1956
Germany



**John Cardinal
Tong Hon**
31 July 1939
People's Republic
of China



**Baselios Cleemis
Cardinal
Thottunkal,**
15 June 1959
India



**John Olorunfemi
Cardinal
Onaiyekan,**
29 January 1944
Nigeria



**Rubén Cardinal
Salazar
Gómez,**
22 September
1942
Colombia



**Luis Antonio
Gokim Cardinal
Tagle,**
21 June 1957
Philippines



**Jean-Louis
Cardinal
Tauran,**
3 April 1943
France



**Attilio Cardinal
Nicora,**
16 March 1937
Italy



**William Joseph
Cardinal
Levada,**
15 June 1936
United States



**Franc Cardinal
Rodé, C.M.**
23 September
1934
Slovenia



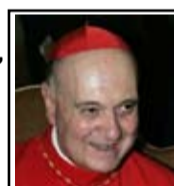
**Leonardo
Cardinal Sandri,**
18 November
1943
Argentina



**Cardinal
Lajolo, Giovanni**
3 January 1935
Italy



**Paul Josef
Cardinal Cordes,**
5 September
1934
Germany



**Angelo Cardinal
Comastri,**
17 September
1943
Italy



**Stanislaw
Cardinal
Rylko,**
4 July 1945
Poland



**Raffaele
Cardinal
Farina, S.D.B.**
24 September
1933
Italy



**Angelo Cardinal
Amato, S.D.B.**
8 June 1938
Italy



**Robert Cardinal
Sarah,**
15 June 1945
Guinea



**Francesco
Cardinal
Monterisi,**
28 May 1934
Italy



**Raymond Leo
Cardinal
Bruke,**
30 June 1948
United States



**Kurt Cardinal
Koch,**
15 March 1950
Switzerland



**Sardi Cardinal
Paolo**
1 September
1934
Italy



**Mauro Cardinal
Piacenza,**
15 September
1944
Italy



**Velasio Cardinal
De Paolis, C.S.**
19 September
1935
Italy



**Gianfranco
Cardinal
Ravasi,**
18 October
1942
Italy



**Fernando
Cardinal Filoni,**
15 April 1946
Italy



**Manuel
Monteiro Cardinal
de Castro,**
29 March 1938
Portugal



**Santos Abril y
Cardinal
Castelló,**
21 September
1935
Spain



**Antonio Maria
Cardinal
Vegliò,**
3 February 1938
Italy



**Giuseppe
Cardinal
Bertello,**
1 October
1942
Italy



**Francesco
Cardinal
Coccopalmerio,**
6 March 1938
Italy



**João Braz de
Cardinal Aviz,**
24 April 1947
Brazil



**Edwin Frederick
Cardinal
O'Brien,**
8 April 1939
United States



**Domenico
Cardinal
Calcagno,**
3 February 1943
Italy



**Giuseppe
Cardinal
Versaldi,**
30 July 1943
Italy



**James Michael
Cardinal Harvey,**
20 October 1949
United States

**Pope Benedict XVI's successor will be chosen by
117 Cardinal-electors during a secret election -
known as a Conclave - in the Vatican's Sistine Chapel.**

The Roman Pontiffs



105. ST. NICHOLAS I

Born in Rome. He was elected on 24 April 858 and died on 13 November 867. After grave disagreements with the Emperor Louis II he united with him to form an army against the Saracens. He strenuously defended the liberty of the Church against Photius. He declared 15 August as the Feast of the Assumption.



106. ADRIAN II

Born in Rome. He was elected on 14 December 867 and died on 14 December 872. He is remembered for having crowned Alfred the Great as King of England (the first English sovereign blessed by Rome). He tried to settle the deep quarrels among the Catholic people. He called the 8th Ecumenical Council.



107. JOHN VIII

Born in Rome. He was elected on 13 December 872 and died on 16 December 882. Assisted only by the inhabitants of Rome he defeated the Saracens at Terracina. After his coronation Charles the Gross failed to maintain his promise of help, and the Pope was defeated by the Arabs; he was forced to pay a large tribute.



108. MARINUS I

Born in Gallese near Rome. He was elected on 16 December 882, and died on 15 May 884. He greatly pressured Basil, the Eastern Emperor, to take action against the 'schismatics'. A strong suspicion of poisoning surrounded his death which occurred after he had tried to solve the quarrels among the Italians.



109. ST. ADRIAN III

Born in Rome. He was elected on 17 May 884 and died in September 885. As soon as he was on the throne he confirmed what had been decided by his predecessors against the Emperor Photius. Having been invited by Charles the Gross to visit France, he died during the journey at San Cesario.



110. STEPHEN V

Born in Rome. He was elected during the month of September in 885 and died on 14 September 891. Upon hearing of his election, he barricaded himself in his house but the doors were broken open by force and he was placed upon St. Peter's throne. He forbade trial by fire and water in the courts and encouraged arts and crafts.



111. FORMOSUS

Born in Ostia. He was elected on 6 October 891 and died on 4 April 896. While a cardinal he was excommunicated by John VIII for having crowned as King of Italy, Arnolfo, afterwards Emperor of Germany. Thanks to his zeal the Bulgarians were converted to Christianity.



112. BONIFACE VI

Born in Rome. He was elected in April 896 and died in the same month. His election owed a great deal to support received from those hostile to Formosus, but his pontificate lasted only 15 days. By this time the papal throne was at the mercy of the great feudal families of Italy.



113. STEPHEN VI

Born in Rome. He was elected on 22 May 896 and died in August 897. Dominated by internal factions, he had the corpse of Pope Formosus exhumed and thrown into the Tiber after a mock trial. As a result of a popular insurrection he was arrested and strangled in prison.



114. ROMANUS

Born in Gallese (Rome). He was elected in August 897 and died in November 897. One of his first acts was to rehabilitate the memory of Pope Formosus. He confirmed Gerona in his possession of the islands of Maiorca and Minorca. He died of poisoning.



115. THEODORE II

Born in Rome. He was elected in December 897 and died in the same month. He governed the Church for only 20 days but during this time he had the body of Formosus recovered from the Tiber and buried in the Vatican. There was a suspicion of poisoning in his sudden and unexpected death.



116. JOHN IX

Born in Tivoli. He was elected in January 898 and died in January 900. He reaffirmed the supremacy of the Church over Rome and all its territories. To avoid the inevitable internal struggles, he reestablished the right of Imperial intervention in the consecration of the popes.



117. BENEDICT IV

Born in Rome. He was elected on 1 February 900 and died in July 903. Amidst all the prevailing corruption he succeeded in maintaining the integrity of the Holy See. In the terrible confusion of intrigues and hatred he constantly sought out the way of justice. He crowned in Rome as Emperor, Louis of Borgogna.



118. LEO V

Born in Ardea. He was elected in July 903 and died in September of the same year. In the tumultuous rioting of the time he was imprisoned after a very brief pontificate and was assassinated. His body was burnt and the ashes thrown into the Tiber.



119. SERGIUS III

Born in Rome. He was elected on 29 January 904 and died on 14 April 911. He had the Basilica of St. John Laterans, which had been destroyed by fire, rebuilt. He insisted on and defended the rights of the Church against the Lords. The "tiara" is shown for the first time on the medals of this pontificate.



120. ANASTASIUS III

Born in Rome. He was elected in April 911 and died in June 913. In the two years of his pontificate he was not able to achieve much because of the persistent internal disorders. He had to suffer the pressures exerted by Berengarius I. Suspicion of poisoning accompanied his death.



121. LANDO

Born in Sabina. He was elected in June 913 and died in February 914. His elevation to the papal throne was due to the intrigues of one of the many factions of the time. He died mysteriously having restored peace among the many internal factions.



122. JOHN X

Born in Tossignano, he was elected in March 914 and died in May 928. His election was due to intrigues though he disapproved of their inspirers. He marched against the Saracens and routed them at the Garigliano River. He was killed in prison because he refused to lend himself to further intrigues.



123. LEO VI

Born in Rome. He was elected in May 928 and died in December of the same year. His election was brought about by the will of the very powerful Marozia. He did everything possible to restore peace among the various factions in Rome. He was successful in war against the Saracens and against the ferocious Hungarians.



124. STEPHEN VII

Born in Rome. He was elected in December 928 and died in February 931. He was elected by the powerful intrigues of the counts of Tuscolo while Rome was governed by Marozia, Marquise of Tusciana. He supported the monasteries of St. Vincent al Volturno and two cenobites in Gaul.



125. JOHN XI

Born in Rome. He was elected in March 931 and died in December 935. He tried to settle the serious intrigues of his family. Despite his having been elected with their support he deplored their lack of restraint. He died at the age of 29 after many tribulations.



126. LEO VII

Born in Rome, he was elected on 3 January 936 and died on 13 July 939. He reformed and reorganized monastic life and had the ancient Cenobite near the Basilica of St. Paul outside the walls, rebuilt. He wrote to the bishops of France and Germany in condemnation of witches and fortune tellers.



