



ST. THOMAS APOSTLE

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Messenger

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"Gleaned from the classics"
By Johannus

*Ultima semper
expectanda dies homini
dicique beatus ante
obitum nemo supremaque
funera debet.*
(from Ovid)

One should always look at his last day and no man should be deemed happy this side of the grave or until his final rites have been performed.

Doctor's Day
1st July



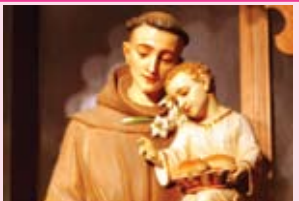
Writer's Day
8th July



Population Day
11th July



Tallest statue of St. Anthony



His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith will unveil a statue of St. Anthony, at the Hendala Junction (Opposite the Wattala UC), on July 7, 2012 at 6.30 pm.

The statue which is 25ft tall, is taller than the statue erected at Arcela, in Italy, where St. Anthony died. The Arcela statue is 20 ft high. All devotees of St. Anthony are cordially invited to participate in this event.

Provincial Superior



Rev. Sr. Victorine James has been appointed as the new Provincial Superior to the Sisters of the Holy Cross (Menzingen) in Sri Lanka.

Hailing from Naranthanai, Kayts, Sr. Victorine James, entered the Congregation in her early teens. She is a qualified nurse and midwife, having followed the Nursing Education and

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Sec. General of the Brothers of Charity



The Regional Superior of the Brothers of Charity, in Sri Lanka Rev. Bro. P. M. Linus, F.C. has been nominated as Secretary General of the Congregation of the Brothers of Charity based in Rome, at the last General Chapter (22nd) held in Rome from May 14 to June 02, 2012.

"A student should be morally formed and spiritually nourished"



Picture shows His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith imparting God's blessing. The Rector of St. Joseph's College, Very Rev. Fr. Sylvester Ranasinghe and some of the other members of the staff are seen in the background.

The Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith addressing students and staff of St. Joseph's College, Colombo said that a Board of Administration for Education will soon be established for every Catholic School.

The Board as its objective will monitor the standard of these schools and the curriculum and work towards uplifting the education of the school.

His Eminence, declared open 'Reflections 2012', an art, sculpture, photography and short film exhibition produced by the students of the school. He also blessed and declared open a new Advanced Level Educational Block and the refurbished Bonjean Memorial Hall on the same day.

In his address His Eminence mentioned the challenge a student faces in his school life today and

PG 2 >>>

Second Seminar on Abortion

Second Seminar on Abortion, organized by the Guild of Saint Luke and Ss. Cosmas and Damian (Catholic Doctors' Guild), on the topic, "Practical approach to the problems of Abortion," will be held on July 7, 2012, at 5.00 p.m, at the Auditorium of Caritas Sri Lanka - SEDEC, Kynsey Road, Colombo 8.

All Catholic professionals who are interested are cordially invited to participate.

- Secretary, Guild of St. Luke

Release of Religious Hymns



Rt. Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph, Bishop of Mannar, is being presented with a copy of 'Jeeva Raagangal' a CD containing Religious Hymns, by Miss I.D. Udesha Francis who also produced it. Mr. A. Mahendran, the music director for the CD was also present at the function. The Guest of Honour was Rev. Fr. Tony Martin, Secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference. This CD Release was held at St. Benedict's College, Kotahena on the June 9, 2012.

- Natasha Jegarajasingham

World Communications' Day 2012

Theme: Silence and Word-Path of Evangelization



Media Day, with a history of forty six years, goes back to the Second Vatican Council and year after we see the Holy Father addressing the world, with a timely theme of emerging new trends in the field of communication.

The Holy Father's address generally is directed at the family, youth and children, cautioning the family of dangers spilling from unguarded trends in the media world, especially in the social media.

Sadly websites such as facebook, youtube, blogger and also the mobile phone are having an adverse effect on children and their behaviour pattern and the Holy Father has dealt with these relatives

very extensively in the past decade.

We who are in the Media Apostolate must admit that up to date we have not done much justice in this direction. However having understood the validity and the urgency of the task we thought, though late, to start at this current time with the school children. At present our programme will cover the regions of Colombo and Negombo.

The Workshop in Colombo will be held at St. Joseph's College, Maradana and the schools attending this workshop are as follows: St. Joseph's College, Maradana, St. Peter's College, Bambalapitiya St. Benedict's College,

Kotahena Good Shepherd Convent, Kotahena St. Bridget's Convent, Colombo-7 Holy Family Convent, Bambalapitiya

The Workshop in Negombo, which will be held at Ave Maria Convent, will be attended by Ave Maria Convent, De Mazenod College-Kandana, Maris Stella College and Loyola College in Negombo and also Ave Maria Branch School.

Rev. Fr. Sriyananda Fernando, Prof. Sarath Wijesuriya, Edward Jayakody, Kalasuri Sathischandra Edirisinghe are scheduled to speak on this day.

National Catholic Social Communications' Centre

Year of the Word of God

"Talitha, koum!" "Little girl, I tell you to get up!"

Mk:5:41

National Catholic Writers' Association Literary Festival, 2012

Tags which don't
carry any keys

The National Catholic Writers' Association which was established on July 12, 1984 has organised a literature festival and literature competitions this year in Sinhala English and Tamil languages, under senior and junior categories.

The candidates are not permitted to indicate their names on their creations. The candidates should forward their creations with his/her name, address in a certificate certifying his/her identity of his/her creation to the following address, General Secretary, National Catholic Writers' Association, No. 24, 2nd Floor, Paul VI Centre, Colombo 11 on or before 30th July 2012.

The school candidates should forward their creations, with a certificate of recommendation of the principal of the school/principal of Sunday school/priest.

The following competi-

tions will be conducted by the association.

Short stories open Competition Sinhala / Tamil / English Senior category.

Under one of the themes of enhancing Catholic values. Two copies should be forwarded 800 - 1000 words in Sinhala / Tamil / English languages. Any candidate is permitted to present any number of short stories. The first, second, third places will be awarded Rs. 500, Rs. 300, Rs. 200 respectively. Few selected short stories will be awarded certificates on merit. This is an open competition for any person of any religion.

Short stories Junior category - Sinhala/Tamil/English

This competition is opened for school candidates of Grade 10 - 13 in Sinhala, Tamil or in English Language. The winner

will be awarded a trophy, cash prize and a certificate.

Catholic Poet of the Year

Any poem published in printed or electronic Media between 30th June 2011 - 31st May 2012 is entitled. Any number of poems of this range can be forwarded. This competition is opened only for Catholic poets. The winner will be awarded a trophy, cash prize and a certificate.

The Catholic Journalist of the Year

Articles should not be sent in relation to this competition. The winner will be selected by a special Jury.

The new poetic creations

The new poems in Sinhala Tamil or in English can be forwarded. This is an open competition. The winner will be awarded

a trophy and a certificate.

Children's Creations Sinhala

This competition is entitled for students of Catholic schools from Grade 5, 9. The poems should consist more than three phrases. The kids essay should consist 200 words. The candidates are permitted to select any theme at their choice.

The Best Reader's Vision

The prize will be awarded to the best two reader's articles published in the "Gnanartha Pradeepaya" and "The Messenger" between 30-06.2011 - 31.05.2012. The particulars based on the articles are unnecessary to be provided by the candidates. The winners will be selected by a special Jury.

Padminie Nanayakkara
Secretary, National Writers' Association



Rev. Fr. Tensin Perera, Parish Priest of St. Mary's Church, Belihuloya in the Diocese of Ratnapura, is bent on collecting key-tags, as a hobby. So far he has collected hundreds of key-tags of various types. Collecting items as a hobby reminds one of the past and projects you into the future.

Pix by: J. Antony

Raymond's 85th Work of Art



Mr. Raymond Fernando, the well-known sculptor of Moratuwa, presents his 85th work, which is a crucifix to His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Vianney Fernando, Bishop of Kandy at Balcombe Place, Colombo.

T. Samaratunga

Katana celebrates, St. Anthony's Feast



The annual feast of St. Anthony's Church, Katana was held on Sunday, June 24. To commemorate the event the Katana youth council erected a beautiful pandol at the entrance to the Church.

C. Danicius

Annual Prize-giving of St. Anthony's College, Wattala

The annual prize-giving of St. Anthony's College, Wattala was held recently at the College, with His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo as the Chief Guest.

In his welcome address the Principal of the College, Rev. Fr. Mal Fernando said that St. Anthony's College, Wattala began its educational activities under the directorship of Very Rev. Bro. Vincent Joseph on April 4, 1942 and today it is one of the leading, National schools in the country.

Presenting the Annual Report of the school, Fr. Mal Fernando said that the College began its 70th year from May 4, 2012 and will celebrate the completion of the Year in 2013.

Clarence Leonard

Members of the Bl. Joseph Vaz Secretariat visit Mannar



The members of the Bl. Joseph Vaz, National Secretariat visited places of religious importance in Mannar recently. Picture shows the group after a visit to the Queen of Martyrs, Church with Rev. Fr. Jude Croos and Rev. Fr. C. Arulpragasam, Diocesan Spiritual Director, Mannar.

Theobald Samaratunga

A student..... Contd. from Pg. 1

stressed the importance of cultivating keenness and gaining knowledge.

