

Ss. PETER AND PAUL
28th June

Messenger

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"Gleaned from the classics"
By Johannus
Tibi nullun periculum esse perspicio, quod quidem se junctum sit ab omnium interitu
(from Cicero)
I don't perceive any danger for you other than that which threatens the destruction of all of us

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Need for a global joint solution in Sri Lanka

President Mahinda Rajapaksa in his recent visit to the Vatican met the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI and discussed issues relating to Sri Lanka and the need to promote reconciliation after the long civil war.

A brief Vatican statement released after the meeting said: "The hope was expressed that a global joint solution may soon be found corresponding to the legitimate expectations of all the parties involved."

The Holy Father and President Rajapaksa discussed the contributions made by the Catholic Church in the interest of the people of Sri Lanka, especially in the fields of health care, education, and social welfare.

"The Catholic Church, which makes an



His Excellency, President Mahinda Rajapaksa greets the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, on June 8, 2012 at the Vatican.

important contribution to the life of the country with her religious witness and educational, healthcare and social assistance activities, will continue to commit herself to the common good, reciprocal understanding and the integral development of all citizens," the statement of the Holy See said.

President Rajapaksa also met Vatican Foreign Minister Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, after his meeting with the Holy Father.

- Archdiocesan Website



THE HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS - JULY 2012

General: Work Security
That everyone may work in safe and secure conditions.

Missionary: Christian Volunteers
That Christian volunteers in mission territories may witness to the love of Christ.

Housing for war-affected families in Batticaloa

Forty Five houses built by Caritas-EHED, Batticaloa for war-affected families and funded by CAFOD, were handed over to beneficiaries in Ayithiamalai North, Manunai West recently. The ceremonial opening of the houses was presided over by Rev. Fr. Cryton Outschoorn, Director of EHED Batticaloa.



Among the guests of honour were Rev. Fr. George Sigamoney, Director of Caritas Sri Lanka-SEDEC, Ms. Victoria Jones, Asia Program Officer of CAFOD and government officials of the area. Most of the houses were provided with tanks for harvesting in water while some of the families were given livelihood support as well.

- SEDEC-Media Unit

All of us are called upon to share the riches: Archbishop



"Let the infinite riches that God has bestowed on us, be shared by one another." So said His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, presiding at the Sacred Heart feast, at the Archbishop's House Chapel, amidst a gathering of bishops,

priests, religious and members of the staff.

"Every one of us should discover and identify the riches laden upon us by God. It is God who initiated love on us. God so loved us, that He created us, takes care by providing for us, assumed humanity and died for our sake. More so God's

profound love is expressed by an intimate gesture in forgiving us and offering us the treasured reward of life eternal," the Archbishop in his homily observed.

"Human beings are materialistic, thus they tend to be avaricious of worldly gains, more than the Spiritual. The

inadequacy we possess in losing or gaining these material assets, make us sad and dejected. Many of us who assess God's love rated on tangible gains, in the absence of such achievements, tend to deny God's love. Let this attitude not overwhelm and defeat us," the Archbishop reiterated.

"The Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Fountain of Love, offers all who are open to His love, the glorious reward of salvation. Thus the Sacred Heart of Jesus, burning with love should motivate us to reciprocate God's love. Let us be a testimony of God's love and so be pleasing to Him and to one another," His Eminence stressed.

Rev. Fr. Indrajith Perera was instrumental in organizing the liturgical proceedings.

- Catholic Messenger Correspondent

Ekamuthu - Oray Makkal Unity Camp-4

The Unity Mission Trust, aimed at fostering unity, reconciliation and healing will hold its fourth camp, Ekamuthu - Oray Makkal Unity Camp-4, from June 29 to July 2, 2012 at Tharanikkulam, with the participation of 550 children, between 16 to 19 years-of-age.



The activities of the camp focus mainly on the children of the North and the Wannai areas, so as to develop self-confidence in these children by nurturing unity, reconciliation and healing in their minds through their participation in these camps.

The theme of the camp will be leadership development, capacity building and personality enhancement.

For details see PG 3 >>>

Archdiocesan Sacred Heart Rally at Tewatte

The Archdiocesan Sacred Heart Rally will be held on July 7, 2012 under the patronage of the Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence, Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, at 10.30 a.m. at the Tewatte Basilica. The recitation of the Holy Rosary and the procession will begin at 8.30 a.m. at the old Grotto.



The theme for Pope's Day is...

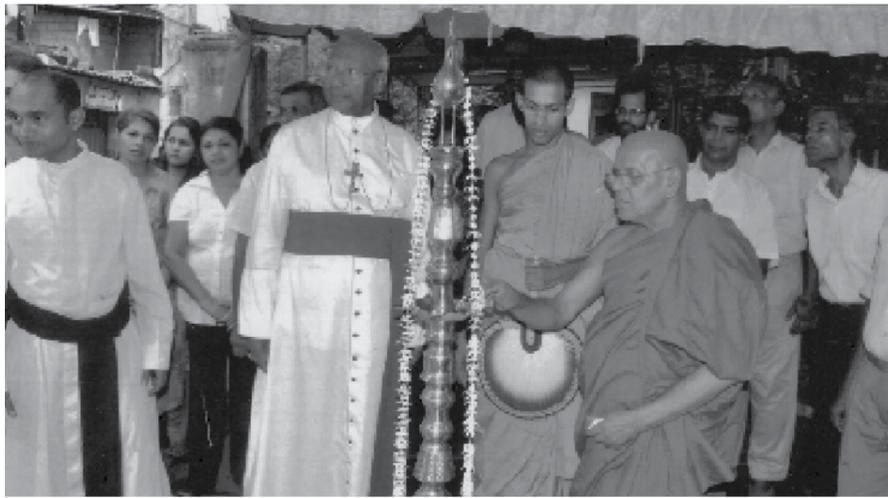
"Holy Father lead us to God's Kingdom"

His Lordship Oswald Gomis leads Poson Dansala in his Home Town

Archbishop Emeritus His Lordship Oswald Gomis, was the star attraction at the Poson Dansala organized by the Eksath Sudhada Sangamaya last Poya Day at Kelaniya, his of birth place.

Among others lighting the customary oil lamp were the Ven. Kirinda Revath Thera Vihara-dhipathi of Sri Sugatharamaya, Galborella, Kelaniya, Rev. Fr. Gihan Ridley, Parish Priest, Kelaniya, Rev. Fr. Roshan Fernando, Parish Priest, Kirimetiya, Ven. Maussagolla Mudilka Thera, Principal, Sri Kalyani Dharma Vidyalaya, Kelaniya and Rev. Sr. M. Siyeni, Principal, St. Paul's Girls' School, Waragoda, Kelaniya.

His Lordship said that he



was happy to be present at a public event organised by the people of his birth place. He was proud of the numerous activities of the Kelaniya Eksath Sudhada Somagaya headed by Nandalal Samaraweera to promote social and religious unity and har-

mony in the area. There was Christianity in Sri Lanka even before the arrival of the Portuguese and there has been religious harmony at that time too, he said.

Alfred Perera

St. Anthony's Shrine Dalupotha gets new Library and Computer Unit



His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva opened a Computer Unit and a Library recently at St. Anthony's Shrine, Dalupotha, to coincide with the feast of the Church.

Looking is Administrator of the Shrine Rev. Fr. Christopher Julius.

Requiem Mass for Fr. Michael Rodrigo



The 85th birth anniversary of Rev. Fr. Michael Rodrigo OMI, takes place on 30th June, 2012. A memorial Holy Mass will be offered on Saturday 30th June 2012 at 8.30 a.m. at St. Mary's Church, Dehiwala. It will be followed by a talk on Fr. Michael's Life and Mission by Prof. Anton Meemana.

Special Sacred Heart celebration at Kanuwana



The members of the Sacred Heart Societies of the Kanuwana and Visakawatte Churches attended a special Mass officiated by the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Lester Nonis and assistant Rev. Fr. Priyamal at the Kanuwana Church to celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, on Friday 15th June.

Shirley Perera

Third month remembrance of popular artiste Anton Jude

A programme to commemorate the third death anniversary of film, TV and stage actor Anton Jude will be held at John de Silva Memorial Hall at 5.00 p.m. on June 24 (Sunday).

A commemorative talk to mark the event will be delivered by Prof. Pradeep Abeysundera.

There will also be a distribution of school books to a selected school.

This will be followed by the staging of a drama directed by Anton Jude, "Sakisandamadala," at 6.30 p.m. for the public. Entrance will be free of charge.

Kumara Nayanajith

AGM of Sacred Heart Confraternity, Wellawatte

The Annual General Meeting of the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of St. Lawrence' Church, Wellawatte took place on June 16, 2012 at 11.00 a.m.

The meeting was presided over by the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Bob Rodrigo OMI.

The following members were elected to serve the Sacred Heart Confraternity for the year 2012/13.

President: S.B. David
Vice President: Maxie Machado
Secretary: Prashanthi de Soysa
Treasurer: Thushani Machado
Prayer leaders: Waida Perera
Violet Fernando
Marian Cassim

The Sacred Heart Confraternity also organised the Feast of the Sacred Heart with a 9-day devotion and Benediction. The Feast was celebrated on June 15 (Friday).

Rev. Fr. Sampath recited the closing prayers to end the day's programme.

S.B. D.

Welcome for New Parish Priest at Kalutara - Nagoda



Rev. Fr. Nirmal Malaka Silva, the new Parish Priest of Kalutara-Nagoda was warmly welcomed by the parishioners of Nagoda recently.

Picture shows Fr. Malaka Silva being accompanied to the Church by Rev. Fr. Anthony Fernandopulle Episcopal Vicar Colombo South Region, Rev. Fr. Maurice Namal, Rev. Fr. Mahendra Gunatillake, Rev. Fr. Divshan Asanka, and Chrysantha Kumara.

D. Anselm Fernando

Opening of New Library at Maggona



A new library for the Daham Pasal students of Maggona Parish was recently declared open by new Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Ishan Prameena and Rev. Fr. Hemantha Udayakumar Perera.

The programme was organised by Rev. Fr. Hemantha Perera in collaboration with Sr. Romula (AC) and Daham Pasal teachers.

D. A.F.

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Katana Parish First Holy Communion



Sixteen children from St. Anthony's School, Katana received First Holy Communion recently at St. Anthony's Church, Katana.

Picture shows the children pose for a picture with Rev. Fr. Amila Gomes, Dean of Katana and Parish Priest of Halpe Rev. Fr. Niroshan Fonseka and the staff of the Daham School.

Cecil Danicius

Ekamuthu - Oray Makkal Unity Camp - 4, Tharanikkulam, June 2012

The Unity Mission Trust, which has been working with children in the North and Wannu since May 2009, has now finalized arrangements to conduct the Ekamuthu - Oray Makkal Unity Camp - 4 for 500 School Children. It will be held from June 29 - July 02.

The work of the Unity Mission Trust aimed at healing, unity and reconciliation has evolved over a period of time and we have now developed our core specialization which is the conduct of a series of Unity Camps, on an interfaith platform to foster and facilitate integration between children of the North and South, who are aged between 16 to 20 years.

The series of Camps conducted by the Ekamuthu Oray Makkal Unity Trust focuses mainly on children of the North and Wannu and delivers a programme to develop leadership capabilities, personal capacity enhancement and self-confidence development. These children have not experienced or been exposed to this type of capacity building programme which at the end fosters integration, healing, unity and reconciliation as well. The details of the Camp are as follows:-

- Ekamuthu - Oray Makkal Unity Camp - 4: Tharanikkulam - June 29th to 02nd July 2012
- **Participants:** 550 school children between 16 to 19 years mostly from Central Wannu and from all areas of South Central Sri Lanka.
- **Theme of the Camp** - Leadership Development, Capacity

United (Logo) **ඒ (සබ්) එකමුතු ඉරේ මக்கල්**
Unity Mission Trust

Ekamuthu Oray Makkal Unity Camp 4: Tharanikkulam
29th June - 2nd July 2012

BE A PARTNER!