127. STEPHEN VIII

Born in Rome. He was elected on 14 July 939 and died in October 942. He supported Louis IV d'Oltremare against the rebellion of the Frankish Vassals. He tried to convert the powerful lords of East and West to the salutary principles of the Gospels. He was subjected to the arrogance of Alberic II.



128. MARINUS II

Born in Rome. He was elected on 30 October 942 and died in May 946. He set an example of a pure and blameless life in a very turbulent period. He patronized the arts, reorganized the corporations, and restored Rome as the moral capital of the world. He had several modifications made in the rules of ecclesiastical orders.



129. AGAPITUS II

Born in Rome. He was elected on 10 May 946 and died in October 955. He did his utmost to raise the moral conditions of the clergy, and, with the help of Otto I of Germany, partly pacified Italy. Harold, King of Denmark, embraced Christianity.



130. JOHN XII

Born in Rome. He was elected on 16 December 955 and died on 14 May 964. Bold and daring, he insisted on the temporal rights of the Church. He reconstituted the Holy Roman Empire, crowning Otto I of Germany, by whom he was later deposed. The Imperial Act of Otto I created the "Count Bishops."



131. LEO VIII

Born in Rome. He was elected on 6 December 963 and died on 1 March 965. Elected as an antipope, he reigned for a few months despite many vicissitudes with his predecessor and his successor, Benedict V. He forbade the laity to enter the presbytery during solemn functions.



132. BENEDICT V

Born in Rome. He was elected on 22 May 964 and died on 4 July 966. He was exiled to Hamburg by Otto I until the death of Leo VIII. On the death of the antipope, Otto I because of the pressure of the Franks, Germans and Romans recognised the validity of his investiture. He died in Hamburg in the odor of sanctity.



133. JOHN XIII

Born in Rome. He was elected on 1 October 965 and died on 6 September 972. Imprisoned by the supporters of an opposing faction for ten months, he was released with the help of Otto I who assisted in the spread of Christianity in Poland and Bohemia. He introduced the custom of blessing and giving a name to bells.



134. BENEDICT VI

Born in Rome. He was elected on 19 January 973 and died in June 974. After the death of Otto I the anti-German faction broke loose, besieged Castel Sant' Angelo, imprisoned the Pope and had him killed. He converted the Hungarian people to Christianity.



135. BENEDICT VII

Born in Rome. He was elected in October 974 and died on 10 July 983. A man of great virtue, he tried to stem the debauchery and the shameful ignorance which pervaded Italy and the Christian world. He promoted the development of agriculture.



136. JOHN XIV

Born in Pavia. He was elected in December 983 and died on 20 August 984. Despite his being a man of great energy and virtue he was elected as a result of intrigues. On his return to Rome Francone had him arrested and he died of hunger in the prisons of Castel Sant' Angelo.

A Personal encounter with Christ is indispensable, for genuine faith

Baptism becomes the irrevocable mark which is imposed and carved on us as to identify our undivided allegiance to God. It opens our hearts and minds to a greater reality which we will discover and unfold through our journey. Even though our life journey begins with Baptism (Rom 6:4) towards the heavenly Jerusalem, it is not the only criterion through which we can be called the children of God. The authenticity and credibility of a genuine Catholic depends on the realization and in living the true faith in day to day activities and renewing and adhering to all the commitments which we have undertaken through Baptism. Above all else the vigorous binding force between God and us becomes the true and authentic faith without which Baptism has no credibility and value.

Faith is full submission of one's intellect and will to God (*Dei Verbum*, Vatican Council II). When a person submits himself to faith in God he makes a choice without any compulsion to stand with the Lord so as to live with Him. When a person is single minded in rendering his total will to whom he is related (God) freedom and tranquility will be obvious. Thereby man is ushered into a state of being where explicitly and completely assurance, protection and

love of God are confirmed. Man is provided no room to doubt the gratuitous actions of God. Here God enables us His eagerness to extend Himself to us in order that we may get to know Him and consequently open ourselves to deepen the union with Him. This union can be caused and effected only through the action of faith which assures us our final salvation. Thus faith becomes the sole criterion of our salvation.

Unless we open our hearts and avail ourselves of the right action of faith, delusion of our faith in God cannot be overcome. St. James says "what does it profit, my brothers, if a man says he has faith but has not works? Can his faith save him? (Jas 2:14-18). What would it be, if instead of catering to the needs of the child, the mother sets off from the child; and if instead the child inclined to maternal care, searches for ways and means of fulfilling such? Pope Benedict XVI says in his '*Motu Proprio Data*', '*Porta Fidei*', faith without charity bears no fruit while charity without faith would be a sentiment constantly at the mercy of doubt.

The foundation for such kind of faith which accompanies charity is obviously the personal experience. It is said that faith is a gift and this precious gift can be achieved only by the personal

experience with Jesus Christ. If instead a child does not experience the maternal care, is he able to claim his trust towards his mother? If the disciples had not encountered the magnanimity of Jesus and His resurrection, would the disciples dare to proclaim Jesus to the other people boldly?

Are we resolved to say that faith can be renewed and strengthened only through personal encounter with Jesus? Saul, being a persecutor of Christians, after having encountered the risen Lord personally, dared to confess himself "for me to live is Christ". Thus in faith, what is inevitable and indispensable is "our personal experience with Jesus Christ" in whom we set ourselves to experience "a change of heart" (Metanoia). It is faith that enables us to recognize Christ and it is His love that impels us to assist Him whenever He becomes our neighbor along that journey of life (*Porta Fidei*, Pope Benedict XVI, 2011).

Whenever we are invited to open ourselves to a profound experience with Jesus Christ in the light of faith, we have got to seek ways and means to effect this personal experience. Prayer is the only way and the effective instrument in which we are able to aim at faith and the possible

platform on which the faith is enlarged and re-energized. If one is not resolved to be in the presence of God silently, it is impossible to envisage a genuine faith. "The self-sufficient do not pray, the self-satisfied will not pray, the self-righteous cannot pray. No man is greater than his prayer life." (Leonard Ravenhill)

By prayer, man begins to touch the invisible realities of God and seeks out the deeper meaning of such realities and thereby to reshape, to purify his faith and to proclaim it with open heart and mind. Our attention should be drawn to the great and profound example of Holy Mother Mary who became a beacon of love and faith in God and who became so courageous not to relinquish her inextinguishable prayer life in spite of all the hardships that she had to undergo. She became blessed by believing and blessed by praying (*Lex Orandi et Lex credendi*). Let us reach out to this profound example of Mother Mary so as to nourish and renew our faith in the light of prayer, expecting to experience Jesus Christ personally as our Lord and the Master.

Bro. Benedict Jayamanna O.Cist.
Cistercian Community,
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Tel: 037 7 390 590-3, Fax: 037 222 100 7

Email: info@skylinetravels.lk Web: www.skylinetravels.lk

Reservation:
0777-797428
0777-370218
0773-875078
0773-875082

(N 6356)

Take my hand O, precious Lord

My Jesus, did I see you....
....On the day I was baptised.
....On my First Holy Communion day.
....On my Confirmation day.
Yes I may have seen you,
But failed to recognize you
When will I really see you again?
I am longing for that day to see you
The day you come and take my hand and say
"Come to my kingdom prepared for you"

Sheila Perera

The Divine Physician

I went to the Lord's Clinic to have my routine check-up and I was confirmed as sick. When Jesus took my blood pressure, He saw I was low in tenderness. When He read my temperature the thermometer registered, a high level of anxiety! He ran an electro cardiogram and found that I needed several 'by-passes' since my arteries were blocked with jealousy and animosity and could not provide for an empty heart.

I went to Orthopedics, because I could not walk by my broth-

er's side and I could not hug my friends since I had fractured myself when tripping with envy. He also found I was short sighted since I could not see beyond the shortcomings of my brothers and sisters.

When I complained of deafness, the diagnosis was that I had stopped listening to Jesus' voice talking to me on a daily basis.

For all of that, Jesus gave me a free consultation, thanks to His mercifulness so my pledge is enough. But once I leave the clinic I only take the natural remedies He

prescribed through the words of truth.

Every morning take a full glass of gratitude. When getting to work, take one spoon of peace. Every hour take one pill of patience, one cup of brotherhood and one glass of humility. When getting home, take one dose of love. When getting to bed, take two tablets of clear conscience.

Do not give into sadness or desperation for what you are going through today. God knows how you feel, God knows exactly and with perfection what is being allowed

What does Lent mean to you?

In this year, especially dedicated to the theme of faith, Ash Wednesday assumes a particular significance as it powerfully reminds all of us of the importance of faith in our Christian life and how it should be renewed and lived ever more deeply. At the same time, whether we like it or not, it brings us face to face with the reality of our end which is inevitable and all of us have to tread that path one day or the other.

