



Holy Childhood Sunday  
25 January

SINCE FEBRUARY 11, 1869  
**MESSENGER**  
THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY OF SRI LANKA

REGISTERED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POSTS OF SRI LANKA

UNDER NO. QD/19 / NEWS / 2015

Sunday, January 25, 2015 Vol 146 No 04 20 Pages Rs: 25.00 Registered as a newspaper

# • AT THE SHRINE OF MADHU I saw something I never thought I would see: Pope

Among the most significant issues that Pope Francis touched on during a fifty minute media conference on the six hour flight from Colombo to Manila, the capital of the Philippines on January 15, was his visit to the Sri Maha Bodhi Temple at Maligakanda, Maradana, the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary in Madhu and the Canonization of Saint Joseph Vaz.

In answer to a question posed by a journalist on his surprise visit to a Buddhist Temple the Holy Father explained, "Yesterday I saw something I never thought I'd see ... at the Shrine of the Madonna. It wasn't just Catholics, they weren't even the majority. There were Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus. They all go there to pray and they say they receive graces. There's something in the people there that unites them," Pope Francis said.

"If they are so naturally united that they come together to pray in that holy place, that is Christian, then how could I not go to a Buddhist Temple to greet them," he asked.

"This witness at Madhu yesterday was very important, it makes us understand the sense of inter-religiosity that is lived in Sri Lanka. There is respect



among them, Yes, there are small fundamentalist groups, but they are not of the people, they are ideological elites. They are not of the people."

Pope Francis also said that at the inter-religious encounter in Colombo, he had read what the Second Vatican Council said about the other religions and the values in other religions. "The

Church has grown a lot in these years and in respect...We are all on a path of conversion, which is a grace; always from sin to grace. This inter-religiosity as brothers, respecting each other always is a grace," he observed.

Continuing the Pope said, "You asked why did I go to the Buddhist Temple? The head of this temple had been



## Encyclical on Ecology

Pope Francis confirmed on the Flight that he is in the final stages of completing the Encyclical on Ecology, stating that climate change was mostly due to the work of man. He revealed that he expects the Encyclical to be published in June or July before the important International Conference in Paris on Climate Change.

able to get himself invited by the government to be at the Airport for my arrival.

Contd on Pg. 2 >>>

## Blessings for Minister of Christian Affairs



The new Minister of Disaster Management and Christian Religious Affairs, John Amaratunga assumed duties at the Ministry of Disaster Management recently. A Ministry of Christian Affairs last functioned under the Presidency of Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga. Picture shows Mr. Amaratunga receiving blessings from Catholic Priests.  
**Nimal Perera**

## Joint Worship Service for Christian Unity Week

Concluding the week of prayer for Christian Unity from January 18-25, the Joint Worship Service organised by the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka and the Roman Catholic Church as a commitment to Christian Unity, will be held on Sunday, January 25 at 5.00 pm, at the Methodist Church, Moor Road, Wellawatte.



The Theme for this year is "Jesus said to her: Give me to drink" (John 4:7).

**Rev. Fr. Sanjewa Mendis**

## Pope invited for IEC in Philippines in 2016

After Pope Francis left Manila on the morning of Monday, January 19, the Archbishop



of Manila, Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle has said that the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines have invited Pope Francis to attend the 51st International Eucharistic Congress (IEC) to be held in Cebu in January 2016.

Pope Francis had approved the date and theme of the 51st International Eucharistic Congress which will take place from January 25 to 31, 2016 under the theme "Christ in you, our hope of glory" which is taken from the Letter of St. Paul to the Colossians.

The IEC began in 1881 as the fruit of the works of St. Peter Julian Eymard, Apostle of the Eucharist and is held every four years. The last conference was held in Dublin, Ireland in June 2012. The first ever IEC to be held in Asia was in Manila in 1937.



# Verbum Television the first Catholic Television Channel

Telecast will commence on 30th January at 4.30 pm through PEO TV & Dialog TV

# Feast of St. Francis de Sales Church, Dalugama

Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith will preside at the 150th jubilee celebrations of St. Francis de Sales Church, Dalugama this Sunday, January 25. Vespers sung, the previous day was officiated by His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo.

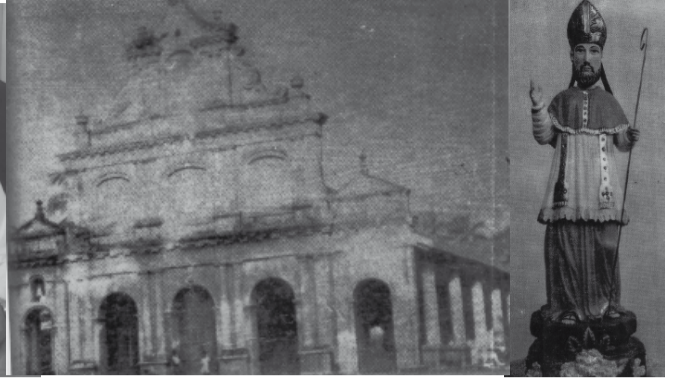
To commemorate this event a jubilee souvenir will be published under the patronage of the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Jude Shamman.

The Church also has a record of introducing six bishops who were at one time assistant parish priests of the Church. They are, Archbishop Emeritus, His Grace Most

Rev. Dr. Oswald Gomis and Their Lordships Rt. Rev. Dr. Raymond Peiris, Rt. Rev. Dr. Harold Anthony Perera, Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Fernando, Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva and His Lordship, the Late, Rt. Rev. Dr. Don Sylvester.

St Francis de Sales is the patron saint of writers, lawyers and journalists.

*Maurice Bollegalla*



## Blessing of Statue of St. Sebastian at Diyalagoda



Rev. Fr. Tharanga Dinesh Keerthisinghe, Parish Priest Diyalagoda blessed and declared open for worship the new statue of St. Sebastian and a place for the lighting of candles at Diyalagoda Church premises, recently.

*D. Anselm Fernando*

## A Day for Sick and Elders



St. Gerard Majella (SVP) Conference of Kalamulla Parish held a 'Day for Sick and Elders' last month at the Katukurunda Convent under the patronage of Spiritual Director, Rev. Fr. Welikadaarachchi.

*Rufus Fernando*

Contd. from Pg. 1

## I saw something...

He is a very good friend of Cardinal Ranjith and there he met me and asked me to come to the temple and Cardinal Ranjith said he will get me there. Then, talking with the Cardinal I saw there was not much time... So returning to Colombo after Madhu there was the possibility of going to the temple, so we telephoned and we went there. In this temple there are relics of two disciples of the Buddha that for them are very important. These relics were in England and they managed to get them there and they took them out so we could look at them. He came to see me at the Airport; I went to see him at his house."

The Holy Father also spoke to journalists on the Canonization of Saint Joseph Vaz, which according to the Director of the Holy See Press Office, Fr. Federico Lombardi SJ, was something very close to the Holy Father.

Pope Francis said the Canonization of Saint Joseph Vaz was made with the methodology that is envisaged in the Church Law, it is called 'Equipollent Canonization'. It is used when after a long time a man or woman is blessed (has been beatified) and has the veneration of the People of God and de facto s/he is venerated as a saint and the process of a miracle is not made. They are persons who can be that way perhaps for centuries.

The Pope explained that the canonization of Saint Joseph Vaz took place when he decided to choose persons who were great evangelizers (men or women). The first was Peter Faber who was the evangelizer of Europe. He died, one could say, on the road. "These are persons that did great evangelization and so they are in accord with the theology of Evangelii Gaudium and for this reason I choose these people. That's it."

## Blessings Mass at Tewatte



His Grace Archbishop Emeritus, Rt. Rev. Dr. Oswald Gomis imparts the blessing to the faithful with the statue of Our Lady at the Blessings Mass organised by the Society of Our Lady of the Basilica, Wennappuwa.

This feast was held for the 31st time.

*H.A. Caldera*

## Notice

### Annual Convention of the Cursillo Movement

The Inter-Diocesan Secretariat of the Sri Lanka Cursillo Movement, prayerfully invites Cursillo Members to the 48th Annual Cursillo Convention to reflect on the theme "A Call to be Missionaries of Love" on Sunday, February 1, 2015, at St. Peter's College, Bambalapitiya, commencing at 8.00 a.m. Entrance Coupons can be obtained from your Ultreya Co-ordinator.

#### PLEASE NOTE

Participation at the Convention is only for those who have followed the "Three Day Programme" in full.

*Rev. Fr. Tony Martyn Chaplain  
Inter Diocesan Secretariat*

## Flood relief donation to Anuradhapura



As a result of a request made by His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, Archbishop of Colombo, devotees of Colombo Diocese donated relief material such as clothes, dry rations, mats, pillows, mosquito nets, bed sheets, towels, school stationery and exercise books to help in meeting the needs of people affected and displaced by recent floods and landslides caused by the incessant rains in Sri Lanka.

The donated goods were handed over to Anuradhapura Diocese as humanitarian assistance by a team led by the Director of Seth Sarana, Rev. Fr. Rohan de Alwis.

Picture shows Rev. Fr. Paaris Jayamaha, Director of Seth Saviya Anuradhapura Diocese, receiving the relief goods from Mr. Titus Wimalasiri, Executive Manager of Seth Sarana - Caritas Colombo.

## Silver Jubilee of St. Sebastian's Church, Rukmalgama

The Catholic community of Rukmalgama Housing Scheme, Pannipitiya, is making preparations to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of their Church dedicated to St. Sebastian, on Sunday February 1, 2015.

The parishioners of St. Sebastian's Church, Rukmalgama, greatly appreciate the pioneering efforts of Rev. Fr. Marcus Fernandez, who completed the building of the Church with hard work and determination. He was ably assisted by Rev. Fr. Robinson Wijesinghe, who was the Assistant Parish Priest of Christ the King Church, Pannipitiya.

*The feast programme is as follows:*

Sunday 25th January 2015:

Holy Mass followed by the hoisting of the flag staff.

Monday 26th January to Friday January 30th

Daily Novenas at 7.00pm

Saturday 31st January, 2015

Vespers Service at 6.45pm

Sunday 1st February 2015 8.15am

Festive High Mass followed by a procession around the Housing Scheme.

The proceedings will conclude with the blessing of the congregation with the miraculous statue of St. Sebastian, the Patron Saint of the sick.

*Z.E. Irugalbandara*

## Commercial Bank donates IT Lab to Church



Commercial Bank of Ceylon PLC - Mahiyangana Branch under its Corporate Social Responsibility project donated a fully equipped and furnished IT Lab to the Risen Christ Church. Mr. Delakshan Hettiarachchi Senior Regional Manager, (Central), graced the occasion on the invitation of Mr. Sagara Tennakoon, Manager, Mahiyangana Branch and Rev. Fr. Dilex Shantha, Parish Priest.

*Ranjith Karunaweera*

## Thanksgiving Mass on retirement



A Mass of Thanksgiving was held at St. Nicholas Church, Bopitiya to mark the retirement of Pamunugama MV Principal, Anura Gunawardena. Picture shows him receiving blessings from the celebrant. *S.K.J. Kurera*

**CATHOLIC PRESS WEBSITE**

www.colombocatholicpress.com

Email: cmmessenger2014@yahoo.com

cmesenger@slt.net.lk / pradeepaya@slt.net.lk

Telephone: 2695984, 2678106, 4899611 Fax: 2692586

# Weeping Philippine girl challenges Pope

## Children are not guilty of anything

A weeping 12-year-old Philippine girl, asking how God could allow children to become prostitutes, moved Pope Francis to hug her and appeal for everyone to show more compassion.

Glyzelle Palomar, a one-time homeless child taken in by a church charity, made her emotional plea during a meeting with young people at the Catholic University of Santo Tomas in Manila, ahead of a Holy Mass by the Pope to millions of faithful on the morning of

Sunday, January 18.

"Many children are abandoned by their parents. Many children get involved in drugs and prostitution," Palomar told the Pope as she stood on stage alongside 14-year-old Jun Chura who also used to be homeless.

"Why does God allow these things to happen to us? The children are not guilty of anything."

Palomar broke down and wept profusely, prompting the 78-year-old Pontiff with a man-of-the-people reputation to

take her into his arms and hug her for a few seconds.

The Pope later discarded most of his prepared speech that he was due to give in English, reverting back to his native Spanish to deliver an impromptu and heartfelt response.

"She is the only one who has put a question for which there is no answer and she wasn't even able to express it in words but in tears," the Pope told a crowd that organisers said reached 30,000.

The Pope, who was in the Philippines for a five-day visit, told those in the crowd that they first had to learn to cry with other marginalised and suffering people. He said superficial compassion, which resulted in just giving alms, shown by many in the world was not enough.

"If Christ had that kind of compassion, he would have just walked by, greeted the people, given them something and moved



Pope Francis hugs two former street children

on," he said, with his response echoed in English by an official translator.

