

Messenger



THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS
June 15



THE IMMACULATE HEART OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
June 16

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Altar Servers' Day

St. Aloysius' Seminary, Borella, organizes its Annual Altar Servers' Day which will commence at 9.00 a.m. in the seminary premises on June 16, 2012.

The Rector of the Seminary, Very Rev. Fr. Lalith Felix Perera invites all the altar servers who are in Grade six and above to take part in the activities of the day.

Minor Seminary Media Unit

Newman Society celebrates 60 years



The Newman Society of the University of Peradeniya celebrated 60 years (1952-2012) recently, with a Thanksgiving Mass with His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Vianney Fernando as the main celebrant.

The Mass was followed by a fellowship of past and present members of the Society, some of whom were meeting after decades.

To mark the event a Na sapling was planted by the Hony. Secretary of

the Newman Society Alumni Association, Mark Warnaluka.

Emeritus Prof. Ashley Halpe with Rev. Fr. Derrick Mendis in the chair, poetically addressed the gathering drawing attention to the need for Universities to be interdisciplinary in drawing up curricula for students.

Rev. Fr. Egerton Perera presented a Diamond Jubilee Souvenir to the guests where about 40 alumni had made their reminiscences.

CBS to celebrate 200th Year



The Ceylon Bible Society (CBS) will commemorate its 200th anniversary this year with the main celebration to be held on August 1, 2012, at the Ceylon Bible Society premises.

His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith will deliver the message at the celebration. On the same day a commemorative stamp will be issued to mark the event.

Meanwhile a Bible Exhibition organized by the Ceylon Bible Society in celebration of the 200th Anniversary was held in Kandy, with the participation of the Bishop of Kandy, His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Vianney Fernando.

Be faithful to the call of the Priesthood: Bishop Emmanuel

His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Fernando, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo speaking at the 66th prize-giving of St. Aloysius Minor Seminary, Borella, said that in the words of Jesus, the calling "follow me" includes a decision from the seminarians.

"Following Jesus means to be a disciple of Jesus," His Lordship observed.

"Therefore," he said, "a seminarian is called each day to offer his whole being to Jesus and to die to egoism and pride."

His Lordship was speaking as the Chief Guest at the prize-giving held last Sunday at the Seminary. Rev. Fathers Xystus Kurukulasuriya and Benedict Joseph graced the



Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Fernando is seen lighting the traditional oil lamp in the presence of the Rector, Very Rev. Fr. Lalith Felix Perera and other priests.

occasion as the Guests of Honour.

His Lordship while reminding their parents of the responsibility to pray for the seminarians said that making spiritual and also

material sacrifices for their children in the seminaries, would strengthen their calling to the priesthood.

A large number of priests, clergy, and parents of seminarians attended the prize-giving.

New Church of Our Lady of All Nations' in Batticaloa



The newly built church dedicated to Our Lady of All Nations' was blessed and opened by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Kingsley Swampillai, the Bishop of Trincomalee-Batticaloa, last Sunday (3), at Panichiyadi, Batticaloa.

The new church was built with the support of the Pontifical Mission Societies for the Propagation of Faith. The major financial contribution came from them with the rest of the funds collected from among the local parishioners and well

wishers, who extended their maximum support to the parish priest during the time of the construction of the Church.

The Panichiyadi parish is a new settlement area and the people living here were originally from Kallady, Dutch-Bar parish. After the tsunami due to the buffer zone restrictions, they were located at Thiraimadu and Panichiyadi. The community here consists of a mixed group of Burghers and Tamils.

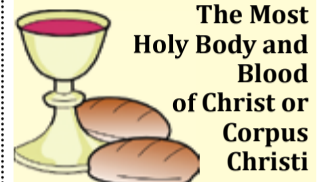
The construction work of the Church began on September 21, 2007 on a land given by the Government.

125th Anniversary of St. Anthony's Cathedral, Kandy



St. Anthony's Cathedral, Kandy will celebrate its 125th Anniversary on June 13th, 2012, with the Festive High Mass presided over by His Lordship, Joseph Vianney Fernando.

10th June



The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ or Corpus Christi

12th June

Day Against Child Labour



13th June

Feast of St. Anthony



14th June

Blood Donation Day



17th June

Father's Day



20th June

Refugee Day



Feast of St. Anthony's Church, Kollupitiya

The Annual Feast of St. Anthony's Church, Kollupitiya will be celebrated on Saturday, 23rd June and Sunday, 24th June.

The Programme:

Sunday 17th June at 9.30 a.m. - Hoisting of the Flag Staff.

Saturday, 23rd June 6.30 p.m. - Vespers Service followed by a procession along the streets of Kollupitiya.

Sunday, 24th June at 8 a.m. - Festive concelebrated High Mass. Chief Celebrant His Excellency Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Spitteri, Apostolic Nuncio.

The proclamation of the Diamond Jubilee of St. Anthony's Church, Kollupitiya which falls on June 2013, will be made on the Feast Day.

Honouring Mother Mary



The staff and students of the Convent of Our Lady of Victories joined in a procession organized by the board of prefects, in honour of Mother Mary. The statue of Mother Mary was taken in procession, along the streets decorated in blue and white. Rev. Fr. Bertram Ranjith, parish priest of Moratuwa blessed all who participated in the procession.

*Rev. Sr. Sujeeva Nonis
Principal*

CWU Archdiocesan Union



The first meeting of the Archdiocesan Branch of the Christian Workers' Union (CWU) met recently presided over by Rev. Fr. Reid Shelton Fernando, Archdiocesan Chaplain.

The new office bearers of the Archdiocesan Union were also elected on this day.

Gerard Dias - President
Michael Pieris - Treasurer
Komalitha Fernando - Secretary

Theobald Samarantunga

Caritas Safe Migration Signature Campaign makes steady progress

The campaign to collect 10,000 signatures under the Caritas Safe Migration Programme is making steady progress in several Dioceses.

The present service contract being only in English and Arabic Languages had narrowed the opportunity for the migrant workers to understand its content which includes details with regard to their working conditions. This lack of understanding about the terms of the contract has been viewed as one of the reasons for the issues faced by migrant workers. On the other hand, a good understanding of the contents of the job contract will help these migrant workers to take the right decisions with regard to their employment.

If the service contract is in their own mother tongue, they would be able to carry out their work with better understanding and that would be a help to lessen their issues as well. The National Labour Migration Policy for Sri Lanka also insists that the contract should be translated to Sinhala and Tamil to ensure that it is clearly understood by the worker prior to signing.

The objective of the current signature campaign is to request the government to give the opportunity for the women domestic migrant workers to read their service contract in their own mother tongue as per the National Labour Migration Policy.

Ainslie Joseph

Sharing in the Priesthood of Christ the High Priest

A seminar for all the assistant priests of the diocese of Chilaw was organized by the Chilaw Diocesan On-going formation committee under the guidance of the Bishop of Chilaw, His Lordship Valence Mendis at St. Sebastian's home-Nuwara Eliya recently.

Rev. Fr. Gamini Silva OMI as the guest speaker led the group of 24 priests to reflect upon the priesthood more deeply. This seminar was attended by His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Valence Mendis, Very Rev. Fr. Peter Charles, the Vicar General of the diocese, Rev. Fr. Pius Nihal and Rev. Fr. Susantha Bennet.

Rev. Fr. Esanka Mihiran - Katuneriya Parish

"Hymns for Holy Week"



Rev. Fr. Michael Silva, "Suba Seth Gedera", Buttala presents the first copy of his Hymn Book, "Hymns for Holy Week" to Rev. Fr. Shantha Sagara Hettiaracchi, Editor, *Gnanarthpradeepaya* at his office recently.

Cecil Danicius

Free distribution of Spectacles



A free distribution of spectacles conducted by St. Anne's Society, Wattala and sponsored by the Rotary Clubs of Wattala and Kandy was held at St. Anne's Church premises, Wattala recently.

Picture shows Amitha Samarasinghe, President Rotary Club of Wattala, Malinga Jayawardene, President and Sunil Visidagama, Secretary of ST. Anne's Society, Wattala and the officials of both organizations.

Pic Nimal Perera

Elected President - Sri Lanka Scouts

P. D. Leonard Rienzie Albert, a senior parishioner of St. Theresa's Church and a product of 1st Colombo (President Own) Scout Group, (J.P.-Whole Island) and "Fellow" Industrial Security Foundation Sri Lanka Incorp., Veteran Scout of 1952 and Veteran Queen Scout of 1956, with an unmatched chequered career in the Scout brotherhood was elected as the President of the Sri Lanka Scout Association last week.

He was a founder member of the Sri Lanka Queen's and President's Scout Guild where he served as a Chairman of the Steering Committee and later unanimously elected as the Founder President, serving for 3 years. He continues to serve as the President of the YE OLE Kingfisher Fellowship and Chairman of the Group Committee.

He is the proud recipient of Queen's Scout awarded from H.M./Queen Elizabeth II, Thanks badge from former President Chandrika Kumarathunga, Veteran Scout Testimonial from Sri Lanka Scout Association, Long Service plaque from Colombo District Scout Association and Thanks Medal from the President Mahinda Rajapaksa with the Asia Pacific Top Achiever Scout Award.



St. Anthony's Church, Soysapura

St. Anthony's Church, Soysapura, a sub parish of Queen of Angels Church, Rawatawatta, celebrates its annual feast on June 17, 2012. This small church was built approximately 18 years ago, under the guidance and supervision of then Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Edward Revel. On 12th March, 1994 a statue of St. Anthony was placed in a small land area of the Soysapura Housing Scheme, which was the first step towards the inception of the Church.

It is appreciating to notice the successful development this small church has accomplished within a short period of time and overcoming many obstacles. With the support and enthusiasm of all the Parish Priests appointed thus far for the parish of Rawatawatta, St. Anthony's Shrine, Soysapura has been able to celebrate the novenas and Sunday services efficiently and effectively.

A common sight that could be seen in a church dedicated to St. Anthony is that people belonging to all races and religions come together to venerate the statue of the saint. Soysapura, is a housing scheme that is enriched with the multi-racial and multi-religious context. Anyone who visits Soysapura would feel that it is almost like a mini Sri Lanka within Sri Lanka. Therefore, in this colourful social context of Soysapura, our St. Anthony's Shrine plays an ardent role.