Way before the Vatican Council, Ash Wednesday had about it a flavour of doom and gloom and our minds and ears were dolefully attuned to the sad strains of 'Dies Irae'. A pall of pessimism, sadness and fear seemed to pervade the entire period of Lent. That mood of Lent was part of the flavour of the age out of which our Liturgy emerged. It was meant to bring us down to our knees in humble acknowledgement of our sinfulness and our own demise one day.

The three pillars of Lent could be categorized basically as the gift of prayer, sacrificial fasting and generous almsgiving.

Some people love to talk about what they are planning to give up during Lent. Prayer, of course, gets the pride of place, accompanied by fasting and almsgiving. But these spiritual activi-

ties and exercises are of no real value if one central reality of Lent is overlooked: what is the state our soul right now; and how do we really count before God. The period of Lent is like a clarion call to all of us to take God seriously, look deeply into our life of faith, moral wounds and face the unavoidable reality of our death.

The Church has relaxed the Lenten rigor of a by gone era, certainly not to make us less spiritual, generous, prayerful and disciplined but to make room for more serious reflection on God, our soul, our faith, the spiritual life and finally the fact of the end of our earthly existence.

Lent without some sort of giving up, sacrifice and discipline is hardly Lent at all. The Church by not imposing on us any strict strictures of behavior, very wisely allows us the freedom and latitude to pick and choose our own ways and means of giving up during these forty days of Lent. It is the finality of death that most of us find difficult to come to terms with. Ash Wednesday would not let us forget this, but rather jolts us into the realization that with death not only our physical existence comes to an end and we have to leave behind our loved ones, along with everything we possess but more importantly and essentially we have to

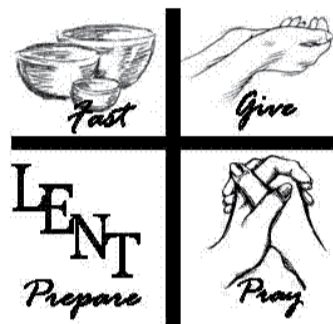
encounter our God and realize that our immortal and everlasting existence will begin then.

Ash Wednesday, then asks, impels and challenges us to face this eternal life with the power of the Cross which will emerge gradually into view as the days of Lent turn into weeks and the weeks merge into months.

This is a time that our merciful and compassionate Creator urges us to take Him seriously and try the best we possibly can to root our evil from our lives and anything else that would make us less ready and prepared to look our God in the face.

The sobering and humbling fact of death puts all things into proper perspective and imbues us with a rare kind of wisdom. From this perspective of death, we can take a practically sober view of our own life and make a true assessment of the priorities by which to live, surrounded as we are with all kinds of temptations, distractions, attractions and incitements we all have to valiantly contend with, in this so called progressive and digital time and age which vehemently and cunningly tries to dissuade and divert our attention from our final goal in life.

At our death, we will stand before God naked, alone and devoid of any pretence. This alone



can stir us to a sober, careful and prayerful scrutiny of our whole existence.

With this kind of inception of Lent, it can be made into a very meaningful and fruitful spiritual experience.

By dying with Christ in this positive manner, as we commence the holy and challenging period of Lent, we can share something of the power, victory, triumph and exhilaration of the glorious feast of Easter when Jesus rose triumphant from the tomb, conquering death and sin and brought us new life which should surely deepen our faith during this 'Year of Faith.'

As we step into the time of Lent, the Church gives us the solemn reminder, 'Remember you are dust and unto dust you will return'.

"God our Father, glorious in giving life and still more glorious in restoring it, when His last night on earth came, Your Son shed tears of blood but dawn brought incomparable gladness. Do not turn away from us or we will fall back into dust but rather turn our mourning into joy by raising us up with Christ".

Rev. Fr. Joe Paul
Fernando

Oh God! we yearn to be Thine

O Jesus, You are so gentle, meek, and so mild
O Jesus, You look at us often, with a broad smile
O Jesus, You say I came to be and remain with you.
O Jesus, you come, to live in our hearts for ever more.

O God, you love, for us is higher than the sky
O God, when I looked up, I see you asking why
O God, what could I say,
O God, I need to remain Faithful, to thee.

Holy Father, all your precious words, and actions are rooted deep

Holy Father, bless us your children, to live in you, never to weep

Holy Father, you are the one, who can make us, your sheep
Holy Father, our love, trust, and belief eternally, permit and bless us, to keep.

Francis

Place I like to visit



Whenever I think about a place I like to visit, two places come to my mind: one Sigiriya, two the Kandalama Hotel. The reason for that is when ever we visit Sigiriya we make it a point to stay at the Kandalama Hotel. Both these destinations are wonderful architectural creations, of course I can't ignore the similarities of the two.

Sigiriya is a rock fortress while Kandalama is built around a rock, both creations have not harmed nature. The Kandalama Hotel was awarded the ISO: 18001 for that very same reason. The water fountains at Sigiriya shows the wit of the people during those days and the way they took water to the top of the rock is still mystery. Whereas the way that the Kandalama Hotel was built; preserving all the natural elements around it shows that the two creations match each other.

Hence I feel that Sigiriya and the Kandalama Hotel are not two places but one. I suggest everyone who wishes to visit one of these places visits the other as well because you will never be able to visit two places that have so many differences yet are so similar. Hence the place I like to visit will always be the combination of Sigiriya and the Kandalama Hotel.

Vikum Jayasinghe

"The Joy of Giving"

The blessings come only when you share
Not forcefully but volunteering;
Share the joy by giving others,
This is the best way to help the needy.

Give others freely: "Let not the left hand know
What the right hand does."
If someone came to know it,
That could be courting popularity.

Each giving is a joy.
Feel hopeful and healed
Someone watches over you
Standing by you when you truly share.

Give joyfully and you shall receive more,
The joy of giving with open heart
With open hands give and share.

Playing the role of Jesus

A mother was preparing pancakes for her two sons. The boys began to argue about who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the situation as an opportunity to instill a moral lesson. She told the boys, "If Jesus was sitting here, he would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake. I can wait.'" The older boy turned to his younger brother and said, Tom, you play the role of Jesus!

What it says in the Readings

I will leave this place and go to my father and say: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.'

(Mt. 15:18)

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR C March 10 - 17th March 2013

Sun: Fourth Sunday of Lent

Jos. 5: 9-10; 2 Cor. 5: 17-21;

Lk. 15:1-3,11-32

Mon: Is. 65:17-21; Jn. 4: 43-54

Tue: Ez. 47:1-9,12; Jn. 5: 1-16

Wed: Is. 49:8-15; Jn. 5: 17-30

Thu: Ex. 32:7-14; Jn. 5: 31-47

Fri: Wis. 2:1a.12-22; Jn. 7:1-2,10,25-30

Sat: Jer. 11:18-20; Jn. 7:40-53

Sun: Fifth Sunday of Lent

Is. 43:16-21; Phil. 3:8-14; Jn. 8:1-11

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Response: Lord, enable us to arise and get back to the Father's house.

In his misery the prodigal son knew that his father's door was always open. That all Christians may be generous in forgiving those who have hurt or disappointed them. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, enable us to arise and get back to the Father's house.

For all the members of our society: That they may rid themselves of the utterly selfish attitude of the younger son who demanded his rights without the slightest thought for his responsibilities.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, enable us to arise and get back to the Father's house.

For all parents: That they may be able to create homes in which their children will know that they are loved unconditionally. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, enable us to arise and get back to the Father's house.

That we may all rise above the small and begrudging attitude of the older brother who had learned so little of his father's love and understanding.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, enable us to arise and get back to the Father's house.

Forty Martyrs

10 March

The 40 martyrs were all soldiers probably belonging to the famous Roman Legion XII quartered at Sebaste in Armenia (Turkey) about the year 320 or 323. When their legion was ordered to offer sacrifice to the gods by the Eastern Roman Emperor, Licinius, these 40, though of various nationalities, flatly refused, and, instead, dissociating from the rest, formed a separate company. Tormented and then brought for a trial before Agricolaus, the Governor of Cappadocia, they boldly declared that they were Christians and that no torment would induce them to forsake the Faith.

Finding all persuasion inexorable, the Governor subjected them to brutal torture and cast them into prison, where they were comforted by a vision of Our Lord who encouraged them to persevere.

It was a cruel winter, and they were condemned to lie naked on the surface of a frozen lake in the open air till they were frozen to death. Agricolaus also ordered that a fire and a warm bath should be prepared on the edge of the pond to tempt them to apostatize. The martyrs, without waiting to be stripped, ran joyfully to the spot of combat and undressed themselves, encouraging each other saying that one bad night would purchase for them a happy eternity. Together they exulted: "Lord, we are 40 engaged in this conflict; grant that 40 may be crowned, never falling short of that sacred number!"

The soldier, who watched saw angels descend-

First Reading: Joshua.5:9-10.

The Lord who rescued the Israelites from Egypt tells Joshua that he has rescued them from the reproaches of Egypt. The Israelites having observed the Passover consumed the products of the land.

Second Reading: 2 Cor. 5: 17-21.

St. Paul tells his Corinthian converts to be reconciled with God as God in His goodness has reconciled the world through Christ.