- 550 school children from 65 schools in Wannu and across Sri Lanka will attend an educational, inspirational and bridge building Camp to foster healing, unity and reconciliation, amongst 16 to 19 year olds.
- Camp will focus on Leadership Development, Personal Capacity building and growth of self-confidence.
- Special Awards for outstanding students in Oratory, Drama, Art and Craft, Singing and Leadership skills.

Building up reference libraries in 32 selected schools in the Wannu. (Total reference libraries built up will now add to 80 across the Wannu)

For more information :
Log onto : www.unitymission.lk
Email : info@unitymission.lk

You can :

- Sponsor a Student / Group at Rs 4500/- per student.
- Sponsor an Activity.
- Provide gift packs of school books and stationery for ALL students. Art Material; Tamil/ English books for Libraries being set up.
- Contribute towards infrastructure development of host schools at Tharanikkulam.

Contributions can be made by Cash or Cheque to:
People's bank, Account No- 014100180004373
SWIFT Code : PSBKLKX / PSBKLKX 023

Building and Personality Enhancement.

• Aims of the Camp - Foster Unity, Reconciliation and Healing and strengthening of the minds of children, that all children are equal sons and daughters of our beloved Mother Lanka - and that there is hope for a better future for all, through continued establishment and the building of bonds between children of the North and South of Sri Lanka.

Your support towards to the success of this Camp by way of any of the following will be very greatly appreciated:-

- **Be a Partner** - Volunteer to serve as a Member of the Unity Mission Trust.
- **Be a Sponsor** - the cost of sponsoring 01 student is Rs. 4,500/-. You can sponsor a child or even a group of 25 students at Rs. 112,500/-

• Support on Activity on Camp - Call or e-mail for further details.

The sponsorship expenses will cover the following;

- Build new bridges of friendship between North and South
- Identify student leaders for further networking and development
- Identify highly talented and high potential student to be selected for on-going scholarship support to encourage them to reach greater heights of success.

Contributions can be made to "Ekamuthu Oray Makkal Unity Mission Trust", People's Bank, A/C No. 014100180004373. Swift Code PSBKLKX / PSBKLKX 023

For more information, please log onto www.unitymission.lk or email to info@unitymission.lk Phone inquiries: 0094 773 660103

Bertal Pinto Jayawardena

New Redemptorist Priest from Chilaw



Rev. Fr. Suresh Kelum Fernando CSSR from, the Diocese of Chilaw was ordained on June 16, 2012 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral, Chilaw.

Fr. Kelum is the son of Warnakulasuriya Bernard Basil Fernando and Warnavithanage Dailie Asoka Fernando of Suduwella, Chilaw.

He had his early education

at Bishop Edmund Peiris College, Chilaw and St. Mary's College, Chilaw.

He entered the Redemptorist Minor Seminary in 1999 and completed his philosophical and theological studies at the National Seminary, Ampitiya.

Fr. Kelum was ordained by His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Valence Mendis.

SUNDAY PUNCH

by Camillus

PRAY ALOUD WITH ME

BUT YOU SHOULD SEE
HER AT HOME



IN EVER LOVING MEMORY
OF

RANJANIE COORAY

**10TH ANNIVERSARY
ON 28TH JUNE 2012**



Beloved wife of Rex, mother of Raj, Ruwan, Ruwani and Renu Cooray and mother-in-law of Thilini and Noeli beloved sister of His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, Shalani Hettikanda and Moneen Biergans.

*O Lord, we thank you for her.
May you be praised.*



**Church in the
World**

Pope calls for continued renewal amid liturgical abuses

(CNA/EWTN News).- At the conclusion of the 50th Eucharistic Congress in Ireland, Pope Benedict urged ongoing liturgical renewal – as outlined by the Second Vatican Council – amid current misunderstandings and abuses.

"At our distance today from the Council Fathers' expressed desires regarding liturgical renewal, and in the light of the universal Church's experience in the intervening period, it is clear that a great deal has been achieved; but it is equally clear that there have been many misunderstandings and irregularities," he said in a video message to over 75,000 pilgrims in Dublin's Croke Park Stadium on June 17.

"Not infrequently," he added, "the revision of liturgical forms has remained at an external level, and 'active participation' has been confused with external activity. Hence much still remains to be done on the path of real liturgical renewal."

Although the liturgy should be "celebrated with great joy and simplicity," it should also be conducted "as worthily and reverently as possible," he said.

In his eight and a half minute address, the Pope explained that the Council Fathers had wanted to renew the external forms of the Mass so as to "make it easier to enter into the inner depth of the mystery," and therefore "lead people to a personal encounter with the Lord, present in the Eucharist."

Croke Park is the home of Ireland's traditional Gaelic sports, and is also the largest stadium in the country. Gathered within it were the tens of thousands of pilgrims who had come from worldwide to pray and learn more about the Eucharist during the week-long event June 10-17.

"Ireland has been shaped by the Mass at the deepest level for centuries," said the Pope, "and by its power and grace generations of monks, martyrs and missionaries have heroically lived the faith at home and spread the Good News of God's love and forgiveness well beyond your shores."

Touching upon the troubled recent history of the Church in Ireland, the Pope said the "mystery" as to why some clerics would abuse those in their care can perhaps be explained by the fact that "their Christianity was no longer nourished by joyful encounter with Jesus Christ: it had become merely a matter of habit."

This was precisely the attitude, he said, that the Council had wanted to overcome so as to "rediscover the faith as a deep personal friendship with the goodness of Jesus Christ."

Pope Benedict concluded by announcing that the city of Cebu in the Philippines will host the next International Eucharistic Congress in 2016 before imparting his apostolic blessing and commending the Irish people "to the loving protection of Mary, Mother of God, and to Saint Patrick, the great patron of Ireland."

THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY OF BRID LANE
Messenger
SINCE 1988

EDITORIAL

24 June 2012

Faith is not belief without proof but trust without reservations

We Christians are called to be the followers of Our Lord Jesus Christ. We have faith only because the Holy Spirit has given it to us as a free gift for no one can believe unless the Holy Spirit has inspired him.

We believe in God but that is not sufficient for even the devil believes in God. Faith in God means more than belief. It means a total trust in Him and a constant fellowship with Him throughout the day and the night until we go to sleep. It also means constant vigilance to avoid sin and this can be achieved by prayer. Prayer is nothing but a conversation with God. He has told us to bring our burdens to Him and that he will grant us relief. Do we heed His call? Yes, we implore Him to grant our numerous requests requests for material rather than spiritual gifts. We ask for a good house, a good job, obedient children and so on. But God knows all our needs and He will provide for our needs though not for our greed or for our desire to emulate or outshine others which is itself a sin.

This attitude of mind towards God is best called mercenary since our faith is based on God granting us our wishes. But Jesus has said that we can enter the Kingdom of God only through the narrow gate. The rich will find it hard to enter the Kingdom since they are distracted by the riches and cares of this world like the man who wanted to follow Jesus but wanted first to go and provide for his family and return. But God assures us that He will look after those whom he cares for. We are required to first seek the Kingdom and then God assures that everything else will be added unto us what is required for us in this world as well as eternal life. But what about the misfortunes and problems in life we all face. Yes, despite them we should trust in Him even when the situation is hopeless and everything is black and looks impossible. Even if we have to die it is not a misfortune for He is the God who gives life and He can raise us to eternal life.

There is this inexplicable fact that God allows his loved ones to suffer. But suffering is no disaster. Suffering helps us to remain in the narrow path instead of straying to the broad path which is the road to perdition. Christianity is not a Gospel of prosperity. Nor is it a Gospel of despair. It is a Gospel of hope - hope of eternal life which can be given only to those who believe in Our Lord Jesus Christ - No one can come to the Father except through me.

Thomas Edison, the great inventor saw his laboratory and house go up in flames, destroying years of his experiments. But he didn't despair. Two weeks after the fire his electric bulb came to be accepted and a new age dawned - the age of electricity. Great people like him are just ordinary people with an extra-ordinary determination. Similarly our trust in God must not flag or weaken. We can do so only by living in complete fellowship with God. But such fellowship is disrupted by sin which is disobedience to God in any way. The first parents sinned by disobeying God and we do the same ever since. We want to do what is good but as St. Paul laments we end up doing what is wrong. But our God is a God of Compassion. He will not turn against us because we have sinned. He doesn't punish us or turn his face against us. But our sins remove us from fellowship with Him because we no longer feel inclined to trust him. We think He is angry with us. So when misfortune befalls us we think God is punishing us for our sins. But He assures that He is patient with us and will wait for the return of the sinner for whom he feels only pity not anger. But as sin disrupts our fellowship with God we lose faith in ourselves. But He is waiting patiently for us to return to him. We must confess our sins and He is ever-ready to forgive us.

As Jesus told the woman caught in sin - He will not condemn her but asks her to go and sin no more. It is the same thing He tells us. The moment our sins are confessed we can return to fellowship with God because our conscience will not keep blaming us and we won't believe that God has turned His face away from us.

A close look at the Priesthood and Celibacy

What does the Catholic Church teach about the priesthood?. The priests are ordained for ministry.

And 'ministry' means service, and ministers are servants, their lives are at the service of their congregation.

Priests work for God's kingdom on earth, and so they are called servants of God.

Jesus commanded his apostles (collectively) for specific works, these works are invariably sacramental and ritual. We see in every single one of the Gospels, Jesus commanded the apostles to baptise: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them." (Mt.28:19). He told them to say the Holy Mass: "He took bread and broke it....saying, this is my body...do this in memory of me." (Luke 22:19) He empowered them to hear, the sins of confessions and absolve sinners: "If you forgive sins of any, they are forgiven. If you retain the sins of any they are retained." (John 20:23). He sent them out to anoint the sick: (Mark 6: 7, 13). Thus, then and now, the primary work of the priest is liturgical and sacramental. This priestly ministry has been passed on to this day through a sacramental rite: The laying of hands. (Acts:6:6)

The Catholic tradition refers to the priest as - another Christ. By Holy Orders, a man becomes as Christ, to be the presence - the person and the face of Christ, the High Priest. And so we see by the sacrament of Holy Orders a man is changed for ever. The sacrament confers a permanent character, just as baptism does. Once you are baptised, you are changed forever - you are a Christian for ever. As the old saying goes, "once a Catholic, always a Catholic."

In the same way, once a man is ordained, he is a priest forever (Ps: 110: 4; Heb: 7:21). He may be an immoral priest and the Church has disciplined him - a defrocked priest, who may no longer celebrate the sacrament, he still remains a priest. Sacramental powers do not depend on worthiness. It is Christ himself who acts in the person of the priest - through his voice, and through his hands. St. Augustine puts it forcefully: "When Peter baptizes, it is Christ who baptizes, when Judas baptizes, it is Christ who baptizes."

Unlike the priesthood of the old covenant the priest-



hood of Christ did not fall to men by inheritance. It came by vocation.