"Today's student has to be morally formed and spiritually nourished," His Eminence observed and requested that a plan of action should be worked out to gather Christian unity, charity and love in the schools. This also includes the love of one's school and the motherland, said His Eminence.

His Eminence urged those present to stop criticizing the school and its Administration and said that overnight resolutions have failed many a time.

While thanking the Rector and the Priestly Community for their dedicated service rendered to the school, His Eminence called upon the School Welfare Associations and the Old Boys' Union to work in solidarity with the Staff and the Rector.

Merril Shantha Fernando

Provincial..... Contd. from Pg. 1

Administration Course in Delhi.

She worked at St. Michaels' Nursing Home, Kolupitya as a theatre Nurse and later was appointed Asian General Councillor in 2002 and in 2008 was sent as a missionary to Pakistan, until her election as the Provincial Superior. We wish her all the best and God's blessings.

Sr. Concelia HC

Sec. General Contd. from Pg. 1

elected Regional Superior of Brothers of Charity for Sri Lanka in 2007, and served as Deputy Principal of St. Joseph's College, Trincomalee for 2 years.

Vincentian National Council (SVP) visit Batticaloa and Kalmunai Regions

The National Council of the Societies of St. Vincent De Paul, visited Batticaloa and Kalmunai Regional Councils and met beneficiaries who were assisted during the floods, with funds received from the SVP Council General in Paris.

The Council members visited the beneficiaries in their homes, most of whom have been victims of war, tsunami or floods.

The main relief measures of the project included, renovation of houses and dwellings, livelihood assistance to school children with books shoes and uniforms etc. This support was provided through 23 conferences, to 800 families belonging to the Batticaloa Regional Council.

The members also visited St. Mary's Boys' Orphanage to meet children who were receiving scholarships through the Australian National Council "Assist a Student Programme" and also the Differently-abled Home, assisted by the Kalmunai SVP Conference.

Theobald Samaratunga

Entrance to Colleges of Education to obtain Teaching Posts

Those who have obtained three passes at the G.C.E. A/L Examination in 2011 and below 25 years of age can apply to enter Colleges of Education to obtain teaching posts in 25 subjects including the subjects mentioned below in Sinhala, Tamil and English medium. Roman Catholicism, Primary Education, Science, Mathematics, PT, Agriculture and Food Technology, Arts, Music, Dancing and Information Technology.

For more details please read the Government Gazette or Dinamina paper on 22nd June 2012 and the final date to send applications is 13th July 2012.

Those who require instructions to fill the application forms and to select subjects please be present at Catholic Education Office at Archbishop's House, Colombo 08 on 4th July Thursdays 2012 at 2.30 p.m.

For further information please contact Miss Chrishani on telephone number 011-2699129 during the Office hours.

He assumes duties as Secretary General of the Congregation of the Brothers of Charity, from July 15, 2012, and will be based in Rome.

We wish him all God's Blessings'

Rev. Bro. J. Dominic Savio, F.C.

Corpus Christi at St. Joseph's College, Maradana

St. Joseph's College, Colombo 10, celebrated the feast of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ on June 23, 2012 at the College premises. Two days of prior preparation was reserved for the students, staff and the clerical staff. Holy Eucharist service was celebrated with Rev. Fr. Sylvester Perera, as the Chief Celebrant. Fr. Sylvester is a newly ordained priest of the Cistercian Order, also an old Josephian.

In his homily Fr. Sylvester Perera said that it was not difficult to meet Jesus, we need not to take appointment like meeting any other eminent personalities. He is present in the Blessed Sacrament, the Host we receive during the Holy Mass. "Christ is the way of Life. Jesus Christ is the only strength for



the rich, the poor, the sinner and for everyone. Through the Holy Eucharist we lift our lives to God," Fr. Sylvester said.

After the Holy Mass, the entire school participated in a pro-

cession taking the Holy Eucharistic around, singing hymns and praying for the eternal blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ to be with the Josephian family.

Merril Shantha Fernando



Church in the World

Filipino Archbishop: Priests must show Christ to a struggling Church

MANILA, Philippines -- Members of the clergy have a mission to convey God's love to all people, including those disillusioned and alienated by abuse of power and people by priests and religious, the archbishop of Manila told his clergy, last week.

Archbishop Luis Antonio Tagle of Manila shared this and other reflections from the 50th International Eucharistic Congress in a homily to about 250 priests, bishops and other Massgoers at the Arzobispado de Manila chancery chapel.

The Eucharistic Congress was held June 10-17 in Dublin.

One has to discern carefully "when you know that the church that you belong to is not anymore accepted by many," Tagle said.

"When its faith and belief system are being questioned, when its institutional expression seems to be contrary to what people want to believe, will you still commit? Will you still believe?" Tagle asked those at the Mass.

The International Eucharistic Congress, held every four years, aims to promote awareness of the Eucharist as central in the life and mission of the Church, according to the congress' website. The congress also seeks to improve the understanding and celebration of the liturgy and to draw attention to the social dimension of the Eucharist.

Tagle attended the congress with 13 Philippines bishops, the largest group from a single bishops' conference, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines reported. During the week, Tagle spoke of sex abuse of minors by clergy in Asia and gave a catechesis on Communion in the Word through Mary.

At the Manila Mass last week, Tagle described scenes and events from the Congress and reflected on how behaviour in Ireland had changed since the 1932 congress. A video played at the congress' closing Mass showed delegates and pilgrims looking "so pious" as they greeted the papal legate and conducted prayer and worship, Tagle said.

Absence of faith

Among experiences that gave him a sense that people had lost faith in the church as an institution, Tagle cited a TV program that included four women chatting that he watched in his hotel. One said, "I don't go to Mass, so this Eucharistic Congress does not interest me. Why will I be interested? Mass means nothing to me."

The Archbishop quoted another commentator: "Well, I am still a believer, but the institutional church does not embody my beliefs. The institution does not capture my faith, so I won't join anything that the institutional church proposes."

He remembers another saying: "They will probably spend 10 million Euros for this event. Will the tourists, the delegates, be able to infuse more than 10 million Euros to the Irish economy during these days? If not, then this is a losing proposition." One questioned the Pope's absence.

"Rome is very near," she said. "He could have flown to Ireland. Of course, he is afraid to face the Irish people. There are so many things to answer for."

Warning signs

Filipino Missionaries of Charity Sr. Perla joined the bishop's Mass in Manila which was also Tagle's birthday. The nun said she appreciated Tagle's stories because she experienced the disillusionment during her eight-month mission to Ireland last year.

"I know what (Tagle) is talking about," she told NCR. She said she felt "the big difference" between the attitudes toward religion, faith and the institutional church of Filipinos and the Irish people she met.

Benedict XVI announced in a video message that the 2016 Congress would be held in Cebu, central Philippines.

Prize-giving of Our Lady of Victories, Moratuwa



The Annual Prize Giving of the Convent of Our Lady of Victories, Moratuwa was held last month. The Chief Guest on this occasion was His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Raymond Wickramasinghe, the Bishop of Galle. As this year is declared the "Year of the Word of God" by the Archdiocese of Colombi, the theme for the event was 'Be a Light of the Word of God'.

His Lordshi in his speech said that it was always a great pleasure to

visit an instituion which is Catholic, with its particular faith, environment, beauty, cleanliness, discipline and particular achievements in in education. He advised the students to mould their character in accordance with Catholic morals.

His Lordship also stated that the parents are the first teachers of the students and the teaching profession is a great gift and a sacred vocation.

Ranusha Fernando

125th Jubilee of St. Peter's Hospital Chapel

The National Hospital Chapel dedicated to St. Peter celebrates 125 years on July 8, 2012.

The Chapel was built and blessed with the arrival of Franciscan Missionary Sisters, during the time of His Grace, Most Rev. Dr. Christopher Bon-jean OMI in 1887.

The Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence, Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith will be the chief celebrant at Holy Mass at 8.00a.m., on July 8th.

His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Norbert Andradi OMI, Bishop of Anuradhapura, will officiate at Vespers on July 7th at 6.30 p.m.

The hoisting of the flag staff will take place on (Sunday) July 1, 2012 at 12.00 noon.

Rev. Fr. Randil OMI

SUNDAY PUNCH

by Camillus



THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY OF SRI LANKA
Messenger
Since 1968

EDITORIAL

1st July 2012

Remove the culture of impunity for politically motivated violence

The statement of the IGP that the Police could not arrest the accused named by eye witnesses in the attack on the JVP meeting in the Hambantota district and known to have over a hundred warrants issued pending against him, illustrates the malady affecting our Police today.

Have the people come to accept the fact that the Police will not take action against any criminal involved in any violent action including murder, rape or destruction of property, if the suspect is doing the bidding of those in power? If the Police are independent, being placed under an independent Police Commission as suggested by the LLRC, and de-linked from the military; we are bound to see a different police and better enforcement of law. Investigations will be conducted by professional policemen and evidence will be elicited, against any suspect, irrespective of his status and power. The Police then will not be subject to the dictation of the political masters. In such an event, there is a likelihood of successfully solving political or high profile crimes.

It is the present regime that abolished the Independent Commissions set up under the 17th Amendment. The 18th Amendment has given absolute power to the President and every institution of the State has become subject to his will. The President cannot know the most deserving to be appointed or promoted to posts. If the Independent Commissions functioned then there is a fair chance that the most suitable will be appointed to the high posts.