Going down memory lane, when the Church was initially built there was no clear cut plan on how to build the Church nor a piece of land properly bordered for this purpose. The statue of St. Anthony

was placed on a small table and the building work began. As the work was progressing, Archbishop of Colombo at that period of time, His Grace, Most Rev. Dr. Nicholas Marcus Fernando paid a humble visit to witness the progress of the Church. This is definitely a key milestone of the proud history this church

owns. Sidelining the various obstacles faced during the development process, at present this church holds a respectful place in the hearts of the people of Soysapura.

We personally acknowledge the objective of our current Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Tyrone Perera to create a prayerful atmosphere for the faithful who come to this church because the surroundings of the Church has lot of activities and people around. The main hindrance to fulfill this objective was that we did not have any paper work that would prove the identity of the Church. With the ardent hard work and guidance of the Parish Priest we were able to prove the ownership of the church to the Housing Department, following the guidelines of the Religious Sector. This is a victorious event for the faithful at Soysapura.

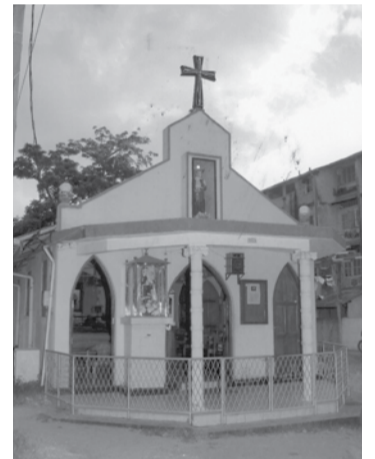
The Church committee has done all the necessary preparations to celebrate the feast of St. Anthony, without any external elaborations as per the instructions of the Priest.

Programme for Feast

Hoisting of the Flagstaff -	5.00pm June 9, 2012
Daily Novenas	- 7.00 p.m.
Vespers	- June 16, 2012
Festive High Mass-	5.00 p.m. June 17, 2012

Douglas Cooray

*Secretary - St. Anthony's Church
Soysapura - Moratuwa*



Pallensena Church donates house to needy family



Under a programme launched to help the less-fortunate, the Parish of Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Pallensena had build a house for a family consisting of a mother and two children.

The house was built by donations received from the Catholic Community in Milano, Italy and completed by Rev. Fr. Sisira Samarakoon.

The house was blessed by Rev. Fr. Patrick Perera, Episcopal Vicar, Negombo Region and the keys handed over to the mother.

Present on the occasion were the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Jayantha Nimal, Rev. Sr. Rosita Fernando of the Convent of Perpetual Succour, Rev. Fr. Sisira Samarakoon and parishioners.

Melvyn de Costa

Apostolic Nuncio visits Kotte

His Excellency Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Spiteri, Apostolic Nuncio in Sri Lanka said that if we are to renew the Church's faith in the Word of God, we need to look to the one in whom the interplay between the Word of God and faith was brought to perfection.

His Excellency was speaking as the chief celebrant at the Festive Mass held at St. Thomas' Church, Kotte to conclude the month-long Marian devotion of the parish, recently.

Quoting from the recent post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Benedict XVI, entitled "Verbum Domini" (Word of God), His Excellency said, "The Virgin Mary by her 'yes' to the word of the covenant and her mission, perfectly fulfilled the divine vocation of humanity.

"Her thoughts are attuned to the thoughts of God and her will is one with the will of God," the Apostolic Nuncio observed.

The Nuncio was welcomed



by the Parish Priest Very Rev. Fr. Anthony Fernandopulle, Episcopal Vicar (Colombo South Region).

A statue of the Lord Jesus Christ erected upon a tall pedestal and facing Kotte town was blessed by the Nuncio and a commemorative plaque to mark the visit of the Apostolic Nuncio was unveiled by him.

Present on the occasion

were Rev. Fr. Travis Gabriel, Rector St. Peter's College, Bambalapitiya, Rev. Fr. Sriyan Ranasinghe OMI, Rev. Fr. Gihan Goonathilake, Principal St. Joseph's College, Primary Section, Rev. Fr. Gihan Sheno Silva, Asst. Parish Priest Kotte and a large gathering of the faithful.

Text: Trevor Ludowyke

Pic: Asiri Warakulasuriya



Church in the World

Pope saddened by 'Vatileaks'

In a rare statement, Pope Benedict XVI has said that while he was distressed by the "Vatileaks" case, the Church would not lack God's help for the trials it encountered.

The series of events had included the arrest and prosecution of his butler for stealing and passing on to the press sensitive papal documents and the ongoing police hunt to find any accomplices.

"The events which have occurred during these days regarding the Curia and my collaborators have caused sadness in my heart, but they have never clouded a firm certainty that despite human weakness, difficulties and trials, the Church is guided by the Holy Spirit and the Lord will never be lacking in his help to sustain it in its journey," the Pope said.

In an unusual step, the Pope read a prepared statement at the end of his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square. Paolo Gabriele, 46, was charged on May 26, with the "aggravated theft" of confidential Vatican documents found in his apartment. His arrest followed several months of so-called "Vatileaks" in which numerous confidential documents about the internal workings of the Vatican were passed on to the Italian media. In recent days the same media outlets have speculated that Gabriele is only a minor figure in a much larger conspiracy that includes a member of the Sacred College of Cardinals. They have also theorized that the leaks are aimed at dislodging the Vatican's Secretary of State, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone.

Paolo Gabriele is an Italian father of three who has worked in the Papal Household under both Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. He is one of very few individuals who have daily access to the Pope. Within the close-knit family atmosphere of the Papal Apartments, Gabriele is affectionately nicknamed "Paoletto" or "little Paul." Meanwhile, the hunt continues for those responsible for the leaks. That task has been given to both the Vatican police and a special commission of three cardinals chaired by Spanish Cardinal Julian Herranz.

The significance of the International Eucharistic Congress and the Legion

The fiftieth International Eucharistic Congress is to take place in Dublin in June 10, 2012. In the Providence of God, the last time the IEC took place in Dublin 80 years ago, was a time of great grace for the worldwide Legion. Bishops, priests and laity came to Dublin from all over the world, and many of them took the Legion back with them, to their own countries.

The universal church discovered this new movement of the lay apostolate, gifted with a dynamic harmony between prayer and action, both christocentric and profoundly Marian, and totally dedicated to the Holy Spirit. There were many other attractive features of its spirituality and organisation that became known, and The Congress is seen as the great Epiphany of the Legion. Now we have another IEC in Dublin and we pray that we will be open to all the graces that the Lord will offer the Legion at this time. We pray that the worldwide Legion may be given the grace to cooperate fully with our Eucharistic Lord, during this special time of grace for the whole Church.

The primary focus of the Legion apostolate is of course, the Eucharist. The Handbook puts it very forcefully. "The Eucharistic is the center and source of grace" therefore, it must be the very keystone of the Legionary scheme. The means of that communication is chiefly the Holy Eucharist. 'I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.' (Jn. 6. 51-52)

The position of the Legion is so clear and persuasive; its main object is to establish the reign of the Eucharist in all hearts. To Jesus through Mary. So it is also the privilege and task of every co-worker of Mary, to give Jesus to souls and there is no better way than to lead them to the Eucharist. The Handbook is merely echoing the solemn teaching of the Magisterium, which repeatedly says that the 'Eucharist is the source and summit of the total work of Evangelization.' In the light of these few sentences, we should begin to see how fundamental the Eucharistic Congress is, not only to the whole Church, but in a special way, to the Legion.

Camillus Fernando

Sri Lanka National Rally at Padua, Italy



The Padua Rally organized by the Sri Lankan migrants in Italy on the 1st of May every year was held at the Basilica of St. Anthony in Padua for the 14th consecutive year under the guidance of Msgr. Neville Joe Perera, the National Co-ordinator for Migrant Catholics in Italy.

His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr.

Valence Mendis, the Bishop of Chilaw presided over the festive High Mass celebrated in gratitude to St. Anthony whose powerful intercession attracts thousands of Christian and non-Christians devotees to Padua every year.

Addressing the faithful in his homily His Lordship emphasized that at a time when the image of our beloved motherland, particularly in the West, has been presented in a very low profile, it falls to the lot of every migrant Sri Lankan to help

us regain our image of peace-loving nation and which promotes fraternal co-existence among diverse ethnicities. This can be done, added His Lordship, through the great credibility we demonstrate through faithfulness to our work and right moral conduct and

even through the tropical unsophisticated smile in our faces when we interact with a foreigner.

His Lordship also recalled the tireless efforts of Rev. Msgr. Neville Joe who pioneered the project of an organized mission in the spiritual interest of the scattered migrant Sri Lankans in Italy. Fourteen years ago, Bishop Valence said for the whole of Italy, there was only one Sri Lankan priest to look after the people and that was Fr. Neville Joe. At present there are 20 Sri Lankan priests in Italy serving the Sri Lankan Catholics dispersed in various parts of the country.

The 20 chaplain priests present on the occasion had organized a special felicitation in honour of Fr. Neville Joe's new office as Monsignor Msgr. Neville Joe thanking those present expressed his special thanks to His Eminence Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith who intervened to re-start the Sri Lankan Airlines services to Rome and Milan which had been cancelled for some time. About 10,000 devotees took part on this occasion.

BREAD OF LIFE



But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him.

- 2 CORINTHIANS 2:14 NIV

New Church....

Contd. from Pg. 1

The foundation stone was laid by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Kingsley Swampilalai. The work begun in 2007 ended in 2012.

The beautiful carpentry work of the new church has been designed and done by the parishioners of the church, as many of them are carpenters.

Rt. Rev. Dr. Ponniah Joseph, the Auxiliary Bishop, Rev. Fr. A. A. Navaretnam, the Parish Priest together with a large number of Priests, Religious and lay faithful were present on the occasion.

Romela Outschoorn

THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY OF SRI LANKA
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EDITORIAL

10 June 2012

Why do bad things happen to good people?

Very often we are confronted with the news that a good friend, a devoted Catholic is afflicted with cancer or a child is killed by an accident or some incurable disease like leukemia. We think that God should have prevented such misery and question why. Our Buddhist friends would say it is due to their 'karma' either in this world or in a previous birth. But what can we say?

Yes, sometimes bad things happen to people who seem undeserving of them. The book of Job deals with this issue. God had allowed Satan to do everything he wanted to Job except kill him. What was Job's reaction? "Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him" (Job 13:15). "The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised" (Job 1:21). Job did not understand why God had allowed these things to happen to him but he knew God was good and therefore continued to trust in Him. God allows things to happen for His reasons, whether or not we understand them. Above all, however, we must remember that God is good, just, loving, and merciful. Often things happen to us that we simply cannot understand. However, instead of doubting God's goodness, our reaction should be to trust Him. "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

The Bible says there are no "good" people. All of us are tainted by and infected with sin (Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8). Romans 3:10-18 could not be clearer about the non-existence of "good" people: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All of us now living deserve to be thrown into hell at this very moment. Every second we spend alive and healthy is only by the grace and mercy of God. We deserve nothing except hell fire.