Christ looked men in the eyes and called them out: "Follow Me" (Matt:9:9). From then on, they were set apart for service. They became a sign of the new world order. Just as men are identified by their trades, identified as who they are by what they do a priest identifies himself when he imitates Christ's life. Jesus promises that each of his chosen men would "do the works I do; and greater works than these will he do." (John 14: 12). The apostles had seen Jesus feed the multitude with just a few loaves. They had seen him raise the people from the dead. They had seen him heal the lepers and give sight. What greater works could they do, was the question on their minds. St. Augustine explains it all. "They will perform baptism, which is greater than creation itself. They would forgive sins, which is greater work than raising the dead. They will celebrate the Holy Mass which brings heaven into the midst of the world. It is for these sacraments that Jesus ordains his priests.

In the Old Testament the prophets speak of God as the bridegroom of his chosen people - Israel. "For your maker is your husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name." (Is: 54:5). Christ came as the bridegroom (Matt:9:15) to establish a communion that is lasting and intimate. With this wedding, he began a new life, a new creation. The Book of Revelation depicts it in visionary terms of the marriage Supper of the Lamb (21;2). In the Mass, the Supper of the Lamb, the marriage is consummated and become one flesh in union. We receive Our Blessed Lord: He lives in us, and we live in him. We have heaven already, though we can not enjoy it with our physical senses, we hope to enjoy it in

heaven for ever.

The Priestly Celibacy:

Let us get ourselves once more, back to the Garden. God created Adam and called him to give his whole life as a loving service. When tested, he failed. Christ, the New Adam fulfilled the role that the old Adam failed to fulfill. In Christ, God brought victory. He invites the priests of the New Covenant to share in that victory - to share in the singularly powerful mediation. There is one God, and there is one mediator between God and man - the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as ransom for all. (1 Tim: 2: 5-6).

Imitating Christ, the priest's celibacy is an outward sign of Christ's total commitment to the Church. As Jesus's self gift was total, undivided and undisturbed, so is the celibate priest.

This state of life, chosen voluntarily, leaves the priest totally free for ministry. He can give himself entirely - holding nothing back. This is the reason for celibacy of the priest. In looking back to what all I have written, we can summarise his role thus: He gives new life - divine life through baptism; nourish that spiritual offspring through the Eucharist. He disciplines the children through penance in the confessional. He instructs through his teaching and preaching. He raises his congregation to full Christian maturity. It is for this reason that we call our priest "Father." And fathers teach their children with authority. Henry Adams said of his teachers: "A teacher affects eternity, he can never tell where his influence stops."

"What the priest says from the pulpit, his congregation speaks to the world."

Let us pray for our priests, and pray for more good priests.

Bryan Landsberger

Ss. Peter and Paul: The Giants of the Church

Feast Day - June 29

Saints Peter and Paul were two persons from widely different backgrounds who could never have got together to serve in the vineyard of the Lord but for the powerful intervention of Jesus our Saviour with whom nothing is impossible. Their joint efforts eventually ended in their becoming two of the greatest saints of the Church.

Peter the fisherman

Peter was a humble but a somewhat impetuous fisherman whose only ambition in life was to improve his fishing business. His given name was Simon, the son of Jonah. According to the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, one day when Jesus was walking on the shore of the Sea of Gaililee he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting their nets. Jesus had told them "Come follow me and I will make you fishers of men." At once they had left their nets and followed Jesus. Luke's narrative of this historic encounter is somewhat different. He states that one day Jesus was standing on the shores of the Sea of Gallilee and a large crowd had gathered to listen to Him. He got into a boat belonging to Simon and asked him to pull away from the shore.

Then Jesus had sat in the boat and addressed the people. After He had finished He had asked Simon to take the boat into deep water and let down his net for a catch. Simon had told Jesus that they had laboured all night and caught nothing but at the Master's command he would do as instructed. The catch was so great that the net began to break and the boat was close to sinking. Outside help was sought and a disaster prevented. Then Simon fell at the feet of Jesus and said, "Depart from me O Lord for I am a sinful man." Jesus had told him. "Don't be afraid from now on you will be a fisher of men." When the boat was brought to the shore Simon had left everything behind and followed Jesus (Luke 5: 1-11).

John's version of the encounter was different. It was Andrew the brother of Simon who had first met Jesus. He had rushed to Simon saying that he had found the Messiah and brought him to Jesus. Looking at Simon, Jesus had said, "You are Simon, son of John. You will now be called Cephas which when translated is PETER (John 1: 40-32).

Be that as it may from the time the two of them met an unbreakable bond of love and devotion that was established between Peter and his Master. As they went about together Jesus had the opportunity of observing Peter at close quarters.

Jesus would have been impressed by Peter's sincere love and loyalty and also that Peter was endowed with innate qualities of leadership.

Peter was with Jesus at all the important events recorded in the Gospels including the Transfiguration and was convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God. It was in the northern city of Caesarea Phillipi after Peter had proclaimed that Jesus was Christ the

son of the living God that Jesus had told Peter. "Peter, you are a rock and upon this rock I will build my church and to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 16: 13-20).

Although Peter was very close to Jesus he tripped very badly when despite prior warning he thrice denied that he knew Jesus in the courtyard of the Chief Priest on Good Friday morning. Immediately afterward he was filled with remorse and went out and wept bitterly.

At the post resurrection breakfast meeting on the shores of the Sea of Galilee Peter had to affirm to Jesus three times that he loved Him more than the others before his supremacy, which had been sullied by his denials, was restored and Jesus asked Him to feed His lambs and His sheep.

On the day of Pentecost Peter took the leadership in preaching to the large crowd that was present from many nations a sermon on Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah and the Son of God. The crowd listened in wrapt attention and 3000 were baptised and received the Holy Spirit on that day itself. As the days passed the number of believers increased very rapidly despite the persecutions that had begun. The divine message was taken to the neighbouring areas including Corinth, the third biggest city in the Roman empire and the response was phenomenal. That infant church was very much on the move. With the arrival of Paul on the scene after his dramatic conversion the Gentiles were converted in large numbers.

The year Peter went to Rome is not recorded in the Bible. When he got there he found a thriving community of believers. Together and most probably with the assistance of Paul who was in Italy at that time they established the Church of Rome which became the headquarters of the Catholic Church with superintendence over all the Catholic Churches in the world. Peter

"Together and most probably with the assistance of Paul who was in Italy at that time they established the Church of Rome which became the headquarters of the Catholic Church with superintendence over all the Catholic Churches in the world."

was the Bishop of Rome and the first Pope until AD 67 when he was put to death on the orders of Nero the deraanged Roman emperor. Peter lived up to the expectations of Jesus and founded a church against which the gates of hell will never prevail.

Paul alias Saul of Tarsus

This is quite a different story. Saul was born in Tarsus in the province of Cilicia in south central Turkey. He was a Pharisee and an ardent supporter of Judaism. As he grew older he moved into Israel and lived in the vicinity of Jerusalem. He was the most feared man by the growing community of believers in the Way because he believed that the followers of Jesus would be a serious threat to Judaism. He therefore

launched a systematic campaign to persecute the followers of Jesus Christ.

After his dramatic conversion by Jesus when he was on the way to Damascus to persecute the Christians in that city there was an incredible turn in his life as he became one of the strongest advocates of the Christian message. He preached to the Gentiles who rallied round him in large numbers and were eventually baptised. He was called the apostle of the Gentiles.

The events leading to his almost incredible conversion bear repetition. Armed with letters from the Chief Priests in Jerusalem he was on the way to Damascus in Syria to persecute the Christians when he was struck down and blinded. Then Jesus of Nazareth spoke

"After his dramatic conversion by Jesus when he was on the way to Damascus to persecute the Christians in that city there was an incredible turn in his life as he became one of the strongest advocates of the Christian message."

to him and asked him, "Why do you persecute me: Paul gave no answer. His escorts took him to a house on Straight Street in Damascus.

While he was there Jesus had instructed Ananias, one of His disciples in Damascus to visit Saul saying: "This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name (Acts 9: 15-16).

Ananias did as he was told and visited Saul restored his sight and baptised Him. Paul received the Holy Spirit. After days of prayer and meditation and study of the Old Testament prophecies he began to preach in the synagogues and elsewhere that Jesus Christ was the Messiah, Son of God. The people were amazed at the almost unbelievable transformation that had taken place but when Paul (no longer Saul) explained how it all happened they believed him. Encouraged by their response he took the Christian message to all parts of Central Asia.

Gentiles flocked to him in very large numbers and received Baptism. So committed was he to his new missionary role that he undertook three overseas trips with wonderful results. He was



taken as a prisoner for trial in Rome. While he was there he preach the message of Jesus and many were converted.

All this did not come to Him easily. In his second letter to the Corinthian (Chap. 11: 22-33) he explained how he was flogged, imprisoned, had to face trial and even shipwrecked. But he carried on regardless.

He wrote 14 Epistles or Letters to the various churches he founded and he monitored their progress exhorting them to lead truly Christian lives.

It is believed that Paul helped Peter in whatever way he could in the founding of the Church of Rome and in spreading the Christian message all over Italy.

Although the Bible does not record Paul's death tradition has it that he was beheaded outside the city wall of Rome. After his stunning conversion in Damascus Paul's philosophy of life was summed up in his words:

"I live not 'tis not I that live God gives me life, God lives in me."

As we celebrate the feasts of Saints Peter and Paul who have been designated as the most outstanding heroes of the Faith, let us thank the Lord for their remarkable lives and pray to them to ensure that the Catholic Church will continue to be a beacon of hope for a troubled world.

Walter Rupesinghe

"After his stunning conversion in Damascus Paul's philosophy of life was summed up in his words: "I live not 'tis not I that live God gives me life, God lives in me."



Don't judge the book by its cover

There's a saying in English; 'don't judge the book by its cover.' It is our human nature to go by appearances. We think that a smartly dressed man is a gentleman. A lady who shows off her expensive jewellery is well-refined and educated. A person who talks the whole time is wise and intelligent. On the other hand, a man who is tough-looking is a crook, a criminal. A person who is saintly-looking is holy and pious.

"Appearances are deceptive," so preached the Lord Buddha. In St. Matthew's Gospel, we find Jesus Christ condemning the Pharisees for trying to mislead the common people through their behaviour. Christ says the Pharisees

do everything to be seen by the people and be admired by them. They wore wide bands comprising the law of God on their foreheads and on their wrists. The bands were small leather boxes inside which were the words of God and they wore them on their forehead and on their wrist to show their piety. It was also their custom to wear robes with tassels. Which means, the border of the robe had a thick band. This tassel was to remind them about the commandments of God. But the Pharisees wore robes with very broad tassels to show the common people that they were law abiding and God-fearing. Christ condemned these people because they were in fact deceiving the people.



Do you also get carried away by outward appearances?

A ten year-old boy entered a hotel coffee shop and sat at a table. A waitress put a glass of water in front of him.

"How much is an ice cream with fruits and nuts?" the boy asked. "Fifty cents," the waitress replied offhand.

The little boy dipped his hand into the pocket, pulled out his coins and started counting.

"How much is a dish of plain ice cream?" he asked

once again. Some people were now waiting for a table and the waitress was getting a little impatient.

"Thirty five cents," she said, a bit irritated.

The little boy counted his coins again. "I'll have the plain ice cream," he said in a subdued tone.

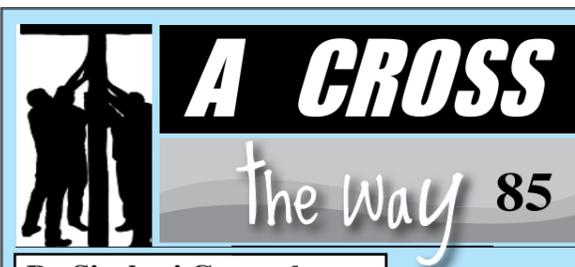
The waitress brought the ice cream, put the bill on the table and walked away. The boy finished the ice cream, paid the cashier and went away.