Modern governments have set up institutional machinery to deal with appointments, promotions and disciplinary control of those who hold top posts. History has seen that when the law enforcement agencies become independent, corrupt leaders, including heads of the police department go to jail. This is exactly what happened in Hong Kong in late 1970s. Will the President bring back the Independent Commissions or would he prefer to exercise control solely by himself?

In the past we did have a sufficiently independent Police service that enforced the law and brought criminals to book in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Code and the Police Ordinance. But constitutional guarantees for protection against politicization were removed with the 18th Amendment. Since then the Police have deteriorated. Take the case of killings of Lasantha Wickrematunge and many other journalists that have taken place. Can the Police say that these crimes have been truthfully investigated? Only if the police are given a free hand to investigate and prosecute the offenders, is there the possibility of exposing those who were responsible for those crimes.

Some critics of the Government say that it is fostering a culture of impunity, violence and lawlessness. Others says the motives of the regime is to silence all its critics. On the other hand, the critics who do keep on believing and abiding in Christ, in the face of a culture of impunity, violence and lawlessness, should be inspired and motivated by the words of Christ, *"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free."* (John 8:32)

Helping the poor to regain their lost dignity

Poverty is a lived reality of thousands of families living in the rural, urban, coastal and estate areas in Sri Lanka. It is a fact of life for them, perhaps due to several reasons, such as joblessness, unemployment, under-employment and exploitation.

Poverty of many families is also due to the price-hike of essential items needed for survival. Poverty causes malnutrition and sicknesses. It is responsible for psychological problems such as anxiety, stress, depression and social evils and crimes. Children born to poor parents lack formal education and hope of a better future. When health care and formal education in Sri Lanka have become commodities, how can the poor afford these 'luxuries'? Concomitant effects of poverty are social exclusion and isolation.

Today, in the Catholic Church, we hear many bishops, priests and religious speaking about the many faces of the poor. A few priests and a few religious in Sri Lanka also speak and write about various categories of the poor undergoing many hardships. I, for one, am focusing my attention on the category mentioned at the beginning of this article.

There are several who, at the macro-level analyse the causes - global and national - of poverty, while some at the micro-level (at the grass-roots) are struggling with the poor in the villages enabling them to lead lives worthy of human dignity in a spirit of solidarity.

Church's concern for the poor

With the Second Vatican Council, a new historic consciousness arose within the Catholic Church about the poor, inspired and enlightened by the Holy Spirit. So, soon after the Council, Pope Paul VI, while visiting Colombia for the 1967 Latin American Bishops' Meeting in Medellin, told an audience of rural workers, "The whole tradition of the Church recognizes in the poor sacrament of Christ. Beloved sons and daughter, you are Christ for us" (Tablet, 3 Sept., 2009).

Blessed John Paul II in his Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Asia*, said, "The Church in Asia then, with its multitude of poor and oppressed people, is called to live a communion of life which shows itself particularly in loving service to the poor and the defenceless" (no 32). "In seeking to promote human dignity, the Church shows a preferential love of the poor and the voiceless, because the Lord has identified himself with them in a special way" (cf Mt 25:40). He said that preferential love for the poor excludes no one, but simply embodies a priority of service to which the whole Christian tradition bears witness" (E.A, 34).

Pope Benedict XVI in his encyclical letter, *Deus Caritas Est*, says, "Within the community of believers there can never be room for a poverty that denies anyone what is needed for a dignified life" (no. 20).

An appropriate spirituality needed

At first Christians were called "the followers of the Way" because Jesus told his disciples, "Follow me." It was at Antioch they were called Christians because the pagans found them professing their faith in Jesus Christ, remembering Him in the celebration of the Eucharist and sharing their resources out of mutual love so that no one among them was in need. (Acts 2:42-45; 4:32-35).

Christians are called by their baptismal consecration to follow Jesus and His spirituality demonstrated through His life and ministry. Jesus spoke about the poor, mixed with the people who experienced social and religious exclusion and exploitation. His sensitive and compassionate heart made Him respond to people's pain and hence fed the hungry, consoled and comforted the disturbed.

Blessed John Paul II said the poor in Asia will find their best reason for hope in the Gospel command to love one another as Christ has loved us (cf Jn 13:34), and the Church in Asia cannot but strive earnestly to fulfill that command towards the poor in word and deed. (E.A 34). He also underlined the need for solidarity with the poor because it becomes credible if Christians themselves live simply, following the example of Jesus, His simplicity of life and unfeigned love for all, especially the poor. These are signs of the Gospel in action. The Pope wanted the Christians to adopt a life style that is consonant with the teachings of the Gospel so that the Church may become a Church of the poor.

Spirituality shown through life-style

When speaking of a spirituality that will energise the Christians to identify with the poor and the

defenceless in the parishes, I am reminded of what appeared in the Editorial of *"Daily Mirror."* Here's an extract from that editorial; "The vital step for poverty alleviation must begin at the top... In Sri Lanka our political, religious and social leaders need to set an example to the people because one good example speaks more powerfully than 100 political speeches or sermons. They need to follow Mahatma Gandhi or Cardinal Jaime Sin of the Philippines, South Africa's legendary Nelson Mandela or Desmond Tutu and enter into a simple and humble life-style, learning to manage with their basic needs...." (*Daily Mirror*, Sept., 3, 2011).

Spirituality in Action

Papal pronouncements give us enough meaning and Inspiration for our personal Christian living. However, spirituality of a Catholic priest must be one that includes not only the liturgical and the sacramental life but also pastoral praxis in the society. Perhaps lack of contact and communication with the parishioners and lack of time spent on community building in the parishes are factors driving some Catholic families to join the fundamentalists. Catholics in our parishes expect the parish priests to help them to enjoy abundant life promised by Jesus (Jn. 10:10). In fact, the Catholic priest is ordained to proclaim the Word of God, celebrate the sacraments and also build Christian communities. Therefore I feel he must embody an integrated spirituality that will energise him also to reach out to the people, especially to the ones who are poor, isolated and marginalised in order to form them into communities in and through which they also can find abundant life.

Building communities among the poor in the parishes is very much needed today. This ministry demands mixing with the poor, listening to their struggles and anxieties and evolving a programme of action which will lead to the formation of community/solidarity. Such a programme can include promotion of an integrated Christian spirituality among the people, bringing them together and helping them to understand their life situations critically, reflect on the discovered realities in the light of the Word of God and find together some desirable and viable actions for their development.

Spirituality and community development

Commitment to the ministry of building communities among the poor, in my opinion, must begin with education and enlightenment for it involves development of the total person from a less human condition to a more human condition. Helping the poor to regain their lost human dignity and become more human is a gradual process. Though abundant life promised by Jesus is not limited to economic aspects only, for practical purposes, it is good to begin there because the poor will learn well when their interests are touched. Their felt needs determine their interests.

The poor who struggle to survive, cannot think of savings. So outside financial assistance is needed initially and it is important to develop mutual trust and their capacity to use such assistance productively. Such financial help can come in the form of grant or loan from the Catholic Organisations (SEDEC/Caritas and its diocesan Centres) and also from generous benefactors in the parishes. I believe many parishes can create funds to help the economic life of the poor, their health care and formal education of their children. There are many Catholics who will generously contribute for such good purposes, if they are motivated properly by the parish priests.

Parish priests ministering in large parishes with the needed spirituality and integrated pastoral approach may find it difficult to find time for meeting the poor and the marginalized in their parishes for this ministry of community building and community development. In such situations, they can invite competent religious and the lay faithful to collaborate in this ministry because community building means building the Kingdom of God. The Religious and the lay faithful are in the parishes to help the parish priests to build the Kingdom of God. It is in the community, where there is love, God wants to dwell. In and through such a Christian community, the poor will certainly regain their lost human dignity, enjoy a better quality of life, know they are children of God and also participate as a community in the Eucharistic celebration.

Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Fernando, OMI
Dev Arana Mission Animation Centre,

The New Evangelization Window on Synod XIII

Introduction

The working paper to be used at this General Synod has been presented in a press conference in the Vatican on June 19th. With its theme: "The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Faith," this representative assembly of bishops together with theological experts, invitees from other churches and religions will be held from 7th -28th October this year in Rome. This date is significant, for it coincides with the celebration of the golden jubilee of the great Second Vatican Council that opened way back in 1962 and at the same time marks the inauguration of the "Year of Faith" by Pope Benedict XVI. As one can surmise, all these events are for the purpose of re-energizing the Universal Church with the spirit of a living faith and revitalizing her in the apostolic mission of bearing witness and proclaiming the Gospel in exercising her perennial missionary vocation.

The Working paper or the *Instrumentum Laboris* contains all the important observations and proposals that have been received by the Synod Secretariat in Rome in response to the earlier *Lineamenta* (Outline) document with its elaborate questions. We are told that among those consulted were 13 synodal chapters of the Eastern Catholic Church, 114 episcopal conferences of the Western Church, 26 dicasteries of the Vatican and the Union of Superiors General of various religious orders in the Church. Hence, the contents have harvested a comprehensive reflection on what should be the nature and the dynamism of this new evangelization. It is said that, it is a type of missionary engagement that has to be new in ardour, new in methods and new in expression.