## Imelda Marcos appears among the pilgrims



The controversial former first lady of the Philippines, Mrs. Imelda Marcos who is now wheelchair-bound was present at the Holy Mass of Pope Francis in Tacloban city.

Speaking to journalists Marcos said: "The Pope's message is for the poor, he wants to help the poor. If everyone followed the Pope's example, we would be assured unity and peace." These words are significant given that many remember Imelda Marcos for her collection of over 2700 pairs of shoes.

She also exercised a strong political influence in the country when her husband Ferdinand Marcos was President, a power no other first lady had had, before her. She was Minister of Human Settlements, Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary, Governor of the National Capital Region and a member of the Interim National Legislature. She also held positions in many companies and government and public entities.

## Diploma in Catholic Education and Teacher Training - 2015

Applications will be received for 'Diploma in Catholic Education and Teacher Training' selection test conducted by the Archdiocesan Catholic Education Office for the Teachers of Catholic Private Schools, who are employed on contract basis.

Application forms have been sent to all principals of Catholic Private Schools. Please fill the application with the Principal's signature and return same to Catholic Education Office at Archbishop's House, Colombo - 08, on or before February 20, 2015, together with the receipt of deposit of Rs. 400.00 at Commercial Bank, Borella Branch to A.C No. 1190020913.

Last date to send the application forms is February 20, 2015.

**Archdiocesan Director of Education and General Manager of the Catholic Private Schools (W.P.)  
Archdiocese of Colombo.**

## Highest crowd for a Pope ever in the Philippines



Six to seven million people braving the rain, lined the route to the Holy Mass presided by Pope Francis at Papal route to Rizal Park, Philippines, city officials estimate. That would be a record for a Papal event. About five million welcomed Pope John Paul II in Manila in 1995.

The Vatican said Pope Francis had dedicated the service in part to the victims of Typhoon Haiyan, which devastated the country in 2013. The Holy See Press Office also confirms that this is the highest crowd ever for a Papal Visit.

The Holy Mass at Rizal Park was the Pope's final full day in the Philippines, where there are 80 million Catholics, concluding his six-day tour of Asia.

In his homily Pope Francis that God reminds us of our deepest identity. "All of us are God's children, members of God's family. Today Saint Paul has told us that in Christ we have become God's adopted children, brothers and sisters in Christ. This is who we are. This is our identity."

## Archbishop Tagle of Philippines on Pope's message to faithful

His Eminence Luis Antonio G. Cardinal Tagle, Archbishop of Manila speaking after the departure of Pope Francis said that priest, religious, the lay, all got the message of the Holy Father clearly and everyone will be called to put this message into action."

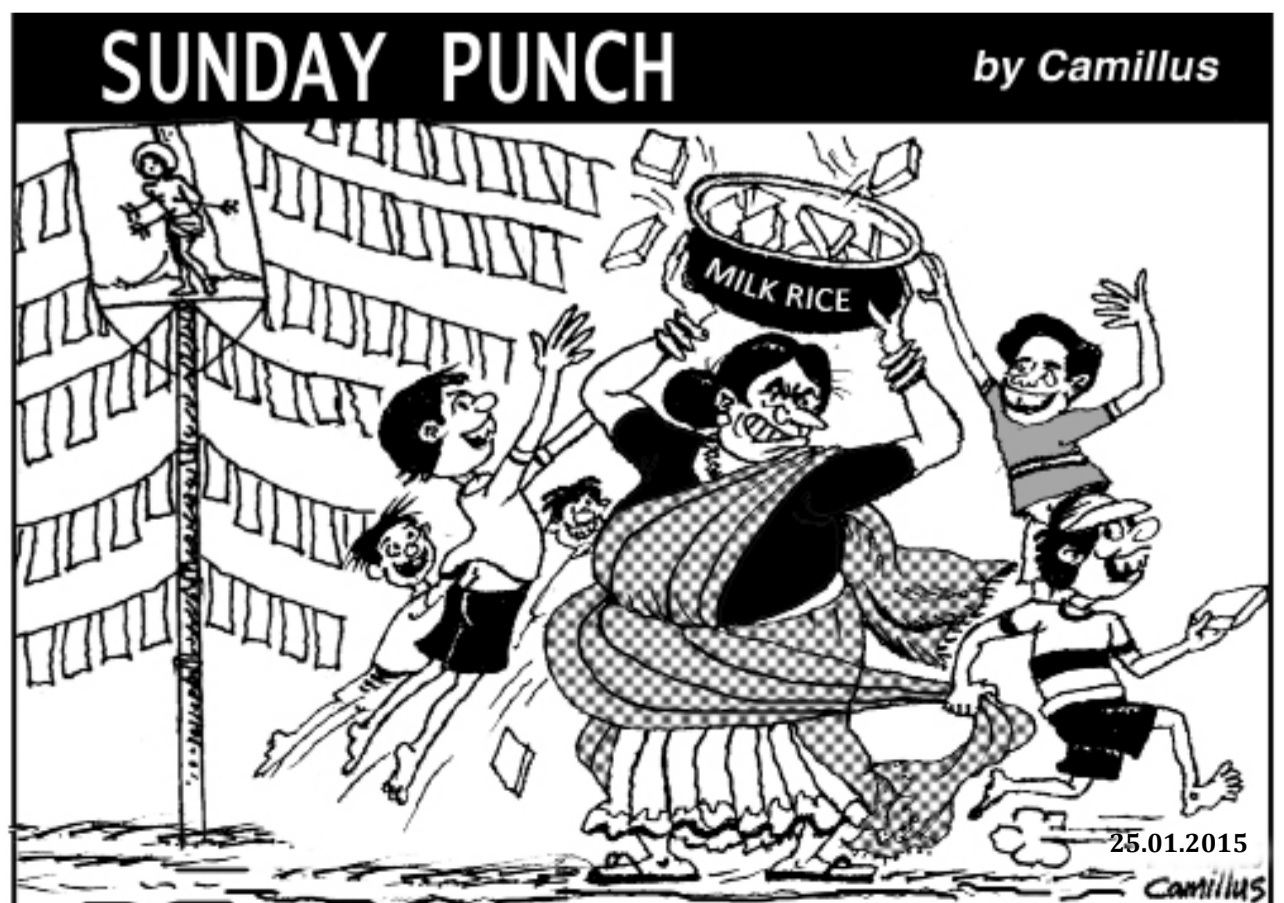


The Archbishop said that the Papal message on bridging the gap between the rich and poor is "not just for Christians but for all." Cardinal Tagle also stated that Pope Francis is challenging the culture to not blindly accept every novelty.

"I think the Holy Father is also inviting us to be discerning and to be critical," he said.

"Not everything new is necessarily good. Here I think the Christian spirituality of discernment can be handy," observed the Cardinal. "How do we immerse ourselves in the Word of God, in prayer, in the teachings of the Church, and with that deep resource how do you address the changes in the world?"

Cardinal Tagle said when speaking privately with Pope Francis, the Holy Father said one solid foundation is popular religiosity. "He said it is the simple faith that makes people survive the changes in society," said Cardinal Tagle.



25.01.2015

Camillus

ONCE FEBRUARY 11, 1960

# MESSENGER

THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY OF SRI LANKA

## EDITORIAL

Email: [cmessenger2014@yahoo.com](mailto:cmessenger2014@yahoo.com)  
Telephone: 011 2695984

January 25, 2015

## Revival of God's Kingdom values in Sri Lanka

With the spectacular visit of Pope Francis and the launching of a new all-party National Unity Government, Sri Lanka has entered a new era which hopefully would be a golden chapter in the country's history.

Pope Francis, in his three-day pilgrimage which drew about 1.5 million people - the biggest crowd for any public event in Sri Lanka's history - brought a message of peace, reconciliation and unity with priority being given to poverty alleviation and sincere care for millions of people trapped in poverty.

President Maitripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe have repeatedly stressed that the government of the New Democratic Front (NDF) will be an all-party coalition - first of its kind in Sri Lanka. It is likely that the important bills including the vital constitutional amendment will get not just a two third majority but a unanimous vote in Parliament. That means yes votes from 224 of the 225 member-parliament, the exception being the Speaker who normally does not vote. Happily the President and the Prime minister, in a conciliatory move, have agreed to ask speaker Chamal Rajapaksa to continue.

With the approval of the vital constitutional changes including the revival of the 17th Amendment the powers of the Executive President will be devolved to the Cabinet of Ministers and Parliament and to Independent Commissions handling areas which constitute vital pillars of democracy.

For good governance and democracy, accountability and transparency, powers of the executive presidency will be devolved to the independent Judicial Services Commission, the National Police Commission, the Public Services Commission, the Elections Commission and to the commission probing allegations of bribery and corruption. Suitable members of these commissions will be nominated by an all party Constitutional Council and appointed by the President.

On January 29, an interim Budget will be presented by the new Finance Minister Ravi Karunanayake, a highly qualified chartered accountant. He and other government leaders have promised that as the first step towards poverty alleviation the prices of 10 essential items would be substantially reduced with salary increments and other relief measures being given to all workers.

Another important bill in the 100-day programme is a Code of Conduct for all MPs. Any member, even a minister, found guilty of violating this code will be sacked immediately. This will be part of the battle to check and curb rampant corruption running into hundreds of millions of dollars. Independent analysts say this was one of the main reasons for the downfall of the Rajapaksa regime and government leaders have pledged that all those against whom substantial evidence is available will be speedily tried in courts of law. If convicted they will face jail sentences while their assets will be seized and given back to the country and the people from whom billions of rupees were plundered.

In one of thousands of such cases the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna - which has not joined the new government but is supporting it - filed a petition in the Court of Appeal against the LTTE's arms magnate Kumaran Pathmanadan or KP. According to the complaint KP allegedly owns a fleet of ships, tons of gold, supermarkets and fuel stations in several countries and other assets worth hundreds of millions of dollars. He was arrested by Interpol in Malaysia more than four years ago but has enjoyed luxury VIP protection up to now. The JVP has asked the court for an order that his assets worth billions be seized and given back to the poor people of this country.

We have seen the best of times, the worst of times and now, in the afterglow of Pope Francis' glorious visit we hopefully are seeing historic times with values and principles of the Kingdom of God.

# Servants of the People

By Francis Madiwela

Our President Maithripala Sirisena, an unassuming and soft-spoken man said at his swearing-in that it would be the first and the last time that he would contest for the office of the president. This is in contrast to his predecessor who even changed the constitution to contest for the third time. Mr. Sirisena also said, "We do not need a king but a true human being to serve you."

The concept of servant is a very familiar theme in the Bible both in the Old as well as the New Testaments. In the Book of Isaiah the Lord says: "Here is my servant, whom I strengthen, the ones I have chosen, with whom I am pleased. I have filled him with my spirit and he will bring justice to every nation. He will not shout or raise his voice or make loud speeches in the streets" (Isaiah 42:1-2).

### Servant Theme

Modern Biblical scholars dispute to whom Isaiah refers in his "servant poems." (Isaiah Chapters 40 to 55.) These poems or songs are also called "Ebed Yahweh songs" which literally means the songs of the Servant of God. Some say that Isaiah refers to the kings of Israel as the servants of God. Some say that the reference is made to the prophets and some argue that it is a referral to the Messiah. In the connotation of kings it refers to the rulers of the people. Isaiah expects kings or rulers to be servants of the people.

When it applies to the Messiah it is shown in practice in the life and death of Jesus Christ Himself. He depicted Himself as the servant of God, who would demean Himself even to wash the feet of His apostles. He urged His apostles to follow Him in this humble gesture. "I, your Lord and Teacher, has just washed your feet. You then should wash one another's feet. I have set an example for you, so that you will do exactly what I have done to you." (John 13:12-16)

In the Book of Isaiah the servant poems continue in Chapter 49. Here the Prophet puts the servant theme into the mouth of the Prophet. "Before I was born, the Lord chose me and appointed me to be his servant...He said to me, Israel you are my servant, because of you, people will praise me." (Isaiah 49:1-3).

This servant theme continues in many books of the Old and New Testaments. In the Book of Psalms, "I am your servant, O Lord, I serve you, just as my mother did." (Psalm 116:16).

His Eminence Thomas Cardinal Cooray took a verse from Matthew 20:28 as the insignia in his court of arms: "To serve and not to be served." Jesus makes the mission of the Servant his own; he is the meek and humble of heart, (Matthew 11:29) who announces the salvation to the poor. (Luke 22:27)

The Biblical theme of *Ebed Yahweh* (servant of God) also is very much affiliated with the theme of *Kenosis*, which mean self-emptying. This theme of self-emptying is very well depicted in an ancient hymn used for prayers in the first century Christian churches. Paul in his letter to the Philippians is quoting this ancient first century hymn which the early Christians would have known by heart.