Gospel: Lk. 15: 1-3, 11-32

Jesus is accused of welcoming sinners. But He relates to them the Parable of the Prodigal Son wherein He shows that God is like the merciful father who awaits the return of the Prodigal son. Nevertheless the elder brother refuses to accept his brother.

Reflection

The compassionate and merciful love of God is being presented in order that we may turn away from our sinful ways and return to the Lord.

In the First Reading we see how God's love and His mercy rescued the Israelites from the slavery of Egypt. Living in slavery in Egypt was considered a punishment from God. The Israelites

repent and ask God to rescue them from slavery. God out of His mercy rescues them and leads them to the promised land, where they settle down. All these happened because of the infinite mercy of God.

In the Second Reading St. Paul is very clear that God out of His mercy reconciled the world to Himself through His Son Jesus Christ. For our sake He made Christ a sinner though He knew or had no sin, in order that in Him we might become righteous. This He did because of His mercy and love towards the sinful mankind. Such is the mercy and love of God.

The Gospel shows the love of God for the sinner through the Parable of the Prodigal Son. First of all in the prodigal son there is lust for wealth. He request his portion of the wealth. Then we find disobedience; he leaves the father without listening to him. He leaves the God given Promised Land and goes to a foreign land to live. Then the prodigal son spends the wealth with his friends we are only too aware of the sins one commits when one is wasting money. The Gospel says that he squandered his wealth in loose living. Then he goes and works for a foreigner; for a Jew to work for a foreigner was considered sinful and Jews considered swines as

dirty animals. The parable says that the prodigal son not only looks after the swine but even feeds himself with the food served to the swine. so there is eating of dirty food and stealing. This only goes to prove how sinful the son had been. Nevertheless the father awaits the return of the son. Thank God the son decides to go back to the father. The father not only embraces him on his return but even orders the servants to dress him up and also to kill the fettered calf. Such is the love of the father. If a human father acts in such a manner then how much more will God our Heavenly Father love us? We are often like the elder brother who never bothered about the younger brother and who refused to accept the other as a brother. But the father's love was quite different.

Out of His mercy and love God awaits the return of the sinner. Therefore let us not hesitate to turn away from our sinful ways and turn to the Lord.

Aid Story.

The story is said of a son who one day had a big quarrel with his father and then ran away from home. He was living for a long time away from home. Having heard in Church about the story of the prodigal son and the love of the father. He had a

conversion. He wanted to go home and ask pardon from the father. But he was not sure whether the father would forgive him and accept him back. Therefore he wrote to the father that he would on such and such a date go in front of their home and if the father is not angry and if he is ready to forgive and welcome him; to have a white flag put on the tree right in front of the house and that he would come back home the following week.

On that particular day the son got into a bus that would take him on that way. As the bus was nearing his home he began to get excited. He was afraid that the father would not welcome him. Whether there would be a flag at all. Therefore he told the whole story to the man seated next to him and asked him to see whether there is a flag put up on the tree in front of the house. And unable to bear it he looked on the other side. Soon the man shouted and asked the son not to delay, but to immediately get down and go home. For the father not only had put a flag on the tree right in front of the house but on all the trees in the garden. Such was the love of his father. And the son too got down from the bus and went home only to be embraced and welcomed by the father.

Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos

ing with 39 crowns for one of them had lost heart and renounced his faith - crawling to the fire he died at the spot just when he expected relief. But another soldier, inspired to confess Christ, took the dead man's place, thus once again completing the number 40. They remained steadfast while their limbs grew stiff and frozen, and died one by one.

Now, there was one young soldier who continued to hold out against the cold. When the officers who came to clear the place of the dead bodies found him still breathing, they persuaded him to save himself by renouncing his faith but his mother, standing nearby, exhorted him to persevere. He was then thrown alive into the fire with the dead bodies of his brethren.

Reflection: "After this I looked, and there was an enormous crowd - no one could count all the people. They were from every race, tribe, nation and language, and they stood in front of the throne and of the Lamb, robed in white and holding palm branches in their hands" (Revelation 7:9).



Sunday Rhythm Fourth Sunday of Lent

- The younger :** "... let me have the share of the estate that would come to me`."
- The younger :** How many of my father's paid servants have more food than they want..."
- The younger :** "... here I am dying of hunger!..."
- The younger :** "... I have sinned against heaven and you."
- The younger :** "I no longer deserve to be called your son."
- Father :** "Quick! Bring out the best robe... a ring... sandals... we are going to have a feast, a celebration."
- Father :** "...this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; ... lost and found."
- The elder :** "... all these years I have slaved for you... yet you never offered me so much ... to celebrate."
- Father :** "...you are with me always and all I have is yours..."
- Richest blessing :** "... we are going to have a feast... was lost and is found."
- Richest result :** "...you are with me always and all I have is yours."
- TO THINK :** Have you slaved for God and are you with God always?
- TO PRAY :** Dear compassionate Father, help me to be with you and to enjoy your homely atmosphere. Amen.
- TO ACT :** Let us accept our brothers and sisters who are lost when they come to life in God without being a barrier but being a Ring of God.

Rev. Fr. S. Randil Fernando OMI

The Roman Pontiffs



137. JOHN XV

Born in Rome. He was elected in August 985 and died in March 996. Involved in the passions generated by the abuse of power, he was forced to flee to Tuscany. He put an end to the disagreements which had arisen in the Church of Reims. He was the first Pope to undertake the process of canonization of a saint: Ulderic.



138. GREGORY V

Born in Saxony. He was elected on 3 May 996 and died on 18 February 999. Forced to flee to Pavia, the antipope John XVII was nominated by Crescentius and reigned for almost a year. Gregory instituted the commemoration of the dead. He translated to the Church of Santa Maria Nuova in Rome the body of St. Lucilla.



139. SILVESTER II

Born in Auvergne (France). He was elected on 2 April 999 and died on 12 May 1003. He tried to repress debauchery. Highly cultured, he introduced the use of Arabic numbers. His pontificate carried on over the famous year 1000, considered crucial for the Final Judgment. It used to be said: "A thousand and not another thousands."



140. JOHN XVII

Born in Rome. He was elected in June 1003 and died in December 1003. He was elected in the period of grave disorder which followed on the death of Otto III of Germany. There are no trustworthy details of his brief pontificate.



141. JOHN XVIII

Born in Rome. He was elected in January 1004 and died in July 1009. He renewed, even if only for a short time, the union between the Latin and Greek Churches. He worked zealously to spread the Christian Faith among the Barbarians and the Pagans. He instituted the episcopal see of Bramburg.



142. SERGIUS IV

Born in Rome. He was elected on 31 July 1009 and died on 12 May 1012. He changed his name because he was called Peter. He maintained friendly relations with the Emperors of the East and of the West. He tried in vain to reduce the immorality among the bishops and powerful abbots. He saved the Holy Sepulchre from destruction.



143. BENEDICT VIII

Born in Rome. He was elected on 18 May 1012 and died on 9 April 1024. Because of opposition to his election he sought assistance from Henry II whom he solemnly crowned afterwards in Rome. He made laws against simony and duelling. He decreed that clerics should not marry.



144. JOHN XIX

Born in Rome. He was elected in May 1024 and died in 1032. He crowned Conrad II of Germany as Emperor in Rome. He refused to consent to doubtful claims of the Byzantine court. He protected Guido d'Arezzo, the inventor of the 7 musical notes, the names of which are the first syllables of hymn to St. John the Baptist.



145. BENEDICT IX

Born in Rome, he was elected in 1032 but was 12 years of age when he ascended the throne. He forced the King of Bohemia to return the relics of St. Adalbert to Prague. Eventually he took refuge in the Monastery of Grottaferrata. He was elected Pope three times.



146. SILVESTER III

Born in Rome. He was elected on 20 January 1045 and died on 10 February 1045. For a time he took the place of Pope Benedict IX who excommunicated him as an antipope. Notwithstanding the many disputes, the Church recognises him as a legitimate pope. It is not known how he died.



147. BENEDICT IX

Elected for the second time in 1045. He renounced the throne on 1 May of the same year. His renunciation was forced on him after only 20 days because of corruption and political and economical interests.



148. GREGORY VI

Born in Rome. He was elected on 5 May 1045 and died on 20 December 1046. He took the place of the much-discussed Benedict IX. He personally led his army in protecting himself from invasion. He was forced to abdicate. To him is attributed the forming of the first pontifical army.



149. CLEMENT II

Born in Saxony. He was elected on 25 December 1046 and died on 9 October 1047. His great preoccupation was with the arrogance of the Count-Bishops, the cause of much bitter fighting among their vassals. He succeeded in overcoming the resistance of Bishop Aribert of Milan. He canonized St. Viburata, a Hungarian Martyr.



150. BENEDICT IX

Elected for the third time on 8 November 1047, he renounced the throne on 17 July 1048. He was advised to do this by St. Bartholomew. Repenting of the turbulent life led up to this, he became a monk in the Monastery of St. Basil in Grottaferrata where he died and where he is buried.