The idea of the new evangelization was first mooted in the speeches and writings of Blessed John Paul II who felt that such an apostolic endeavour has to be shouldered by all the faithful individually and the Universal Church in order to renew the Catholic Faith and to proclaim it more powerfully and more relevantly to the modern world with its revolutionary changes in the socio-cultural, religious and political spheres. It is important therefore to see how the Church can continue to respond to her fundamental call to evangelize and to assess her resources in meeting today's challenges and avoid any risk of a dispersion of energy or fragmented efforts. The Synod expects to draw much inspiration from earlier important documents on evangelization like the apostolic exhortation of Paul VI *"Evangelization in the Modern world"* (1975), and from Blessed John Paul II's encyclical *"Mission of the Redeemer"* (1990) and his second "Great Jubilee" docu-

"The Gospel is always a new proclamation of salvation, accomplished by Jesus Christ, to make every human life share in the mystery of God and his life of love, thereby opening human life to a future of hope, which is inspiring and trustworthy"

ment *"The dawn of the New Millennium"* (2000). These three documents are replete with the idea of "New Evangelization." In fact, in "Mission of the Redeemer," the Pope speaks about the new *"areopagi"* that need to be evangelized, repeated in the Working Paper as well.

The grass-root responses of those consulted reveal that the problem the Church is facing in the challenge of the new evangelization because of changes mentioned above, not only affect the world and culture, but also herself in the first person, that is, her communities, her activities and her identity. The synod is called upon to exercise a process of discernment, which can also serve as a way of responding to the current situation with greater courage and responsibility. In keeping with this idea, the *Instrumentum laboris* is drafted in four chapters which are useful in providing the basic content and means for fostering this reflection and discernment of the forthcoming Synod. The aim is to bring about a Church that is evangelized and evangelizing.

Sectors for New Evangelization

The document itself accurately summarizes for us at the very beginning the basic structure of the contents. It is as follows: The first chapter is dedicated to a rediscovery of the heart of evangelization, namely, the experience of Christian faith which has at its core the encounter with Jesus Christ who is God the Father's Gospel to humanity, which transforms us and gathers us together. This experience introduces us, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, to a new life, already experienced by us in the present, precisely in our feeling gathered as the Church. At the same time, this new life is the cause of our joy which compels us, as witnesses and joyful heralds of the gift received, to traverse the streets of the world, awaiting the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God.

The second chapter seeks to focus attention on discerning the changes which affect how we live our faith and which influence our Christian communities. The reasons for spreading the idea of the new evangelization are then evaluated as well as the different ways the many particular Churches can feel involved. The third chapter treats the basic

places, means, persons and activities in the transmission of the Christian faith — the family, liturgy, sacramental life, catechesis and works of charity — and how, in the process of transmission, the faith needs to be professed, celebrated, lived and prayed. Finally, the fourth and final chapter discusses areas of pastoral activity, specifically those dedicated to the proclamation of the Gospel and the transmission of faith. The classic areas are then discussed, with greater development given to the most recent ones which have arisen in response to the impact and concerns arising from a reflection on the new evangelization in Christian communities and the manner in which they live their faith. It must be noted that the adjective "new" refers to a cultural situation which has changed and the need for the Church, with renewed energy, determination, resourcefulness and newness, to look at the way she lives and transmits the faith.

The new sectors which have emerged in human history in the last decade in turn must be turned into places for proclaiming the Gospel and experiencing the Church. As often referred to by Blessed John Paul II, these sectors include cultures, society, economics, civic life and religion. The *social sector* highlights the *phenomenon of the great migration*. It is observed concerning *civic life* that: "From the time of the Second Vatican Council to the present, the changes which have occurred in this sector can rightly be called momentous. Many responses have highlighted a variety of urgent situations in this sector, namely, a commitment to peace; the development and liberation of peoples; better international regulation and interaction of national governments; the search for possible areas of listening, coexistence, dialogue and collaboration between different cultures and religions; the defense of human rights and peoples, especially minorities; the promotion of the most vulnerable; and the integrity of creation and a commitment to the future of our planet."

The fifth sector is *scientific research and technology*. Over against their marvels and achievements, we have to be cautioned against that inherent in the many positive aspects is the lurking danger of excessive expectations and manipulation,

making of them the new idols of the present age. In a digitalized and globalized world, science can easily become "our new religion." In fact, new forms of "gnosis" are arising which make technology a form of wisdom and also give rise to new cults, which exploit the religious practices of healing, to which people easily succumb, and manifest themselves as religions promising prosperity and instant gratification. Communications is the sixth sector. Mass media are fast becoming the "forum" of civic life and social experience, which is readily seen in today's widespread use of the internet. Among them are: A greater access to information; more opportunities for knowledge and dialogue; new forms of solidarity; and the ability to foster an increasingly global culture which leads to a shared heritage of values and the better development of thought and human activity.

New Evangelization

New evangelization is precisely the Church's ability to renew her communal experience of faith and to proclaim it within the new situations which, in recent decades, have arisen in cultures. The same phenomenon is taking place all around: the North and South, the East and West. This embraces countries with an age-old Christian tradition and countries which have been evangelized within the last few centuries. The coalescing of social and cultural factors — conventionally designated by the term "globalization" — has initiated a process which is weakening traditions and institutions and thereby rapidly eroding both social and cultural ties as well as their ability to communicate values and provide answers to perennial questions regarding life's meaning and the truth.

Pope Benedict XVI sees in today's real-life situations that marginalize God and the "spiritual" an "interior desert," where these very issues have to be raised with more vigor and rigor. Many more aspects regarding new evangelization are being aired in the working paper. For example, the new evangelization is also the name given to a spiritual reawakening and the reanimation of a process of conversion which the Church asks of herself, all her communities and all the baptized. Through the new evangelization, the Church seeks to insert the very original and specific character of her teachings into today's world and everyday discussion. She wants to be the place where God can be experienced vividly even now, and where, under the guidance of the Spirit, we allow ourselves to be transformed by the gift of faith.

The Gospel is always a new proclamation of salvation, accomplished by Jesus Christ, to make every human

life share in the mystery of God and his life of love, thereby opening human life to a future of hope, which is inspiring and trustworthy. Emphasizing the Church's call to undertake a new evangelization at this moment in history also means intensifying and prompting a profound interior and missionary renewal within the Church. She has to help the faithful to get over practicing religion is a passive way and from separating faith from their daily life. Besides, there are the other external obstacles that endanger and prevent transmitting of the faith such as consumerism and hedonism, cultural nihilism and obliterating of any sense of transcendence that make talk about salvation meaningless. A lively sense of faith, experienced and lived accrue many blessings and fruits such as families which get transformed into a true sign of love, sharing and a hope which is open to life; communities equipped with a true ecumenical spirit; the courage to support initiatives for social justice and solidarity; and the joy of giving one's life to the priesthood or the consecrated life. The document does not forget to pay attention to popular piety with its devotion to the saints and Mary, in particular, as well as sacred places (shrines) with their opportunities for penance and spirituality. These avenues are increasingly being seen as a very timely and original means of initial proclamation. Pilgrimages and devotions can also provide the occasion to introduce a person to a real faith-experience and to respond to the great existential questions which touch upon conversion in one's life.

Conclusion

There is no question of the new evangelization bringing in a "new gospel" because Jesus Christ remains the same. So, the new evangelization simply means an adequate response to the signs of the times, to the needs of individuals and people of today and to the new sectors, as we have seen, with their cultures through which we express our identity and the meaning of our lives. Consequently, the new evangelization means fostering a culture deeply grounded in the Gospel and helping people discover the "new man" (Eph 4:24), which is within as a result of the Spirit which has been poured out into our hearts. There is an "education emergency" that calls for passing basic values of life and moral imperatives. While the new evangelization must strive to present the gospel message and the Christian faith as a source of hope to the modern society, the Church too must experience the enthusiasm and the joy of evangelizing.

Rev. Fr. Leopold Ratnasekera, OMI



Ephesus, Mary & John

We Christians know about Ephesus mainly because of the letter of Paul to the Ephesians. This letter is one of the last letters that he wrote as a prisoner in Rome. Ephesus was a prospering port city in the western coast of Asia Minor during the time of Christ. It was chosen as the capital of the eastern part of the Roman Empire. Paul would have visited Ephesus for the first time in 52 AD.

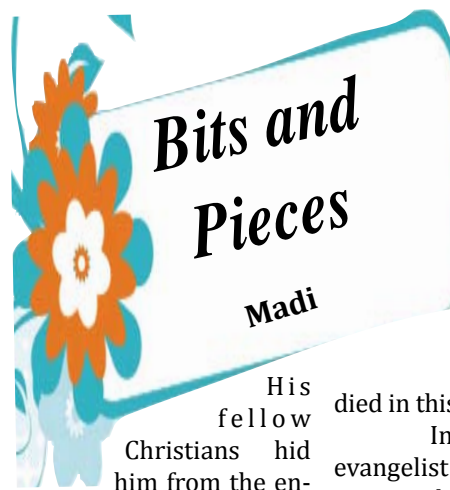
But according to tradition the Church of Ephesus was founded by St. John the Evangelist who authored his own Gospel, the Book of Revelation and three letters (Epistles) in the New Testament. We know this because

St. John the Evangelist is buried in Ephesus. There are remains of a large basilica built over his tomb in the middle of the old city. There are many documents proving the fact that John lived and died in this city.

John is the only disciple of Christ who died of old age. All the other disciples died as martyrs. Tradition says that he lived for more than a century. During his time the Christians were still persecuted and they had to practice their religion in secret. Because of the cosmopolitan nature of the city the Christian community could hide among the other religious and national sects. Ephesus was so safe for early

Christians, Paul during his second missionary journey stayed in Ephesus for more than two and a half years. He wrote several epistles in this city.