Paul says, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ: He always had the nature of God. But he did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made himself in human likeness and being found in appearance as a man. He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him, to the highest place and gave him the name above every name...every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord." (Philippians; 2: 5-11)



**"The highest obligation of a human being is to be of service to others"**

Here the theme of kenosis (emptying of himself) and the servant-hood (ebed Yahweh) are very clear. This is the meaning of the word incarnation, God appearing in human flesh, emptying himself even to the state of a human.

### Saint Joseph Vaz

St. Joseph Vaz was an epitome of a servant of God. He literally came to Sri Lanka as a labourer and sometimes disguised himself as a beggar. He served the persecuted and hidden Catholic communities settled down in various parts of the island. Most of his travelling was done on foot, to celebrate mass, to administer sacraments and to encourage the Catholic communities all over the island.

This is the Biblical theme of service and emptying which is depicted in many utterances of people such as Mahatma Gandhi who said "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." Our President in his inaugural address referred to our founding fathers as D.S. Senanayake and S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike. It was S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike who said, "The highest obligation of a human being is to be of service to others."

The aim of the politicians should not be to amass as much wealth to oneself or to enjoy the perks of office, but to serve the electorate. It was another twentieth century statesman who said, "Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country." President J.F. Kennedy meant service to the country and to its people.

Justice C.G. Weeramantry in his book "A Call for National Reawakening" says the Sri Lankan politicians seek office to enjoy the very attractive perks of the office. "A fleet of vehicles, armed guards, an escort whenever one travels and numerous other perks. It pays to be a politician."

I recommend this 156-paged book written by the onetime President of the International Court of Justice as an excellent handbook for every politician who intends to serve the country and its people.

# Who is a Saint?

(For the occasion of the Canonization of Saint Joseph Vaz)

**Prof. Anton Meemana**

*"This is the will of God, your sanctification: That you abstain from immorality."  
(1 Thessalonians 4: 3)*

## Saintly identity and Christ

A saint is a person who has found his or her true identity, true vocation, true life, true joy in Christ Jesus. The closer you get to Christ, the deeper you live in Him, the more you become truly and profoundly yourself.

Only when we get lost in Christ, we are found by Him. Only when we are found by Him, we can find Christ. When we find Christ, we find ourselves. When we keep a distance from Christ, we keep a distance from our very selves, too. When we become like Christ, we become deeply ourselves.

As Oscar Wilde points out; "He who would lead a Christian life is he who is perfectly and absolutely himself."

My true identity is forever hidden in Christ. When I hide myself in Christ, my true identity, which had been hidden in Him, surfaces. Unless it had been nourished and incubated in Him, it cannot shine through.

Saints always joyfully abandon their will, personal ambitions and agendas for a greater purpose. One's ability and humility to follow not one's own will but God's will is the real courage. To live for a higher purpose leads to a deeper joy.

The ultimate fulfillment and contentment in life can be had only in the process of living a holy life. Holiness cannot be achieved as a project. It is a gift bestowed on us without our full conscious control. It is something that happens to us, that is being constantly done to us.

More than anybody else, a saint radiates the image and likeness of God. Every saint convinces us that, no matter how bad the world appears to be, God is truly alive in our midst, in our chaotic World.

There is no way we can escape from God and therefore there is no way we cannot not become accountable to God for our conduct.

It is true that sanctity is a gift from God, but at the same time, our sanctity is also our precious gift to God. By making what we received from God our own, we return the gift to the giver. But when we return it, it has already acquired our zeal, our stamp, our imprint in it.

Each person's sanctity is unique. One person's sanctity cannot be compared with another's. Holiness is nobody's monopoly and everybody's property.

## Divine Glory and True Sanity

Great saints in human history show us as to what height we humans can spiritually aspire. But it is never for one's personal ambition or glory. It is all for the greatest glory of God. Our own Saint Joseph Vaz certainly belongs to this category.

Saints are the ever-active members of the Divine Orchestra that sings, chants, praises and exalts on and on and on the Divine glory. Saints have God as their only true valuable possession.

The one who is possessed by God possesses everything. The one who does not possess God possesses absolutely nothing for whatsoever he or she

has acquired financially, materially and temporarily will be taken away sooner or later.

Sanctity is Christ living in us now and forever in order to cleanse us from all sins. Christ visits us always through saints. Christ continues to shine in and through each saint.

Not to become a saint is not to become a real human being; that is to say, not to live a full life, an authentic life. Saint is the real catalyst, the true revolutionary. Saints are never insane. Only a sane person could become a saint. Saintliness is our real sanity. We become insane, when we do not strive to become saints.

We cannot have a complete awareness of our holiness during our life-time. Only after our death, will it be gradually and fully manifested and realized. Fullness and fulfillment is a gradual process. Since only God knows fully the authentic shape of our holiness, He will be revealing it to future generations. The depth of one's holiness will be revealed only to others and can only be known by others and it is God who is behind this historical process.

Growing awareness of our sinfulness is the gateway to our growing holiness. It is true that self-awareness is a decisive factor but not sufficient in itself. After deep self-awareness must come constant struggle to do things differently and behave transformingly.

Each saint is a guiding star for those who have been shipwrecked in the ocean of worldly chaos. A saint always recognizes the best in others and in so doing he or she also brings the best out of himself or herself.

God never belittles us in order to glorify or magnify Himself. He always magnifies, edifies, sanctifies, lifts us up. That is the true greatness and magnanimity of God. God is too great to belittle us. A great God makes others great too.

Since Christ brought out the best qualities even in sinners, the one who lives in Christ ought to do the same.

A saint desires and wants others to be holier than himself. A saint desires deeply and wants truly others to become better saints than himself. The holier the others become, the easier for us to become holy. A saint wants others to enjoy the joy of saintliness. A saint raises others up over and above himself. That is the secret of his deep-seated joy, the secret of his heavenly bliss. Until and unless we make others happier, we cannot find true happiness. In this sense, saints are the happiest people on earth.

Real change in life requires hard work, quality time, a lot of patience and infinite humility. But ultimately it is a work of God's endless grace. Necessary things for a meaningful life will be revealed to the patient man. A patient man is a gracious man and a gracious man is a precious man. Such is the basic spiritual contours of a holy person.

Nobody can tell me who I am. Only God can do it satisfactorily since only God knows me completely and totally. Since I do

not know who really I am, I do need the help of God and also other people who are sincerely after my well-being. God desires nothing less than my total well-being and happiness.

## Eternal Perspective and My True Vocation

I need a panoramic view of myself in order to see myself properly. Glimpsing God's perspective helps me to will the will of God. Seeing what God sees and willing what God wills is always for my best interest.

In order to love and serve others, we must become ourselves deeply. Confused person is a self-preoccupied person and hence cannot free himself from his confused state of mind. Confusion enslaves us. Authentic interior free-



dom stems from constant letting go of one's unnecessary self-preoccupations.

*Contd. on Pg. 14*

# Have we chosen the better part?

"Today's religious men and women need to be prophetic, capable of walking the world, of showing they are a special breed who have something to say to the world today" (Pope Francis). Vocation to religious life is purely a gift from God and it cannot be forcibly vested on a person, rather one should receive it only from God. However with the dawn of the new millennium, 'Vocation' has become an ever recurring question in the religious field. Everybody seems to be concerned about the declining number of vocations. Thus a number of questions are raised by people, even questioning the Divine, regarding the reduced number of vocations. Are Priests and Religious faithful to their vocations and committed to the Call? Or is there some other reason?

## Loss of zeal and the Spirit

Every founder of Religious Orders was inspired by God to enable and to materialise the love of God and His Mercy through their different Charismas in the world. In return, amidst so many trials, temptations and hardships they offered their lives to actualise these Orders with their particular mission in order to lead people to their Creator. They were totally rooted in God and eventually became effective and holy instruments in His hand. Thus they fasted rigorously, prayed unceas-

ingly and forgot their own desires to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Now there is a question before us whether we, as followers of those holy founders, uphold and nurture the same spirit and commitment? Is it not already diluted and contaminated with our dire needs? It is true that we have to change with the times, but does that mean that we have to move away from the original spirit? Have we already succumbed to the temptations of relativism and hedonism? Do we have time to pray, to meditate the Word of God? Do we find any meaning in fasting and austerity which boosted the spirituality of our holy founders? Do we still find Poverty and simplicity or have they fallen by the way side? So how can we be blessed by God when we keep aloof from God? Without His blessings how can we be a blessing to others?

## Decadence of Family Life

In today's society, family has become the most vulnerable institution with many challenges thrust in its way, the most threatening being the country's economic situation which has a direct effect on its very existence. To maintain this family, both parents have to go to work and thus children and parents both have no time to bond with each other. The children have lost the love and care of parents which are indispensable for a healthy

growth of children and without which they search other ways and means to fill up the gap, such as internet, pornography, unethical and unhealthy relationships etc.

## Self-realisation

Each and every one has got to realise their original spirituality, commitment and the charisma of their respective congregations. As the Second Vatican Council stresses we have got to search for our roots, but without staying there, we have to come to the present era where we have to realize our original spirituality deeply rooted in Christ in modern society. We should not forget or change the center of our lives. We have got to understand that first we are called to love Him and secondly to do His work. It is important to realize the fact that as *Sacrosanctum Concilium* says, without Him we can do nothing and He is the only one who can make our work effective and fruitful. Therefore in our mission, prayer is indispensable.

Our prayer and work are like two wings on which life is balanced. Therefore every priest and every religious should get onto their knees, in order to make a difference in the life of others. If we cannot uphold a good prayer life, it is certain that we will be only businessmen.

**Bro. Benedict Jayamanna**  
O.Cist.  
Cistercian Community,  
Ampitiya



# Pope Francis praises *Humanae Vitae*;

Addressing a crowd of 20,000 people gathered in the Mall of Asia Arena, a newly opened events arena owned by a Filipino shopping centre chain which screened the Pope event, live, in all its cinema complexes across the country, Pope Francis spoke about the beauty of the family. He urged against a new form of ideological colonization which tries to impose new models.

The meeting began with testimonies from some poor families. Then there was the touching and dramatic story of a woman whose husband had to immigrate to Singapore to find work after just two years of marriage. Also, Renato and Anastasia Cruz, a deaf couple who had five children with normal hearing. They told the Pope about their difficult experience using sign language. They concluded by expressing their love for the Pope in sign language and he reciprocated in the same way.

Speaking off the cuff, Pope Francis said that a family without dreams is impossible. "When a family loses the ability to dream, it loses the abil-

ity to love and children do not thrive. When you examine your consciences, ask yourselves this question: Did I dream about my children's future today? Did I dream about my wife's love? Never lose this ability to dream. Never lose the excitement of being boyfriend and girlfriend still!"

"God's will is revealed to St. Joseph in his dreams," the Pope said "In this moment of rest in the Lord, as we pause from our many daily obligations and activities, God is also speaking to us." The Pope said that we need to be able to "rest in the Lord" and make time each day for prayer.

"Like Saint Joseph, once we have heard God's voice, we must rise from our slumber; we must get up and act... So too, in our time, God calls upon us to recognise the dangers threatening our own families and to protect them from harm." On my desk I have a picture of St. Joseph sleeping, protecting the Church in his sleep. Yes, he does. And when I have a problem, I write a small message and place it under the statuette of St. Jo-



seph so that he can see it in his dreams ... so that he can pray for my problem."

The Pope then went on to pronounce the key passage in his speech, speaking off the cuff: "Beware of ideological colonizations that aim to destroy the family, that do not originate in dreams, prayers, the encounter with God or the mission God has given us. They come from the outside, that is why I call

them colonizations. Let us not lose the freedom God has given us, the family mission! Just as our fellow countrymen at a certain point in history decided to stand against political colonization, so families must be wise and show strength in saying 'no' to any attempt at ideological colonization of the family ... And ask St. Joseph for inspiration as to when to say 'yes' and when to say 'no.'"

"Here in the Philippines," Pope Francis said returning to the prepared text, "countless families are still suffering from the effects of natural disasters. The economic situation has caused families to be separated by migration and the search for employment and financial problems strain many households. While all too many people live in dire poverty, others are caught up in materialism and lifestyles which are destructive of family life and the most basic demands of Christian morality. The family is also threatened by growing efforts on the part of some to redefine the very institution of marriage, by relativism, by the culture of the ephemeral, by a lack of openness to life."

Speaking off the cuff again, Pope Francis said: "I think of the Blessed Paul VI who faced the problem of defending openness to family life in the face of a population increase. He knew about the difficulties families were facing, this is why he was so merciful toward special cases and asked confessors to be very understanding and merciful in his encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*. In this encyclical Blessed Paul VI, looked ahead, he looked at the people of the earth and saw the impending threat of the destruction of the family through the deprivation of children. Paul VI was courageous, he was a good pastor and warned his flock about the wolf that was coming. Today he sends us his blessings from Heaven."