When the waitress came back, she began wiping down the table and then stared at what she saw. **Placed neatly by the side of the dish, was fifteen**

cents, her tip that she never expected.

The boy had only fifty cents. He could have enjoyed his favourite ice cream with fruits and nuts with that money. But he sacrificed it to give a tip to the waitress. The waitress may have considered the boy as a nuisance when he stepped into the shop as he was not likely to be a heavy spender. When the boy left the shop, by his small act of sacrifice, he had shown his true character, he had taught the waitress a life-long lesson, not to judge a person by mere appearance.

ANANDA PERERA



By Sirohmi Gunsekera

Weddings

*"You by my side, that's how I see us.
Your folks and mine, happy and smiling.
We are on our way to say "I do" ..."*

Sharia hummed the words of the Wedding Song as she smiled and dressed for her niece Lali's wedding. She thought of the many obstacles that had lain in the path of the couple.

"After all, just because Lali's fiance Ajit is a Buddhist, it doesn't mean that he is not a good man. I know how unhappy Lali was when she broke up with Mario who was a Catholic but who treated her very

badly, flirting with other women. I was so worried when Lali started carrying on with Ajit as I thought she was on the rebound. But they have had their affair for four years now and both are mature.

Lali told me that Ajit was tender and considerate and does not mind that she had slept with Mario. I was secretly shocked when she told me that. It just shows that many couples indulge in pre-marital sex. It is such a pity because, like Lali, you may end up marrying someone else. If only young people had someone they could really talk to frankly about love, sex and marriage. They don't need to be preached at but their feelings and desires need to be understood. At least, Lali could confide in me even though I could not help her as she struggled with Mario. The main thing is to be non-judgemental. You have to always think that "There but for the grace of God go I!" thought Sharia.

She heard the horn of the cab she had called for and took a last look at herself in the mirror, adjusting her saree. "Let me say a Prayer for Ajit and Lali and may God bless all the couples who marry today," she told herself.

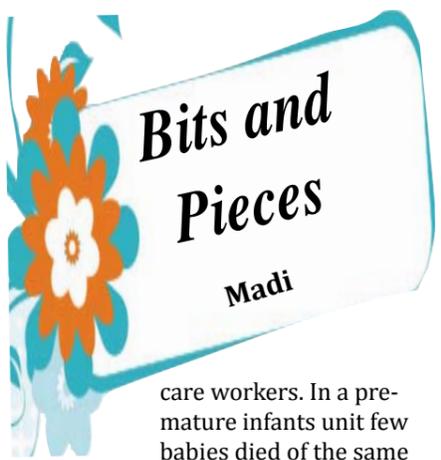
Hospital Hazards

Did you hear about the person who got admitted to the hospital to have his right leg amputated and came back home with his left leg removed? Ultimately he lost both his legs because the diseased leg was the right limb. Media published stories about an Indian youth who entered a hospital for pneumonia and ended up losing his left kidney. The doctors taking care of him were involved in a corrupt racket of selling organs to rich patients who needed human body parts.

When you enter a hospital even for a few days you should be on your guard about the caregivers making mistakes. Nurses who are dispensing medications can mistakenly give you the wrong medication or the wrong dosage at the wrong time. Make sure that you get the correct medication at the correct time. Busy nurses can give you medications prescribed for the patient who is just next to your bed.

We get admitted to the hospitals to get our diseases healed. But do you know the hospitals have the worst germs or micro-organisms which are resistant to normal antibiotics. You can easily catch any of these infections from the hospital. This is especially true of airborne infections such as influenza, pneumonia and other respiratory tract infections such as tuberculosis. You can easily become a victim to these airborne infections because there are many persons with respiratory diseases in the hospitals. The patient in the next bed may be suffering with tuberculosis or pneumonia.

Another unfortunate incident that can happen is transmission of infections from the health



care workers. In a premature infants unit few babies died of the same bacterial infection within a few days. On investigating they found out that the deadly micro-organism was transmitted through the finger nails of a health care worker who was looking after these premature babies. Trimming her finger nails and good hand washing would have prevented these unfortunate deaths.

General hygiene such as constant hand washing is essential for the prevention of such transmissions. Observe whether the doctors and nurses who are looking after your care are washing their hands thoroughly

before they touch you. Constant hand washing is extremely important to prevent transmission of infections from patient to patient. You have a right to check whether care givers are washing their hands before they touch you and when they are looking after you.

Medical instruments such as thermometers, stethoscopes and sphygmomanometers (blood pressure machines) that are used commonly between patients have to be sterilized before they are used on a new patient. If not these common instruments can become a source of transmission of infections between patients.

As happens in our private hospitals it is a good thing to have a next of kin, relative or a friend with you when you are under hospital care. He or she can be your advocate and check whether the care that you are getting in the hospital is not hazardous to your health. This is important especially if you are unconscious when you are admitted to the hospital. In some pri-

TAKE TIME FOR A MINUTE OF HUMOUR - SMILE!

The professor of law asked the student in law College. "What is the maximum penalty under British Law for bigamy? A voice from the last bench was heard. "Two mothers-in-law, sir."

Rev. Fr. Fraccid Anthony Fernando OMI

Jesus - The Temple

Saffron robes
Bald pates
Meditative
Deep silence
Monks in sermon
Devotees throng
White clad
Shouts of 'Saddhu'
I see peace
Contentment
I remember
My sweet Jesus
Nailed, butchered
on cross
Struggling
Gasping
To breathe
Emotions swell
Tears pour
Cryout, Lord!
I sin no more
Buddha stands
Placid, serene
Another,
Just alike
Saviour Jesus.



Miran Perera

private hospitals you could be inadvertently billed for treatments and consultations that you never had; and expensive medications that you never got.

As a health care worker and patient in hospitals in Colombo, London and New York, I was extremely alert when I was admitted and treated. Once I was charged thrice for the same procedure, which was done only once. My wife was about to be given an invasive procedure that was ordered for some other patient. Fortunately I was never taken to a hospital in an emergency situation and I

was conscious to monitor the care.

We get admitted to a hospital because we need intensive health care. Generally the health care workers are extremely conscientious about the welfare of the patients in their care. Doctors and nurses are human and mistakes could be made. The patient, a family member or a friend, has to be an "advocate" who will monitor the care given by the health care workers. The patient has a right to know the care that she/he is given and the health care workers has a duty to inform.

June; devotion to the Sacred Heart



Statue of the Sacred Heart carved by Raymond Fernando



A young man had grown up nearby and he was beginning to be heard. His name was John. No doubt Jesus looked up and admired his handsome and fearless cousin. He was the sensation of that season. His denunciations, demand for repentance, uncompromising speeches were quoted far and wide. Those who had known him as a boy could hardly believe it was the same person. But there was one who had no doubts. A day came when he was missing from the carpenter's shop. The scene of the baptism of Jesus is a favourite with artists. However paintings of the Baptist's childhood are rare. We present to you today a painting of the Baptist as a child who may have shared many playful memories with his cousin Jesus. The painting is by

A.C. Anandappa and is one of the original paintings which decorated the Nazareth Retreat Chapel, Nuwara Eliya.

Ordinarily the Church observes the day of a saint's death as his feast, because that day marks his entrance into heaven. To this rule there are two notable exceptions, the birthdays of Blessed Mary and of St. John the Baptist. All persons are born with original sin. But Mary, already in the first moment of her existence, was free from original sin (for which reason even her very conception is commemorated by a special feast), and John was cleansed of original sin in the womb of his mother. This is the dogmatic justification for today's feast. This Sunday the Church celebrates the feast of John the Baptist. This feast anticipates the feast of Christmas.

Paintings of Lanka's favourite

The collection of paintings of St. Anthony is from the Nazareth Retreat Chapel, Nuwara Eliya.

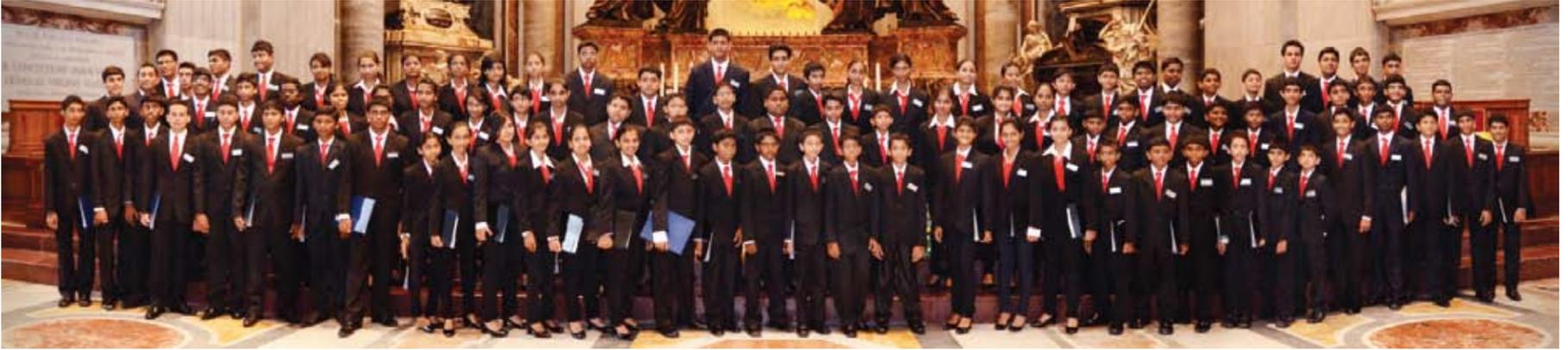
When the Portuguese came to Sri Lanka in 1505, they brought with them their fervent devotion to their favourite saint. A saint born and bred in their own mother land Lisbon, Portugal in 1195 and baptized with one of their very own names Ferdinand. It was later that He changed his name to Anthony, after the patron saint of the chapel, St. Anthony of Egypt, where he received the Franciscan habit. Much later during his mature years, when St. Anthony went to preach in the Italian city of Padua, the saint's name became associated more with the Italian city of Padua, than his birth land. Today St. Anthony is venerated by both Catholics and non-Catholics in Sri Lanka, where ancient and new shrines, cathedrals, churches, schools, colleges, roads and villages

are dedicated to the Saint. It has also become the habit of many families to name a boy child of the family after the Saint. The feast of Saint Anthony was celebrated on June 14.



Roman dreams - Realized

93-Member Sri Lankan Mass Choir on World Stage



The Combined Choir at St. Peter's Basilica, Rome

The 93-member Sri Lankan combined schools singers led by St. Cecelia's Choir of St. Joseph's College, Colombo together with choristers from Good Shepherd Convent, Kotahena, Maris Stella College and Ave Maria Convent - both from Negombo, put themselves on world stage in the first week of June 2012, winning the hearts of thousands of international audience in the Vatican City.

This was on Wednesday 6th June, in the General Audience of Pope Benedict XVI which drew over 10,000 people from diverse nations. Their performance was captured live by Reuters, EWTN and Catholic TV and in audio visual clips in several transnational websites even though the recordings were not able to achieve the required standards. The contingent was led by Rev. Fr. Sylvester Ranasinghe, Rector of St. Joseph's College, well assisted by Rev. Sr. Renuka Silva, Principal of Good Shepherd Convent, Kotahena.

"Beautiful Singing" - Pope Benedict

Pope Benedict XVI, who witnessed the performance of the Sri Lankan Choir, remarked to the Archbishop, Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, that the Millennium Anthem - *Gloria A Te* with its majestic trumpet call, was "beautiful."