The most famous ancient religious center in Ephesus was the temple of Artemis. This temple was regarded as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Artemis was regarded as the mother goddess of fertility. She also loved animals. Her greatest temple was in Ephesus. Paul, during one of his sermons in the theatre criticized this goddess as a man-made idol and the silversmiths and artisans who made a living out of this cult rebelled against him and wanted to harm him.



Bits and Pieces

Madi

His fellow Christians hid him from the enraged artisans.

The most important Christian shrine in Ephesus is the Church of Blessed Virgin Mary. It is so important to Christians that in 431AD the third ecumenical council was held in this church. The main dis-

cussion was on the Nestorian position on the Blessed Virgin Mary. Such an important church was dedicated to Blessed Virgin Mary in Ephesus, because Mary lived and died in this city.

In his Gospel, the evangelist John clearly writes why he had an obligation to look after Our Lady during the last days of her life. On Calvary during his final hours on the cross, "Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother" Woman, behold your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And

from that hour the disciple took her to his own home." (John 19:26-27)

When John moved from Palestine to preach the message of Christ in other parts of the world, he took the Blessed Virgin Mary with him. He founded the Church of Ephesus and lived there until his death of old age. The Virgin Mary's house is located on Mount Koressos which is in the vicinity of Ephesus. Mary was taken to this stone house on the top of the mountain by Saint John and she lived pilgrimage. Thousands of Christians as well as non Christians visit this small stone cottage on a top of a hill. They not only pay homage to the Blessed Mother but also plead and obtain many spiritual and physical favours from her.

You are worth much more than many sparrows

We read in the papers these days, people committing suicide in alarming ways. People kill others, then commit suicide. The mother tries to kill herself along with her two children as she has no means to feed them. The life that is given to each one of us by God is unique and unmatched. God expects us to treasure this uniqueness and achieve God's purpose through his guidance and direction. God's watchful eyes rest on us always with undiminished attention.

The care, love and watchfulness that God exercises on us is beautifully explained by Jesus Christ in St. Luke's gospel, chapter 12. Jesus says, "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet, not a single one of them is forgotten by God. Even the hairs of your head have all been numbered. So do not be afraid, you are worth much more than many sparrows."

During Jesus' time, two sparrows were sold for one penny. These sparrows were sold for sacrifices at the temple. The very poor people offered sparrows as sacrifices at the temple as they were the cheapest. Now, if for one penny you get two sparrows, for two pennies you'll get four sparrows. But Jesus says, 'Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies?' This means there's an extra sparrow. The sparrow sellers gave an extra sparrow if anyone was prepared to spend two pennies. This offer was to induce the buyers. Thus we see the extra sparrow has no value at all. It's given free. Jesus says God cares even for that extra sparrow that has no value

God's own way



Contentment
Unending search
Seek a life time
Lives as taught
In his commandments
Followed scripture
Truth so revealed
Volumes of interest
Learning Psalms
Over and again
Gospel comprehend
Yet a life empty
Bound determined
Steadfast faith
Brings the ultimate
In mysterious ways
God renews our pace
Saddle of righteousness
Monothiestic faith
God his own way
Assures happiness
For all to praise

Miran Perera

Thoughts that haunt me

Ananda Perera

at all. Even the valueless sparrow is dear to God. However, Jesus says that we are worth much more than many sparrows.

Are we always mindful of God's concern and guardianship? God is always there for us. But he is sidelined. It is not God's way to trespass into our lives and resort to unwelcome occupation. He waits expectantly until we extend an invitation to steer the course of our lives. Our life is full of ups and downs. We give up when the going gets tough.

A well-known speaker started off his seminar by holding up a twenty dollar note before the audience. In the room of two hundred, he asked, "Who would want this twenty dollar note?" Many hands went up. He said, "I am going to give this note to one of you, but first, let me do this." He crushed the note. He then asked; "Who still wants it?" Still the hands went up. "Well, he replied, what if I do this?" He dropped it on the ground and with his foot, trampled it. He picked it up, now all crumpled and dirty. "Now who still wants it?" he asked. Still the hands went in the air. He said, "My friends, no matter what I did to the money, you still wanted it because it did not decrease in value. It is still worth twenty dollars."

Many times in our lives, we are dropped, crumpled and thrown into the dirt. We are laughed at, misunderstood and ridiculed. We are not recognized, we are driven to a corner. We have few friends, we face sarcasm, no one wants to keep company with us. We feel we are worthless. But no matter what happens, as long as God is with us, we'll never lose our value. We are special in the eyes of God.

Angel on my Shoulder

There's an angel on my shoulder,
Though I've never heard her sing,
I know she keeps me safe each day
And close beneath her wing.
My angel does not
Play a harp or rest
In clouds all day.
She's much too busy
Guarding me,
Keeping me from
Harm's way.
She rejoices in
My life's success
And weeps when
I'm in pain.
She picks me up
When I have failed
And helps me try again.
Tonight I'll say a prayer for her
And thank the Lord above
For sending me an angel
To lead me with her love.
(Internet)



By Sirohmi Gunsekera

Small Things

"Have you heard of Saint Theresa of Avila? She was known as 'The Little Flower of Jesus', said Jessica.

"I have heard of her. She died very young, didn't she?" replied Nihal.

"Yes, and she never did great things in her life. But she always prayed and thanked God for giving her little tasks to perform like watering the garden and tending the flowers," said Jessica.

"Perhaps we too should think of doing little things and doing them well without waiting for big miracles," suggested Nihal.

"You are right. Sometimes, we spend our whole lives waiting for big things to happen and are so disappointed when they don't happen. Maybe we should concentrate on the little things we can do. For instance, today I can tell myself not to take offence if a friend lets me down. We should not allow ourselves to feel hurt, dwelling on our sense of grievance. Maybe he or she had a reason for doing what she or he did. Just offer it up to God and go on from there!" said Jessica.

"And we should learn to live for the day! If only we can make the most of each moment from sunrise to sunset... That is all. Let's try not to fritter away even a minute for we shall not pass through this way again," said Nihal.

"Both men and women need to learn to value the small things we can do. It is not infra dig to stoop to the level of a child. Remember that Jesus knelt down and washed the feet of His disciples," said Jessica.

"I know. We must all learn humility. Like the Little Flower of Jesus, you and I should do the small things well," said Nihal.

TAKE TIME FOR A MINUTE OF HUMOUR - SMILE!



The young husband coming home after work in to the living room inquired, "These ashes in the living room floor...? The wife replied, "These are your mother-in-law's." "Oh is she dead?." "No! She is just too damn lazy to find an ashtray."

Rev. Fr. Fracidd Anthony Fernando OMI

Art & Architecture in Liturgy

Compiled by: Kishani S. Fernando

The two great apostles

On June 29, the Church celebrates the feast of the two great Apostles, Peter and Paul. It is in these two apostles the Church has its roots and its foundation. They are the solid rock on which the Church is built. They both suffered martyrdom in the name of their Lord. They will forever remain her protectors and her guides

The ivory statuettes of St. Peter and St. Paul mounted on a wooden base as shown here is in the custody of St. Mary's Parish, Maggona. The statuettes are intricately carved outlined in gold and red. Sadly a hand of one of the statues is broken.

The 22 inch polished mahogany statue of St. Paul holding a sword cut out of white sandalwood is the latest creation of Mr. Raymond Fernando. The statue is for St. Paul's Church, Waragoda.



My Lord, My God

St. Thomas, the disciple who did not believe, became one of the first witnesses of the Church. The Church is fond of appealing to his testimony and frequently puts in our mouths those simple words whereby he expressed the fervour of his regained faith: "My Lord and my God." The Church celebrates his feast on July 03.

It is known that St. Thomas preached the Gospel in Asia beyond the frontiers of the Roman Empire. It is an accepted fact that St. Thomas the Apostle came to India and was the founder of the Syrian Christian Church in that country. There is a tradition that he also visited Sri Lanka and preached on a hillock facing the sea shore in Colombo. The locals referred to this hillock as San-thum-pitiya or the plain of St. Thomas. Today it has been identified as the small hillock on which St. Thomas' Church Gintupitiya stands facing the Colombo harbour.

The site on which the church at Gintupitiya stands has a long history. The present Church was built in 1815 and was the first church in Lanka built for Anglican worship. According to scholars it was built on the site of an earlier Portuguese Roman Catholic Church, which is believed to have been constructed on the foundations of an even earlier church of the Persian Nestorian Christians of the 6th Century. The Gintupitiya church as such is also evidence that there were Christians in Sri Lanka from very early times.

Jerome Labourt in his book *'Le Christianisme dans L'Empire Perse'* mentions a fourth century work where it is stated that the Persian priest biographer Zadoe was the Monk Superior of the Monastery of St. Thomas in India and that his residence was established under the land of the Quatrave in the black Island of Zeilan. Zadoe was the Presbyter appointed to look after the spiritual needs of the Persian settlers.

In 522 AD the Graeco Egyptian traveller and merchant, Cosmos Indicopleustes, mentioned that "Even in Taprobane where the Indian Sea is, there is a church of Christians with clergy and a body of believers (Christian Topography, Book III) He also stated that in Sieladiba (Sinhaldwipa) there is a community of Persian Christians who have a presbyter appointed from Persia, and priests and deacons and all the appearances of the public worship. But the natives and the kings are of different faith." Further evidence has been quoted from the Arab travellers, Abu Zeid Hassan (851 AD) Elias, (890 AD) and Edrisi, (1154 AD) the Arabian geographer.