A connected question would be "Why does God allow good things to happen to bad people? This very same question troubled the psalmist who wrote Psalm 73. Like us, he had experienced some difficulties and questioned the injustice of it all. He watched the evil people around him living by their own rules, enjoying all the wealth and pleasures of the world and piling riches upon riches. He complains, "They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from the burdens common to man; they are not plagued by human ills" (Psalms 73:4-5). Today we would say they could pay their bills, have plenty to eat and plenty of luxuries. He began not only to envy these people, but even to question God as to why He would allow such a thing to happen! We too have the same question in our minds when we witness the wicked, the ungodly people around us get new cars, luxurious homes, promotions, beautiful clothes, and take fabulous trips, while we struggle to pay the electricity bill. The answer lies in the rest of the psalm.

"When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me till I entered the temple of God; then I understood their final destiny. Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors! As a dream when one awakes, so when you arise, O Lord, you will despise them as fantasies" (Psalms 73:16-20). Those who have temporary riches on earth in reality do not have true riches—eternal life.

There is no need for us to be envious of the prosperity of the wicked because their prosperity is an illusion. We may not have everything we want here on earth, but we will one day prosper for all eternity through Jesus Christ our Lord. Whenever we are tempted to try the other road, we should remember that the other road is a dead end (Matthew 7:13). But in all truth, the narrow road is the only road that leads to eternal life. That should be our joy and our comfort.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

The solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus falls on Friday 15th of June. Understood in the light of the Scriptures, the term 'Sacred Heart of Jesus' denotes the entire mystery of Christ: Son of God, uncreated wisdom; infinite charity, principal of the salvation and sanctification of mankind.

Sacred Heart of Jesus

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a fairly prominent feature of modern Catholicism. It is mainly in European civilization that the heart has become the symbol of the great love of Christ. (Even in the Bible, the heart is regarded as the seat of knowledge, rather than of love) The devotion is traceable to medieval mystics such as Juliana of Norwich, Frances of Rome, and St. Bonaventure. In the 16th century it was fostered by the Carthusians and, later Jesuits. St. John Eudes (17th century) provided a theological basis, and the apparitions of St. Margaret Mary (1673-1675) gave focus, specially as regards the need for reparation for sin. A Mass and office were authorized in 1765 (becoming universal in 1856). The Solemnity of the Sacred Heart is celebrated on the Friday after Corpus Christi; hence June is the month of the Sacred Heart.

The language and spirituality, essential to devotion to the Sacred Heart, developed in the history of the Church from the 17th century, the time of St. Margaret Mary and Paray-le Monial has been used in some official Church documents and in writings of saints and theologians.

Language of the Heart

It cannot be said that the Scripture revival eliminates the reality expressed in the traditional devotion to the Sacred Heart. Scripture brings home to us in a special way the reality and meaning of Christ's love, the meaning of our Christian life as beloved disciples who respond out of love to the Christ we discover in the Gospels, to the Christ who is present in the Christian community and in the needs of our world. In the writings of St. Paul we become more aware that our Christian call is to build up the Body of Christ, the Christian community, to reconcile humanity ever more deeply with God the Father through our own lives in union with Christ and to 'complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the Church.' Through the Bible we can come to deepen our understanding of Christ's love (of his heart), of our own 'consecration' to the heart of Christ and our own call to 'reparation' in, perhaps, a language that has more appeal than expressions which are associated with the traditional theology of the Sacred Heart.

For example, the Fourth Gospel could well be called a Gospel of the heart. It focuses on Christ as both human and Son of

God, on the mystery of Jesus as a human God and a divine human who loves and is loved by his Father. It contemplates Christ as one who calls us 'friends', who loves people to the point of laying down his life out of love for them and whose central message is: 'Love one another as I have loved you.' This is a gospel of personal relationships based on love. 'Greater love than this no man has than that he should lay down his life for his friends' (15:13). This Gospel more than any other proclaims that the centre of Christian life is God's love made flesh – the person of Christ, the only and beloved Son of the Father who lived and died out of love for his friend and who invites us to respond to his love of friendship. Such a Gospel is the story of Christianity as loving relationships, it is the reality contained behind the expression 'the Heart of Christ.' Devotion to the Sacred Heart is a celebration of that love both divine and human which has entered human history in the person of Christ.

However, all the essential elements of devotion to the Sacred Heart as found in the writings of the Fathers of the Church, of the saints and in some official documents of the Church that do not appear in Scripture. That devotion is based as well on tradition (eg. The Fathers such as Irenaeus, Tertullian, Augustine and later in medieval times Anselm, Bernard, Francis, Bonaventure, Nechtilde, Gertrude). Also an essential element is also provided by the experience of Margaret Mary and the formal approval of the devotion by the Church in documents and in the liturgy. (eg. The Feast of the Sacred Heart and for various devotional practices).

There is a striking difference in the language of some writings about that devotion and the language of scripture. For example, the language characteristic of the devotion is found in Margaret Mary's account of her experiences in prayer. She attributes to Christ a language that is identical with the convent style of the 17th century. Like some mystics she hears emotional outpourings which derive in large part from a personal psychology and language pattern: 'Behold this heart which has so loved men that it has not spared anything is consuming itself in order to testify to its love....And I receive in return from the majority only ingratitude by their lack of reverence and sacrileges....'

The Heart as Symbol

The Risen Lord, whom we worship, still has a human 'heart' but we cannot understand heart in a physical sense. It has a figurative meaning; it is a symbol not of a physical organ of Christ, but a symbol of the whole person of Christ, human and divine, as loving his Father, as loving us, as being loved himself by his Father and as bringing to us the love of his Father. In the Old and New Testaments, the word 'heart' is often used as a comprehensive

term for the human personality as a whole, it's inner life, its character. It is the conscious and deliberate spiritual activity of the self-contained ego; it is the seat of a person's spiritual strength, faculties, intelligence, feelings; it is the inward impulse causing a person to act and is the secret source of man's life. The Old Testament sometimes speaks of God's heart, meaning his will. In the devotion to the Sacred Heart, the heart is closely related to the affective life, to love and express the person of Christ as one who loves. But in the Bible 'heart' expresses the whole person of God or of man; it does not focus on the affective life, for it indicates a wider range of meaning, including all that is within a person. For us 'heart' differs from the Old and New Testament use of the word. What is common is that 'heart' expresses the whole person. The Old Testament speaks of God's heart not in an essentially affective sense. The New Testament does not have the expression 'the heart' of Christ. When Jesus describes himself as 'gentle and lowly in heart' he is not referring to his love or affection but his patient trust in God (Mt. 11:29)

The heart not only symbolizes the self-giving and affective love of Christ but also his forgiving love or mercy. William Barclay describes mercy as 'the outgoing kindness of the heart of God. In the encyclical *Dives in Misericordia*' Pope John Paul II says: "The Church seems in a particular way to profess the mercy of God and to venerate it when she directs herself to the Heart of Christ'. His whole letter could be taken as a reflection on Christ's love under the aspect of mercy. It contains the Biblical basis for this mercy. In particular, the Gospel of Luke is the story of Christ as the merciful saviour of all mankind; the central theme of the Gospel is contained in the parable about the merciful father. The loving mercy of the father draws the prodigal deeper into his love and the elder brother stands for those who cannot understand the mercy of a loving father, compassionate towards the prodigal brother.

Therefore, the theology of the Sacred Heart is founded on the basic faith expressed in Scripture that God loves us, loves me in the person of Christ, loving and merciful. It is only when we have steeped ourselves in this truth that we are enabled to respond to Christ's love. Christ invites us to respond freely to his love and the response formally express in the devotion sometimes takes various forms, among them consecration to the Sacred Heart. In Scripture the response is described as discipleship, the following of Christ through commitment to his person, in dedication and full confidence, expressed in the Fourth Gospel, as 'believing into Jesus', 'receiving' into our lives, 'hearing his voice' that is by an active obedience in love to him and his message. To love is to obey, to obey is to love.

(Taken from *Scripture in Church* by James McPolin, S.J.)

CATHOLIC CHURCH – The Family of GOD

Victor Silva (FCA. MCIM)
Kandy

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

(Continued from last week)

10) PETER, the "Keys of the Kingdom", and the Pope.

Dr. John Gerstner once asked Scott: "What biblical support do you find for the Pope?"

Scott's response is summarized below:-

- The Gospel of St. Mathew emphasizes Jesus' role as the Son of David and the King of Israel, sent by His Father to inaugurate the Kingdom of heaven.
- Mathew 16:17-19 shows us how Jesus establishes it. He gives Simon three things: First, the new name of Peter (or Rock); Second, His pledge to build His Church upon Peter; and third, the keys of the Kingdom of heaven.
- When Jesus speaks of the 'keys of the Kingdom, He is referring to an important Old Testament passage – Isaiah 22: 20-22, where Hezekiah, the royal heir to David's throne and king of Israel in Isaiah's day, replaced his old Prime Minister, Shebna with a new one named Eliakim and handed over the 'keys of the kingdom' to him.
- By entrusting to Peter the 'keys of the Kingdom', Jesus established the office of Prime Minister for administering the Church as His Kingdom on earth. The 'keys' are a symbol, then, of Peter's office and primacy to be handed on to his successor; thus it has been handed down throughout the ages - (Page 71).

(The above response was given by Scott when he was still a Presbyterian Minister).

11) The Catholic Church is the Pillar and Foundation of Truth

Scott claims that it is the Bible that led him to the Catholic Faith. When Scott asked a Christian theologian, "What for you is the pillar and foundation of truth?", he had answered "The Bible, of course!" When the same question was asked from Kimberly, she too had quickly replied that it was the Word of God.

However, by quoting 1 Timothy 3:15, where St. Paul writes: "If I delay, you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the household of God, that is the Church of the living God, which is the pillar and foundation of truth," Scott affirmed that the pillar and foundation of truth is the Catholic Church - (Pages 53,54 & 110).