151. DAMASUS II

Born in Bavaria. He was elected on 17 July 1048 and died on 9 August 1048. At the request of the Emperor Henry III of Germany he took the place of Benedict IX, after Aliard, Bishop of Lyons, had declined the tiara. He retired to Palestrina where he died.



152. ST. LEO IX

Born in Lorraine. He was elected on 12 March 1049 and died on 18 April 1054. He was freely elected by the clergy and the people of Rome. When he arrived, he entered Rome barefoot as a sign of humility. He excommunicated Michael Ceralarius who was responsible for the schism of the Greek Church from the Latin one.



153. VICTOR II

Born in Bavaria. He was elected on 16 April 1055 and died on 28 June 1057. His election came after a vacancy of one year. He received the abjuration of Berengarius and blessed Henry III on his death bed. Following the standard set by his predecessor, he made the Church prosperous.



154. STEPHEN IX

Born in Lorraine. He was elected on 3 August 1057 and died on 29 March 1058. As soon as he was elected he tried to raise the moral standards of the clergy. He surrounded himself with learned and renowned counsellors who assisted him in all political matters. He forbade matrimony between bloodrelations.



155. NICHOLAS II

Born in Borgogna. He was elected on 24 January 1059 and died on 27 July 1061. He called a synod at home which forbade the investiture of bishops without papal authorization. It was also decided that the election of the Pope should be reserved to Cardinal-bishops and Cardinal priests.



156. ALEXANDER II

Born in Milan. He was elected on 1 October 1061 and died on 21 April 1073. He interested himself more in religion than in politics, and did not hesitate to intervene in the reform of the clergy in France. Since he was not recognised by the German court, Henry IV supported Honorius II in opposition to him, thereby bringing about tumults.



157. ST. GREGORY VII

Born in Tuscany. He was elected on 22 April 1073 and died on 25 May 1085. A Council called by him issued a "Dictatus Papae": Only the pope is universal; no one can judge him; he alone can dispense from a vow. Henry IV, who had been excommunicated, made his way to Canossa and, wearing only a rough habit, to receive pardon.



158. BLESSED VICTOR III

Born at Montecassino. He was elected on 24 May 1086 and died on 16 September 1087. Four days after his election he fled to Montecassino. Being proclaimed a second time, he was brought to Rome by force and consecrated. He excommunicated the antipope Clement III and took up residence on the fortified Tiber Island.



159. BLESSED URBAN II

Born in France. He was elected on 12 March 1088 and died on 29 July 1099. The conclave had to be held at Velletri because Rome was in the hands of the antipope Clement III. He declared war on the infidels and was the inspirer of the first Crusade. He instituted the "Truce of God," a brief pause in battle to bury the dead.



160. PASCHAL II

Born in Bieda (Ravenna). He was elected on 14 August 1099 and died on 21 January 1118. The struggle for supremacy between the Pope and the emperor forced him into exile. Henry V succeeded in having himself crowned, maintaining the right of investiture of bishops. During his pontificate, the Church of St. Mary of the People was built.



161. GELASIUS II

Born in Gaeta. He was elected on 10 March 1118 and died on 28 January 1119. Attacked in the Basilica of the Lateran he was imprisoned by the rebel Cencio Frangipane. When he was freed by Genoese sailors he fled to Gaeta from where, dressed as a pilgrim, he returned to Rome. He eventually moved to Clunv.



162. CALIXTUS II

Born in Burgundy. He was elected on 8 February 1119 and died on 13 December 1124. During his pontificate an agreement was reached at Worms which recognised the Pope's right to nominate bishops. He called the 9th Ecumenical Council and proclaimed the 2nd Crusade.



163. HONORIUS II

Born in Fiagnano. He was elected on 21 September 1124 and died on 13 February 1130. He renewed friendly relations with nearly all the European courts in view of the fight against the Saracens. During his pontificate the famous factions of the Guelphs (for the pope) and the Ghibellines (for the Emperor) came into being.



164. INNOCENT II

Born in Rome. He was elected on the 23 February 1130 and died on 24 September 1143. He had hardly been elected when he was forced to flee from Rome. Lothario of Saxony brought him back to Rome, kissed his foot in obedience and personally held his mule's bridle during the procession, in exchange for his coronation. The Pope called the 10th Ecumenical Council.



165. CELESTINE II

Born in Citta di Castello. He was elected on 3 October 1143 and died on 8 March 1144. With the help of St. Bernard he settled the internal differences of the Church. He tried to end the war between Scotland and England, but he was not able to obtain peace in Italy. He lifted the excommunication of Louis VII.



166. LUCIUS II

Born in Bologna. He was elected on 12 March 1144 and died on 15 February 1145. He had to govern during the disorders caused by Arnold of Brescia. With the rise of the Comunes in Italy begins the end of the Middle Ages. While he was trying to prevent an extremely grave riot he was struck by a stone which caused his death.



167. BLESSED EUGENE III

Born in Montemagno (Pisa). He was elected on 18 February 1145 and died on 8 July 1153. He was forced to flee from Rome several times. He sent the previously decided Crusade on its mission. He completed the institution of the Sacred College. He began the construction of the Papal Palace.



168. ANASTASIUS IV

Born in Rome. He was elected on 12 July 1153 and died on 3 December 1154. He had as counsellor Cardinal Nicholas Breakspare, afterwards Adrian IV. By his gentleness of character he succeeded in bringing about the pacification of the temporal domains of the Church.

The Roman Pontiffs



169. ADRIAN IV

Born in Langley (England), He was elected on the 5 December, 1154 and died on 1 November, 1159. He was a strenuous defender of Papal supremacy. At the meeting of Sutri, Barbarossa refused to hold the bridle of the pope's mule, and the pope refused him the kiss of peace. However when an agreement was reached between them, he crowned him as Emperor.



170. ALEXANDER III

Born in Siena, He was elected on 20 September 1159 and died on 20 August 1181. He excommunicated Barbarossa because of his misdeeds and, and, by supporting the <Lombard League>, defeated him at Legnano by means of the famous 'carroccio' He called the 11th Ecumenical Council



171 - LUCIUS III

Born in Lucca. He was elected on 6 September 1181 and died on 25 September 1185. By means of a hurriedly put together constitution he exhorted all those in authority to suppress heresy by force of arms, having himself been forced to take refuge in Verona because of the riots which had broken out in his own territories.



172 - URBAN III

Born in Milan. He was elected on 1 December 1185 and died on 20 October 1187. He was elected in Verona and there he set up his papal court. As a cardinal he had planned the "Lombard League". He stood up firmly against the arrogance of Barbarossa, and died of sorrow when the Saracens took possession of Jerusalem.



173. GREGORY VIII

Born in Benevento. He was elected on 25 October 1187 and died on 17 December 1187. He was highly thought of by Barbarossa and would without doubt have succeeded in solving the grave disagreements between the Church and the Empire had his pontificate been longer. He assisted in every way the Christians in the Holy Land.



174. CLEMENT III

Born in Rome. He was elected on 20 December 1187 and died in March 1191. He succeeded in bringing peace to Rome after a period of 60 years, during which the popes had been forced to stay away from the city. He encouraged the Third Crusade in which the king of England, Richard the Lion-Heart, participated.



175. CELESTINE III

Born in Rome. He was elected on 14 April 1191 and died on 8 January 1198. He sustained the indissolubility of marriage. He gave official approval to the Order of the Teutonic Knights whose principal duty was to defend the pilgrims in the Holy Land.



176. INNOCENT III

Born in Anagni. He was elected on 22 February 1198 and died on 16 July, 1216. A man of great qualities, he exerted an enormous influence. He re-established his temporal authority within the Papal States, actively prompted the Fourth Crusade and called the 12th Ecumenical Council.



177. HONORIUS III

Born in Rome. He was elected on 24 July 1216 and died on 18 March 1227. He defined, in the <Liber Censorium>, the rights of the popes and specified the ceremonial for their election. With Andrew II of Hungary, he organized the 5th Crusade. Under John I of Sweden Christianity penetrated into Estonia.



178. GREGORY IX

Born in Anagni. He was elected on 21 March 1227 and died on 2 August 1241. He excommunicated Frederick II for his attitude towards the Crusade. He canonized St. Francis, St. Anthony and St. Dominic. He instituted the Holy Inquisition. He approved the collection of Divine Officers. He prepared the 6th Crusade.



179. CELESTINE IV

Born in Milan. He was elected on 28 October 1241 and died on 10 November 1241. The cardinals were unable to reach an agreement on his election, so the Roman Senate closed them under lock and key in the ancient palace of the Settizonio on the Coelian Hill. From this episode is derived the world 'conclaves'.



180. INNOCENT IV

Born in Genoa. He was elected on 28 June 1243 and died on 7 December 1254. His election took place at Anagni after two years of vacancy. He was a celebrated canonist. He called the 13th Ecumenical Council. He instituted the feast of the Visitation. He undertook the 5th Crusade with St. Louis IX of France.