The Sri Lankans stole the show, drawing applause as they entertained the vast audience with choicest songs in Italian, English, Tamil and Sinhala. These included Handel's "*Hallelujah Chorus*," Verdi's "*Va Pensiero*" and Mozart's "*Kyrie*," among others.

Historic Mass at St. Peter's Basilica

The Choir opened their programme with a solemn High Mass at St. Peter's Basilica on Saturday 2nd June at 10.30 am before a large crowd of Sri Lankans domiciled in the Rome area. Historically, it is the first time a choir from Sri Lanka was blessed with this rare opportunity.



During the Eucharistic Service at St. Peter's Basilica, Rome

Presided over by Colombo's Archbishop, Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, the Mass in Sinhala, Tamil, English, Italian and Latin was inspired by harmonious singing in these languages.

Concert that drew large crowds

Sunday the 3rd June, saw a capacity crowd of Sri Lankans and Italians at the splendourous Basilica of the Twelve Apostles in the heart of Rome. After Holy Mass, came the concert of sacred songs titled "*Sogni Romani*" - "*Roman Dreams*." The dreams became a reality - "*Realita Roman*" as the choir opened the event with a majestic rendition of the National Anthem in full harmony.

The first segment which began with Sinhala "Namo Mariyeni" also featured hymns in Tamil and Hebrew. Next came the Classical section with "*Miserere*" by the 17th century composer Allegri of the Baroque era and Mozart's "*Laudate Omnes Gentes*" with a boy soprano soloist blending exquisitely with the elegant violin accompaniment and fine keyboard orchestration. Thereafter it was the solemn "*Requiem Aeternam*" followed by the energetic "*Kyrie*" Eleison and the fiery "*Dies Ire*" all from Mozart's memorable Requiem.

Handel's segment next featured the glorious "*Worthy is the lamb*" and "*The Hallelujah Chorus*," followed by songs in English "*The King is Coming*" with a Tenor/ Bass duet backed by the choir and human solidarity songs including "*World in Union*" and a Gospel version of "*Lean on Me*."

The final section of Italian songs featured the popular "*Va Pensiero*" by Verdi, the Mountain Song "*La Montagnara*" and the anthem "*Gloria*

A Te" with its trumpet accompaniment. The two hour concert ended with the nostalgic Italian farewell song "*Con Te Partiro*." As the singers took a final bow, the standing ovation lingered for long.

Pueri Cantores President's Visit

Most Rev. Robert Tyralla, the President of International Pueri Cantores Federation of which the four schools concerned are members, paid a special visit to Rome from Poland to meet with the Sri Lankan singers. It was marked by an Eucharistic Service at the historic Basilica of Maria Maggiore on the evening of 5th June at

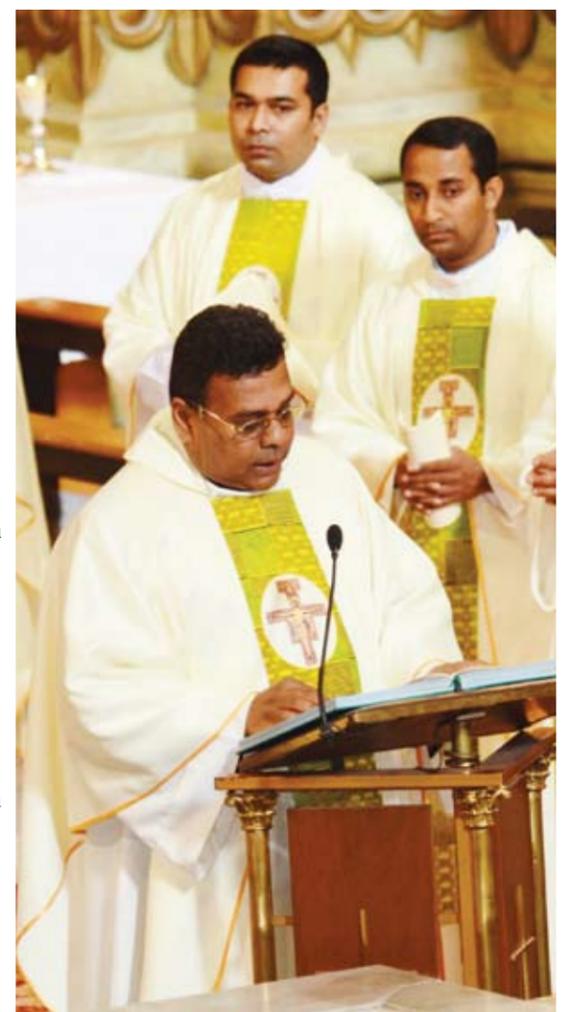
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The Classical Segment



Singing before the Holy Father



Most Rev. Mgr. Neville Joe, Chief Co-ordinator in Rome

A Precious Icon

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

The icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help has a unique origin and symbolism and is a study in itself. It is a Byzantine painting of the Madonna and Child, dating from around the 14th century. Traditionally, it is said to be inspired by a similar icon-painting by St. Luke.

It was stolen from Crete by a merchant, taken to Rome by ship, sold to a Roman family and then through strange and marvellous events handed over to a church where it was venerated under the title, "Mother of Perpetual Help." Here it also went through a "hidden life" till it was handed over to the Redemptorist Fathers in 1865 for public veneration at the Church of St. Alphonsus, Rome, by the then Pope. It remains to date in this church. The icon has become one of the most popular images of the Madonna throughout the world. So it is also in our country, with the special shrine at All Saints' Church, Borella, and many others spread in Sri Lanka.

The message of this icon is that the Child in Mary's arms is Divine. He sees the terrible future that awaits him, with the angles bearing the names Gabriel and Michael (written in Greek) carrying the symbols of his passion – the cross, nails, lance, sponge. This Child is also Human. Otherwise, he would not show fear and run to his mother for protection and comfort. She holds him gently with both hands but her eyes are turned towards us. She helps her Son Jesus, and is perpetually ready to help us.

In this Year of the Word some Gospel references help us to identify better with Mother Mary under the title of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and understand for ourselves why she can be OUR HELPER too...

A Helper to Joseph and Jesus, was Mother Mary, for sure. From Bethlehem to Egypt to Nazareth, right upto the end of their lives her motherly help was available. It seems to have been God's plan that she out-lives them both so that her perpetual help could be with them. And we know from the Gospels how this family, though comprising God's specially chosen ones, had to face so many struggles and challenges just as much as they enjoyed days and times of great happiness, peace and joy. They faced these joyful, sorrowful and glorious times together, with the luminous lamp of their faith, shining not only in them but through them to those around. They are a blessed and holy family held up to all families for their emulation.

Today, more than ever, we need this Mother of Perpetual Help to be a light to our families. One glance around our own families, those of our friends and in society at large, is enough to be saddened by the discord and divisions that are rampant. The dictum "the family that prays together, stays together," seems to be practised more by default than in reality.

Often, we question when "bad things happen to us" or when faced with many crosses.

Why me? Why us? The icon offers a message from Jesus, of the Motherly help needed in such crises. This Mother and Son have faced many challenges before us and understand our humanness, our cries and tears. It is we who need to turn humbly to the right sources for help.

A helper to Elizabeth, was Mary, already blessed with the great honour of bearing the long-awaited Messiah. She hastens to help her cousin Elizabeth in her hour

of need. A pregnant woman "in her old age" rejoices at the generous and kindly help she receives from her kinswoman Mary. In a Spirit-filled proclamation she recognizes that Mary, this young mother-to-be is "blessed among women" for the fruit of her womb is blessed abundantly. "Why is it that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?" is the stupendous question she asks.

Mary comes to us also as a Helper only to offer each of us "My Lord" and to all of us, "Our Lord." This is the greatest help she brings perpetually into our lives. She hastens to visit us in our moments of need, whether material or spiritual, to offer the gift of her Son, leading us closer to Him, "the Way, the Truth and the Life." May she help us whenever we call on her in the problems of our daily life and grant us also the grace to serve others unselfishly. Can we too reach out with our perpetual help to others in need?

A helper in ministry. Mother Mary was not a silent, passive spectator in the public life of Jesus. She followed him in spirit and prayer, with care and concern. She ministered to and mothered her beloved Son until the end. The Gospels confirm this. In Matthew 12:46f. the mother and brethren come 'asking to speak to him.' Jesus explains his definition of a relative, i.e., those who "do God's will," "hear the word of God and do it" (Luke 8:21). At the very first miracle of Jesus, the evangelist John tells us that it is Mary who reaches out to help an embarrassed bridal couple. A silent helper in the shadows, in the background, she enables Jesus to "manifest his glory" through this wonderful miracle at Cana (John 2:1f.). During his entire ministry Mary

would have continued to keep all these events "pondering them in her heart." (Luke 2:19). Finally, her help to Jesus was to manifest courage and steadfastness in his time of greatest agony. She was still the proud mother of her Son as she firmly stood beneath the cross (John 19:25). It is Jesus who offers us his Mother in his final dying moments to be our helper.

All of us have a mission and ministry in life according to our calling and Mother Mary continues to play that same role as she did for Jesus. When "trials and sorrows, reverses of fortune and painful privations" beset us, she is our refuge and hope. She offers us the greatest help we need - fortitude, courage, motherly care and protection.

A helper in prayer. The Acts record for us Mary's perpetual help to the Apostles, huddled together, left desolate without their Master. Have we reflected sufficiently on this role of Mary in the upper room? She was the greatest helper and prayer-partner, united in mind and heart with the apostles and other women followers gathered there. She who was already overshadowed by the Holy Spirit and the power of the Most High (Luke 1:35) awaited the coming of the Spirit upon the Early Church.

Today, we still need Mary's help to grow in our prayer life. Her intercession on



our behalf, right through the journey of our lives, is to enable us to see the Lord face to face one day. Therefore we say, "Pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death." We ask for her help also to build up the Church of her Son Jesus, in these challenging times, when powerful worldly forces try to draw the Church away from the purity and integrity initiated by the Master and Founder Jesus Christ. "Take care of us, dear Mother, for with Christ you are more powerful than all hell combined."

May the feast of Our Lady of Perpetual Help remind us once more of our call to be people of faith called to holiness, believing that the crosses and crowns of life have been borne before by God's own Son, Jesus, helped by his Mother Mary. They will help us too as we enjoy the mountain tops and walk also through the valleys of darkness in life, till we reach the light and glory of heaven.

*Srs. of Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Rajagiriya*

Roman Dreams....

Contd. from Pg. 8

which the choir sang. This was again followed by a mini concert which drew many



eager pilgrims. The choir also visited the Papal museum, Sistine Chapel, Basilicas of John Lateran and St. Paul - outside the wall and the colosseum - at several of which places they raised their voices in harmony, drawing avid audience.

If Not For Them

It was the active involvement of His Eminence Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith that paved the way for this incredible and almost impossible dream to come true. The incomparable organisational skills of indefatigable Monsignor Neville

Joe - the Sri Lankan priest in Rome made the Rome event run smoothly, well supported by the generosity of Rome's Sri Lankan community. Rev. Frs. Indika Joseph, Quintus and Priyantha served as co-ordinators.