Although the Christians in Persia were persecuted and their churches were destroyed in the 13th century, it would appear that at least a small community of Nestorian Christians continued in the Island till well after the advent of the Portuguese in 1505. There is evidence that in 1554 a group of St. Thomas Christians from the village of San Thome Pattinam in the Erukkalampiddi area in Mannar had made representations through the Portuguese envoys to St. Francis Xavier in Goa, pleading with him to come and baptise them.

In 1912 Archaeological Commissioner Ayrton discovered a Nestorian Cross in Anuradhapura carved on a stone pillar, and Padre Fernan de Queyroz in 1688 makes mention of a Nestorian cross dug up in Mutwal, not far from where St. Thomas' Church, Gintupitiya now stands. All these show that there have been Nestorian Christians in Sri Lanka long before the advent of the Portuguese.

The Portuguese too built a church here. It is possible that this was the same church re-built by Franciscan

monks on the order (or request) of Constantine de Sa de Noronha, dated 23rd November 1628. Friar Paulo da Trindade in his book *"Conquista Spiritual Do Oriente"* (c 1630) states, "There is in the neighbourhood of Colombo, the beautiful Church of St. Thomas the Apostle in which there is a small stone pillar with a cross carved on it of the kind the glorious Apostle used to work with his own hands. This was the first church he built on the

Island and there the Pai Dos Christaos (a priest especially entrusted with conversion work) resides." There was also in the vicinity a Franciscan Orphanage under the direction of the Rector of St. Thomas Church. This was supported by the endowment of part of the revenue from the two villages of Dunga and Orna (Dunagaha and Horana).

When the Dutch, as allies of the king of Kandy, laid siege to the Port of Colombo in 1656 they seized the surrounding hilltops and turned the churches on them (including St. Thomas' Church, Gintupitiya) into military barracks. In an act of sacrilege, they snatched away the statue of St. Thomas from the Church in Gintupitiya and having defaced and mutilated it, forced it into an artillery barrel and blasted it in the direction of the city wall during the bombardment. The Rajavaliya referring to the attack on the Fort by the Dutch and Sinhala forces makes specific mention of San-tum-pitiya in lower Boralugoda where Vickramasinghe Mudali pitched his camp and erected a stock-ade.

In the times of the Dutch, the Portuguese Church at Gintupitiya fell into ruins, but the churchyard continued to be used for three small cemeteries, one for slaves, one for natives and one for the heathen. It was probably at this time that the name 'San-thum-pitiya' (Plain of St. Thomas) was changed into Gin-tu-pitiya (Plain of the heathen) derived from 'gentu' the Portuguese word for heathen.

With the advent of the British, the Malabar or Tamil Christians who had earlier followed the Presbyterian form changed over to the Anglican tradition. They wanted their own church and collected eight hundred Rix dollars and approached the government for permission to erect their own church separated from the Europeans. As such the present church was built. It was gothic in architecture and Sir Robert Brownrigg whose name is inscribed in the west wall, presented the chalice and other sacred vessels for the Holy Eucharist Service.

- Taken from an article by Frederick Medis.

The picture at top is a sculpture that seeks to capture that very dramatic moment when St. Thomas believes in his Risen Lord and utters the words "My Lord, My God." The sculpture is at the Anglican Cathedral, Kurunegala. The pictures below show the present church dedicated to St. Thomas at Ginthupitiya.



IEC 2012: Communion with Christ and with one another



A Time of Grace for the whole Catholic Church

The International Eucharistic Congress (IEC) held in Dublin, Ireland from the 10th to 17th June, 2012 was a unique time of grace for the whole Catholic Church. It provided an opportunity for her to reflect both on the centrality of the Holy Eucharist in her life and mission and to give renewed impetus to the living in faith of her members.

This was the 50th International Eucharistic Congress which also coincided with the 50th anniversary of the inauguration of the Second Vatican Council which was, undoubtedly, an important moment of renewal and deepening of the Church's teaching in terms of her understanding of herself as the Body of Christ and the People of God. Drawn from this Theology of the Second Vatican Council, particularly *Lumen Gentium*, no. 7, the Congress formulated as its theme *'The Eucharist: Communion with Christ and with one another.'* The theme reminded us, that it is by participating in the Holy Eucharist

we build communion with Christ and, at the same time, with one another, thus achieving an authentic ecclesial solidarity.

Exploring the theme through its wider scope of programmes which included liturgical events, cultural events, symposiums, 150 workshops, 18 general conferences, processions, catechesis, testimonies and adoration, the Congress was truly a source of encouragement and renewal for the many thousands who participated. The daily celebration of the Holy Eucharist, held at the open Arena of the Royal Dublin Society (RDS), was indeed at the very heart of the Congress, giving strength and nourishment to the pilgrims despite the heavy showers experienced every now and then. One Cardinal speaker even referred to the inclement weather as the 'showers of blessing' both on the Church of Ireland and on the whole Church. A parallel symposium organised by the Congregation



of the Blessed Sacrament with their Superior General and many representatives from all over the world was also commendable. This took place at the Blessed Sacrament Chapel at Bachelor's Walk, the shrine which also served as one of the hosting churches for the Congress, welcoming and extending hospitality to pilgrims.

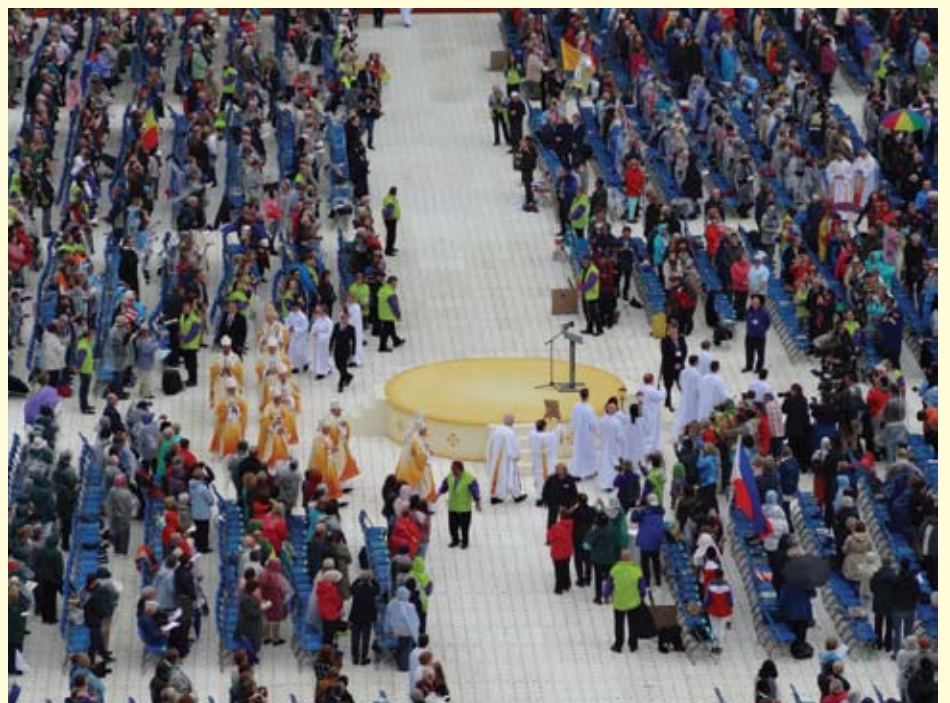
An Invitation

The Congress was both an invitation and a challenge for a deeper understanding of how in the Eucharist, we are invited to a personal act of encounter and communion, with the Lord who gives Himself to us, in Word and Sacrament. The Eucharistic Encounter opens the path for a new communion with one another, in which we in turn are given to others. The theme thus reminded us that, just as Jesus allowed himself to be broken on the Cross for the salvation of the world, so we who break the bread of the Eucharist must commit ourselves to the same task. Our communion is thus not only with Christ, it is and must be, with one another.

The Congress concluded with the Eucharistic Celebration, which was

"The Eucharistic Encounter opens the path for a new communion with one another, in which we in turn are given to others. Our communion is thus not only with Christ, it is and must be, with one another"

to September 2nd this year. We are invited to deepen our communion with Christ in the Eucharist and extend that Eucharistic communion to one another, irrespective of our caste, ethnic and social differences. Seeking to create a



A Sign of Communion, Healing and Hope

attended by more than 70,000 pilgrims and was a real sign of communion, healing and hope. The chief celebrant, Papal Legate, His Eminence Marc Cardinal Ouellet concluded by thanking God for all His blessings on the Church through the Congress and wished that its memory and hope would continue in the lives of the people. During the Holy Eucharist, a televised message from Pope Benedict XVI was broadcast, in which he announced that the next Eucharist Congress will be held in Cebu in the Philippines in 2016.

A Challenge

The Congress poses a particular challenge for us the Sri Lankan Church, especially at a time when the Archdiocese of Colombo looks forward to its celebration of the Diocesan Eucharistic Congress to be held from August 31st

greater communion with Christ and one another, we are called, in time, to work towards eradicating all that is sinful, selfish and divisive among us. Communion with Christ nourishes communion and reconciliation with one another as one Catholic family of Sri Lanka, overcoming all other differences among us.