Pope Francis said, "Our world needs good and strong families to overcome these threats! ... Protect your families ... Be sanctuaries of respect for life, proclaiming the sacredness of every human life from conception to natural death." Pope Francis concluded by inviting families to be missionary families.

## My family and I

What does your family mean to you?  
How important is it for you?



Family means a lot more than a relative by blood or marriage. It means the people who accept you no matter who you are, where there's no hatred or judgment. The love of a family should be unconditional, and everyone should try their best to provide all they can for the people in their family, emotionally and financially. Family are the people that everyone deserves to feel secure and com-

Loving relationships are a family's best protection against the challenges of the world.  
"Bernie Wietre"

fortable with. Everything people learn comes from the way their family brought them up and therefore, everything you are is because of your family. It does not matter if they are your blood relatives; if they have been there

for you and will be there for you unconditionally for the rest of your life, then they are your family!

Family is the most important thing in a person's life. A family enlarges their children, educates their children. The

first education begins in the family. If a child doesn't learn anything in his/her family, he/she can't be successful.

The members of a family takes care of each other, love and protect each other. Sometimes there are arguments, but they are infectious things. Some families are conservative, they take care of each other more than the other families

Family is the smallest unit of society. Every person's education starts in the family. Love, respect and morals start in the family. They keep their secrets and share them with each other.

Courtesy: Among Ourselves

## • FLIGHT FROM MANILA TO ROME

### 'Responsible Parenthood' doesn't mean birth control

CNA - Pope Francis backed Blessed Paul VI's teaching against birth control and urged openness to life, but reminded couples that "responsible parenthood" does not require them "to be like rabbits" in order to be good Catholics.

"I believe that openness to life conditions the Sacrament of Matrimony. A man cannot give the Sacrament to the woman and the woman give it to him, if they are not in agreement on this point to be open to life," Pope Francis said.

During a January 19 press conference aboard Philippine Airlines flight PR 8010, two of 10 questions posed to Pope Francis referred to population growth and birth control.

Asked by a German journalist if the Church would open up to birth control as a means of population control and limiting poverty, he said that the openness to life of a married couple means "responsible parenthood."

"The key word ... and the one the Church always uses and I do too, is 'responsible parenthood.' How do we do this? With dialogue," said Pope Francis.

He said that each person should work with his pastor to carry this out. He said later that Churches have marriage groups, experts and pastors, adding, "I know so many ways out there that are licit and that have helped this."



The Pope illustrated an example of "irresponsibility": A pregnant woman he met recently, already with seven children, each born by caesarean-section.

"But does she want to leave seven orphans?" he asked. "This is to tempt God. Her response could be, 'No, I trust in God,'" added Pope Francis.

Pope Francis' words harken back to the 1968 encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, in which Blessed Paul VI writes that it is 'licit to take into account the natural rhythms immanent in the generative functions' in order to space children for 'serious motives', such as

physical or psychological health, among other factors.

The Church supports Natural Family Planning - natural methods of spacing children which involve abstinence from sexual intercourse during a woman's fertile period, without the use of drugs, devices, and surgical procedures. In this way, human sexuality and fertility are respected rather than suppressed.

In a separate question, the Pope said that in rejecting the use of birth control, Paul VI "gave us something more. The refusal of Paul VI was not only to the personal problems ... but, he was watching the universal Neo-Malthusianism that was in progress," said the Pontiff.

He said you can recognise this phenomenon today in places like Spain and Italy, where the birth rate has plummeted to little more than one child per woman. The drastically low birth rates are a sign of Neo-Malthusianism, the Pope stressed to journalists on the plane, through which 'powers have sought to control humanity'.

"But, this also doesn't mean that the Christians must make children serially," he added.

"What I want to say was that Paul VI was not more antiquated, closed minded. No, he was a prophet who, with this, said to watch out for the Neo-Malthusianism that was coming," he concluded.



Compiled by: Kishani S. Fernando

Did we all not witness the emotions on the face of the Holy Father when he was gifted with a replica of the statue of Our Lady of Madhu, after the Prayer Service at the Madhu Shrine? Did we all not see how he cradled the image with the greatest love? Did we all not notice how he hugged the 20 inch Mahogany statue close to his heart, whereas all other gifts made to him were graciously passed on to his aides to be held. What memorable moments. Maybe one of the most talked about highlights during the Holy Father's visit to Sri Lanka.

Behind the scenes Shelton Fernando of Thuduwawa and Anjelo Trevon Lovendhal from Ja-Ela were discussing the installing of a 3' Mahogany statue of Saint Joseph Vaz inside the Madhu Church with Rev. Fr. Emilianupillai (Fr. Emil), the Administrator of the

# A gift that won all hearts

Madhu Church. This statue was made by Raymond Fernando of Moratuwa. The possibility of gifting the Holy Father with a statue of Our Lady of Madhu was also discussed. The idea was well received by all present and immediately Shelton phoned Raymond to find out if he would undertake the work. Coincidentally in Raymond's career of crafting sacred images, this statue would be his 100th statue.

After a telephone conversation with Fr. Emil, Raymond said that a photograph of Our Lady of Madhu without her mantle was taken and sent to him with instructions to follow the figure as depicted in the picture. This was the first time that a picture of the statue of Our Lady of Madhu was taken without her mantle solely for the purpose of carving the statue which was to be presented to the Holy Father. Meanwhile Fr. Emil also commissioned two other persons to make the statue with the view of selecting the best. However of the three parties, it was only Raymond who got back to him with a statue.

It so happened that I visited Raymond Fernando many times during those months to follow the progress of the Joseph Vaz statues that were being made by him for the Canonization Ceremony in his workshop. One day Raymond informed me that he was carving the statue of Our Lady of Madhu. Thereafter I was privileged to follow its progress - as little by little, day by day it came to life.

The statue was completed in 2 months and was gifted to Fr. Emil by Raymond to be in turn gifted to the Holy Father. A special wooden box lined with satin was made to carry the statue. Thus on the 13th of January three of Raymond's close friends Christopher, Ranjith and Mangal transported the statue from Moratuwa to Madhu.

I was later informed that upon the presentation of the statue, when they saw how the Holy Father reacted to his gift, Fr. Emil and all those who had been party to the carving and transporting of the statue could not bear the happiness and cried tears of joy. It was also an emotional moment to all those who did not know anything about how this gift came to be given and merely watched the presentation on TV.

I asked Raymond Fernando what he felt when he saw this footage on TV and thereafter of the pictures splashed liberally in almost every newspaper. Raymond explained calmly: To bring this log of wood to life was for me a spiritual meditation - a deep prayer. I am but a mere instrument chosen by God to give to his people a vision to venerate. I can only say that when I am carving a sacred image I can feel that an all powerful force is leading me and guiding my hand. I live a simple life, I follow a moderate philosophy but at all times God is the center of my life and that, I believe, helps in my carving of sacred images. There are many people who I am very grateful to for having brought me to this stage in life. Bishop Vianney Fernando of Kandy must be mentioned firstly. It is his humble qualities, respectfulness and strong leadership that encouraged me to continue in statue carving. The late Rev. Fr. Alex Dassanayake was another person who compelled me to use my God-given talents for the people. Not forgetting my dear friend Mr. Christopher who at all times has been and is my inspiration and advisor.



## Step by step ... day by day ... giving life to a sculpture

The 6' Mahogany statue of Saint Joseph Vaz, placed on the left side of the Altar dais on the stage at the Canonization Ceremony at Galle face green on January 14, was sculpted by Raymond Fernando of Moratuwa.

The pictures here attempt to show the progress of a wooden statue from its very first stage as a mere log to a creation to be venerated by devotees and the public.

Five other statues of Saint Joseph Vaz were made during this same time by Raymond. These include a 3' statue for the Madhu Church, a 2' statue for St. Theresa's Church. Both these statues were blessed by the Holy Father.



# Missionary Childhood Sunday 25th January 2015

**We, the little flowers of Jesus, who adorn the world!**

**Holy Childhood Sunday Message -2015  
(A Message for the Elders)**



At the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells those who came to listen to Him: "You are the salt of the earth You are the light of the world" (Mt. 5/13-14). Then, He asks them: "But if the salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? (Mt. 5/13B). He goes on to tell them that it is no longer good for anything but to be

thrown and trampled underfoot. Again, He tells them: "Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lamp stand where it gives light to all in the house" (Mt. ' 5/15). And it is so. The lesson that Jesus gives us is: "Your light must shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Heavenly Father" (Mt. 5/16). Let us remember that the Lord's advise is for all of us, the elders and also for our children - the little ones.

The Theme for this year's Holy Childhood Sunday and also for this whole year is: "We, the little flowers of Jesus, who adorn the world"! As we have an invitation from the Lord Himself to make our world and our society a better place to live in, this theme reminds us all and especially our little ones about their vocation and their responsibility to spread their fragrance and joy in their environment.

The world, the society and the environment in which we live has now lost its beauty and become corrupt. Abusive language and malpractices are prevalent everywhere. Falsehood and untruth rules the world. Even our little children are exposed to this. Bribery and corruption is seen in every nook and corner, both among the rich and the poor. Children too are not spared of this menace. In this situation, all of us, priests, religious, parents and elders should rally round to safeguard and protect out little ones who are to make the world and society beautiful - the flower garden of Jesus. It is our duty to prevent and protect them from going astray by the bad examples and wrong teachings of the present society. Let us all realize that it is our main Apostolic Mission and duty, to guide and lead our little children to Jesus. Let us always remember the words of Jesus our Master. "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them." Very often we are engaged in big projects with influential people. Now let us pay our full attention to these little ones and try to save them from the attacks of Satan and his friends, who try to mislead and drag them towards evil. When the Lord questions us about the orphaned and misled children, our answer should not be that of Cain; "Am I my brother's guardian?" Let us consider that all these little ones are 'Mine' or 'Ours' and act accordingly.

Let us take seriously the message of this year's theme for Holy Childhood Sunday. Let us take to heart that we are all called to enlighten the world and make it a better place to live in. Let us encourage our children too, to act in this manner from their young days. Let us also convince them that it is their duty and their responsibility and also that they are capable of achieving this. Let us also teach them small activities that they can do to reach this goal. It is also for us to nourish them with the Word of God. Thus they will be able to overcome the snares of Satan. If we do this, the Good Lord will be pleased with us and bless us abundantly.

*Little children are the flowers that adorn the Lord's Garden - the World..!*

*May God bless you! May Mary Our Mother protect you!*

**Rev.Fr. Reginald Saparamadu  
National Director - Holy Childhood**



**"WE ARE THE LITTLE FLOWERS OF JESUS WHO ADORN THE WORLD"**

God has given us many blessings to uphold our faith and witness before Him as God's beloved children. Let us learn the real value of Christian life by living the commandments of God taught by the Church and by receiving the Sacraments.

In the beginning God completed the creation of the world in 6 days and made the 7th day sacred in order that we may keep it holy. {Genesis 2:1-3}. Man was the crown of His creation. With this wonderful creation of man, God completed His work of creation. The Holy Bible tells us that after God created all this, He saw that it was really good and was happy. {Genesis 1:31}.

All the people have received the grace to become members in this beautiful world which was created. We have inherited the specific grace of becoming children of God through the Sacrament of Baptism. That is an eternally specific grace. From this day onwards we began to live as children of God. The specific character of a child of God is, to have deep faith in God, live an exemplary Christian life and walk the journey towards sainthood.

We who inherit this divine life must constantly turn towards conversion of ourselves through the Sacrament of Penance and consider it a great opportunity to introduce this love of God to those who do not know Him.

Just as we need bodily nourishment, we need also spiritual nourishment as children of God, to enrich the world. We need the Word of God and receive strength from His Sacred Body and Precious Blood daily, which is our spiritual nourishment. By doing so, we believe that we receive nourishment to the body and soul. Through the Eucharist our faith is strengthened and we make an offering of ourselves and thus become witnesses to Jesus.

It is our prime duty to develop and safeguard the Catholic faith which we inherited from our childhood. When we received the Sacrament of Confirmation, we proclaimed publicly in the Church that we would shoulder the responsibilities of the Catholic Church faithfully. The response we make when we face challenges in life will reveal to us how much we keep to this promise that we made to safeguard our faith. Experiencing the Living Lord Jesus in the face of life's challenges is extremely important for a Catholic child.

God called each one of us to witness to the Living Lord Jesus in various ways; for example, through the leadership of priestly, religious and lay apostolates. Holy Mass and Eucharist is the greatest opportunity we have in order to experience the Living Lord. It is a great moment when we are filled with the Holy Spirit. In that great moment, all three, the laity, religious and priest are enlightened to see the road to heaven.