Dream's End

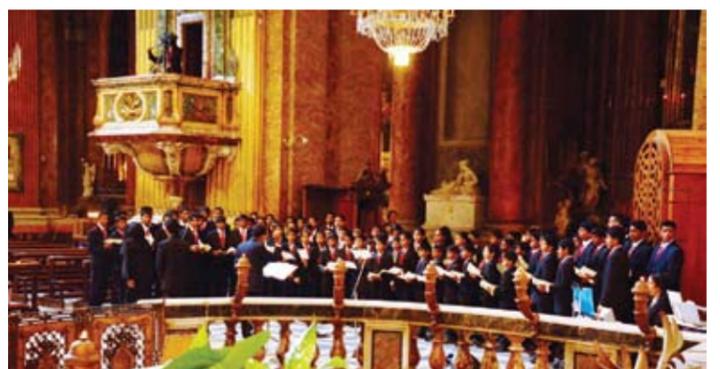
The week long programme came to a conclusion as the mass choir left Italy in two batches. There were tears in everyone's eyes as they parted ways, signifying the conclusion of a heavenly dream, an unforgettable event in every singer's life.

Rome's call for any human being on earth is irresistible as the young singers of Sri Lanka discovered in just eight tumultuous days.

Francis D' Almeida



In Concert Good Shepherd and Ave Maria Convent



At Basilica of 12 Apostles

Dear Sacred Heart

*Teach us, dear Sacred Heart
To specially honour Thee
by the enthronement of Thy
Sacred Heart*

in our home and family.

Teach us our family consecration,

to renew daily and reign

King in our home,

and be the heart of the family.

Teach us dear Sacred Heart

as a Christian family to pray

and seek Thy loving guidance

and protection everyday.

Teach us to imitate

Thy obedience

to Thy heavenly Father

and help us grow spiritually

and love one another.

Teach us dear Sacred Heart

to strive as a family

to follow the gospel precepts

especially in charity,

so that when we light the red altar lamp

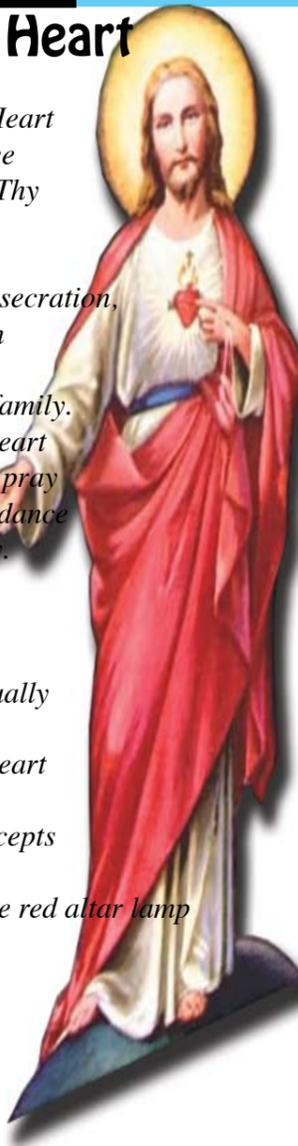
to know Thee

our hearts too will burn

with the fire of Thy love

eternally.

Ralph Alles



Have we in the Church taken the gifts of the Holy Spirit seriously?



In the liturgical readings of the feast of Pentecost (valid for all three years) there is an omission of certain verses from the prescribed text of the Second Reading for the Mass. What is already there is also significant for the Church conduct and welfare.

The First Reading is from Acts chapter two about the events of the first Pentecost. But the Second Reading is taken from the 12th chapter of the First letter to the Corinthian Community and in this reading vs 8-11 are omitted.

I wish to ask the liturgy experts the specific reasons for this omission. What is omitted is the enumeration of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit. So many questions can be raised. Is the universal Church or Liturgy experts have a phobia towards the gifts of the Spirit? Are these three verses not beneficial to the Church administration? Are they afraid of the overwhelming thrust of the Holy Spirit? Is there a phobia that the so-called human leadership fear that greater action of the Holy Spirit will lead to chaos? Do they not have any faith concerning these gifts as enumerated by St. Paul?

If one goes through these gifts, 1) wisdom, 2) gift of knowledge, 3) faith, 4) to work miracles, 5) healing, 6) prophecy, 7) pray to tongues, 8) interpretations and 9) discernment. As Paul speaks, these gifts are for the community of the Church. And these particular manifestations of the Spirit are not merely for the individual

but for the general good. The Catechism records seven different gifts of the Holy Spirit and they are a) wisdom, b) understanding, c) counsel (right judgement), d) fortitude (courage), e) knowledge, f) piety (reverence) and g) fear of the Lord (wonder and awe).

When these verses were omitted, it can be surmised that the Church did not believe in these gifts? If these gifts are shunned then one can also conclude that the Church runs its course on mere human stamina? It happens that some of the so called fundamentalist churches make use of these gifts for renewal of Christian life and attracts them to their fold. One could adduce a further reason that there is a phobia towards the gift of tongues or glossolalia, or some have even an adverse attitude towards words of prophesy and the question can be asked whether these are only for Pentecostal churches?

So I do appeal to the Catholic leaders of the Church to make an in-depth study about these gifts and make use of them for the renewal and welfare of the Church?

Reid Shelton Fernando

Faithfulness to St. Anthony pays off

My dad was an ardent devotee of St. Anthony. Besides visiting St. Anthony's Shrine at Kochchikade every Tuesday, he was of the habit of paying a visit to the Shrine on other week days as well. My dad was of the opinion that, if St. Anthony is so powerful, how powerful would Jesus be, the source of all power.

At the age of 92, my dad lay on his sick bed. On 13th of June 2009, in the afternoon my dad inquired from me, whether I intended to attend the feast of St. Anthony at Kochchikade. That very same day, on the 13th of June he passed away around 5.30 p.m. I recall it is around that time, that he would lead all of us, to attend the festive procession. That was faithfully done over a period of time. It is my opinion that my dad was called to rest around 5.30 p.m. on the 13th of June, since he expressed his loyalty to St. Anthony, through out his life.

Shanthi Perera

is our weapon in our hand to fight against the viles of satan. Be near and dear to Mary to be spared from all spiritual and physical dangers. In no other prayer are we reminded of our death fifty three times. So, pray the rosary on and oft and make it your daily bread.

Many retired men and women who executed their duties with utmost care and efficiency fall into despondency and waste their precious time idling in armchairs. The Holy Bible is the only panacea to get over our despondency

of the future. "Put all your heart's confidence in the Lord, on your own skill relying never." (Prov 3: 5-6) Indeed God's word is the true source of comfort for us at our old age.

Therefore value your old age and make the most of it giving thanks and praise to the Lord who has given you a long span of life.

May God Bless you, and may Our Blessed Mother protect you throughout your old age.

Leonard Wijesiri

A long life span is a blessing from heaven, above

Human life is a precious gift from God. Therefore this transitory mundane life must be lived to please God and at the end to achieve the everlasting life which is the goal of every Christian. However it is a matter of great regret to observe that many human beings display a cynical attitude towards this God given life. We can never pay back our debt of gratitude we owe God, unless we abide by the commandments of God and lead a righteous life.

The younger generation fret and fuss about their future. It is human nature. They are under the wrong impression that they will be blessed with a long span of life. Man proposes but God disposes.

On the other hand men and women who are advanced in age fail to ponder over the fragility and instability of human life. They are well aware that their days are numbered. But they too are worried about the vicissitudes of life. Trust our all-knowing God for the unknown future. We, the older generation are blessed by God to live long and through His infinite mercy He has given us time to compensate for our past sins. Our accountability before God will be immense, and the judgement will be terrible.

The inevitability of death is a universal truth. Some bid farewell to this world as infants or children. Some others face death at the prime of youth.

Only a few live long. "As soon as the breath leaves the body man goes back to the dust he belongs to." (Ps 145: 4) Be prepared. Better late than never.

It is high time to place greater emphasis on prayer, as it is the most steadfast weapon to face in our old age. Lack of concern for prayer will ruin our spiritual life. For sure prayer will relieve the burden of distress, anguish, sorrow, suffering etc. We encounter at our old age. These tend to be the stumbling blocks that deter the spiritual journey of the old. So, as we reach the evening of life let us strive to overcome such temptations. Undoubtedly the Holy Spirit will empower us.

As we all know

the Eucharistic Celebration is the highest form of prayer. Therefore partaking in the Eucharistic Celebration daily will certainly be an added fillip to gain mastery over trials and tribulations that come our way in our old age. What a grace-filled way to start the day for a human being.

Turn to Our Blessed Mother who is the mediatrix of all graces. She is all out to strengthen our spiritual life as well as our physical life. Infirmities - such as - deafness, blindness, feebleness often confront us with old age. Mother Mary is the comforter of the afflicted and the help of the weak. So, try to find solace through the intercession of Our Heavenly Mother. The Holy Rosary

Two Lasallian stalwarts celebrate their Diamond and Golden Jubilees

Rev. Bro. Philip of Jesus and Rev. Bro. W. George B. R. de Silva respectively celebrate their Diamond and Golden Jubilees.

Rev. Bro. Philip of Jesus was born on 23rd May, 1934 at Kurukulawa Ragama. His parents were S.D. Philip and Dona Welbina Jayawardena. He had his initial education at R. C. Kurukulawa. Later he was admitted to De Mazenod College, Kandana. In January he joined the Juniorate and was admitted to De La Salle College, Colombo 15. In 1984 he was selected to go to Penang to be a Brother. While he was in the Scholasticate, he completed O/L. and A/L. (London). In 1957 he followed a course in agriculture at Peradeniya University. In the same year he made his Perpetual Profession. In 1963 he was attached officially to Diyagala Boys' Town, Ragama. After 12 years he was awarded a scholarship for higher studies in the U. K. where he completed his B.Sc. in Bio Science. Deviating from Boys' Town structure, he was requested to teach at De Mazenod College, Kandana and later at St. Sebastian's College, Moratuwa.

He was appointed Director of St. Benedict's College, Colombo 13 from 1989 to 1994. He holds a M.A. in Education from the La Salle University of Manila and was



Bro. Philip of Jesus



Bro. George de Silva

the President of the Gampaha District Basketball Association and a member of the Exco. of Basketball Federation of Sri Lanka, 20 years ago. He was enthusiastic in promoting the game of Basketball in schools and outside. Presently he is attached to Mawathagama Estate, a branch of Diyagala Boys' Town, as the Managing Director.

Coming to the Golden Jubilarian. Rev. Bro. George de Silva hails from Kotahena, and was born to Mr. W. S. De Silva and Mrs. Don Mabel Liyanage on 8th October, 1943. He was recruited from St. Benedict's College to the Junio-

rate in 1958 and while continuing his formation there, he attended St. Anthony's College, Wattala, then De La Salle College, Mutwal and again St. Benedict's College. He professed his First Vows in Penang in 1964 after completing his Novitiate. After his Scholasticate he was streamlined to get into the school teaching. He taught at De Mazenod College, Kandana and was a famous soccer coach while teaching at St. Sebastian's College, Moratuwa. For his Religious Formation he attended a programme called Sangre in St. Francisco, in the USA. He officially retired from school service on 08th October, 1998. He is a Trained Teacher (Mathematics) from the Maharagama Teacher Training College. He obtained S.L.E.A.S. Class II in 1992. He is a Diploma Holder in Scripture, Philosophy and Sociology.

As principal of St. Mary's College, Chilaw and St. Anthony's College Wattala he proved, a capable administrator, producing outstanding results in the A/L at St. Mary's, with the highest number of students entering University. Presently he is the Supervisor of the A/L section at De Mazenod College, Kandana.

Hearty congratulations to the two Jubilarians!

Rev. Bro. Vernon Perera FSC

The Parish Compound is an Extended Altar

The Eucharist is a Community Prayer and not individualistic.

That togetherness becomes superficial when we restrict this within the Church and not take it outside into the compound.