Joy, Grace, Peace

It was a great pleasure, honour and blessing for me, to have been able to share in this journey of the 50th Eucharistic Congress. Each day of the Congress was an expression of joy, grace and peace encouraging me to continue to live and promote the Eucharist, as communion with Christ and with one another.

**Rev. Fr. Justin Chawkan, sss
St. Philip Neri's Church, Pettah**



Photograph taken on the third day of the Congress during the Procession with the Blessed Sacrament.

St. Peter's Hospital Chapel Celebrates 125th Jubilee

The Hospital Chapel which is dedicated to St. Peter at the National Hospital of Sri Lanka, celebrates its 125th Jubilee on the 8th of July 2012.

The Chapel was built and blessed with the arrival of Franciscan Missionary Sisters during the Episcopal era of Most Rev. Dr. Christopher Bonjean OMI in 1887. The following year onwards the Oblates Fathers took charge of celebrating the Eucharist at the FMM Convent inside the Hospital and no sooner Fr. Conrad OMI started visiting the patients and helping them spiritually. The Chapel looks very historical and attractive with the olden architecture such as wood carvings, attractive altar, its decorated floor tiles and wooden tabernacle. Today this chapel looks even more aesthetic with the addition of a newly built Grotto, Stations of the Cross, statues of Jesus healing a blind man and newly landscaped surrounding.

The Oblate Priests continue this mission of presence even to this day. When the then Government took over the Nursing Ministry from the Reverend Sisters during 1964-65, the Oblate Chaplains never gave up this ministry. They continued to serve the sick and the infirm with the collaboration of Reverend Sisters such as FMM, Holy Family, Apostolic Carmel and Charity Sisters in various scales. The Mission is also really strengthened by Guild of St. Luke Saints Cosmas and Damien, Sri Lanka Catholic Nurses' Guild, St. Eugene's Volunteer Group and Minor Staff Members.

One of the main missions of Jesus was healing the sick and the suffering and making them whole. It was an experience of the Kingdom of God that was to be realized. We find even the disciples continued the same ministry during and after the earthly life of Jesus. (Acts. 3:1-10; 9:32-35). This mission of Jesus was carried on by the disciples and in Sri Lanka too. We come across a remarkable personality Blessed Joseph Vaz. In 1697 when the Kandyan Kingdom was plagued with small pox, when the king, nobles and people had fled the kingdom, it was Blessed Vaz and some of his disciples worked untiringly taking care of the sick and burying the dead, even without caring for

their own lives.

Years later in 1886, the English Governor, Sir Arthur Gordon, was concerned for the nursing services in the Colombo General Hospital, Ceylon's largest and best equipped medical facility, and thus had appealed to the Catholic Church for nursing nuns. The governor had laid particular emphasis on the need for attention to the poor public patients in the hospital. Archbishop Bonjean was impressed by an invitation emanating from the British government in Ceylon. Hence on March 16, 1886, Sr. Mary of Passion, the Superior General of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, having speedily obtained the authorization of Propaganda, sent Sisters to the General Hospital in the month



of May, 1886 to commence duties. On June 22, 1886 the Sisters were greeted by Dr. Kynsey, Dr. MacDonald, and Dr. Vanderstouten and also Mr. De Harpe who was in charge of equipments. Fr. Boisseau and Fr. Collin arrived and blessed the house the Sisters were to stay.

The house provided by the government in the hospital premises was very small and quite Franciscan. It was promptly named after Saint Peter, 'for did he not cure the sick when even his shadow passed over them?' (Acts. 5:15). Later on the first Eucharist was celebrated by Fr. Bayle at St. Peter's on June 24, 1886, on the feast of Corpus Christi, and the Blessed Sacrament was reserved in the tabernacle. With all the difficulties the Sisters gradually developed the hospital with infrastructure and the services were very commendable. Most of the patients

were Buddhists, and even Hindus, Muslims, and also few of Protestants and Catholics. The poor, who previously avoided the hospital, were now seeking admittance.

On April 1, 1887, Fr. Coquil OMI, blessed the new chapel and celebrated the first Mass there. By the end of 1888 Fr. Conrad faithfully provided daily Mass. These good works continued day by day and as a result the quality of the hospital improved. But later on when the government brought the rule to dispel the foreign nuns and priests from Sri Lanka, the nuns had to leave the country with lots of tears and many countries such as Congo,



way Hospital, Castle Maternity Hospital, De Soyza Maternity Hospital, Rajagiriya Ayurveda Hospital, Angoda and Muleri-yawa Psychiatric Hospitals etc.

There were so many who contributed to the development of this Chapel. His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith made a few personal visits to the Chapel and gave his help through the Diocesan Procurator, Fr. Merl Shanthi. Very Rev. Fr. Rohan Silva OMI, the Provincial Superior of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and the Bursar Fr. Jagath Anthony OMI were very concerned and supportive and they were our strength. The Guild of St. Luke Saints Cosmas and Damien and many other doctors voluntarily came forward to help in the development work. The St. Eugene's Voluntary Group is always behind us

in prayer and material support. Catholic Nurses' Guild and the Attendants and staff give their support too. Not only the Hospital Staff, there were so many well-wishers and friends who were always generous in helping.

All arrangements are been made to celebrate this unique event on July 8th, 2012 at 8 am with the presence of His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, the Archbishop of Colombo. There will be a Thanksgiving Service (Vespers) on the July 7th at 6.30 pm with the presence of His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Norbert Andradi, OMI, Bishop of Anuradhapura. The Hoisting of the flag staff to begin the celebrations will take place on the July 1st, Sunday at 12 pm.

Rev. Fr. Randil Fernando, OMI

Biblical landscapes - the Garden

By Rev. Fr. Anselm de Croos

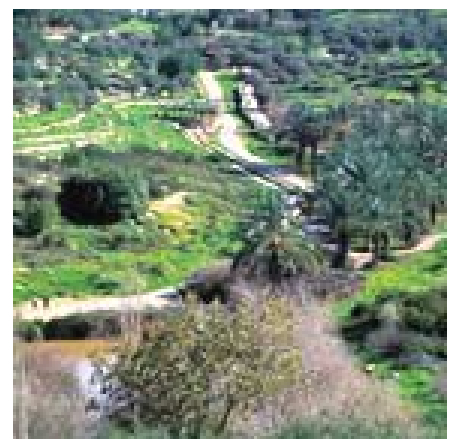
There are twelve iconic biblical landscapes deeply connected with the whole drama of redemption.

The garden, the mountain, the seashore, the sea, the fountain, the forest, the river, the lake, the desert, the cave, the sky, and the fields; the number twelve is a sacred whole number in the Bible, the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles.

The garden has its deep and Mystic connotations in the story of revelation. The romance of God and humanity surrounded by creation is the setting for the greatest love story ever told. The musical score that was begun in the Garden of Eden continued till the dawn of redemption through the Garden of Gethsamene and continued to the garden of Easter morn where the Risen Christ was mistaken for the gardener.

The innate beauty and harmony infused into the human soul at creation not only to please the eye but to refresh the soul moves the heart to long and yearn for the ultimate beauty that was and is experienced in a garden. Spiritual faculties often dormant are awakened in those quiet moments that is a part of the garden experience. The genius of man has been exercised throughout the ages in creating gardens of beauty and harmony but they could never ever come close or rival the matchless beauty of nature in all its sublime glory where the divine gardener has counterposed woods and water, trees with their tall trunks, the green swads grass interspersed with a profusion of wildflowers, with sand and stone forming the framework of these marvelous masterpieces.

One can let one's thoughts dwell undisturbed by drinking in the exquisite loveliness of a garden that reflects the Beauty of God.



BIBLE BOX



As an activity of the Colombo Catholic City Mission, the following is a Question and Answer, Bible Box, to enlighten the readers with the Word of God.

Q1. "And behold, Elizabeth, your SUNGENIS (i.e. kinswoman or female relative), has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren" (Luke 1,36). How do we explain the relationship between Elizabeth and Mary?

A: According to Luke 1:36 Elizabeth, from a priestly family (Luke 1:5) "... his wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth"), is a **SUNGENIS** of Mary. That is, she is a **kinswoman** or **female relative** of Mary (against the meaning of 'cousin' popularized by Wycliffe).

Q2. How is Mary related to Elizabeth? In which way is she the female relative or kinswoman of Elizabeth?

A: Luke does not specify the relationship. Hence we have to admit that the degree of family relationship is vague - R. E. BROWN, *The Birth of the Messiah*. A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke (ABRL; NY 1993) 292 and that the exact relationship is not known (C. STUHLMEYER, "The Gospel according to Luke", JBC, 121).

Q3. Do the other Gospels support this relationship?

A: Only at the beginning of Luke (1:36), we find the detail that both Elizabeth and Mary are relatives or kinswomen. But in the public ministry, there is no suggestion that John the Baptist is a relative of Jesus - R. E. BROWN, *Responses to 101 Questions on the Bible* (Bombay 1993) 79. None of the descriptions of the relations between Jesus and John the Baptist in the public ministry leads us to suspect a family relationship - R. E. BROWN, *Mary in the New Testament* (Bangalore 1992) 134. Further, the other Gospels are totally silent about this relationship. In John 1:33 John the Baptist says that he did not even know Jesus: "I did not know him ..."

A4. What does Luke want to say through this kinship?