181. ALEXANDER IV

Born in Anagni. He was elected on 12 December 1254 and died on 25 May, 1261. He wrote extensively on popular jurisprudence. He canonized St. Clare and confirmed the reality of the stigmata of St. Francis. He forbade summary trials for heresy and condemned the "flagellanti."



182. URBAN IV

Born in Troyes (France). He was elected on 4 September 1261 in a surprise election at the conclave of Viterbo to which he had come in order to pay homage to the future pope. He died on 2 December 1264. He confirmed the feast of "Corpus Christi," to take place 60 days after Easter.



183. CLEMENT IV

Born in Saint Giles (France). He was elected on 15 February 1265 and died on 29 November 1268. He excommunicated Conradin of Svevia but this did not prevent the occupation of Rome and Naples. Before being a priest and a bishop he was a man of the world. He lived and died in Viterbo.



184. BLESSED GREGORY X

Born in Piacenza. He was elected on 27 March 1271 and died on 10 January 1276. After almost three years of vacancy because of disagreements at the conclave of Viterbo, the people removed the roof of the conclave and put the cardinals on bread and water until they should come to a decision. He called the 14th Ecumenical Council.



185. BLESSED INNOCENT V

Born in Sutron (Savoy). He was elected on 22 February 1276 and died on 22 June 1276. Total seclusion was enforced on the conclave that elected him. By baptizing the three ambassadors sent to him by the Great Khan he extended Christianity to far off Mongolia.



186 - ADRIAN V

Born in Genoa. He was elected on the 11 July, 1276 and died on the 18 August of the same year. His pontificate lasted 39 days, and he was never actually consecrated. He put ecclesiastical laws in order and suspended Gregory the Tenth's norms concerning the conclave.



187- JOHN XXI

Born in Portugal. He was elected on 20 September 1276 and died on 20 May 1277. From Alphonsus II of Portugal he obtained the promise that the churches and their income would be respected in that kingdom. He died in the collapse of the residential palace in Viterbo.



188 - NICHOLAS III

Born in Rome. He was elected on 22 December 1277 and died on 22 August, 1280 in his villa in Soriano in the Cimino. He was the first pope to reside permanently in the Vatican, and he began the laying out of the famous gardens. He sent missionaries to convert the Tartar kings.



189 - MARTIN IV

Born in France. He was elected on 23 March, 1281 and died on 28 March, 1285. He strove to unite in the bonds of charity the kings and lords of the time. The famous revolution known as the Sicilian Vespers broke out during the pontificate. Giuseppe Verdi composed an opera about the event.



190 - HONORIUS IV

Born in Rome, he was elected on 20 May 1285 and died on 3 April 1287. One of his first measures was to establish order in the Papal States. He gave great encouragement to the University of Paris and tried to establish closer relations with the Greek Church. He also tried to reach some form of agreement with Islam.



191 - NICHOLAS IV

Born in Ascoli. He was elected on 22 February 1288 and died on 4 April 1292. He bought back order to the Court of Portugal. He promoted the progress of study by instituting the University of Montpellier. He strengthened the missions and in league with Genoa, fought the Saracens. He was the first Franciscan pope.



192 - ST. CELESTINE V

Born in Isernia. He was elected on 29 August 1294 and died on 19 May 1296. A man of exceptional retitude and simplicity, he renounced the papacy when he realized that he was a mere instrument in the hands of the lords of those troubled medieval times. He decreed that the newly elected pope has the right to refuse his election.



193 - BONIFACE VIII

Born in Anagni. He was elected on 24 December 1294 and died on 11 October 1303. He was a Pope of great stature. He celebrated the first Holy Year (1300) and decreed that it be repeated every hundred years. He founded the "Sapienza" university in Rome. He was a generous patron of celebrated artist among whom was



194 - Blessed BENEDICT XI

Born in Treviso. He was elected on 27 October 1303 and died on 7 July 1304. He settled a difficult dispute with the kingdom of France. He was bitterly persecuted by a group of conspirators and died after eating a poisoned fig, a fruit of which he was particularly fond.



195 - CLEMENT V

Born in Villandraut, He was elected on 14 November, 1305 and died on 20 April 1314. He was consecrated at Lyons and under the influence of Philip the Fair, fixed the residence of the Holy See at Avignon. The so-called "Captivity of Avignon" lasted 70 years. He called the 15th Ecumenical Council. He founded the University of Oxford.



196 - JOHN XXII

Born in Cahors (France). He was elected on 5 September 1316 and died on 4 December 1334. His election took place at Lyons after a vacancy of two years. He instituted the feast of the Most Holy Trinity. He was also responsible for the institution of the Sacra Rota and for the building of the Papal Palace in Avignon.



197 - BENEDICT XII

Born in Saverdun (France). He was elected on 8 January 1335 and died on 25 April 1342. Obligated by Philip VI to live in France, he intervened also in the affairs of Rome. He required Bishops to live in their dioceses and reformed the Benedictine, Franciscan and Dominican Orders.



198 - CLEMENT VI

Born in Maumont (France). He was elected on 19 May 1342 and died on 6 December 1352. He was a cultured and virtuous man. He bought the city of Avignon for 18,000 gold florins. He protected the Jews. He reduced the interval between Holy Years from 100 to 50 years and celebrated the second one in 1350.



199 - INNOCENT VI

Born in Braisahmont (France). He was elected on 30 December 1352 and died on 12 September 1362. He ordered the Spanish Cardinal Albornoz to restore order in the Papal States. He fostered arts and culture. He had a surrounding wall built to defend the city of Avignon.



200 - Blessed URBAN V

Born in France. He was elected on 6 November 1362 and died on 19 December 1370. He brought the Papacy back to Rome but, after three years of tumults and disorder, had to return to Avignon. He added the third crown (signifying Imperial power) to the tiara. The other two crowns signify Royal power and Spiritual power.

The Roman Pontiffs



201 - GREGORY XI

Born in Maumont (France). He was elected on 5 January 1371 and died on 26 March 1378. After the intervention of St. Catherine of Siena he brought the Holy See back to Rome. The Roman Senate donated a part of the Vatican Hill to him. He included St. Mary Major's among the Basilicas for gaining a jubilee indulgence.



202 - URBAN VI

Born in Naples. He was elected on 18 April 1378 and died on 15 October 1389. The conclave that elected him was the first to be held in the Vatican. Being of a very difficult temperament, he could not avoid the creation of antipopes at Avignon, and this brought about the Western Schism which lasted forty years.



203 - BONIFACE IX

Born in Naples, he was elected in November 1389 and died on 1 October 1404. He failed to settle the question of the schism since the second Avignon antipope refused any form of reconciliation. He celebrated the 3rd and 4th Holy Years (1390, 1400) during which the "White Sect" descended from Provence.



204 - INNOCENT VII

Born in Sulmona. He was elected on 11 November 1404 and died on 6 November 1406. He was a man of great culture but of weak character and failed to achieve any lasting results in his efforts to solve the schism and the difficult conditions in which the Papal States found themselves. He enlarged the faculties of Greek and Medicine.



205 - GREGORY XII

Born in Venice. He was elected on 19 December 1406 and died on 18 October, 1417. It was the saddest period of the Western Schism. It came to a point where there were three contemporaneous claims to papal obedience: Rome, Avignon, Pisa. The Emperor Sigismund called the 16th Ecumenical Council during which Pope Gregory renounced the Papacy.



206 - MARTIN V

Born in Rome. He was elected on 21 November 1417 and died on 20 February 1431. He was a patron of the arts in a time which saw the beginning of the Renaissance. He celebrated the 5th Holy Year (1423) and, for the first time a "Holy Door" was opened in the Basilica of St. John Lateran.



207 - EUGENE IV

Born in Venice he was elected on 11 March, 1431 and died on 23 February, 1447. He called the 17 Ecumenical Council at Basel but out of fear it was transferred first to Ferrara and then to Florence. It decided that the Pope was superior to a Council, with the result that those who opposed this view elected as antipope Felix V.



208 - NICHOLAS V

Born in Svizzera. He was elected on 19 March, 1447 and died on 24 March, 1455. He began the construction of the present Basilica of St. Peter's. He restored order politically to France and England. He helped the Spaniards in their final bid to get rid of the Saracens. He founded the Vatican Library. He celebrated the 6th Holy Year (1450)



209 - CALIXTUS III

Born in Jativa (Spain). He was elected on 20 August, 1455 and died on 6 August, 1458. He ordered the universal ringing of bells at midday every day. He brought about the growth of Christianity in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. He instituted the feast of the "Transfiguration."



210 - PIUS II

Born in Siena. He was elected on 3 September, 1458 and died on 15 August, 1464. In order to help those provinces dominated by the Turks, he ratified a league between the kings of France, Burgundy, Hungary and the Doge of Venice. He died as he was setting out on yet another Holy War.



211 - PAUL II

Born in Venice. He was elected on 16 September, 1464 and died on 26 July, 1471. He decided that only cardinals should wear the red berretta. So that each generation could receive the benefit of a special pardon, he reduced to 25 years the interval between the Holy Years.