"So that we may be mutually encouraged"

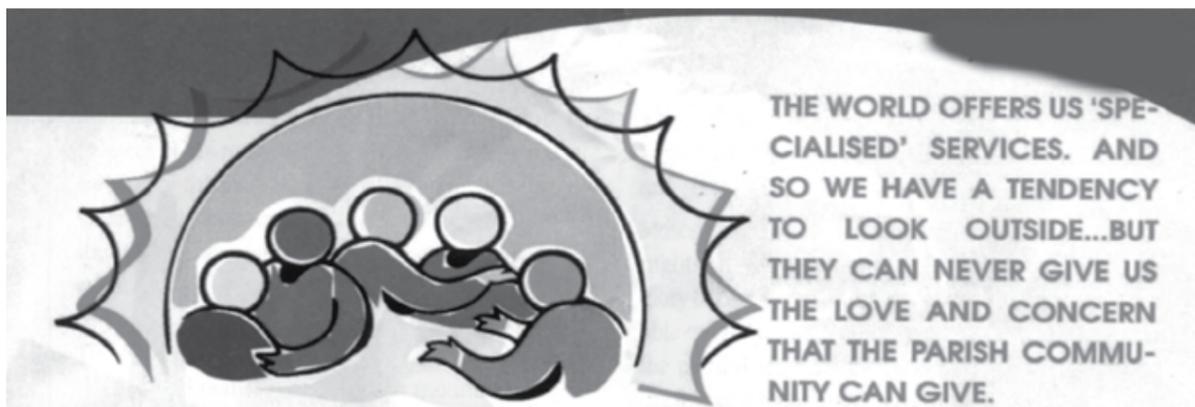
(Rom 1:12)

Today, it would be good to be honest and ask ourselves if there is fellowship in our parishes. Yes we do come and celebrate Holy Mass. And it is done with preparation and everything seems perfect. The choir, the decorations, the offertory, the multimedia are all in place and they are perfect. Yet our Church community seems to lack something. That spark seems to be missing. Our numbers do not increase like it did with the early Christian community described in the Acts of the Apostles. Is it not because we lack the 'fellowship' aspect of our worship?

We should realise that the Church compound is an extended altar. The Eucharist that was celebrated in the Church is extended in the fellowship that we share in the compound with one another. The Eucharist is not an

individualistic prayer. It is a community prayer. That togetherness in prayer becomes superficial when we restrict the prayer to within the Church and not take it outside into the compound. In the Church, we have together come in broken, and shared the joy of the body and blood of the Saviour. In the same way after the Eucharist, in the Church compound we share each others pain and joy. This is when the parish community has spark in them. It is not about which parish community is able to 'solve' problems better. It is about which parish community is able to 'listen' to our problems better.

When we stand around and share our problems with the parish community, we come to realise that ours is not the only problem in life. We realise that there are others going through similar problems. We find so many solutions to those similar problems. We



THE WORLD OFFERS US 'SPECIALISED' SERVICES. AND SO WE HAVE A TENDENCY TO LOOK OUTSIDE...BUT THEY CAN NEVER GIVE US THE LOVE AND CONCERN THAT THE PARISH COMMUNITY CAN GIVE.

are able to advice others about similar problems which we were able to overcome. This is what makes our parish community powerful. This is when our parish community has a spark.

"Let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith"
(Gal 6:10)

In the earlier days, when families or individuals had problems they would look to the parish community for support and answers. Today when we have prob-

lems, we look outside. The world offers us 'specialised' services. And so we have a tendency to look outside. But let us remember that the world can give us specialised services but they can never give us the love and concern that the parish community can give. A community that has worshiped together should be able to share their pains with one another. A woman, who had left church few years ago, told me why she left. She said, "Father, I have nothing against the Catholic Church. But the problem

was that I never found any fellowship there. Everyone would come and worship and after that none of them had time for the other. In the Pentecostal Church that I go to they have the time for fellowship. We have the time to sit with one another. When we have problems, instead of going to the outside world we first come together and share that problem and pray over it. I don't find that in the parish Church."

We may disagree but if we are honest with ourselves we will rea-

lise that she speaks the truth. We lack fellowship. We lack genuine concern about the life of the one along with whom we worship. If our parish communities are more fellowship oriented, people will feel that they are at home. They will never think about leaving looking for 'greener pastures'. Fellowship does not mean that there will be a solution to all problems Rather it means that there will be a family who shares these problems and gives a listening ear.

Courtesy: Divine Voice

Pope's Day 24. June 2012

"Holy Father, let your voice resound amidst all strife."



"HOLY FATHER, LEAD US TO GOD'S KINGDOM!"

Today, in Sri Lanka we celebrate Pope's Day. According to the Church Calendar, today is also the Feast Day of St. John the Baptist. It is the same Mission of leading the People of God to God's Kingdom that St. John the Baptist had to fulfill in his day and the Holy Father has to perform today.

We all know that St. Peter and all the Pontiffs who took his place are the Visible Heads of the Church. We also know that the responsibilities and the Mission they had to bear are the same as that of Christ Jesus - Evangelization. That is to proclaim the Good News of Salvation, the Good News of the Kingdom and the Good News of the Father. That was to protect the People of God from the evil one to lead them to God's Kingdom. After the triple denial of Peter, the triple questions that the Lord put to Peter were: "Simon, Son of John, do you love me more than these?" (Jh. 21 / 15). Peter's answer was: "Yes Lord, You know that I love you" (Jh. 21/15B). After this triple answer, Jesus told Peter and those who took his place in the future: "Feed my lambs" (Jh. 21 / 15C); "Tend my Sheep!" (Jn 21/16). It is with this request, that the duty and responsibility of protecting, tending, building and leading the people towards the Kingdom of God was placed on the Holy Pontiffs - the Visible Heads of the Church. It is this same responsibility that is placed on our dear Pope Benedict XVI: He is our Shepherd and we are his sheep!

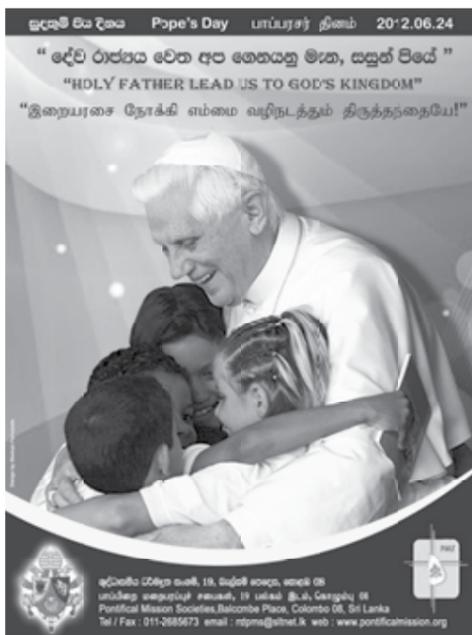
We are all weak Human Beings because of Original Sin. It is clear from the Holy Scriptures, that it is true of St. Peter as well. Yes, St. Peter is a good example to prove, that Jesus our Master makes us all strong and chooses whom He wants and appoints us to various important responsibilities. Although Peter was a weak person, yet Jesus said to Peter: "You are Peter and on this rock, I will build my Church and the powers of death shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven..." (Mt. 16/18-19). Again to Peter who repented for denying Jesus three times and to his other weak disciples, Jesus said: "All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..... and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age". (Mt. 28/18-20). It is the Lord, who always makes Strong and Powerful the weak Human Beings. Without Him, we can do nothing. But with Him, We can do everything. Here let us recall another incident in the Life of Jesus and Peter. Jesus tells Peter: "Simon, Simon, behold Satan demanded to have you that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren". (Lk. 22/31-32).

It remains true. To St. Peter and to all those Pontiffs who have taken the place of Peter, Lord Jesus has given the same duty and responsibility and together with it, His own Power and Protection. Therefore, let us show our love and respect to His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, who leads the Church today. Let us try to see Jesus the Lord, in him. Let us follow his instructions and walk according to his guidance. Let us always pray for him, as Christ the Lord Himself did pray for Peter. Not only today, but tomorrow and every day, let us with great devotion say:

"Holy Father, lead us to God's Kingdom!"

May God Bless you! May Mother Mary guide and protect you!

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Pope Benedict XVI Teachings

Pope Benedict XVI's main role is to teach about the Catholic faith and the solutions to the problems of discerning and living the faith, a role that he can play well as a former head of the Church's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The main points of emphasis of his teachings are stated in Theology of Pope Benedict XVI.

"Friendship with Jesus Christ"

At the conclusion of his first homily as Pope he referred to both Jesus Christ and John Paul II. Citing John Paul II's well-known words, "Do not be afraid! Open wide the doors for Christ," Pope Benedict said:

Are we not perhaps all afraid in some way? If we let Christ enter fully into our lives, if we open ourselves totally to Him, are we not afraid that we might take something away from us?..... and once again the Pope said: No! If we let Christ into our lives, we lose nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful and great. No! Only in this friendship do we experience beauty and liberation.... When we give ourselves to Him, we receive a hundredfold in return. Yes, open, open wide the doors to Christ - and you will find true life.

Benedict XVI: "The Eucharist is the enduring presence of Jesus' self - oblation." (Deus Caritas Est)

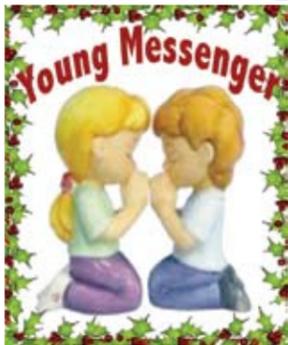
"Friendship with Jesus Christ" is a frequent theme of his preaching. He stressed that on this intimate friendship, "everything depends." He has also said: "We are all called to open ourselves to this friendship with God.... speaking to him as a friend, the only One who can make the world both good and happy..... All we have to do is put ourselves at His disposal.... This is an extremely important message. It is a message that helps to overcome what can be considered the great temptation of our time: the claim, that after the Big Bang, God withdrew from history." Thus in his book Jesus of Nazareth, His main purpose was "to help foster (in the reader) the growth of a living relationship" with Jesus Christ.

He took up this theme in his first encyclical Deus Caritas Est. In his personal explanation and summary of the encyclical, he stated: "If friendship with God becomes for us something ever more important and decisive, then we will begin to love those whom God loves and who are in need of us. God wants us to be friends of His friends and we can be so, if we are interiorly close to them." Thus, he said that prayer is "urgently needed... It is time to reaffirm the importance of prayer in the face of the activism and the growing secularism of many Christians engaged in charitable work."

POPE'S DAY COLLECTION 2011

DIocese	COLLECTION 2011
ANURADHAPURA	11,290.00
BADULLA	24,459.50
CHILAW	183,383.00
COLOMBO	843,674.75
GALLE	20,728.00
JAFFNA	116,047.00
KANDY	110,606.00
KURUNEGALA	74,509.00
MANNAR	55,360.00
RATNAPURA	41,450.00
TRINCO/ BATTICALOA	61,360.00
TOTAL	1,542,867.25

This collection was initiated by the Catholic Bishop's Conference - Sri Lanka, and must be submitted immediately to the Procurator or the Diocesan Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies as the case may be, for onward transmission to Rome via the National Office of the P.M.S for the Holy Father's personal charities.



A young man wanted to learn the art of sword fighting. He went to the greatest instructor in the land and said, "Please give me admission and teach me sword fighting."

The instructor gladly accepted him as a student and said, "Young man you can stay with me and learn this art."