12 The Catholic Church In the conclusion of their book, Scott and Kimberly state the following about the Catholic Church:-

- It is the Church of God: God fathers His family in one Church. Our Heavenly Father is able to preserve His one holy family in the Catholic Church.
- It is the Church about which Christ spoke: "I will build my Church" (Mt 16:18). She is not your Church, nor is she mine; she is Christ's. He is the builder; we are only the tools.
- The Church is Christ's handiwork. To acknowledge the greatness of the Church - her divine authority and infallible witness - is nothing less than magnifying the redemptive work of Christ. Conversely, to reject the authority and to spurn the witness of the Church even when done with a misguided zeal for Christ's exclusive honour is to defy Him and the fullness of His grace and truth. Saul (St. Paul) learned this lesson the hard way.
- The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ and the Holy Spirit is her Soul. St. Paul called the Church, Christ's Body. The soul is meant to animate the body. When the soul does its job, all of the parts and members of the body are alive and healthy. Within the Church, these parts and members are called "saints." Saints radiate the life of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ. This is the purpose of the Holy Spirit, then, to keep the visible Body of Christ alive in truth and holiness. The Holy Spirit has been doing that for nearly two thousand years; it's called the Catholic Church. That these elements are so closely connected by the Apostles' Creed – "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints" – is no accident.
- At the heart of the Catholic Vision lies the Trinity. God is an eternal Family of three persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We are the children of God. The Covenant is what enables us to participate in God's own divine life. For us that life means nothing less than our family share – as children of God – in the

interpersonal communion of the Trinity. This is what Catholics mean by grace, sanctifying grace.To call the Catholic Church the "Family of God", then, is a metaphysical assertion. Indeed it is the Mystery of our Faith – (Pages 180 & 181).

THE CHALLENGE

In the conclusion of the book, both Scott was received into the Catholic Church on Easter Vigil 1986, and Kimberly followed him four years later. In the Conclusion of their book, both Scott and Kimberly invite all Catholics to be Bible Christians (and vice versa), and share the challenge that God has put before them in His Word.

(a) "For our Catholic brothers and sisters, we want to encourage and challenge you to learn the Catholic Faith, which has been entrusted to you as sacred heritage. For your own sake and for others - study it so that you come

to know what you believe and why you believe it. Pick up the Scriptures daily and read them.Believe what you read. Share it. Pray it. Memorize it. Soak in it, as in a warm tub! Learn it well so that you can live it more fully and share it more joyfully. That is the way to make your faith infectious. We need more contagious Catholics!"

(b) Along with the Bible, read the "Catechism of the Catholic Church" and "The Documents of Vatican II."

(c) "The foundation for the Catholics' life must be the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist. (Christ) instituted the Sacraments to give us His own divine life and power."

(d) "Catholics who cultivate prayer, study and a sacramental life-style must also become active apostles wher-

ever they find themselves; at home, on the job, in the market place, but specially with family and friends. In recent years, the Catholic Church has lost literally millions of her members to fundamentalist and evangelical denominations and fellowships. This creates new and exciting opportunities not only to win ex-Catholics back to the Church, but also to show non-Catholics the Catholic Faith for what it truly is: Bible based and Christ-centred.Is our Lord asking too much from Catholicsto help our separated brethren discover the Lord they love in the Blessed Sacrament? If we don't, who will?"

(e) "Jesus Christ wants us in the New Covenant that He established through His own flesh and blood, the same covenant He renews through the Holy Eucharist, When His sacrifice for us is renewed at the altar, we gather at the family table for the sacred meal that makes us one. Jesus wants us to know not only the Father and the Holy Spirit but His Blessed Mother and all His sainted

brothers and sisters as well. He also wants us to live according to the family structure He established for His Church on earth: The Pope and all the Bishops and Priests united to Him. Come home to the Church established by Christ" – (Pages 177 to 182).

Kimberly who was very much dejected when Scott became a Catholic, but followed him four years later, says: "how sweet it is to be home in the Roman Catholic Church!" Yes, sweet indeed to be in the Catholic Church – the Family of God. Let us reciprocate God's tremendous love by resolving to -

- Strengthen our faith.
- Strengthen the faith of our fellow Catholics.
- Share our faith with others.

This is the challenge God has put before us – members of the Catholic Church, the Family of God.

(This is the final part of the tri-series on the article titled Catholic Church - The Family of God.)

Treasured Memories Of My Precious Saviour

Treasured are my childhood memories
That in my heart still linger,
Of how I came to know and love
Jesus, my precious Saviour.

I knew He loved all little children
And bid them come to Him,
"Suffer the little children to come unto Me
For of such is the Kingdom of Heaven,"

On learning how Jesus suffered and died
I cried for I knew it was for love of me,
I also knew every sin crucified Him again
And so I tried my best not to cause Him pain.

As my loving Shepherd He held me close to His heart
And from His embrace never did I want to part,
He knew my every thought and nothing did I hide
And I felt safe and secure with Jesus at my side.

But, as I grew older and troubles came my way
And at times my feet tended to wander away,
And my heart was filled with fear and strife,
I recalled His words: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

And so on the sea of life as I've sailed along
And when in the midst of a heavy storm,
I hear His still small voice: "Peace be still"
And my heart is filled with a wondrous calm.

Now as I continue on my weary pilgrim journey
I'll walk with Jesus on the same road to Calvary,
And alas! although the years have so swiftly gone,
With my Risen Saviour beside me I feel young and strong!

Jesus' precious Body and Blood have nourished, strengthened
And comforted me, that I might live in Him and He in me,
My Lord and My God, Redeemer, Shepherd and Friend,
With sweet Jesus I'll continue till my journey's end!

Lilian Ferdinands



Thoughts that haunt me

Quo Vadis?

Ananda Perera



It seems very ironic that some who go to church to worship the Lord forget their priorities. They seem to be blissfully unaware that they are stepping into 'Holy Ground.' For them, it is yet another ordinary event in their chain of events in their fast-paced life and they want to remain connected to the outside world during their encounter with God. So, their mobile phone in switched on position becomes an indispensable tool. Equipped with this impressive showpiece, they hasten to meet the Lord in the church without a ghost of an idea that it is the most sacrosanct moment in their life.

The House of God was considered as the Most Holy Ground" in the Old Testament times. Death was the punishment for any layperson who came near the altar of the Lord.

The Lord said to Aaron, "You and your sons as well as the other members of your ancestral house shall be responsible for the sanctuary; but

the responsibility of the priesthood shall rest on you and your sons alone. Bring with you also your kinsmen of the tribe of Levi, your ancestral tribe as your associates and assistants, while you and your sons are in front of the tent of the commandments. They shall look after your persons and the whole tent; however, they shall not come near the sacred vessels or the altar, lest both they and you die." (Num 18 : 1-3)

In Chronicles, we read how the proud King Uzziah entered the Temple of the Lord and incurred the wrath of God. He was instantly punished with leprosy.

"But after King Uzziah had become strong, he became proud to his own destruction and broke faith with the Lord. He entered the Temple of the Lord to

make an offering on the altar of incense. But Azariah, the priest, and with him eighty other priests followed him. They opposed King Uzziah, saying to him, "It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the Lord, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron, who have been consecrated for this purpose. Leave the sanctuary, for you have broken faith and no longer have a part in the glory that comes from the Lord." Uzziah, who was holding a censer for burning the incense, became angry and showed

his anger to the priests. While they were looking at him in the house of the Lord beside the altar of incense, leprosy broke out on his forehead. Azariah, the chief priest and all the other priests examined him, and when they saw that his forehead was leprous, they expelled him from the temple. He himself fled willingly, for the Lord had afflicted him. King Uzziah remained a leper to the day of his death. "(2 Chro 26: 16-21)

Temple of God and pour out our hearts to him in an intimate fashion. Is it therefore not hypocritical on our part when the pre-eminence due solely to God inside a church is directed elsewhere? In

worldly affairs, do we dare to have our mobiles activated in the presence of a person of importance? When you walk into church with an activated mobile, it gives the following implications. --- You are willing to compromise your undivided attention that belongs to God only.

The message you expect through your mobile is equally important. You cannot afford to forego the benefit as a result of your encounter with God with the mobile switched off. In short, you want to have the best of both worlds.

You forget the fact that God is almighty, and that he can make all your selfish plans topsy-turvy when your vested interests are given priority.

All these lapses show that you are spiritually retarded and you have a lopsided view of who God is.

Column: On a Wing and a Prayer

By John Fernando

Deliverance Day

I am writing this column on the 68th anniversary of the famous Allied troop landings on Normandy, popularly known as D-Day or Deliverance Day. It was a key moment for the forces of freedom and democracy in their torturous five-year war against the tyranny and dark forces of Adolf Hitler and the Nazis. D-Day, in the last year of the Second World War, saw thousands of Allied (America, British and Commonwealth forces) descend en-masse on the beaches of western France to liberate a continent held captive by evil.

For over three decades I have studied military history. As a child I was fascinated by war and all the machinations of war. I used to know the details of almost every battle and different type of combat aircraft, battle tank or warship. It is a fascination that waned as soon as the most awful spectre of war in all its anger visited our beautiful island, Sri Lanka. I now have a complete disgust for war and know how evil it is.

Over 10 years ago my uncle was killed whilst innocently walking one morning to his workplace at a bank in Maradana, when an LTTE suicide bomber detonated a lethal bomb. My uncle was an innocent man with two young children

and he died an unfortunate and tragic death. His elderly parents (in their 80s) died soon after, due to the emotional strain and shock to their aged bodies. What a tragedy! War is the sum total of human madness and failures. It must be avoided at all cost.

Unfortunately, the world spends extremely large amounts of money (over \$1,000 billion a year) and effort towards defence and war. If that effort and finances were diverted towards charitable works for the global community, then we would not have so many starving or malnourished people, nor the homeless or the destitute. The world would be a better and wealthier place, in every sense.

True, there are times when we may be called upon to fight; especially in the spiritual realm, against Satan and his ugly minions. I am a proud member of the Legion of Mary, and it is an association that is, in effect, the army of God. Our duty is to fight the devil, in addition to evangelising, becoming holier and doing good works. There may also be occasions when nations and armies are called to fight earthly wars, for the sake of justice, decency, freedom and peace. Even Saint Augustine subscribed to the concept of a "Just War", but

we have to be very careful about this as it may be the very undesirable choice of last resort.