212 - SIXTUS IV

Born in Savona, he was elected on 25 August, 1471 and died on 12 August, 1484. He was an expert politician and a generous patron of the arts. He celebrated the 7th Jubilee (1475) and prolonged it until Easter 1476. He instituted 19 March as the feast of St. Joseph (today Fathers' Day). He constructed the Sistine Chapel, later decorated by Michelangelo.



213 - INNOCENT VIII

Born in Genoa. He was elected on 12 September, 1484 and died on 25 July, 1492. He carried out the tremendous task of pacifying the Catholic States. He was inexorable in striking at the slave traffic, and he assisted Columbus in his undertaking to discover the western route to the Indies (America).



214 - ALEXANDER VI

Born in Jativa (Spain), he was elected on 26 August, 1492 and died on 18 August, 1503. By a simple mark on the maps of the new lands of America he decided the destiny of the new continent. He celebrated the 8th Jubilee (1500). During his pontificate a Holy Door was opened for the first time in St. Peter's, St. Paul's, and St. Mary Major's.



215 - PIUS III

Born in Siena. He was elected on 8 October 1503 and died on 18 October 1503. Because of his ill health he accepted the election only after much persuasion. Gout forced him to celebrate the Coronation Mass while seated. He was able to accomplish very little owing to the brevity of his pontificate which lasted only 10 days.



216 - JULIUS II

Born in Savona. He was elected on 26 November, 1503 and died on 21 February, 1513. He encouraged the arts and contributed to study the magnificence of Rome through the contribution of Raphael and Michelangelo. He called the 18th Ecumenical Council. He completed the construction of the Basilica of St. Peter's.



217 - LEO X

Born in Florence. He was elected on 19 March 1513 and died on 1 December 1521. He neither understood nor knew how to offer a remedy to the dangerous schism brought about by the ex-Augustinian monk, Martin Luther. He contributed to the institution of the pawnbroker's activity seen as a work of charity for the assistance of the less fortunate.



218 - ADRIAN VI

Born in Utrecht (Holland). He was elected without his knowledge on 31, August 1522 while Bishop of Tortona and died 14 September 1523. He had engaged in a deep struggle against those who were harassing the Church and against the Turks but without much success.



219 - CLEMENT VII

Born in Florence. He was elected on 26 November 1523 and died on 25 September 1534. He was unable to curb the bitter struggle between Catholics and the Lutherans of the Reform. He excommunicated Henry VIII of England who promptly abjured the Catholic Faith. This pope celebrated the 9th Jubilee in 1525.



220 - PAUL III

Born in Rome. He was elected on 3 November 1534 and died on 10 November 1549. A great patron of culture and the arts, he nominated Michelangelo as architect for life of St. Peter's. In the climate created by the "Counter-Reform" he gave official approval to the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). He called the 19th Ecumenical Council.



221 - JULES III

Born in Rome. He was elected on 22 February, 1550 and died on 23 March, 1555. By reopening the Council of Trent he continued to oppose Lutheran doctrines. When Mary Tudor ascended the throne of England he sent a legate to reestablish the Catholic Faith. He celebrated the 10th Jubilee (1550)



222 - MARCELLUS II

Born in Montepulciano. He was elected on 10 April, 1555 and died on 1 May of the same year. He was the last pope to maintain his baptismal name. He stamped his own sense of austerity and justice on the Curia. He interested himself greatly in the Russian and Mongolian peoples. Pierluigi da Palestrina composed the famous "Mass of Pope Marcellus."



223 - PAUL IV

Born in Naples. He was elected on 26 May, 1555 and died on 18 August 1559. He promoted moral reform, and by means of the Inquisition, opposed the Lutheran heresy. He forced the Jews to live in ghettos. As secretary he had Monsignor Della Casa (of the famous "Galateo" or book on politeness).



224 - PIUS IV

Born in Milan. He was elected on 6 January, 1560 and died on 9 December, 1565. He reopened the Council of Trent and brought it to a successful conclusion. He intervened in European politics in order that Piedmont might be restored to Emanuele Filiberto, thus making the House of Savoy a part of Italian history. He pardoned all sinners.



225 - ST. PIUS V

Born in Bosco. He was elected on 17 January, 1566 and died on 1 May, 1572. In order to prevent the spread of heresy he promoted culture among the people. He excommunicated Elizabeth of England. He was the inspirer of the Christian victory over the Saracens at Lepanto. He decreed the use of the Roman Missal.



226 - GREGORY XIII

Born in Bologna. He was elected on 25 May, 1572 and died on 10 April 1585. He opened seminaries in Vienna, Prague, Gatz and Japan. He celebrated the 11th Jubilee (1575). He reformed the universal calendar and ordered that the 4th of October 1582 should become the 15th, completely eliminating the intervening days.



227 - SIXTUS V

Born in Grottammare. He was elected on 1 May, 1585 and died on 27 August, 1590. With great severity he took in hand the reform of the Church. He completed the work on the Dome of St. Peter's and raised the obelisk in St. Peter's Square. He built the present building where the Holy Stairs in properly housed.



228 - URBAN VIII

Born in Rome. He was elected on 15 September, 1590 and died on the 27 September, 1590. He was of a virtuous and charitable character. He would undoubtedly have aligned his government with the Tridentine decrees but he died of malaria after only 13 days as pope. He left all his wealth for works of charity.



229 - GREGORY XIV

Born in Cremona. He was elected on 8 December 1590 and died on 16 October 1591. A man of an upright and ascetical nature, he was swindled and cheated by his dishonest counselors. He confirmed the right of sanctuary in embassies accredited to the Holy See. He excommunicated Henry IV of France.



230 - INNOCENT IX

Born in Bologna, he was elected on 3 November, 1591 and died suddenly on 30 December of the same year. He succeeded in limiting the effects of a terrible plague, and fought bandits and various internal factions with a certain degree of success.



231 - CLEMENT VIII

Born in Florence. He was elected on 9 February 1592 and died on 3 March 1605. He succeeded in pacifying France and Spain. He celebrated the 12th Jubilee in 1600 and established the devotion of the Forty Hours. During his pontificate, Maderno sculpted St. Cecilia, patron saint of Music, as he had seen her in her tomb when it was first opened.



232 - LEO XI

Born in Florence. He was elected on 10 April, 1605 and died on 27 April of the same year. Given over completely to the ascetical life, he was very popular with the people because of his generosity. During the procession to the Cathedral of his diocese (St. John Lateran's) he was taken ill and died.

The Roman Pontiffs



233 - PAUL V

Born in Rome. He was elected on 29 May, 1605 and died on 28 January, 1621. He established relations with Michael Romanoff of Russia and he appealed to the civilized nations to intervene and prevent the persecution of Christians in Japan and China. He encouraged Astronomy but did nothing to impede the condemnation of Copernicus.



234 - GREGORY XV

Born in Bolognam. He was elected on 14 February, 1621 and died on 8 July, 1623. During his brief pontificate he encouraged the Irish and assisted the Catholic restoration in France. He was greatly interested in the missions and instituted the Congregation of "Propaganda Fide" to assist them.



235 - URBAN VIII

Born in Florence. He was elected on 29 September, 1623 and died on the 29 July, 1644. He carried out work on the Sacred Texts: The Pontifical, The Breviary. During his pontificate Galileo Galilei was condemned - he pronounced "Nevertheless it moves." He celebrated the 13th Jubilee (1625)



236 - INNOCENT X

Born in Rome. He was elected on 4th October, 1644 and died on 7 January, 1655. He advised the Tzar of Russia, Alexis I, to emancipate the servants of the Glebe. He disapproved the Treaty of Wesaphilia because a large number of cities passed under Protestant control. He celebrated the 14th Jubilee (1650)



237 - ALEXANDER VII

Born in Siena. He was elected on 18 April, 1655 and died on 22 May, 1667. He tried by every means in his power to prevent the spread of Protestantism, especially in Italy and in England. He concluded the laying out of St. Peter's Square by completing the Bernini Colonnade and the two fountains.



238 - CLEMENT IX

Born in Pistoia, he was elected on 26 June, 1667 and died on 9 December, 1669. He acted as intermediary between France, Spain, England, and Holland at the Peace of Aquigrana, known also as the Clementine Peace. The Bernini Colonnade of St. Peter's (284 columns) was decorated with the statues of 140 saints.



239 - CLEMENT X

Born in Rome. He was elected on 11 May, 1669 and died on 22 July, 1676. He intervened in the election of the King of Poland and obtained the nomination of John Sobiesky, beloved for his profound Christian convictions and because he had defeated the Turks at the battle of Chaezim. He celebrated the 15th Jubilee (1675)



240 - Blessed INNOCENT XI

Born in Como. He was elected on 4 October, 1676 and died on 12 August, 1689. He abolished the right of legal immunity and eliminated nepotism. He opposed the arrogance of Louis XIV of France. Against the Turks he urged the Polish King John Sobresky who defeated them at Vienna. He instituted the feast of the Holy Name of Mary.