It is an important moment in our lives when we come to the end of our earthly living. Having lived the gift of life given by God and completing our task here on earth of witnessing to the Lord, we say goodbye to this world and enter eternal life to see God face to face. It is a great moment. In order to inherit this blessed eternal life, Lord Jesus invites each one of us, to have the purity of soul. Seeing Jesus face to face is our greatest hope and gift. It is the triumphant victory of our journey of the life of faith.

My dear little children and parents our lives received from the hand of God will be really meaningful if we live our Sacramental life in faith. Just as when God completed the creation of this beautiful world and found it good and was pleased to see Man in it, in the same way, He will be delighted to see us entering into heaven.

My dear children, in order to bloom from our childhood and offer ourselves to God, as fragrant little flowers that beautify the world; we need the guidance of our parents. On the seventh day of Creation God blessed the world and made it holy so that we spend the Sabbath Day sacred and close to God. Let us make up our mind to spend the Sabbath day holy with the Lord.

*May God bless you!*

**Rev. Fr. A. Manura Shiron Premaratna  
The Director - Holy Childhood  
Diocese of Kurunegala**



**The Pontifical Society of Missionary Childhood**

Founded in Nancy, France in 1843 by Bishop Charles de Forbin, to

awaken in every Catholic child a strong sense of commitment to Jesus Christ and a zeal for the spread of the Good News everywhere by deepening their faith, living it faithfully and sharing their resources joyfully, bringing together all children in worldwide fraternity.

<b>Contribution to Holy Childhood Sunday for the Year 2014</b>	
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Anuradhapura	67,660.00
Badulla	82,650.00
Batticaloa	84,622.00
Chilaw	563,062.00
Colombo	1,725,655.75
Galle	88,292.00
Jaffna	258,492.00
Kandy	295,113.00
Kurunegala	216,443.00
Mannar	265,166.00
Ratnapura	100,177.00
Trincomalee	90,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,837,332.75</b>

**Rev. Fr. Reginald Saparamadu  
NATIONAL DIRECTOR  
Pontifical Mission Societies  
HOLY CHILDHOOD SOCIETY  
No: 19, Balcombe Place,  
Colombo 08.  
  
Tel./Fax: 0112-685673  
E-mail: ndpms@sltnet.lk**



# Diamonds of Holy Cross College on Blue Rhythmic Water Waves

The Holy Cross College, Kalutara emerged, in close proximity to Holy Cross Church, during the latter half of the 19th Century, with the initiative of a Burgher gentleman, named Brohier. Since then, day by day the school grew, reaching greater heights with "Disciplined Education" as a norm, and providing immense benefits to the motherland as well as the stakeholders, while adding lots of attractive new features to its services catalogue.

Continuing its proud journey, Holy Cross College, Kalutara will be ready to pass another golden milestone, enriching its asset base with state of the art "Swimming Pool Complex", which is a collective effort of the Old boys, Academic Staff, Parents, Prefects, students and well-wishers, with the guidance of Rev.Fr.(Dr.) Camillus Fernando, Rector HCC and the Management.

At the beginning of the journey of the Swimming Pool Project, the present office bearers of the old boys' union together with the Rector, identified and decided to construct a state of the art swimming pool for the College, with the intention of uplifting the standards of the students, bring forth national level swimmers with the support of expert swimming coaches. The Swimming pool complex consists of 25 m x 6 lanes, changing rooms and a viewing gallery. Easy access to the Swimming pool and ample parking space will enhance the value of the complex. Facilities for, F and B requirements

of users, easy purchasing of swim wears and accessories with other relevant items will be provided through shops in the basement, of the Swimming Pool Complex.

Though the project was initially estimated as 25 million, only for the isolated swimming pool, latter diverted towards the concept of "Swimming Pool Complex" with endless determination of all and now it has reached the figure of 40 million, with the contribution of 12 million by OBU and the balance by the school. The contribution of 1 million by the Prefect Union of HCC 2014 was highly appreciated by the Rector. We cannot forget, Rev. Dr. Camillas Fernando, the Rector of HCC who began the journey from the bottom of the trench, with 38.7 million loan on hand and reached the peak of the mountain, having work worth over 100 million, such as school bus, etc.

On May 21, 2013, the Old Boys' Union of Holy Cross College, Kalutara in association with the school's management organized the Holy Cross Walk, "Let's Walk to Swim," as a fund raising activity for the school's swimming pool. On that day, whole of Kalutara town was covered with Holy Cross College flags and banners from well-wishers, providing greater awareness on the swimming pool project.

Rev.(Dr.) Camillus Fernando, Rector of HCC, specially stated the project as an In-House creation with the immense contributions of Mr. Supun Hevavitharana, Archi-



tect, Mr. K.S. Mangala Silva, Structural Engineer and Mr. Ajith Vandabona, Geo Technical Engineer; all are old boys of HCC. Also he emphasized the friendly corporation provided by the contractor Crist Pool Creations Pvt. Ltd.

Project team is fortunate to realize the dream of the swimming pool within the exact period of one year, which can be considered as a great achievement. The Rector stated that the management of HCC initially wished to open the facility to selected segments such as Old Boys, government and private sector institutions, as phase I.

Inaugural opening is planned to be held on 30th

January 2015. This will be the most colourful event in the history of HCC and His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith will be the chief guest. The ceremony is scheduled at 10.00 am with a welcome for His Eminence in front of Holy Cross Church. Then the distinguished guests and invitees will proceed to the Swimming Pool deck for the blessing. Thereafter HCC Students will present a colourful water display and a water ballet. Immediately afterwards all will gather at the College grounds for the meeting, planned to be held under Parabolic Marquee with 6000 seating capacity. In this historic occasion the Rector HCC hopes to present the outcome of the

another silent project, "Asset Verification" and its report "Proposal for the Physical verification of the fixed assets and the preparation of the fixed asset Register."

"Kalu Ganga" flows silently as usual looking toward his newly born brother. With the blessings of Holy Cross Church thousands of energetic young swimmers will emerge and some of them will crown our motherland with gold in the international arena. In the future, our senescent age, we all can memorize our contribution with tearful eyes, sitting on an easy chair.

*Manjula Gunawardena*

## How the National Choir was formed

A Proposal was submitted by Priyanthi Seneviratne VanDort to His Lordship Vianney Fernando head of the National Liturgy Commission, that in keeping with Pope Francis' insistence on the New Evangelization, and His Vision for the Church, that - "we should come out of ourselves and head for the periphery," that we form a National Choir for the Papal Mass.

The Subcommittee expressed that this being a National event of such magnitude, which is jointly organized by all the dioceses on a National level, it is just and fair, to form a National Choir comprising of Students and youth representing All the Dioceses in Sri Lanka. It is just and fair to give chances to Catholic students and youth from other dioceses also, who have a lot of talent and potential, but who lack opportunities, professionals to help and extract their talents and potentials, the facilities and exposure to showcase their abilities.



The Subcommittee decision was accepted and approved by His Lordship Vianney and he appointed Rev. Fr. Jude Nicholas Fernando from the Chilaw Diocese as the Priest-in-Charge of the Choir Sub-Committee to form the National Choir. He was greatly assisted by Rev. Fr. Edmund Tillekeratne, Fr. Kamal

Fernando, and Ms. Priyanthi Seneviratne VanDort and Yohan De Alwis of Colombo Diocese, Fr. Alex and Fr. Shiran Chamaka from Chilaw, Fr. Soosainathan OSB, Fr. Araliya OSB, Fr. Ivan Jayasundera from Kandy, Fr. Anton Sriyan from Ratnapura and Fr. Rex Saundra from Jaffna. The Committee received support from the

Bishops of the Dioceses, who gave their maximum support, to make this a memorable experience for the Catholic students and youth in their respective diocese and it was a great opportunity and privilege for them, especially those in remote areas and war torn areas, who had no opportunity to sing in any choir, due to poverty, or lack of influence or being less affluent, to be a part of this National Choir that sang for the Papal Mass.

The Choir sang as one and they were given professional voice training by Priyanthi Seneviratne VanDort assisted by Yohan De Alwis who gave their 100% professional expertise, sacrificing their time at great personal cost, free of charge, to bring out the talent of these young people to sing in all three languages - Sinhala, Tamil and English, for the Papal Mass.

Under the dynamic leadership of Mr. Tilak Peiris, a special team of committed lay Catholics - Maxine, Carmel, Edsel, Priyantha, Dilhan, Anthony, Sheila, Sean and Ornille worked round the clock to ensure that everything from the transport, accommodation and food for the Choristers was well organised.

*Priyanthi Seneviratne VanDort*

## Appreciation

Rev. Fr. Alexis Dasanayake, Vice Postulator in the Cause of Blessed Joseph Vaz since 2009 and live wire in the production of the film about Blessed Joseph Vaz, returned to his Creator on December 4. He contributed immensely to the Church in the Chilaw Diocesan and at national levels.

Hailing from Etiyawala, a village in Dum-mala Kotuwa Parish in the Diocese of Chilaw he was born on July 13, 1931. He had his education at St. Mary's College, Chilaw and Joseph Vaz College, Wennapuwa.

Fr. Dasanayake was the first student of St. Paul's Seminary when it was started by Bishop Edmond Peiris OMI, at Ulhitiyawa. He entered the seminary at Ampitya in 1950 and after finishing studies there joined the Papal Seminary at Pune, India in 1955. He was ordained a priest on October 3, 1957.

Returning to Sri Lanka in 1958 young Fr.

## Rev. Fr. Alexis Dasanayake Called to his eternal reward

Dasanayake was posted to the Chilaw Parish as Assistant. After two years service in Chilaw and a short stint in Puttalam, he was appointed Parish Priest at Mawathagama.

Fr. Dasanayake joined the Lateran University in Rome in 1963 for higher studies in Theology. He obtained a Doctorate in Theology.

On his return to Sri Lanka he was appointed as assistant to the Rector of St. Paul's Seminary which was by then shifted to Marawila, in 1965 where he served for two years. His next appointment was as Secretary of the Diocese under Bishop Edmond Peiris. Additionally Fr. Dasanayake took charge of St. Peter's Children's Home and St. Peter's Industrial School in Chilaw.

When the Children's Diocesan Catechetical Centre was inaugurated in 1969, Fr. Dasanayake

was appointed as Acting Director there. He dedicated himself for the development of the new institution and started training programmes and examinations for Catechists.

For 10 years Fr. Dassanayake served as Parish Priest in Boralessa, Kattuneriya and Wennappuwa, all highly Catholic populated parishes. He was always with his flock and the parishioners in turn cooperated with him.

In 1981 he was appointed Director of the Diocesan Catechetical Centre. Catechists in the diocese reached new heights during his time. Fr. Dasanayake was then appointed Director of the National Catechetical Centre in Colombo in 1983. He served in the post for 13 long years and for some time he was a lecturer at the National Seminary, Ampitiya.

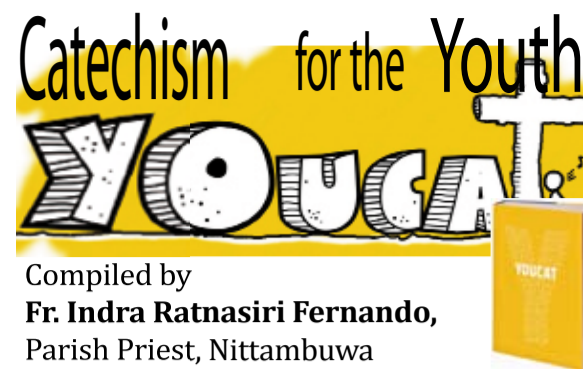
Fr. Dasanayake was selected as a full time

lecturer at the seminary in 1995 and served their for 14 years before being appointed the Vice Postulator in the cause of Blessed Joseph Vaz. He was entrusted with the preparation of the final report for Canonization of Blessed Joseph Vaz. With the able assistance of the Bishops' Conference and a host of priests he meticulously gathered all available documents and submitted the final document.

Fr. Dasanayake, a soft spoken priest with mild manners led a very simple life. He was liked by priests and the faithful alike. A prominent feature in his life was the great dedication he had for any work he was entrusted with. He was undoubtedly a true follower of Blessed Joseph Vaz for whom he had a great devotion and love.

May he rest in peace in the Good Lord!

**Lydwine Kirieldeniya**



Compiled by  
**Fr. Indra Ratnasiri Fernando,**  
Parish Priest, Nittambuwa

### Chapter Two (2) (179-192).

How we celebrate the mysteries of Christ.

Christ the Lord Himself is the one who celebrates the cosmic liturgy, priests and believers participate in different ways in Christ's Divine Worship. In the liturgical service, God gives Himself to us under the form of holy signs, so that we are to do the same; give ourselves to Him.

We, human beings are spiritual and bodily creatures. We need signs and symbols in order to describe spiritual realities. The mystery of Incarnation gives us human signs in which God is living and active among us.