In many ways, the Second World War, from the perspective of the Allies (Britain and her Commonwealth, Russia, China, the United States and Canada, the Free French Forces, the Polish and a host of down-trodden European and other nations) was a Just War. It had to be fought, if humanity was to be released from the tyranny and evil of the Nazis of Germany, the Fascists of Italy and the Imperialists of Japan. It was a war that probably cost 56 million lives, mostly innocents, in addition to the injuries and displacements caused to many millions of others. However, as with the grand scheme of eternal life, good or God has to triumph over evil or the Devil.

As Christians and Catholics we are all called to be God's warriors. Our martial duty to Our Lord and His Kingdom can come in a myriad forms. It could be in the form of a crusader fighting actively against heresy and enmity to the Church; it could be in the form of a faithful husband saying no to physical temptations outside marriage; it could be in the form of a child refusing to use bad words his peers may think are popular and fashionable;

it could be in the form of a committed religious (priest, nun, brother or other) who stands firm in their vows, despite subtle or overt attacks from the Evil One; it could be in the form of any of us choosing actively, each day, to serve God and not ourselves or the Devil with all his earthly attractions.

So Deliverance Day or D-Day, which manifested on the beaches of Normandy, France, in 1944, has deeper significance to us Christians. It is a visible and important sign of human history that good will always triumph over evil. Since time immemorial, human literature for example has been drafted on that important principle of good triumphing over evil. As Christians, we can look back on the 68th anniversary of D-Day and delight in the fact that our Warrior King, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, has saved us from certain defeat and eternal death. He has saved us from our greatest enemies - our selfish and sinful humanselves and Satan. Our Lord Jesus Christ has ensured eternal freedom and peace for His children, who we are.

We can, then, rest assured that Jesus will guide and lead us through the valleys of war and suffering (whatever they may be) and bring us to that beautiful and eternal home, where we can share an intimate and true love with Him. Now that is something worth truly celebrating!

May God bless you abundantly!



By Sihomi Guneseckera

Afraid

"When I get up in the morning, my first feeling is one of fear. I am so afraid of doing wrong," confessed Pamela.

"Why? Do you commit many sins?" asked her friend Liam.

"Well, I try to obey the Ten Commandments and I am not aware of committing sins. I try so hard to be a good God-fearing Christian," replied Pamela.

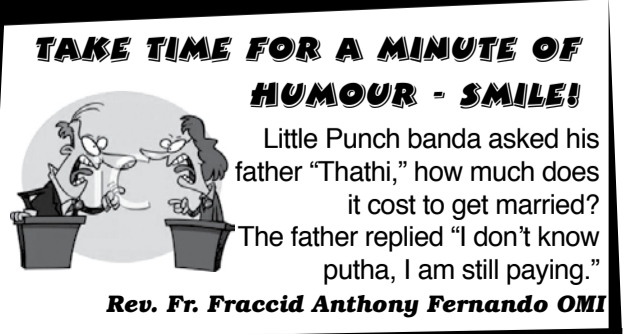
"Then you are simply afraid of Fear! I think it was a former American President who said that there is nothing to fear but Fear itself!" observed Liam profoundly.

"Most Catholics live in fear. They are afraid of the old-fashioned notion of a Vengeful God as in the Old Testament. It's something like the Orwellian idea that "Big Brother is Watching You." They think that an All Powerful, All Seeing God is waiting and watching to see them commit even a venial sin," commented Shirani, adding, "The fear has come down through the generations and most Catholic schools reinforce the idea of Crime and Punishment. They even practice Corporal Punishment, thereby frightening little children. Even adolescents are hit in some schools or they are made to kneel in the hot burning sun."

"No wonder Catholics grow up in fear of Authority and they mistake it for God since it is done in the name of God," commented Liam.

"If only all Christians know God the Father and Mother as a loving, forgiving spirit watching over their lives with love and care! That is the God I know and pray to," said Shirani.

"That is the New Testament God whom we know through Jesus the Son of God who was born as a human being. Jesus communed with His Father and thus we came to know a loving, merciful Father God. He-is "Abba", the God who gives unconditional love or "Agape" said Liam.





**Art
& Architecture
in Liturgy**

Compiled by: Kishani S. Fernando



The story of the statue of Our Lady of Miracles Jaffna titled "Where is this miraculous statue?" was published on this page on 13 May, 2012. The whereabouts of the statue was not known and information on the statue was requested. As a result I received many calls. Mr. Malcolm Ziegelaar who was one of the callers, was instrumental in finding out details from a contact of his in Goa - Mr. Jawahar Almeida. Mr. Almeida was kind enough to visit the Chapel of Sao Pedro where the statue is presently kept and take a photograph of the statue and the Chapel and emailed them to me. These pictures are reproduced below.

The Email

I quote from Mr. Almeida's e-mail in response to my communication with him :

"The statue is not on display at the altar. It is kept locked in a room within the premises of the Church. I don't know the reason for this but I would think it's got to do with safety/security. It is exhibited only once a year on May 6th at the Chapel of Sao Pedro.

In order to see the statue you need to seek permission from the resident priest who opens this room for those wishing to offer prayers and seeking blessings. The Church is located at Ribander about 1 km from The World Heritage site (SE Cathedral, Basilica of Bom Jesus) of Old Goa.

The Church is opened only during Mass hours, but again, the statue is not at the altar. Anyone can see the statue. There are no restrictions."

(Mass timings at the Chapel : Mon/Tue/Thur/Sat: 7.15 am. Wed: 7.15 am & 9.00 am. Fri: 6.30 pm. Sun 8.00 am)

From the Booklet

Mr. Almeida also emailed a copy of a booklet titled *Nossa Senhora Dos Milagres* published in 2006, where one Fr. Planton Faria, sets out the history of the statue.

The picture reproduced on top of this page is from this booklet. Much of the story set out there has been taken from the original history documented by the Portuguese historian Rev. Fr. Fernao De Queyroz. However the following reference to the statue is noted:

"The Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Piedade, panel/Panelium has three altars, of which one is dedicated to our Lady of Miracles which originally belonged to the Church

Lost and found - Thou Star the Fairest

in her honor, at Jaffna in Sri Lanka (Ceylon), where on the intercession of the same Lady numerous miracles took place. The origin of this miraculous image dates back to the beginning of the 17th century....."

"It is over three centuries now since the Portuguese had shipped this miraculous holy statue to Goa and was venerated in the convent of St. Francis of Assisi. Originally the statue was set up in Jaffna, in Sri Lanka, in the Church of Our Lady of Miracles which was built for and named after Her.

"The devotion of this sacred image continued till 24th June 1658, for henceforth Jaffna came under the rule of the Dutch flag. With this seize, all the Portuguese, men and women were arrested and put into prison. Later after thorough examination and inquiry they were expelled from the city and were again imprisoned in a place called Batavia. Fortunately, they could take the image of Our Lady away with them.

"Later on, when peace returned, the image was brought down to Goa. from the jetty on the Mandovi river, the image was brought with great pomp and solemnity to the Convent of St. Francis of Assisi. This took place on November 16 1661. With this solemnity the Sodality of Our Lady of Miracles was also established with the motive of continuing the devotion to this lady.

"When the monks were driven out, this image was brought to the Church of Chagas (wounds of Christ) at the Arsenal. From this place it was moved to the Chapel of Our Lady of Piety, at Panelim, Sao Pedro. The feast of Our Lady of Miracles is celebrated in this Chapel with pomp and solemnity in the month of May."

A Personal Note

It is the usual practice of this writer to complete and hand in this page to the Messenger Office by Tuesday morning 7.00 am. However innumerable difficulties and obstacles have hounded the completion of this page. On Monday at 6.00 pm sitting at the computer to complete the page the monitor would not switch on. Tuesday at 7.00 am working on a borrowed monitor I struggled to complete the page in a way most peculiar and unusual. In this rush to keep to dead lines, I was inspired to do a google search on the phrase "Our Lady of Piety at Panelim, Sao Pedro." I did not expect any information on the Web since I had searched it before many times. What came up knocked the breath off me and I could only gaze at it paralyzed. First on the list of websites was the story: "[The-marvelous-statue-at-Panelim](#), published in the *Herald*, the largest circulated English Daily in Goa." The article had been posted on 22 April, 2012 and was the first to be posted on the web on the subject. I reproduce the article below as another bouquet to this Lady, while it further confirms the whereabouts of the image.

"The Marvelous Statue at Panelim

April 22, 2012. By Luis de Souza

The Feast of Our Lady of Miracles (Our Lady of Panelim) is celebrated with great fervour and reverence every year in May on a Sunday soon after Easter.

This year, it falls on May 6. During the Portuguese era, noblemen took charge and conducted the celebration with great pomp and festivity and even organized a military parade. The solemn veneration is based on certain historical records and is associated with the Institution Confraria de Nossa Senhora do Milagres of the Convent of St Francis of Assisi, instituted by the Portuguese in 1661.

According to tradition, this institution owes its origin to an image of 'Our Lady' which was found fixed to an anchor of a Portuguese ship in the waters of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and hence, the title '*Nossa Senhora dos Milagres*'.

It is believed that the miraculous image was carried from Jaffna to Portugal by the Portuguese prisoners in the year 1658 and later in the year 1661, the image was brought to Goa. A confraternity was soon established under the name of Our Lady of Miracles. Its miraculous character was well known far and wide. An attempt to smuggle out the miraculous

image from Goa about three decades ago, was aborted by the timely intervention of the faithful.

Panelim lies at a strategic point in San Pedro, close to Old Goa. In ancient times in this suburb was located the Casa de Polvora (gun powder works factory). Originally, it was situated near the Convent of San Caetano at Old Goa, then shifted temporarily to San Matias (Divar island) and brought to Panelim in 1630. The village of San Pedro was one of the prominent suburbs of old capital of Goa. Here were located some of the impressive palatial houses where Portuguese noblemen resided.

At Bainguinim, on the banks of River Mandovi, just behind the Church of San Pedro was the colossal structure of the 'Colegio de S. Tomas de Aquino'. It imparted courses in Arts, Theology and Philosophy and was also termed the Universidade. The Colegio was shut down with the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1835.

The statue of Panelim is deemed to have wondrous powers and scores of miracles have been wrought in Our Lady's name. The devotion of Our Lady has been deeply rooted down from ancient times and the crowds that throng to pray at the feet of the image more than testify to the sacred popularity of the miraculous image."

Our Gratitude

Our gratitude to those historians who documented the history of the miraculous image down the ages. And very much today to Mr. Malcolm Ziegelaar and Mr. Jawahar Almeida who helped to complete the search.

It was the Portuguese historian De Queyroz who initially documented the story of our Lady of Miracles in chapters 8 to 11 of the 4th Book of his *Conquest of Ceylon* (translated by S.G. Perera).