241 - ALEXANDER VIII
Born in Venice, he was elected on the 16 October, 1689 and died on 1 February, 1691. His election came about through the intervention of Louis XIV of France and he came to an agreement with him on the four propositions of the so-called "Gallican liberty." He gave help to the king of Poland and to the Venetians in their fight against the Turks.



242 - INNOCENT XII
Born in Naples. He was elected on 15 July, 1691 and died on 27 September, 1700. He ordered priests to wear the cassock every day and to make retreats at regular intervals. Louis XIV renounced the "Gallican Proposals" and the Pope recognised the bishops nominated by the King. He celebrated the 16th Jubilee (1700).



243 - CLEMENT XI
Born in Urbino. He was elected on 8 December, 1700 and died on 19 March, 1721. When he received the news of his election he waited 7 days before accepting it in order to convince himself of its legitimacy. A man of great culture and a lover of the arts, he enriched the Vatican Library. He concluded the 16th Jubilee (1700).



244 - INNOCENT XIII
Born in Rome. He was elected on 18 May, 1721 and died on 7 March, 1724. He reconfirmed the Papal Bull "Unigenitus" for those of the French clergy who had not accepted it. He intervened forcibly in the Spanish Church. He sent 100,000 crowns to the Knights of Malta to assist them in their struggle with the Turks.



245 - BENEDICT XIII
Born in Gravina di Puglia. He was elected on 4 May, 1724 and died on 2 March, 1730. He occupied himself principally with his spiritual mission. On the occasion of the 17 Jubilee (1725) he inaugurated the marvellous flight of steps of Trinita dei Monti in Rome. He canonized St. Louis Gonzaga and St. Stanislaus, patron of Poland.



246 - CLEMENT XII
Born in Florence. He was elected on 16 July, 1730 and died on 6 February, 1740. He refrained from interfering in the various period. He repeated the law forbidding the Lottery; the first numbers that were drawn were: 56-11-54-18-6. He excommunicated all those associated with the masonic movement.



247 - BENEDICT XIV
Born in Bologna. He was elected on 22 August, 1740 and died on 3 May, 1758. He revealed himself as one of the most cultured popes of his century. Together with St. Leonard, he propagated the devotion of the "Via Crucis", and he celebrated the 18th Jubilee (1750). He undertook to continue the papal portraits in the Basilica of St. Paul's in Rome.



248 - CLEMENT XIII
Born in Venice. He was elected on 16 July, 1758 and died mysteriously 2 February, 1769. During his pontificate, he had to face up to the problems created by the spread of Rationalism. Of a rigid nature, he tended to be faithful to conservative ideas and, therefore, was not very popular in many Catholic countries.



249 - CLEMENT XIV
Born in Sant' Arcangelo (Rimini). He was elected on 4 June, 1769 and died, perhaps from poisoning, on 22 September, 1774. He tried to renew normal relations with the Courts of Catholic countries. He founded the museum of Inscriptions, known as the Clementine Museum. He modified the rules governing the Sistine Choir.



250 - PIUS VI
Born in Cesena. He was elected on 22 February, 1775 and died on 29 February, 1799. He celebrated the 19th Jubilee (1775). Forced to break with France, he had to pay a large sum of money and donate many works of art. Napoleon conquered Rome and arrested the Pope. He had the great bell of St. Peter's cast which has a diameter of two metres.



251 - PIUS VII
Born in Cesena. He was elected on 21 March 1800 and died on 20 August, 1823. In accord with Napoleon he obtained a Concordat which improved the position of the Church in France. He crowned Napoleon Emperor in Paris but later on was forced to excommunicate him because of profound disagreements. He created the Papal Flag.



252 - LEO XII
Born in Genga (Spoleto). He was elected on 5 October, 1823 and died on 10 February, 1829. He reconfirmed the existence of the Jesuits and removed Galileo's works from the Index. He celebrated the 20th Jubilee (1825). He reconstructed, the Basilica of St. Paul's which had been destroyed by fire. Many frescoes of the papal iconography were destroyed.



253 - PIUS VIII
Born in Cingoli. He was elected on 5 April, 1829 and died on 30 November, 1830. Meanwhile in Italy the political movements for the reunification of Italy were gaining strength. An open-minded man, he dealt with the Sultan in favour of the Armenians. He began the postal service of the Vatican State. He strengthened missionary activity in the world.



254 - GREGORY XVI
Born in Belluno. He was elected on 6 February, 1831 and died on 1 June, 1846. He relied on the Powers of the Holy Alliance (Austria, Prussia, Russia) in order to govern the Papal States. He reduced the legal age from 25 to 21 years. He founded the Egyptian and Etruscan museums.



255 - PIUS IX
His name was Giovanni Maria Mastai-Ferretti. Born in Senigalia. He was elected on 21 June, 1846 and died on 7 February, 1878. He celebrated the 21st Jubilee (1875) but without opening the Holy Doors. He proclaimed the Infallibility of the Pope when he speaks "ex cathedra." On 20 September, 1870 Rome became the capital of Italy.



256 - LEO XIII
His name was Joachim Pecci. Born in Carpineto. He was elected on 3 March, 1878 and died on 20 July, 1903. He issued the encyclical, "Rerum novarum" which dealt with labour and social politics. He was the first pope to be filmed. He celebrated the 22nd Jubilee, and St. Peter's was illuminated by electricity for the first time.

257 - ST. PIUS X
His name was Joseph Sarto. Born in Riese. He was elected on 9 August, 1903 and died on 20 August, 1914. He brought to a conclusion the codification of Canon Law. He began the publication of the "Acta Apostolicae Sedis" which quotes the unbridged version of laws and documents. He decreed the elevation of the Host and Chalice.



258 - BENEDICT XV
His name was Francis Della Chiesa. Born in Genoa. He was elected on 6 September, 1914 and died on 22 January, 1922. The number of countries diplomatically accredited to the Vatican rose from 14 to 27 and among them was England which had been without representation for more than three centuries. He beatified Joan of Arc.



259 - PIUS XI
His name was Achille Ratti. Born in Desio. He was elected on 12 February, 1922 and died on 10 February 1939. On 11 February, 1929, he concluded a Concordat between the Church and the Italian State with Benito Mussolini. For the 19th Centenary of the Redemption (1933) he celebrated a Holy Year. G. Marconi constructed Vatican radio during his pontificate.



260 - PIUS XII
His name was Eugenio Pacelli. Born in Rome. He was elected on his birthday, 2 March, 1939. He died on 9 October, 1958. He strongly opposed Marxist persecutions. He discovered the tomb of St. Peter during three excavations under the Basilica. He celebrated the 24th Jubilee (1950) and proclaimed the Dogma of the Assumption of Our Lady.



261 - JOHN XXIII
His name was Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli. Born in Sotto il Monte (Bergamo). He was elected on 28 October, 1959 and died on 3 June, 1963. With the Papal Bull "Humanae Salutis," he called the 21st Ecumenical Council known as Vatican II (11 October 1962). Themes: Liturgical life, Social Relations, the Church and the Modern World.



262 - PAUL VI
His name was Giovanni B. Montini. Born in Concesio (Brescia). He was elected on 21 June, 1963 and died on 6 August 1978. He brought the Second Vatican Council to its conclusion (8th December 1965). He celebrated the 25 Jubilee (1975). He allowed clerical dress other than the cassock to be worn. He instituted the Episcopal synod.



263 - JOHN PAUL I
His name was Albino Luciani. Born in Forno di Canale (Belluno). He was elected on 26 August, 1978 and died on 28 September, 1978. He was the first pope to choose a double name. He declined to have a coronation ceremony. His reign only lasted 33 days and he died of a heart attack while reading in bed. He was known as the smiling Pope.



264 - JOHN PAUL II
Karol Wojtyla. Born in Wadowice (Poland). Elected on 16 October, 1978. Died on 02 April, 2005. He is a Pope with an itinerant apostolate who visited 129 nations during 104 trips abroad. He was shot during a general audience in St. Peter's Square on 13 May, 1981. He opened and closed the Second Holy Year of Redemption (1983/1984) and the Jubilee of 2000. He is buried in the Vatican Grottos.



265 - BENEDICT XVI
Joseph Ratzinger, elected on 20 April, 2005. Born on 16 April, 1927 in Marktl am Inn, in Bavaria, near the border with Austria. He had an older brother, Georg, and a younger sister, Maria. He entered seminary in April 1939 and was ordained a priest on 29 June 1951; he received his doctorate in theology in 1953. In the following decade he taught in Freising, Bonn, Munster, and Tubingen and was appointed Professor of Dogmatics at the University of Regensburg in 1969. After being archbishop of Munich, Ratzinger was elevated to Cardinal by Pope Paul VI, on 28 June 1977; in 1981, Pope John Paul II named him Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. On 5 April, 1993, he was transferred to the order of Cardinal Bishops and in 2002 became Dean of the College of Cardinals.