Bread and wine, the water of baptism, the anointing with the Holy Spirit... thus, liturgy means encountering God, which means allowing Him to act - listening and responding to Him. As far as the liturgy is concerned, time becomes time for God. In the liturgical aspect, every second is filled with a meaning. As we celebrate the liturgy, we really experience the fact that God has sanctified time and made every second a gateway into Eternity.

It is to be noted that all time is God's time, memories of Jesus and His teachings are at the same time encounters with the living God.

*The Liturgical Year of the Church:*

This is a systematic way of reflecting God's plan in the person of Jesus Christ. The liturgical year begins with Advent, the time of waiting for the Lord; Christmas season (celebration of redemptive suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus). Thus the Easter season ends with the feast of Pentecost. Feasts of the blessed Mother and the saints through which the Church praises God's graces are too, included.

Sunday is the centre of Christmas time. We as the people of God celebrate the resurrection of Jesus on Sunday, hence every Sunday is a 'miniature Easter'.

Having comprehended the significance of Sunday, it is in a way apt to speak about the liturgy of the hours. Liturgy of the hours is the universal, public prayer of the Church. In this prayer, the world gives the Triune God the opportunity at every hour of the day to transform those who pray. This prayer is prayed even by the Christians who take their faith and join their voices with the many, thousands of praises and petitions that ascend to God from all over the world.

There are changeable and unchangeable components of the liturgy. Unchangeable is everything which is from the Divine origin; the words of Jesus at the Last Supper. The changeable parts, which the Church occasionally changes. Thus, the mystery of Christ must be proclaimed, celebrated and lived out at all times and in all places.

*(To be contd)*

## Fr. Placidus celebrates unique 'double'

Rector of Aquinas University College, Borella, Rev. Fr. Placidus de Silva, celebrates a unique 'double' on January 22. On this day he counts 45 years of priestly ordination as well as 71 years of the gift of life.

Soon after his ordination, from 1970 to 1972, Fr. Placidus served as personal secretary to the late Thomas Cardinal Cooray OMI.

After a staff appointment at St. Aloysius Seminary, in 1977, Fr. Placidus graduated from the London School of Economics, University of London. On his return to the island he was appointed Rector of St.



Aloysius Minor Seminary. From 1989 to 2002 he served as the Episcopal Administrator and Vicar General and from 2002 to 2006 as the Chancellor of the Archdiocese and Parish Priest of St. Lucia's Cathedral, Kotahena. From 2006 to-date he has held the position of the Rector of Aquinas University College, Borella.

Hailing from a family of five children and

being the only son, his mother was not totally supportive of his decision to join the priesthood, but God who works in mysterious ways had the final say to which his family and Fr. Placidus himself had no hesitation in acceding to God's will.

Fr. Placidus had the rare privilege of being a concelebrant at the Holy Masses officiated by Their Holinesses Pope Paul VI (1970), Pope John Paul II (1995) and now Pope Francis (2015).

Our best wishes to you, Fr. Placidus for a Very Happy Birthday and many more years of fruitful service in the Lord's vineyard.

## A Tribute to Dr. (Mrs.) Vimala Navaratnam

It was 1961, when my mother was expecting her second child, my younger brother, the Gynaecologist attending on her was migrating and referred her to Dr. (Mrs.) Vimala Navaratnam.

Since then my family has been religiously consulting both, Dr. A.T. Navaratnam, until his demise in January 2011 and Dr. (Mrs.) Vimala Navaratnam, until the curtain came down on the latter on November 24, 2014. The end of an era of two outstanding medical practitioners of our time.

In the mid-1960's, when the then government imposed restrictions on government medical practitioners carrying on private practice, Dr. A.T. Navaratnam, decided to retire prematurely from government service and join his wife, Dr. Vimala, to consult patients privately at their home at Inner Flower Road, renowned in later years as a haven for suffering patients.

Being a Doctor was no doubt a lucrative profession, but to the Navaratnam's it was not the financial gain they were after as, their charges would only be a mere Rs.10/- or Rs. 15/-!

Caste, Creed, Religion, Status was not in their vocabulary. They devoted themselves to their patients, giving them

the attention they needed, making each patient feel that they were the only person that mattered.

Both, Dr. A.T. Navaratnam and Dr. (Mrs.) Vimala Navaratnam served as the Official Doctors for leading five star Hotels in Colombo, as well as leading Airlines and Diplomatic Missions.

They were just a phone call away, even into the wee hours of the night or morning and, over the years, during the many surgeries I underwent, one of them would be in attendance as the Assisting Physician. When the bill was received there would be a "No Charge" against Assisting Physician. That was the magnanimity in which they carried out their profession.

The sudden demise of Dr. (Mrs.) Vimala Navaratnam leaves a void in my life that can never be filled. There will undoubtedly be hundreds who share my sentiments; hundreds who read this tribute, hundreds who have experienced the unique qualities, determination and sincerity with which the Navaratnam's carried out their medical practice, which are without question.

To their daughter and two sons I could only say - take courage and carry on the mighty legacy of your parents.

**Bryan Nicholas**

## CHURCH IN ASIA AND MISSION INTERGENTES A study based on FABC Documents



A book by Rev. Fr. Gerard de Rosairo OMI will be launched on Thursday, February 5, at 3.30 pm at the Centre for Society and Religion at Maradana.

This book is the outcome of Fr. Gerard's thesis in Tamil at the University of Jaffna, 2007.

## Retires from teaching service

Mrs. Ann Panditharatna, Deputy Principal of Col/South All Saints' College, Borella residing in Kelaniya retired from teaching service on December 24, 2014 after having been in the education sphere as a Teacher for 36 long years.

During her long span of service, she enlightened the students with attributes, guided innumerable children in the right and correct path and paved the way for many neglected and



*"A life sacrificed to enlighten the lives of the pupils of our school to you we are really indebted never you adorned yourself with the power of position but became a loving mother a sister and a real friend indeed"*

dejected ones to succeed in life. She is a real asset given by God to this girls' school and who led a virtuous life which became exemplary to her colleagues and students.

One of the recitations of teachers in gratitude:

The students expressed in appreciation:  
*"Trode like a flower defeated, dejected and rejected, I was like a mother you loved me consoling words really lifted me up good counsel of yours made me a winner riding on high."*

From Page 8

## Selected Quotations on Children's Rights

- ❑ Everyone under 18 years is a child and should enjoy all the children's rights.
- ❑ All children have their rights whatever their age, sex, disability, colour, race, language or religion.
- ❑ Every child has the right to have a name from birth and be given a nationality. She or he has the right to know and be cared for by her/his parents.
- ❑ Children should not be separated from their parents unless it is in the interest of the child (due to neglect, abuse etc.) If parents live apart, the child has the right to be in contact with both parents, if separated from one or the other, or both.
- ❑ The child has the right to get information and give any information to others and to express her or his view unless this would violate the rights of others.
- ❑ Every child has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, subject to parental guidance and national law.
- ❑ Both parents should have joint responsibility for bringing up their children.
- ❑ Children have a right to be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect. Parents and other care-givers have no right to hurt children. The State should undertake programmes to prevent and help children recover from abuse and neglect.
- ❑ If a child is to be adopted, it should be done legally and arranged in the best interest of the child.
- ❑ If a child has to leave her or his home or country because it is not safe to live there, he or she has the right to special protection and help.
- ❑ Children with mental or physical disabilities have a right to special care, education and training, designed to help them become as self-reliant as possible and lead a full and active life.
- ❑ All children have a right to education. The State should make sure that at least primary education is compulsory and is free of charge.
- ❑ Children have a right to be protected from work that may be harmful to their health, education or development. The State should set minimum ages for employment and regulate working conditions.
- ❑ Every child has the right to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, including involvement in prostitution and pornography.
- ❑ No child should be tortured or punished cruelly, given life imprisonment or capital punishment, be unlawfully arrested or deprived of liberty. Any child lawfully deprived of liberty has a right to appropriate treatment, to be separated from detained adults, contact with family and access to legal or other assistance.
- ❑ Children have the right to protection in times of war. No child under 15 years of age, can take part in hostilities or be recruited in the armed forces. The State should provide care and protection to all children affected by armed conflict.

Taken from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

# Short cut to Heaven

A disciple asked his teacher, "What is the easiest way to go to heaven?" The teacher replied, "At the time of death, call on the name of God, and die." If one thinks that to go to heaven one has only to call the name of God at the time of death, and it is an easy thing to do, he might be making a serious mistake. Things may not be that easy.

The time of death is man's most critical time. The time when life departs from the body! Nobody likes this moment and everybody seems to be afraid of it. At such a time it is difficult to imagine what would be the mental state of the dying person. It is the time when we have to go away from our near and dear ones, leaving all the things we love and cherish. So it would be worthwhile to imagine what our attitude would be at such a time and what would be our parting words. Will we be able to say 'God' at that most critical time?

To die with the name of God on our lips, we ought to live our entire life relying on Him. A person who has lived away from God all his life, wallowing in sin, forgetting God, will never be able to call on the name of God at the most critical juncture of his life.

Even as he was hanging on the cross, Jesus crying with a loud voice, said, **Father, into your hands I commend my spirit** (Lk 23:46). We should understand that if Jesus could say these words even when He was convulsing with excruciating pain, in the mental agony and throes of death, It was because of the intense and intimate relations he had with the Father.

Jesus was so close and united with the Father He could say, "The Father and I are one" (Jn 10:30). This is the fellowship of the Holy Triune God. It was because of this fellowship that Jesus kept Himself close to the Father in all the moments of crisis and the Holy Spirit hovering about him. Jesus prays on the Mountain before He chooses his disciples (Lk 6:12) and He prays at Gethsemane before His crucifixion (Mt 26:36). At all these times Jesus was in unity with the Father and the Holy Spirit. It was because of this fellowship and unity that Jesus was able to pray to the Father even as He was convulsing with the throes of death.

Contd. from Pg. 5

## Who is a ...

Confusion imprisons oneself and also tends to imprison others. A prisoner for his survival needs other prisoners too. A prisoner desires the whole world to become a prison too.

A saint's greatest gift is inner clarity. They have sufficiently cultivated humility to look at themselves the way God looks at them. Unless



When Peter saw Jesus coming towards him walking on water, He requests Jesus to order him also to walk on water Peter did walk. **But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, 'Lord, save me!** (Mt. 14:30). He could do that because during his lifetime he had realized that his salvation is in the Lord. Only those who have such a conviction can pray like that in times of grave crises.

St. Stephen is the first martyr of the Church. His adversaries had surrounded him and they were pelting stones to kill him. His body was bruised and lacerated by the sharp and heavy stones hitting him, but even as he was convulsing in the spasms of agonizing pain, he cried, **Lord Jesus, receive my spirit** (Acts 7:59). He could say that because he could see, with his inner eyes, that Jesus was standing close to him.

The two thieves hanging on the sides of Jesus are also two symbols. One died speaking ill of Jesus. The other one is also a thief, but at the time of his death he was able to hold fast to the name of God.

He said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Lk 23:42). We do not

know the previous history of the thief who seeks forgiveness at the last minute of his life. But this is what Jesus told him, **Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise** (Lk 23:43).

All the martyrs and saints of the Church died calling on the name of Jesus as they were dying. Jesus incarnated as a man so that we all can call on the name of God in our last moments.

He descended from heaven and was born in the manger, smelling of milk. He dwelt amongst us. He walked along with us loving and teaching us. Still we often tend to ignore Him, forget Him. If we are to die with the name of Jesus on our lips we ought to know God, who was revealed through Jesus, and live obeying His commandments.

Infant Jesus whom we see and adore in the manger should be loved and nurtured in our hearts. If Jesus is in our hearts, when trials, tribulations and torments come to our life, we will remember Him and He will definitely come to our rescue. We should die calling on His name. Truly, you will then be saved!

Courtesy:  
Vachanolsavam

and until we acquire that divine outlook, we can never become happy and contented.

As Pope Benedict XVI says; "The saints are oases around which life sprouts up and something of the lost paradise returns." Lives of saints are the seeds of hope for the future.

When we begin to live in God, we truly become ourselves. Each moment I live authentically becomes a moment I render glory

to God. His greatest glory is our true happiness. The more you give glory to God, the more you receive glory from God. A saint begins in glory, continues in glory and ends in glory.

A saintly life is a graced life, glorified life through and through. In short, grace ending in glory. That is what a saint is all about and nobody can ever escape from this challenge. So you, my dear reader, are called to become a saint from now on.