Thereafter the search for the statue of Our Lady of Miracles of Jaffna was first documented by the Late Bishop and historian the Rt. Rev. Dr. Edmund Peiris. Bishop Peiris visited Goa in 1931, in the company of Rev. Fr. S. Gnana praakasara OMI whom we are told was "well acquainted with the history of the image and the pailadium of the Catholics of Jaffna." They recorded their visit to the image in 1931 in the "Church of S. Pedro, Piedade just across the bridge of Lieures at the old Goa end" where "The image was kept in a glass case on a side altar to the left." The only picture of the image of Our Lady of Miracles this writer was able to find, was a black and white photo brought back by them on that visit and reproduced in the book - *Marian Devotion in Ceylon* (1948). However visitors thereafter have reported that the statue was kept in the home of a lady and access was almost impossible. It is from this uncertainty of the whereabouts of the statue that we are free today. May Our Lady of Miracles Jaffna intercede for us all!



Parallel Event organized by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See

Towards persevering the un

The gender agenda divorces the human person from him

The following are excerpts of the intervention given in Geneva, at the Palais des Nations, on 9 March, at the parallel event organized by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See on the treatment of terms such as "gender" and "sex" and more recent formulations such as "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" in ordinary discourse and in the context of UN documents.

The culture that we live in integrates the positive fruits of a historical process marked by decolonization, a powerful movement that granted women a status in society that they had never attained before, the collapse of Marxism-Leninism. At a time of accelerating globalization, it seems to celebrate, perhaps more than any previous culture, the equality of all human beings. Our generation also has the opportunity to discover and wonder at the fascinating diversity of peoples and cultures and their specific and irreplaceable contribution to humanity.

We see a danger, however, in a process we may qualify as top-down globalism which, under the guise of bottom-up participation, equal rights and non discrimination, uses the channels of global governance to try and engineer global assent to special interests by way of a manipulative use of language in the consensus-building process.

We can't negate the existence of a cultural, political and juridical combat taking place in these very fora over "gender identity", "sexual orientation," the core content of rights and the meaning of universality. Language is a critical factor.

Let us examine the history of the term gender in the UN discourse. The term gender entered the language of internationally negotiated texts through the non-binding consensus documents of the UN conference process of the 1990s. It achieved a decisive breakthrough at the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, of which the gender perspective is the core and gender equality the primary objective. Following Beijing, the UN Secretariat immediately led an efficient gender mainstreaming exercise throughout the UN system and gender equality was quickly identified as a cross-cutting priority of global governance, to the point of turning into a practi-

We can't negate the existence of a cultural, political and juridical combat taking place in these very fora over "gender identity", "sexual orientation," the core content of right and the meaning of universality. Language is a critical factor.

cal conditionality for receiving development assistance.

The use of the term gender and of its numerous derivative expressions breaks with the language of legally binding instruments prior to the 1990s. Human rights treaties refer to "men and women," or to spouses, "parents," "mothers" or "husband" and "wife" when addressing the equality of all human beings (in dignity or in rights), or issues relating to family, marriage and the education of children. They refer to "sex" when addressing non discrimination. Hence for instance the 1945 UN Charter affirms faith in the "equal rights to men and women" (preamble/2-, as does the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR preamble 5), the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR art 3), the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR art 3) and the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW preamble). The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child refers to the



Eleanor Roosevelt holding the English text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

"equality of sexes" (CRC an 29).

The International Bill of Rights also recognizes the family (in the singular not "families") as the natural and fundamental group unit of society, entitled to protection by society and the State (UDHR an 16/3, IC-CPR art 23, ICESCR art 10), based on marriage between a man and a woman (UDHR art 16/1) and entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses, unequivocally understood in the context of these documents to mean a husband and a wife, a man and a woman (UDHR art 16/2, ICCPR art 23/3). It affirms the *inherent* — inherent meaning belonging to their given nature — dignity of all members of the human family.

The inherent dignity of the human person, its sexual differentiation as man and woman, their equality in dignity, marriage as a union between a man and a woman, procreation and motherhood, the family as the natural and fundamental group unit of society, the right of parents to choose the education that shall be given to their children (UDHR art 26/3), the spousal identity of the human being are universal, interrelated, inalienable, indissoluble realities. The language of human rights treaties names these realities. The language of human rights treaties names these realities as they are - such is indeed the function of language. The UDHR does not cast doubt on their interdependence, nor on the ontological unity of men and women, of which the biological identity is but one component. The UDHR does nothing more than declare what all women and men, "endowed with reason and conscience" (UDHR art 1), can freely and universally recognize

as true and good. Indeed the function of law is not to construct reality and truth, but to declare what is right. If such were not the case, the law and universality would be arbitrary impositions.

The traditional meaning of gender refers to the grammatical categories of "masculine," "feminine" and "neuter" in ancient and modern languages. But human and social scientists belonging to the western postmodern intelligentsia have developed a very different meaning since the mid-1950s. Feeding both on radical feminism and the homosexual movement, which both strove to attain equality exclusively in terms of social power, they distinguished gender from sex, restricting sex to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women, and using gender in reference to what they considered to be the socially constructed roles that a given society would consider proper for men and women. In practice they treated motherhood, the family as founded on marriage between a man and a

woman, male and female complementarity, the spousal identity of the human person, femininity and masculinity, heterosexuality as social constructions or stereotype that would be contrary to equality, discriminatory, and therefore to be culturally deconstructed. At the end of this revolutionary process, the male and female body itself was viewed as socially constructed. The gender agenda divorces the human person from himself or from herself, so to speak — from his or her body and anthropological structure. It is clear that so radically redefined, gender is a purely intellectual construct, hardly to be grasped by non-western cultures.

Nothing could not be more contrary to the spirit of the UDHR. As the gender revolution is a process deconstructing the universal realities mentioned in the UDHR, it is no wonder that the language naming these realities has tended to disappear from that of global governance since it identified itself with the gender agenda. A new semantic package took over, of which gender is but one component: Reproductive and sexual health and rights (instead of procreation), the family under all its forms, or various forms of the family, or families (intentionally vague to include "all possible choices," instead of the family), safe abortion, freedom of choice, stereotypes (instead of complementarity), social constructs, equal partners (instead of spouses), forced pregnancy, to name only a few. Ambivalence is the common feature of the new language, which is not clearly defined because it does not name realities but ideological constructs.

Ambivalence did not bring about peaceful relations between member states and the UN, between



The creation of man from

Universality of human rights

oneself, from his or her body and anthropological structure

western and non-western cultures, between secular and religious people, between silent majorities and participatory minority lobbies. Rather than expressing a genuine consensus it proved to be divisive.

In spite of its massive preponderance in the document and its relative newness in UN terminology, gender is not defined in the Beijing Platform for Action. The promoters of its agenda both non-governmental and governmental, who had been successful at integrating it in the document, strategically avoided to define the term so as to advance by stealth and incrementally. Fuzziness created a political no-man's land. Many tended to interpret gender in its traditional grammatical meaning. Others, aware of the hidden agenda, sought to combat or contain it. The malaise was perceptible.

The only intergovernmentally agreed and legally binding definition of gender is provided in the 1998 Statute of the International Criminal Court in its art 7/3. This definition is the following: "the term 'gender' refers to the two sexes, male and female, within the context of society. The term gender does not indicate any meaning different from the above. Hence, as things now stand, there is no legal — nor any political, and even less moral — obligation to conform to the western ideological interpretation of gender. When special interests agendas turn into policies and law, they participate in the civic education function of law and government and thereby in the creation of a culture that clashes with the aspirations of all human beings to a genuine consensus.

Following Beijing, the hidden agenda started coming out. UN bodies, produced various "definitions" of gender, so as to ideologically frame the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. These so-called

trates this bias: "Gender refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age".

Awareness is globally growing, especially in the developing world, of the real, non consensual content of the gen-



"Adam and Eve" by Francesco Messina (1956)

Ambivalence did not bring about peaceful relations between member states and the UN, between western and non-western cultures, between secular and religious people, between silent majorities and participatory minority lobbies. Rather than expressing a genuine consensus it proved to be divisive.

"definitions" are lengthy and fuzzy. They keep on changing and do not allow anyone to have a clear view of the core content of the gender concept. Yet they are formulated in such a way as to allow for an interpretation that would be inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity — categories which find no clear and agreed definition in international law.

The current definition of UN Women, in its reference not only to "relationships between women and men" but also specifically to "relations between women" and to those "between men," eloquently illus-



Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel

lobbies, the support of the UN, the consent - and at times indeed the leadership - of some governments.

The UDHR is the object of a genuine consensus because it articulates what can universally be recognized as true about the human person, marriage and the family. Some now seek to impose a radically different interpretation of universality, as meaning inclusive of all lifestyles and ideological choices, no matter how contradictory. Instrumentalized to advance non consensual interests, the principle of universality then turns against the UDHR, into an arbitrary *Diktat* that is at once intellectually incoherent, socially conflictual and politically unsustainable. There can be no coercion of conscience in a genuine consensus, by nature freely and sincerely joined.

To be able to discern freely is a fundamental right of every human person. This right is universal; it connects to the freedom of the person, to his or her right to freedom of conscience, and therefore also to our topic. The act of discernment awakens us to act as free persons. There is always a choice to make, for or against what is discerned to be good and is therefore universal. But the trend today is to look at oneself as a victim when in fact, one is just being passive and fails to discern. To believe one is a victim amounts to be put in the dependence of an ideology, a system.

The new politics seem to grant disproportionate power to lobbies promoting socially divisive agendas

der agenda at a time when it decisively moves from its feminist interpretation to its homosexual interpretation, under the leadership of powerfully financed

when it should be on the side of the good of the people and on the side of the family as basic unit of society. Such politics lack checks and balances. But global power-grab does not alter the reality of people's universal aspirations. Our hope is that in time, reality will prevail. The cultural resistance of many Southern governments to some of the agendas we briefly spoke about cannot be brushed aside by mere fiat. These governments are equal member states of the UN. The more their right to self-determination will be trampled upon, the more likely they are, sooner or later, to claim it back, if they have the courage to discern.

What today's cultural combat puts at stake is the emergence of the new, authentically people-centred civilization we spoke about at the beginning of this intervention. The task at hand for our times is to correct the mistakes of the past and build consensus, in a bottom-up, participatory manner, involving non-western cultures, on what is genuinely universal, thereby reconciling, so to speak, the consensual with the universal. The western modern synthesis missed critical ingredients for achieving such a goal. It excluded the father, truth, love, happiness, the heart, God - words that are conspicuously absent from human rights treaties.