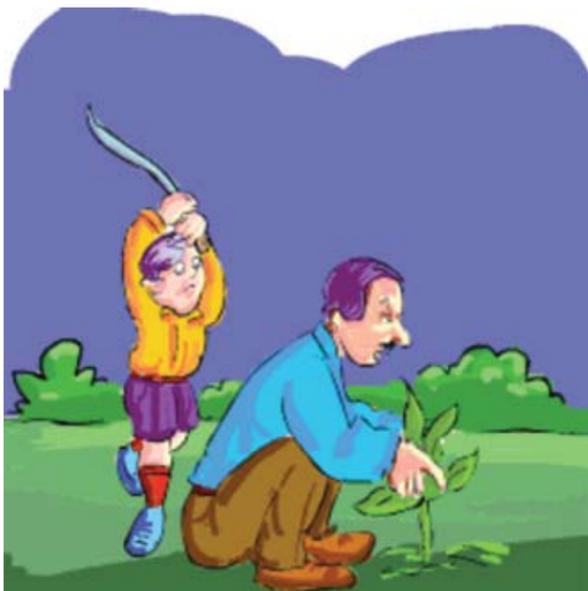
In the days that followed the instructor gave him many odd chores to perform. The chores were sweeping the floors, cutting vegetables, cooking and the like. But there was no mention of the sword or the art of fighting with it.

The young man got desperate, approached the instructor and said,

"Great teacher kindly begin my lessons." The instructor agreed.

The next day

The Instructor



when the young man was cooking, the instructor came from behind and hit him with a wooden sword and vanished. The young man was taken by surprise. The next day too the same thing happened. The young man now started preparing himself mentally to counter any such surprise attack.

Next time when the instructor came to attack him, the young man was able to dodge the blow of the sword. He was very happy with his

performance. He asked the instructor, "Now have I learnt the art of defending myself?" The instructor did not respond to his question and walked away.

Such surprise attacks became common and the young man got more and more skillful in countering the attacks well.

One day the young man saw the instructor engaged seriously in a task and a sudden desire crept into his head.

He thought, "Now let me catch the instructor unawares and attack him."

He took the wooden sword and attacked the instructor without a sound from behind.

But lo! The instructor was fully prepared for it. He took a shield lying near, turned around and defended himself most skillfully.

Realisation struck the young man that moment. He thought, "How great is this instructor. Today I have learnt the real secret of sword fighting. He has taught me that swinging the sword and learning the opponent's moves are not the essentials of sword fighting. What is important is to read what goes on in the opponent's mind and to counter his movement and his thoughts too."

The young man continued to take instructions in all humbleness and with newer insights trained well to become a great sword fighter of his country.

Folktales with morals

Cheer-up!

At the Wedding

Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother, "Why is the bride dressed in white?"

"Because white is the colour of happiness, and today is the happiest day of her life."

The child thought about this for a moment, then said, "So why is the groom wearing black?"

The Boasting Boys

Three boys are in the schoolyard bragging about their fathers. The first boy says, "My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem, they give him \$50."

The second boy says, "That's nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song, they give him \$100."

The third boy says, "I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon. And it takes eight people to collect all the money!"

Bible Lesson

A Sunday School teacher asked her class why Joseph and Mary took Jesus with them to Jerusalem.

A small child replied: "They couldn't get a baby sitter."

The Ten Commandments

A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six-year-olds. After explaining the commandment to "honour thy father and thy mother," she asked, "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?"

Without missing a beat one little boy answered, "Thou shall not kill."

Training on writing skills



Children of Grades 1-6 attending St. Winifred's Daham School, Kahatawila, belonging to the Haldanduwana Parish underwent a training programme on "Enhanced Writing Skills," recently

The programme was conducted by Kumara Nayanajith of the Gnaratha Pradeepaya under the guidance of the Parish Priest.

The Programme was co-ordinated by Teckla Caldera with the support of the Daham Pasal teachers.

Therese Malani

Beautiful Quotes

☞ Patience with family is love,
Patience with others is respect,
Patience with self is confidence and
Patience with GOD is faith.



☞ Never think hard about the PAST, It brings Tears
Don't think more about FUTURE, It brings Fears
Live this Moment with a Smile, It brings Cheers!

☞ Every test in our life makes us bitter or better,
Every problem comes to make us or break us,
Choice is ours whether we become victim or victorious!

Among Ourselves - Diocese of Kandy



(Next week)

What it says in the Readings

As for you, little child, you shall be called a prophet of God, the Most High. You shall go ahead of the Lord to prepare his ways before him.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR B 24th June - 1st July 2012

SUN: 12TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST (POPE'S DAY)

Job. 38:1, 8-11, 2 Cor. 5: 14-17, Mk. 4:35-41

Mon: 2 Kgs. 17: 5-8,13-15,18, Mt. 7: 1-5

Tue: 2 Kgs. 19: 9b-11,14-21,31-36, Mt. 7: 6, 12-14

Wed: Memorial of St. Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop & Doctor

2 Kgs. 22: 8-13,23,1-3, Mt.7: 15-20

Thu: Memorial of St. Irenaeus, Bishop & Martyr

2 Kgs. 24: 8-17, Mt. 7: 21-29

Fri: Feast of SS Peter and Paul, Apostles
Act 12: 1-11, 2 Tim. 4: 6-8,17-18, Mt. 16: 11-19

Sat: Memorial of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Lam 2: 2, 10-14,18-19, Mt.8: 5-17

Sun: 13TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Wis 1: 13-15,2, 23-24, 2 Cor 8: 7,9, 13-15, Mk. 5: 21-43

Prayers of the Faithful

Response: O Lord, hear us we pray, O Lord, give us your love.

That the holy Catholic Church may always strive to point the way to her Lord and Master by her way of life and example, we pray to the Lord.

Response: O Lord, hear us we pray, O Lord, give us your love.

That all the baptized may show by their life and example that they are salt of the earth and light of the world, we pray to the Lord.

Response: O Lord, hear us we pray, O Lord, give us your love.

That all families may live in peace and thus point to the presence of the Lord in their midst, we pray to the Lord.

Response: O Lord, hear us we pray, O Lord, give us your love.

That we may not despise the lowly but always hold them to be the poor of the Lord, we pray to the Lord.

Response: O Lord, hear us we pray, O Lord, give us your love.

St. John the Baptist - June 24

Born six months before our Lord, St. John the Baptist was the son of Zachary and Elizabeth, cousin of our Lady. He was the last and greatest of the prophets. As the forerunner of the Saviour, his mission was to prepare the Jews for the coming of Christ. When Jesus had come, St. John bore witness to Him before his own followers and encouraged them to follow Him.



Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading. Job. 38:1, 8-11.

Referring to the limits that God has placed on the powerful sea which is one of His creations. God tells Job that even suffering and evil have limits when it comes to the power of God, the Creator.

Second Reading. 2 Cor. 5: 14-17.

Human tendency is to live a life for oneself only. But St. Paul reminds us that whoever renews his life in Christ, cannot help but live for Christ, for the mere fact that he becomes a new creation.

Gospel. Mk. 4:35-41.

It shows us that though Christ is invisible he is with us. He is nevertheless with us to help and encourage us when we lack faith and entertain fears. The story of the calming of the storm explains this.

Reflection.

Today's readings invite us to face life with all its ups and downs with faith, hope and courage. As one song has it. "Some guys

have all the luck and some guys have all the pain." Some people have all the blessing of life whilst some are not blessed at all. There are some others who have a mixture of both. We are all called to accept life lovingly from God and to live it accordingly to his will bearing witness to him, who has called us to this life. We do this by living our day to day lives with faith, hope and courage. We are called to live by faith and it is faith that will set us free. Therefore we need to have faith because the Lord is with us in spirit and the Lord has all power and domain over all things. This is quite evident in today's readings. God too reminds us of this so that we may live a life faithful to Him.

Today's Gospel shows us that our lives would be full of storms, uncertainties, fears, dangers, sufferings...etc. But still we are expected to remain calm and quiet. We should not lose our faith just because we do not have an understanding of what God's plans are for us. We needn't be heartbroken, discouraged or depressed be-

cause of the suffering we undergo. Today's Second Reading reminds us that even our Lord underwent suffering and finally died on the Cross. Therefore we cannot question God for what our lives are. We can and should only find out what God expects from us in order that we too may be saved. And we too must find out ways and means of attaining this salvation which the Lord gained for us through suffering and death.

Aid Story

An airliner flew into a violent thunderstorm and was soon swaying and bumping around the sky. One very nervous lady happened to be sitting next to a clergyman and turned to him. "Can't you do something?" She demanded angrily.

"I am sorry ma'am." The reverend said gently. "I am in sales, not in management."

Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos

St. Josemaria Escriva June 26

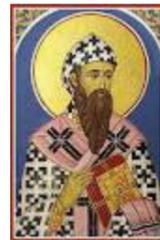
Saint Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer (9 January 1902 - 26 June 1975; also known as José María or Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer Albás, born José María Mariano Escrivá Albás)



was a Roman Catholic priest from Spain who founded Opus Dei, an organization of laypeople and priests dedicated to the teaching that everyone is called to holiness and that ordinary life is a path to sanctity. He was canonized in 2002 by Pope John Paul II, who declared Saint Josemaría should be "counted among the great witnesses of Christianity."

St. Cyril of Alexandria - June 27

He was the Patriarch of Alexandria in Egypt and a most acute, profound theologian. As bishop and doctor, he became the glory of the Church in Egypt.

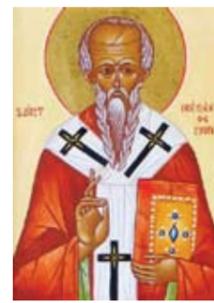


During the Council of Ephesus, he defended the oneness of persons in Jesus Christ and the divine maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary against the heresy of Nestorius.

St. Irenaeus - June 28

He was a disciple of St. Polycarp of Smyrna. At a time when Gnostic sects threatened to undermine Christianity by a perversion of Christian thought, St. Irenaeus vigorously denounced all heresies and safeguarded unity of belief.

He succeeded the martyred St. Pothinus in the See of Lyons.



Incorporated into the Church, the Body of Christ

1267 Baptism makes us members of the Body of Christ: "Therefore... we are members one of another." Baptism incorporates us into the Church. From the baptismal fonts is born the one People of God of the New Covenant, which transcends all the natural of human limits of nations, cultures races and sexes: "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body."

1268 The baptized have become "living stones" to be "built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood." By Baptism they share in the priesthood of Christ, in his prophetic and royal mission. They are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that (they) may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called (them) out of darkness into his marvellous light." Baptism gives a share in the common priesthood of all believers.

1269 Having become a member of the Church, the person baptized belongs no longer to himself, but to him who died and rose for us. From now on, he is called to be subject to others, to serve them in the communion of the Church, and to "obey and submit" to the Church's leaders, holding them in respect and affection. Just as Baptism is the source of responsibilities and duties, the baptized person also enjoys rights within the Church: To receive the sacraments, to be nourished with the Word of God and to be sustained by the other spiritual helps of the Church.

1270 "Reborn as sons of God, (the baptized) must profess before men the faith they have received from God through the Church" and participated in the apostolic and missionary activity of the People of God.

The sacramental bond of the unity of Christians

1271 Baptism constitutes the foundation of communion among all Christians, including those who are not yet in full communion with the Catholic Church: "For men who believe in Christ and have been properly baptized are put in some, thought imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church. Justified by faith in Baptism, (they) are incorporated into Christ; they therefore have a right to be called Christians, and with good reason, are accepted as brothers by the children of the Catholic Church."

"Baptism therefore constitutes the sacramental bond of unity existing among all who through it are reborn."

(Catechism of the Catholic Church)