The Kingdom of God is close at hand; believe in the Good News. (Mk. 1:15)

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR B  
25th Jan. - 1st Feb. 2015

Sun: THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Jona 3:1-5,10;1 Cor.7:29-31;  
Mk.1:14-20

Mon: Memorial of Ss. Timothy & Titus, Bishops  
2 Tim. 1:1-8 or Tit 1:1-5; Lk.10:1-9

Tue: Memorial of St. Angela Merici, Virgin  
Heb.10:1-10; Mk.3:31-35

Wed: Memorial of St. Thomas Aquinas,  
Priest & Doctor

Heb.10:11-18; Mk.4:1-20

Thu: Heb.10:19-25; Mk.4:21-25

Fri: Heb.10:32-39; Mk.4:26-34

Sat: Memorial of St. John Bosco, Priest  
Heb.11:1,2,8-19; Mk.4:35-41

Sun: FOURTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY  
TIME

Deut.18:15-20;1 Cor.7:32-35; Mk.1:21-28

### PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

**Response: Lord hear our prayer**

Heavenly Father, We pray for all the members of our Church, that all of us may be open to Your call and inspiration in order to proclaim the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray to the Lord.

**Response: Lord hear our prayer**

Loving Father, we pray for all our children as this day is set apart for our little missionaries, that all may accept Your Light into their life and be the Light of the world. We pray to the Lord.

**Response: Lord hear our prayer**

Almighty Father, We pray for all our Holy Childhood animators that they may bear witness to your Love thus leading the children in Your path. We pray to the Lord.

**Response: Lord hear our prayer**

# Third Sunday in Ordinary Time Holy Childhood Sunday

**Theme:** "We the little flowers of Jesus who adorn the World."

**First Reading. Jonah. 3: 1-5,10.**

The Prophet Jonah is sent by God to Nineveh to preach the message of repentance. The people accepted God and repented. God in His kindness spared the people.

**Second Reading. 1Cor. 7:29-31.**

For Paul the coming of the Lord is to happen at any moment. Therefore he wants the people to be prepared. They should not be attached to any worldly thing or affair.

**Gospel. Mk.1: 14-20.**

After the arrest of John the Baptist, Jesus preaches the Good News of repentance. He calls the first disciples.

**Reflection.**

Whether, it is our Baptismal vocation or a special direct call from God for a special mission, our prime mission is to proclaim the Good News of salvation. It requires detachment from the world and most of all from sin. Before the birth of Jesus as in the First Reading, during the time of Jesus as in the Gospel and after the time of Jesus, that is the time of the Apostles as in the Second Reading and for that matter even today, the Good News for the people has been the same. "DETACH YOURSELF FROM THE WORLD AND SIN, REPENT AND BELIEVE."

From the time man sinned against God; God's redemptive love has been at work. From time to time through many people God tried to save mankind. Finally, He saved mankind through His Son, Jesus Christ, the Saviour.

The people of Nineveh

were living in sin and so they were condemned and were to be destroyed. But God out of love sent Prophet Jonah with a message of repentance. The people accepted his message, repented and were saved.

John the Baptist preparing the way for the Lord preached a message of repentance. After he was arrested, Jesus came to the region, to Galilee not to condemn or fight for the freedom of John, but to proclaim the message of repentance. He even chose many Apostles to help Him and to continue His work after Him.

In the Second Reading we see the Apostles, especially St. Paul carrying the same message, repent and believe.

So as we in this New Year prepare ourselves in various ways to serve the Lord, let us keep in mind that even today, for the kind of society we live in, the urgent message is a message of repentance. Let us therefore, in all humility and courage proclaim the message of repentance lest the whole world be destroyed by sin.

Due to the urgency of the need to save the world from suffering and sin, we might think of condemnation and fighting our way through, but it will only add to the burden and will bring in more and more suffering and sin.

There is no weapon like love. There is nothing like voluntary repentance and conversion. Let us therefore imitate the Lord. Let us proclaim with love, a message of repentance.

Blessed is he who is able to make people repent and convert them from their sins, they are the most fruitful people and living God's word on the earth.

**Aid Story 1**

St. Vincent de Paul dearly loved a young man who had grown up like wild flower. A violent ray of passion entered the young man's soul and the flower withered and fell, the young man became so licentious that the Saint wept bitterly. "Well"

St. Vincent said to him one day. "I cannot persuade you any longer to give up your bad ways because I see that my words are of no help. However, there is one thing I would like you to do." "What is it?" asked the young man. "Take this picture of the Crucifix and look at it every night before retiring." The unusual request seemed easy to the young man that he promised to comply. That night he glanced at the picture for the first time, and he was so moved that it took him a while to get a sleep. Christ's sorrowful face kept staring at him and reached the depth of his soul. The following night he was afraid to look at the picture.

The patient Christ kept looking at him all night and he could not sleep. The next morning the young man went to St. Vincent; "Father" he said, "I give up. Your attempt has won me over to Christ."

**Aid Story 2**

A grandfather asked his little grandson if he said his prayers every night. "Oh, yes!" replied the boy. "And every morning?" His grandfather asked. "Why should I?" asked the child. "I'm not scared in the daytime."

So many of us think of God - as if a doctor; when something goes wrong. Yet we call Him, "Our Father," when we pray.

**Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos**

## "Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the Kingdom of God like a child will not enter it" (Mark 10,13-16)

1. With the words, "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it", Jesus holds up children as model for His disciples. Why does He do it? Is it because children are innocent? From our experience, we know they are not that innocent at times. Then how does He uphold them?

i. Children totally depend on and trust in their parents. Similarly, the disciples of Jesus should completely depend upon and trust in God and obey the Gospel. Then only they begin to experience that they are ruled by God; that they enter God's Kingdom (reign of God).

ii. Children are simple, humble and open. They are in Jewish society an insignificant lot, a non-entity and a non-being without rights. Similarly the disciples of Jesus must become humble and insignificant in the Church or community. They must remain ordinary in the community. Then only they would own the Kingdom.

2. The values of the Kingdom are radi-

cally opposed to those of the world. The disciples of Jesus should not follow the mind of the rich man (in the following episode: Mark 10,17-31), who thinks he can inherit God's Kingdom by his own merit, "Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth." Instead, the disciples may don the attitude of receptivity, humility, insignificance and trustful dependence characteristic of children.

3. Today we live in a world, ruled by science and technology. Science based Technology has at times become the 'God' of humanity. Albert Einstein predicted: "I fear the day when the technology overlaps with our humanity. The world will only have a generation of idiots." Einstein said and was true. The day has arrived; we live in it.

We see parents chatting to each other while walking on the beach. We also see, alas, their young children seated on beaches but busy with their own mobiles and other electronic gadgets. They hardly bother why they have come to the beach with their parents. They leave the beach without seeing even the beauty of the sea or the setting of the sun. It is the same tragedy that Technology has caused at public places, where

man has to interact with his fellow human being, like restaurants, parks, schools and bus halts. Man has become so individualistic and excessively privacy conscious.

At the Renaissance, man moved from self supporting agricultural village life and domestic industry to the capitalist factory system and modern industrialism. Now in this Technological Age, he is satisfied only with producing and acquiring more sophisticated technologies. He finds no meaning in pondering over the meaning and destiny of his life. Roger Evered is right to say in Some Human Consequences of Technology (1985) 110: "Once the servant and ally of man technology, seems to have acquired a life of its own to such an extent that now man is under threat of becoming the servant of Technology."

4. This mass tragedy of human race calls our attention, on this Holy Childhood Sunday, to re-read and reflect on the words of our Lord, "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." We all need to belong to God's



rule, and not to the servitude of Science and Technology. The Gospel of Jesus has to be taken seriously 'to be little flowers of Jesus who adorn the world' (the special theme of this Sunday). Just like kids who depend completely on their parents; we need, in these hard times, to swim upward against the current in total trust in God. We ought to live the mode of being away from the mode of having more. Let God be the God of our life to rule and direct it towards its destination - His Kingdom.

**Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi**

# Thank you Holy Father

From the eternal City, Pope Francis came,  
 To our dear land, Sri Lanka Indian Ocean's pearl!  
 Dear Father, loving Shepherd so simple, full of grace  
 You bring, God's love to a land torn by strife,  
 Now united and happy in brotherhood and love.  
 Dear Lady of Lanka, Dear Mother, Lanka's Queen  
 Bless Francis, your dear son, wherever he roams  
 Taking God's love not heeding colour or creed  
 Proving to all the universal, Brotherhood of man.

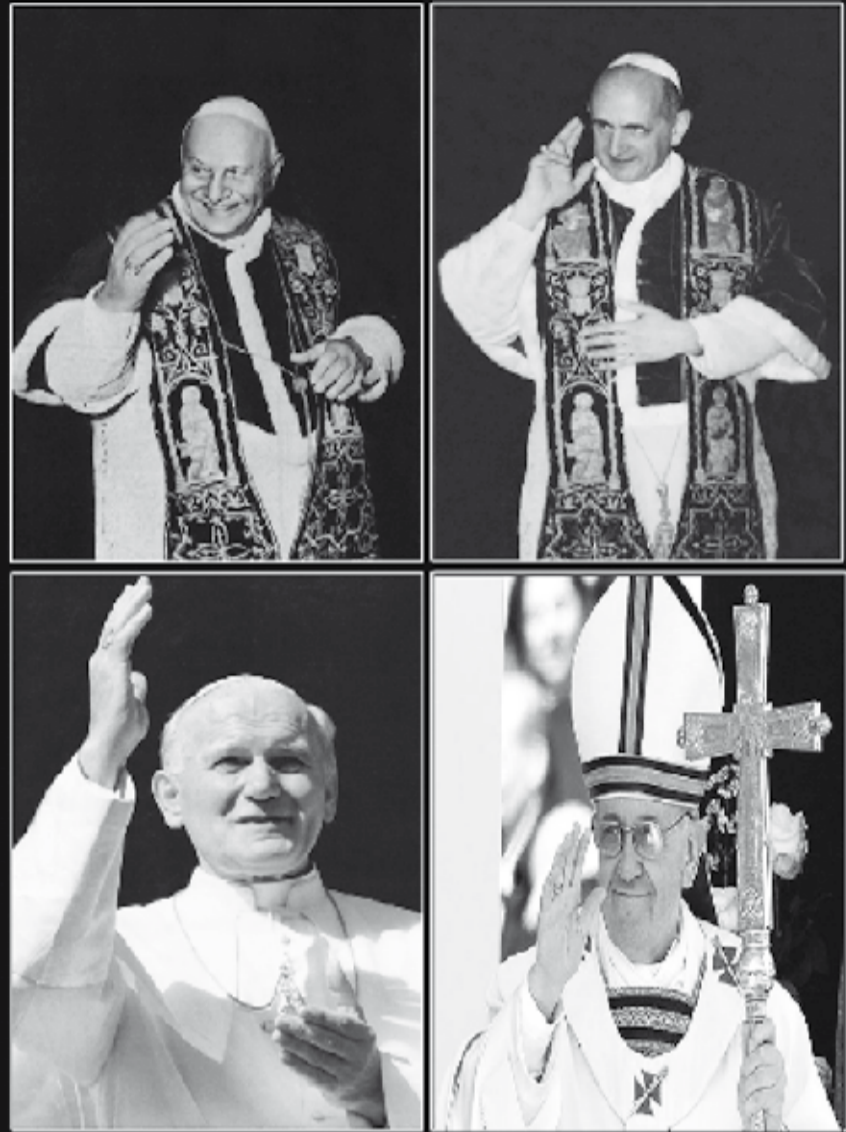
*Clive Dassanaik Taylor*



Hail Sovereign Pontiff!	Exemplary humility
On thy mission of international peace	And reverence for our land.
Thrice Hail!	Our multi - religious
Our sovereign land	Multi - cultural nation
That hails a Buddhist tradition	Acclaims thee
Welcomes thee	In the true spirit of peace
In the true Spirit of the Dhamma	Which prompts thee to our land.
Maithri - Compassion	Harbinger of peace
Katuna - kindness	Precursor of peace
Upeksha - tolerance and equanimity	A thrice blessed welcome!
Thy kiss of peace	
On this our native soil	

*Jeannette Cabraal*

## LET US Build World Peace Through A New Pentecost



More than 50 years ago, St. Pope John XXIII opened the historic Second Vatican Council with a prayer to the Holy Spirit, 'Renew your wonders in our time as though for a new Pentecost'. This renewal of the Church and through it the world was carried forward by Pope Paul VI - to be beatified soon and St. Pope John Paul II. Through them the Holy Spirit moved all over the world bringing about love, peace and justice with a mighty revelation of God's glory. Almost 50 years later in March 2013, the prayer of St. Pope John was fulfilled with the election of Pope Francis through whom the Holy Spirit is bringing about a new Pentecost in the Church and in the world. The Holy Spirit is inspiring Pope Francis to rebuild the Church of the poor and lead into the deep to bring about world poverty elevation, peaceful resolution of conflicts and Christian Unity, World Peace with Justice.

*Marie Benedict*

## HOLY FATHER

We  
welcome  
you...