But today's cultural celebration of equality invites us to restore love in its proper place in society. A man who loves his wife or his child does not think of himself as superior. Westerners who love Africans as brothers are eager to learn from them, from their richness in humanity, from their cultures. It is not only nor primarily because we are citizens that we are equal, but because we are human persons. We are not only equal in rights. Love makes us equal.

Courtesy: L'osservatore Romano

Appreciation: Maurice Lord

Good eyes are the law of Earth: Reunions are the law of Heaven

As a Legionary and a friend, I like to say a little I know about our dear brother Maurice Lord, as we are called in the Legion of Mary.

Maurice was a dedicated person in the Legion. I in recognition of his devoted and dedicated services he was appointed President of the Senatus for two periods. He served as best as he could in this capacity and moulded many in the Legion to follow him to increase more to join the Legion ranks.

He undertook a big responsibility by taking over the Destitute Boys at Maw Sevana

in Mattakuliya, a home opened by the Legion, and taught them what was right and wrong. He was a strict disciplinarian but secretly he loved the boys and they too adored him. It was sad to watch them when they came to pray for him at his home. They were all in tears including the Matron and staff. We consoled them saying remember that Mr. Lord is now in Heaven.

'Maw Sevana' was a burden for brother Maurice to undertake. He did it with love in his heart, but always asked the Legionaries to help him. Sadly no one had time

and only during his last stages that he managed to find a group and chose them from the Praesidium at Maw Sevana. Brother Frank Duff had come to the rescue and I am sure they will now carry on.

As a Senior member of the Legion of Mary under the Concilium, I must bow down with a sense of gratitude that he did help 'Maw Sevana' in every possible way to keep 'Maw Sevana' going and I appeal to the Members of the Board and the Praesidium to continue the good work started.

Mr. Lord was saddened after the death of

Hazel
Rodrigoe

his dear wife Daphne who passed away on the 16th of August 2011. He missed her very badly, although his family were around. He being a patient was called by God on the 9th of May 2012, just 8 months after she left him. Maurice was a man of principles and got all his work done in his office and in the Legion too, we will miss him and his advice given to us in the Legion, mainly the meaningful talks given to us at our various functions. Our loss is Heaven's gain.

May his and her soul rest in peace!



Two Thousandth (2000) Sorrowful Novena Celebrated at Ja-Ela

On May 04th 2012, being in the month dedicated to Mary Our Blessed Mother, Ja-Ela Church celebrated its 2000th Sorrowful Novena, in a grand and appropriate manner, as a fitting tribute to her.

On this day at 6.30 a.m. a thanksgiving Holy Mass was offered, officiated by Very Rev. Fr. Patrick Perera, Episcopal Vicar of Negombo Region, and Very Rev. Fr. Shanthikumar Welivita, Episcopal Vicar of Ja-Ela Region.

It was a blessing to have celebrated the Jubilee Novena, and to have continued this Novena Devotion for the last nearly four decades. Immediately after the Holy Eucharistic Service in the morning, a floral tribute was paid to the late Rev. Fr. K. William Perera, OMI, at his grave near the belfry, being the one who inaugurated this Novena Devotion in this church when he was the Parish Priest, on March 09th in the year 1973.

In the evening the 4.30 p.m. Novena was graced and conducted by Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Fernando, the Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo. The 6.30 pm. Novena was graced and conducted by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva.

His Lordship Maxwell Silva in his sermon said that, when he was the Parish Priest at Thibbotugoda, he attended these Novenas on several occasions and observed that the devotees were increasing on a regular basis. This was to thank the Blessed Mother for many a favour granted to them and also to seek her intercession for further blessings needed. He said that the Blessed Mother is ever ready to help us in our needs. She is always prepared to console us, as her children, when we are depressed. He wished that this Novena Devotion be continued for many more decades.

Besides the religious activities, several other social activities were also conducted to mark this occasion. The Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Gregory Jayantha Fernando renovated the Church to give it a better look. Glass fittings depicting the seven sorrowful events of Our Blessed Mother, were fixed to add colour to the building. A church Web-site was opened. The Station Road was renamed "Rev. Fr. William Perera Mawatha" as a mark of respect for inaugurating the Novenas. A statue of Our Lady of Sorrows (Pieta) was installed at the Urban Council premises in Ja-Ela. This was blessed by Maxwell Silva.

The International Lions Club 306 Band, the members of the Society of Youngsters of Our Lady of Sorrows Ja-Ela, contributed their share of assistance on the occasion in arranging the Medical Care Service for blood pressure, Urine, cholesterol tests, Rabies Prevention treatments, donation of spectacles and blood donation campaign and distribution of Mahogany plants etc.

Finally the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Gregory Jayantha Fernando thanked everyone who contributed for the success of the celebrations of this event. He thanked the Auxiliaries, Episcopal Vicars for gracing the occasion former Parish Priests, Rev. Brothers, Rev. Sisters, Members of the Parish Pastoral Council, Religious Societies, specially the youngsters and the laity for their assistance in numerous ways and their participation.

L.S. Nelson Fernando

Rev. Fr. Vito Perniola SJ Reaches the 99th Mile Post

The Archdiocesan Bulletin for Priests and Religious wish him *Ad Multos Annos!*

Rev. Fr. Vito Perniola SJ celebrated his 99th birthday on 10th April 2012. Born at a small town close to Bari in Italy on 10th April 1913, he has spent 76 years in Sri Lanka. He received in recognition of his services to the Nation - Honorary Citizenship of Ceylon in 1949.

Fr. Perniola was the fifth of a family of nine children. At the tender age of 12, he received a calling to be a Jesuit Priest and Missionary. From his school days he showed brilliance coming first in class. His vocation sent him to Shembaganur in India to study Philosophy in 1932. From Madras he left for Colombo and sat the London Matriculation Examination in 1936. After his matriculation he was reading for a Degree, Bachelor of Arts in Pali and Buddhism with Sanskrit and Hinduism as subsidiary subjects. This involved studying two oriental languages from the very beginning. He completed his B.A. Honours Degree in 1940.

Fr. Perniola began his Theological studies and training at the Papal Seminary in Kandy in 1941. He was ordained a priest in 1947. After ordi-

nation he served at St. Aloysius College, Galle, teaching History of Ceylon. Father has updated the then available text book on this subject written by Rev. Fr. S.G. Perera, the first Sri Lankan Jesuit.

In 1954, when the Catholic University College of Aquinas was founded, he was invited to lecture on Pali. The need for a good grammar was essential and he authored the first edition of the Pali Grammar to prepare the students for the University of London Examinations. Fr. Perniola improved the Pali grammar authored by him, and it is now the accepted standard grammar and has been printed by the Pali Text Society of Oxford.

Then came the most challenging period in his life namely, the authoring of books on the Catholic Church in Sri Lanka. The work was initially begun by Rev. Fr. S.G. Perera. Fr. Perniola has collected documentation from the archives in Rome, Lisbon, Goa and the archives of the Catholic Dioceses, Sri Lanka, mainly Colombo and the National Archives in Sri Lanka. Catholic Church in Sri Lanka - Dutch Period, authored by Fr. Perniola can be considered his *Magnum Opus* ti-

tled The Catholic Church in Sri Lanka published in a total of 19 volumes - 3 on the Portuguese period, 3 on the Dutch period and 13 volumes on the British period 1795 - 1922. He needed to translate into English all the original documents collected from Latin, Portuguese, Italian, Spanish and Dutch. He is a man of unique linguistic skills and scholarship.

Fr. Perniola has authored three valuable booklets on meditation, titled Praying with Scripture, Abiding in Love and Touching the Divine. These booklets have been translated into Sinhalese. The writer had the privilege of following a directed retreat given by him in preparation for his Episcopal Ordination.

Fr. Perniola stands out as a colossus in many fields - Spirituality, Theology, Oriental Languages, inter-faith relations, national and international affairs. He is simple, humble, unassuming and spiritual, closely in touch with the ordinary man, and always available. As he is about to score his century, we wish him good health of mind and body.

Koinonia

Jeannette Cabraal

appreciative. He was much respected by the Irish nuns of the time, as well as by the staff and students, very specially by those in the university entrance forms.

It was Mr. Horace Perera who took us on that unforgettable historical trip to Sigiriya accompanied by the then Miss. Swarna Rupasinghe, now Professor Swarna Jayaweera, our proficient and efficient European History teacher and her inseparable friend the then Miss. Rupa Appiah, the late Mrs Rupa Thillainathan. Taking us round he explained everything there is to know about Sigiriya. He elaborated in such detail that the knowledge was etched in my mind and served me in good stead throughout my teaching career in imparting that

A Tribute to late Horace Perera "Horace" as I knew him

Reading the obituary of Horace Perera, took me back down the years to the time when he taught us Ceylon History in the University Preliminary class at Good Shepherd Convent, Kotahena giving us of his expertise in the field. He also took a combined class once a week of Shepherdians and Benedictines.

His fatherly figure was always welcome and his classes were looked forward to, as 'he imparted his knowledge in his own interesting, inimitable style. Always with a smile on his bespectacled face, he exuded good humour and cheerfulness just as he poured forth on his chosen subject from the springs of his knowledge. He was a thorough exponent of his subject.

He punctuated his lessons sometimes with anecdotes. He related how once he had been telling a tale to his Benedictine students and had just 'uttered the words, "Speak of the devil and he'll be there" when in walked the Brother Director which sent the boys into peals of uncontrollable laughter and left "Horace" with much explaining to do.

It happened one day, that a goat had strayed into the compound of the school and was heading towards our classroom when he remarked, 'Get out! we have enough of you here'

The students among themselves just referred to him affectionately as 'Horace'. A few years ago on encountering an erst-

while classmate, one of the first questions she asked me was "Here, what news of Horace?"

I ran into him most unexpectedly just once after my school days, a long time ago walking along the pavement in Bambalapitiya when he had come down to Sri Lanka presumably. He remembered me. I still value the compliment he paid me, to my husband. It was a testimonial.

He had a little daughter Carmel, in the same school much junior to us. Just like the father, she always wore a smile. I remember we University Preliminary students visiting him at his, College Street residence, when his young brother-in-law passed 'away'. He was greatly



Be rich in Patience....



sions where you cried, regretted and suffered deep hurt for having acted violently or aggressively just because you were unable to control your self.

"Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet."
(Jacques Rousseau)

Yet, no body seems to understand the above mentioned phrase. In the modern world almost everybody is simply caught up in a rat-race. They do not have the time to relax. It is a sad and shocking state of affairs to think that people have lost the meaning and the purpose of life by forgetting their due priorities.

"Patience is the companion of wisdom"
(St. Augustine)

Patience is something which is indispensable to man, in order to enjoy a fruitful and healthy life. Nowadays, since human beings are occupied with numerous activities, they have totally forgotten the value of patience. This is obvious when we watch television, read the daily newspapers or even when we listen to the radio, because corruption is drastically on the increase.

We may think that we are not responsible for any of these corruptions, but, you pause for a while and think about your family, community or whatever the association that you are in. Due to a lack of patience how many times you may have hurt not only your friends or neighbours but also your own innerself. Similarly, there would have been occa-

We bring upon ourselves a lot of trouble by impatience restlessness and hasty action. If we sow a seed today, we want to reap tomorrow. We are unable to wait for sometime. But, the wise farmer will never expect a quick harvest. The persons who have learnt the art of patience, are the those who can be called wise and mature.



Let us think about some of the great people whom we admire and respect such as Jesus Christ, Lord Buddha, Blessed Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln and so forth. These great characters have suffered extremely for the betterment of others but with patience. And eventually they not only achieved their goal but also influenced their followers.

"It is not adversity that kills, but impatience with which we bear adversities."

God allows to suffer His children in order to mould them for a better task in the future. When a blacksmith wants to make an utensil he first heats a piece of steel and hammers it and then plunges it in water over and over again. In the process, he can recognize whether the piece of steel will go into pieces or his efforts are successful.

Similarly, God is our purifier. He tests us by sending difficulties and trials on us, because these are the instrument that he uses to mould us. Therefore, we have to endure everything with patience.

"God Bless the people who patiently endure testing. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him."

(James 1:12)

Bro. Shanaka Gayan,
St. Francis Xavier's Seminary, Jaffna

DAVID the DARING

THE SHEPHERD BOY WHO BECAME A KING

SOME TIME LATER...

JONATHAN, I'VE GOT TO KILL DAVID.

FATHER YOU MUSTN'T! HE HAS NEVER HURT YOU! HE RISKED HIS LIFE WHEN HE KILLED GOLIATH, AND THE LORD WON A GREAT VICTORY FOR ISRAEL THAT DAY.

BUT ONE NIGHT, AN EVIL SPIRIT TOOK CONTROL OF SAUL.

GO TO DAVID'S HOUSE AND SURROUND IT. IN THE MORNING I WANT YOU TO KILL HIM.

IN DAVID'S HOUSE...

THOSE ARE MY FATHER'S GUARDS... WHY ARE THEY SURROUNDING OUR HOUSE? MY FATHER MUST WANT TO KILL MY HUSBAND!

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the Readings

I am the living bread which has come down from heaven, says the Lord. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever.
(Jn. 6: 51-52)

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR B
10th June - 17th June 2012

SUN: THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

Ex. 24: 3-8, Hebr 9: 11-15,
Mk. 14: 12-16, 22-26

Mon: Memorial of St. Barnabas, Apostle
Act. 11:21-26; 13, 1-3, Mt. 10: 7-13

Tue: 1 Kgs. 17: 7-16, Mt. 5: 13-16

Wed: Memorial of St. Anthony of Padua, Priest & Doctor

1 Kgs. 18: 20-39, Mt. 5: 17-19

Thu: 1 Kgs. 18: 41-46, Mt. 5: 20-26

Fri: Feast of The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

Hos. 11: 1, 3-4, 8-9, Eph. 3: 8-12, 14-19,
Jn. 19: 31-37

Sat: Memorial of The Immaculate Heart of the Bl. Virgin Mary

Is. 61: 9-11, Lk. 2: 41-51

Sun: 11TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

Ez. 17: 22-24, 2 Cor. 5: 6-10,
Mk. 4: 26-34

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Response: Lord, help us to build your mystical body in the world.

For our Holy Father the Pope, Bishops, Priests, religious and Catechists: That they may find in the Eucharist the source of their zeal to lead to salvation the people entrusted to their care. We pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, help us to build your mystical body in the world.

For the Church that it may be a light for all the nations, a sign of unity, and a force for reconciliation among all people. We pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, help us to build your mystical body in the world.

For the poor, the sick, the lonely, and the unloved, that we the followers of Christ may befriend them and show them that Christ cares about them. We pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, help us to build your mystical body in the world.

That as we celebrate this Eucharist we may experience the bonds of love Christ wanted to see among his followers, and that these bonds may be strengthened. We pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, help us to build your mystical body in the world.

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THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

First Reading. Ex. 24: 3-8

Moses comes down from Mount Sinai and makes a covenant with God so that the sins of the people will be forgiven and that the people will never again go against God. As a sign the blood of an animal is sprinkled over the Altar and over the people.

Second Reading. Heb. 9: 11-15

Christ is the high priest who offered Himself as a sacrifice for the salvation of all mankind. Unlike the animals that were offered in the Old Covenant, in the New Covenant Christ offers himself as a sacrifice.

Gospel. Mk. 14: 12-16, 22-26

The preparation for the Last Supper is presented to us in detail. At this Supper Jesus blessed bread and wine and gives to His Apostles who are instructed to do the same in memory of Him.

Reflection

Today is the feast of Corpus Christi wherein we celebrate the feast of the most precious Body and Blood of Christ. This is the Sacrament of the eternal bond, the great covenant between God and man through which God totally forgives man's sins and reconciles him with himself thus securing him an eternal salvation through Christ our Lord.

During the time of the Old Testament, animals were sacrificed to expiate the sins of man. In this ritual animals were killed and offered to God on the Altar. Blood was then collected and half of it was thrown on the Altar and the other half sprinkled over the people to signify that the sins of the people were forgiven. There was also the covenant aspect in it. The people were bound with an unbreakable bond to observe the covenant.

But in the New Testament times instead of an animal Jesus took upon him the sins of all mankind and offered himself in obedience to his Father as a sacrifice for the expiation of the sins of mankind. This act obtained salvation for all. It is stated in the letter to the Hebrews. "When Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent, he entered once and for all into Holy place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption."

Today we too are called to secure this salvation for ourselves by living an unblemish life. The Lord is with us to help us in our life's struggles. As an example we have Christ the high priest who offered himself for the salvation of mankind to guide us in our day to day lives. We have the Eucharist as the living sacrifice of Christ to help and encourage us to offer our day to day lives in obedience to God's will. We have the true Body of Christ as food to nourish and strengthen us in our life's journey towards eternal salvation. We have the blood of Christ as drink to wash away our iniquities and cleanse the stains of sin. We have the Blessed Sacrament as our guiding light to guide us to the glory of God.

Therefore let us realize the true and the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and in the Blessed Sacrament. And also let us strive to receive Him as often as possible and give him due worship so that he will be in us and we in him for the greater glory of God.

Aid story

To show how he distributed his grace in the Eucharist, Christ made the following comparison to Saint Catherine of Sienna.

He said to her in a vision,



"My daughter if you had a light in your hand and everybody brought candles to light from it, wouldn't the light and the fire remain the same? That is true, but if some would bring small candles, and others large ones, don't you think that although they were all lighted, the large candles would give more light and heat than the small ones? the same thing happens with the Sacrament of My Love."

Therefore, although it is true that the Sacrament itself gives grace that is received by everybody, it is also true that the amount of his grace depends on how, we receive it. Hence the need for a fervent-preparation. Do not forget the greater your preparation. The more light you carry.

Aid Story 2

The religion teacher one day asked the children about the Holy Mass. She said, "Tell me at Mass whose body do we eat?" One of them shot up his hand, "Father Reilly's body." He said. The teacher was perplexed and asked the little scholar. Why do you say so?" He said, "Whenever I go to Mass, Father, Reilly holds the host aloft and says,

"This is my Body"

Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos

The Necessity of Baptism

1257 The Lord himself affirms that Baptism is necessary for salvation. He also commands his disciples to proclaim the Gospel to all nations and to baptize them. Baptism is necessary for salvation for those to whom the Gospel has been proclaimed and who have had the possibility of asking for this sacrament. The Church does not know of any means other than Baptism that assures entry into eternal beatitude; this is why she takes care not to neglect the mission she has received from the Lord to see that all who can be baptized are "reborn of water and the Spirit." God has bound salvation to the sacrament of Baptism, but he himself is not bound by his sacraments.

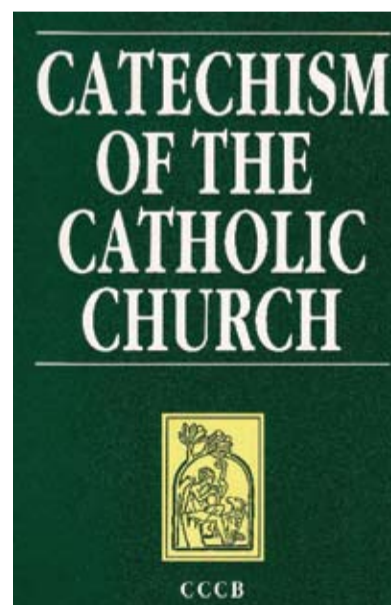
1258 The Church has always held the firm conviction that those who suffer death for the sake of the faith without having received Baptism are baptized by their death for and with Christ. This Baptism of blood, like the desire for Baptism, brings about the fruits of Baptism without being a sacrament.

1259 For catechumens who die before their Baptism, their explicit desire to receive it, together with repentance for their sins, and charity, assures them the salvation that they were not able to receive through the sacrament.

1260 "Since Christ died for all, and since all men are in fact called to one and the same destiny, which is divine, we must hold that the Holy Spirit offers to all the possibility of being made partakers,

in a way known to God, of the Paschal mystery." Every man who is ignorant of the Gospel of Christ and of his Church, but seeks the truth and does the will of God in accordance with his understanding of it, can be saved. It may be supposed that such persons would have desired Baptism explicitly if they had known its necessity.

1261 As regards children who have died without Baptism, the Church can only entrust them to the mercy of God, as she does in her funeral rites for them. Indeed, the great mercy of God who desires that all men should be saved, and Jesus tenderness toward



children which caused him to say: "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them," allow us to hope that there is a way of salvation for children who have died without Baptism. All the more urgent is the Church's call not to prevent little children coming to Christ through the gift of holy Baptism.

(Catechism of the Catholic Church)