*Vaharaivanan*

## POPE FRANCIS

*By Emilda S. Douglas*

Pope Francis, may Almighty God from above  
 On you shower, His peace, joy and love.  
 Praising God, we welcome you,  
 Everloving Mother, will accompany you.  
 Francis, your patron of Assisi,  
 Readily will help and to your needs see.  
 A humble Pope, asked People's blessing,  
 Naturally they'll bless, God's praises singing.  
 Christ's Vicar  
 In all that you do and say.  
 Search God's will. He'll bless you everyday.



Welcome DEAR HOLY FATHER, to our land  
 Your tread, we believe, will cleanse the sand  
 The grace you have showered  
 Will redeem us, we all feel sure  
 Pope Francis - the man of simplicity  
 Who shines with divine purity  
 His asset is his unquestionable spirituality  
 Which will guard the whole of humanity  
 The world listens to his wise word  
 And believes that it comes from God  
 He always tells us to love one another  
 As Jesus did, otherwise we will wither

He loves everyone without discrimination  
 Because he thinks all are his relation  
 With this in mind he moves as their shepherd  
 And embraces them as his loving herd

HOLY FATHER FRANCIS who is a living saint  
 In spirituality, no doubt, he is a giant  
 In the history of the Roman Catholic Church  
 Our Pontiff is the beacon - he will march.

Pope Francis is the symbol of love and peace  
 The sermon he delivers comes as tender breeze  
 In this century, no doubt, he is a wonder  
 This is versified as the lauds come as thunder

# Young World

## Thousands of Daham Pasal Children Welcome Pope Francis at the Colombo-Negombo Main Road.

*Pix: Ashen S. Senarathna*



# English with Fun and Entertainment

**Dear Readers,**

In our 59th lesson we learnt proverbs, inspirational quotes, cohesive devices and vocabulary items with prefixes and suffixes.

In this lesson you will learn a poem about courage, cohesive links and the answers to the vocabulary items of the last lesson,

Comments made by our readers are very encouraging. Thanks for your efforts to make 'English with Fun and Entertainment' an interactive process.

God Bless You!

NJ

## Poems about Inspiration and Hope

Life is a lot of work. What is it that gives us the strength to continue when we are tired and burned out? Sometimes an inspirational idea can help us renew ourselves and be filled with strength to fulfill our life's purpose. Inspiration comes in many forms. However, the root of all inspiration is the idea that our lives are



meaningful. Inspiration is knowing that what I do matters deeply to the universe. When you have the feeling that your actions are meaningful, you will become filled with strength and vigor to fulfill your life's purpose.

**Don't be sad when I die**

- (1) When tomorrow starts without me, and I'm not there to comfort you, please know that I still love you, cause I know you love me too.
- (2) When tomorrow starts without me, and you feel lost and blue, I hope these words I've written will help to see you through
- (3) Someday your pain will ease, sadness replaced by fond memories Come tomorrow you will hear I love you whispered on the breeze.
- (4) When tomorrow starts without me cause God has called me home I turn, blowing a kiss for thee Sad that you may feel alone.
- (5) I will miss you tomorrow as I take one last glimpse a tear falls from my cheek I'll be going home. And tomorrow will start without me  
Source: <http://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/dont-be-sad-when-i-die#ixzz3PG8b7Y7b> Family Friend Poems

**Activity 1 - Linking Words- Cohesive Links :** Linking words signal how one idea leads on from another. **Knowledge** of linking words is essential to understand texts. Here are some simple linking words. They are also useful in writing.

1. **Position in the text.** Some linking words normally form a link between clauses within a sentence or a link between sentences.

**Activity 2:** Read the text and underline the linking words.

Amila is a very rich girl but she leads a simple life. She is an officer in the Sri Lankan Army. She gets up early in the morning and prepares her lunch until 6.30 a.m. Then she gets ready to go to her office. She gets transport because she works in the head office. She does different kinds of work such as attending to leave records, preparing letters to reply to inquiries and preparing notices, and announcements for internal communication. Her work is so important that she cannot afford to take leave.

**Linking words of time - still, yet and already :** 'Still' tells us that an action is continuing, or hasn't happened yet. It has positive, negative and question forms.  
e.g. Its 10 o'clock and John's still in bed.

or She said that she would be here an hour ago and she still hasn't come. or Are you still living in London?

'yet' asks if something has happened, or to say that something hasn't happened. It is mainly used in negatives and questions and comes at the end of a sentence. 'Yet' is usually used with the present perfect tense.

e.g. He hasn't finished the report yet. OR Isn't dinner ready yet?

'Already' is used to say that something happened before expected, it usually comes

in mid position, but can also come in final position. 'Already' is not used in negatives and in British English is only used in questions to show considerable surprise.

e.g. I'll tell her that dinner is ready. She already knows. Have you finished already?! I thought it would take you longer!

In order to understand this type of linking word, you must be clear about the concepts of 'a point in time' and 'a period of time'. A point in time is the answer to a 'when' question, and a period of time is the answer to a 'how long' question.

e.g. Points of time = 6 pm, Wednesday, she arrived, summer, 1999, Christmas, five minutes ago. Periods of time = 3 seconds, 4 days, ages, 100 years, the Christmas holiday, five minutes linking words of time

**Activity 3:** Underline the linking word in the sentences.

- (a)After the lady opened the door she switched on the light. (b)The man lit a cigarette before he boarded the car.(c)Since I have known her we have been firm friends (d)We will wait here until the next train arrives. ( e)I cannot say definitely till I hear from him. (f)The boys were going to school when we saw them. (g) Whenever it is possible we shall visit her.

**Although, though, even though and In spite of / despite**

'Although' must join two clauses, but its position can change. It can either start a sentence or come in the middle.

e.g. Although it rained a lot, we enjoyed the holiday. OR We enjoyed the holiday although it rained a lot.

In spoken English 'though' can be used instead of 'although' when it is used for the second clause.

e.g.. "I didn't get the job though I had all the necessary qualifications." 'Though' can also come at the end of a sentence.

e.g. "The house isn't very nice. I like the garden though." 'Even though' is a stronger form of 'although'. e.g.. Even though I was really tired, I couldn't sleep.

'In spite of' or 'Despite' must be followed by a NOUN, PRONOUN (this, that, what etc.) or ~ing.

e.g. In spite of the rain, we went to the beach. OR We went to the beach in spite of the rain.

It is common to use the expression 'In spite of the fact (that)....' or 'Despite the fact (that)....'

e.g. She's quite fit in spite of the fact that she smokes 40 cigarettes a day.

**Linking words adding information:** And / In addition / As well as / also furthermore moreover / apart from / in addition to / besides

1. "We discussed training, education and the budget."
2. We are interested in costs as well as the competition."
3. "We also spoke about marketing."
4. Apart from Rover, we are the largest sports car manufacturer."
5. Marketing plans give us an idea of the potential market. Moreover, they tell us about the competition

**Activity 4:** Form adjectives using the following suffixes

Suffix	Example	Suffix	Example
-ed	prepared	-en	spoken
-ish	foolish	-less	careless
-ly	lovely	-some	handsome
-ward	forward	-y	steady
-like	childlike	-al	conditional
-able	comfortable	-sive	decisive

Do the following activities and suggest a suitable grade for your students

**Activity 5:** Use the correct prefix to make the negatives of the following words

like	dislike	accurate	inaccurate
legal	illegal	applicable	inapplicable
polite	impolite	sense	nonsense
justice	injustice	natural	unnatural
proper	improper	dependent	Independent
tie	untie	mobile	immobile
charge	discharge	legible	illegible
kind	unkind	comfort	discomfort
responsible	irresponsible	likely	unlikely
prudent	imprudent	vegetarian	non vegetarian



# Pope Memorabilia by Filipinos

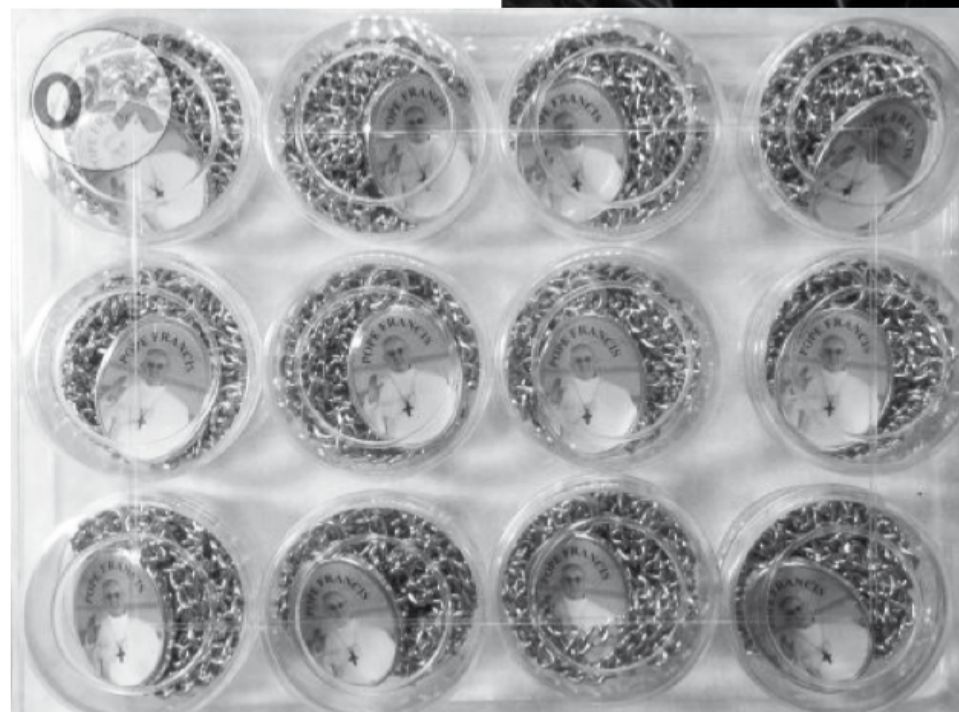
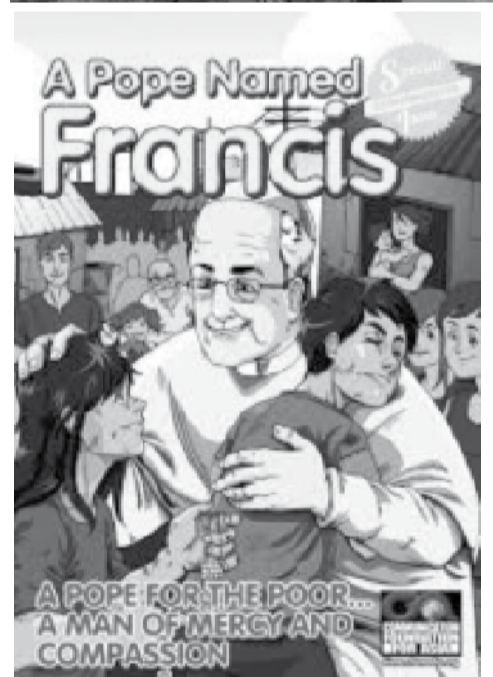


**Pope Francis is Coming to the Philippines this 15-19 January 2015!**

Celebrate Pope Francis' Visit to the Philippines with the Official Papal Visit Commemorative Gift Pack

**INSIDE THE GIFT PACK ARE:**

- Commemorative Card
- Marshall Head Card
- Venice Loyalty Card
- Apron
- Photo Pin
- Discount Coupons from Participating Brands



**PHILPOST** TO 2015 MEMORIALS ACTIVITIES & OBSERVATION OF THE 2015 PAPAL VISIT

*Tois tin*  
**DEAR POPE FRANCIS**  
**LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGN**  
FOR PAPAL VISIT 2015  
*Write a personal letter to Pope Francis!*

**PAPAL VISIT STAMP EXHIBIT**  
ON-THE-SPOT STAMP DESIGN CONTEST  
OCTOBER 24, 2014

*Theme:*  
**A Nation of Mercy & Compassion**

**EXHIBIT SCHEDULE**  
OCTOBER 23-24, 2014 (9:00 AM - 5:00 PM) - LAGUNA BAYVIEW HOTEL  
OCTOBER 25-26, 2014 (9:00 AM - 5:00 PM) - LAGUNA BAYVIEW HOTEL  
NOVEMBER 12-13, 2014 (9:00 AM - 5:00 PM) - LAGUNA BAYVIEW HOTEL  
NOVEMBER 14-15, 2014 (9:00 AM - 5:00 PM) - LAGUNA BAYVIEW HOTEL

For more information on our programs, please call PHILPOST at 527-01-08 or 527-01-32.





# MATRIMONIAL



## Bride

Sinhala Roman Catholic mother from Negombo seeks a suitable educated partner, Roman Catholic for her educated daughter a executive in a Pvt. firm born 1974, 5' 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>", she's slim, fair and inherits substantial assets including a house, please reply with full family information.

E-mail: [proposalnegombo@yahoo.com](mailto:proposalnegombo@yahoo.com)

Tel: 0728156196.

No. N5579, C/o,  
Colombo Catholic Press, Colombo 8.