A: Brown is right to call this family relationship "a symbolic Lucan etiology" (*The Birth of the Messiah*, 285). Since Elizabeth and Mary are related, John the Baptist and Jesus are also related; Jesus' movement and John the Baptist's movement are also historically related; and eventually, the disciples of Jesus and of John the Baptist are also historically related. John the Baptist thus enters firmly within the Christian sphere. In salvation history, there is harmony, instead of rivalry, between the two. It is this historical link that Luke explains, in a graceful way, to his readers.

Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi

Compiled for the Colombo Catholic City Mission

- KORA SAHA ANDAYA (Sinhala)
(The lame and the blind)
- PAYANIHAI (Tamil)
- Shown in Sri Lanka's mobile theatre JANAKARALIYA
- MAKAL KALARI (Tamil)

The late H.A. Perera and Parakrama Niriella jointly gave birth to a mobile theatre that is travelling round the country.

Janakaraliya or *Makkal Kalari* is a new concept of taking the theatre

MEDIA NOTES

fr. ernest poruthota



to people in the villages. It is an open air tent with the stage in the middle of the tent and the audience sits round the stage on all four sides. All have seats.

(Bookings can be made through Parakrama Niriella on 287-27-18 mobile 077317-56-38. janakaraliya@gmail.com)

Parakrama has to his credit street and stage dramas *Sekkuwa*, *Meti Karathaya*, *Galileo*; tele dramas: *Lahiru Dahasak* and *Yasorawaya*; and films, *Sirimadura*, *Ayoma*, under his director portfolio.

Parakrama is now fully engaged in nourishing his mobile theatre initiative *Janakaraliya* or *Makkal Kalari*.

He created a Multi-ethnic platform for the country's youth to share values, customs, traditions and cultures via drama. Greeks introduced a system of script written drama to be shown to a destined and disciplined audience "THRUST THEATRE" and "NEW

ARENA" were introduced in the 20th century, taking inspiration from Eastern cultures the "CIRCUS MADUWA" concept of our ancestors had qualities of the new arena theatre.

Parakrama had gone to Vavuniya, Trincomalee, Hatton and Bogawantalawa to convince Tamil and Muslim parents to offer their children for the cause.

Prof. Sinniah Mannaguru of the Eastern University is highly appreciative of Parakrama's initiative.

A Tamil actor who starred in the Sinhala version of *Meti Karathiya* was nominated for the best supporting actor in 2010, for the first time in Sri Lanka drama history. Likewise the Tamil version of *Sekkuwa* was nominated in the same category.

D h a r m a s e n a Pathiraja scripted *Dhamma Jagoda* produced *Kora Saha Andaya* (The Lame and the Blind) is now having a Tamil version called

"*Payanihal*" the original 1970 Sinhala text of Prof. Dharmasena Pathiraja was translated to Tamil by Rasiah Lohanandan.



Two new female directors Ronika Chamali and Selvaraj Leelawathie have produced '*Payanihal*' for 40 minutes. To facilitate the audience to understand the dialogue of the drama the texts are displayed on a screen in Sinhala and English.

The story is simple:
• *The crippled man is carried by a blind man.*
• *Cripples legs are those of the blind man.*
• *Blind man's eyes are those of the cripple.*

They go on a journey in spite of many disputes by each of them. The journey lasts and both survive so long as they depend on each other. A great spiritual lesson for our national life and individual lives. Dramatic presentation of neighbourly love. There are only two actors blind and the lame. Walking stick and a drum.

Those who do not have big halls like *Nelum Pokuna*, *BMICH*, *Lionel Wendt*, *Tower Hall*, *Elphinstone*, *Lumbini*, *Nawa*

"After a successful tour of Galle, Janakaraliya will be in Puttalam - Anuradhapura, from June 27 to July 6, 2012

Special performances will be held for schools and the general public, coming under Chilaw, Vanath-villuwa Pradeshiya Sabhas. This festival will have children's dramas short dramas and long dramas."

Rangahala, for them the Janakaraliya mobile theatre will experience a new means of education.

Last January this drama *Kora Saha Andaya* represented Sri Lanka at

the New Delhi International Drama Festival. Besides many awards in the youth drama festival in Sri Lanka, Best Direction (*Ronika Chamali and Selvaraj Leelawathie*) Best Actor (*Thyagarasa Sivanesan*) -Best Costumes (*Inoka Lankapura*) in all five awards, were won.

Parakrama Niriella was interested in films even in 1980. For the Christian Fellowship then led by Vidyasagara, Jeffrey Abeysekara, Lakshman Jayasinghe and Kingsley, he did a film on Christ: *The First and The Last*.

Presently Parakrama is involved in "Theatre in Education" (TIE), a National School of Drama which involves students and teachers to do theatre games which includes qualities of team work, self esteem, creativity, innovativeness and most importantly sensitiveness within students the "sub-text" on hidden emotion to understand a character portrayed by an actor fully.

Hurrah for Sri Lanka!

Two young men who make the sign of the Cross before they start playing, have become heroes overnight.

Congratulations to Angelo Mathews and Thisara Perera for bringing victory and fame to their motherland, credit and honour to their schools.

Splendid indeed were your memorable contributions. At a moment of despair and disappointment, you gallantly came to the rescue of your team and your country.

You were absolutely brilliant.
Ad Multos Annos! God Bless.

Alfred Perera



Thisara Perera



Angelo Mathews

The Umpire - Most High, who is it?



"How much
you scored
is not
what matters,
but how you played
the game that
matters most"

Gentleman's game - cricket it was, but is it now, any more? Cricket is a game which puts in to test, one's temperament and character. It is common both to the player and the spectator. It goes beyond the talent and skill of the player, as well as the cheer and enthusiasm of the spectator.

"How is that?" is the question raised, on and off the field, more by the players and more so by the spectators. More often than not, this inquiry is made more as a threat, than as a verification. This is where eleven go up in arms with a yell, as against one. The verdict has to come from one, within a split second, either with a gesture of a protruding finger or a shake of a head. It was always that way then, but it is more sensible now, with the third umpire taking the upper hand.

The present review system wipes out the el-

ement of doubt, caused by human error. The time lag between the review alert and the pending decision, apparently is the never testing cross over, suspended between yes or no. Cricket is known as a 'mind game' which involves a fair share of skill and luck. At crucial moments of the game, where tension mounts forth, players often come under pressure. The umpires too face the same. At such a point of time, the element of error and doubt, inevitably creeps in to the decision of the umpire, which may invariably change the complexion of the game. To remedy this situation, there came about a decision review system in to play. Oh! what good it did to the game, by challenging the erroneous verdict of the faltering umpire. Unfortunately for no reason or the other, this system is not given due prominence as a norm. When eleven players appeal for your dismissal, as a person in question, you are called upon to surrender in mute silence. It is a moment of faith, where you depend on the credibility of the umpire. It could be the correct decision or not, in favour of you or the other.

Let us relate this 'cricketing drama' to the 'game of life'. When you are at the centre, so many may accuse you and appeal against you. Many may wish you

to be ruled out, but your dismissal doesn't come that easy and fast. This is because the Impartial Umpire that stands firm and unmoved, is the Lord the Most High. He never falters in His decisions, thus reviews are of no importance. The verdict, He doesn't deliver it in public, but makes it evident through your conscience. No influence of any force could deter Him. The benefit of the doubt is always in your favour. He is so prudent and patient with His decision and never rushes to rule you out. His plea on behalf of you would be, get down to the basics, amend your technique. Acknowledge your mistakes, rectify the same and keep on improving. Time your shots to precision and be graceful in your stroke play. Try always to be orthodox and never be uppish at the crease. Be defensive on your guard and be sensible in your shot selection. Put your head down, focus yourself and play the bowling on its merits. Thus more than being an umpire, He directs you as an Inspiring Coach. More than a lesson on cricket, He leads you into a chapter of discipline and formation.

You are called upon to bear in mind, that you be permitted to play just one innings, the duration of it is determined, not by your skill, but by the will of the Umpire - Most High. Whether you be applauded or not, is determined, not by the spectators, but by the Infallible Scorer. You would never ever be permitted the second chance of scoring. Once you retire to the pavilion, you could never return to the centre again. How much you scored is not what matters, but how you played the game, that matters most.

If you are to play this gentleman's game of cricket, as a true gentleman, the Invincible Match Referee's choice would be you, as the winner of the award. An invaluable award, no one other than He could give you. It would be a treasured award of your life.

The **Impartial Umpire-Most High**, the **Inspiring Coach**, the **Infallible Scorer** and the **Invincible Match Referee**, is one and the same. It is no one else, other than the **Lord - Himself**.

RodeZo

God cares about good manners

When I present my fashion Seminars, a point about casual dressing being too casual, always receives a universal head nod of agreement. The "too casual" attitude can be prevalent at Sunday Mass as well. Our clothing and outward behaviour sends a message to those around us. Some read-

ers may think: "Our Lord doesn't mind how I am dressed or how I act at Mass." The Gospels, however, indicate that our Lord does care about good manners. After Jesus heals the Ten Lepers (Lk. 13:11-19) He is saddened that nine of the lepers never return to thank Him for their healing. Jesus

appreciates the Samaritan, a foreigner, for his gratitude. In the house of Simon the Pharisee (Lk 7:36-50), Simon does not instruct a servant to wash Jesus' feet or anoint His head, basic good manners shown toward guests in Palestine back then. Jesus points out to Simon what the woman had

done for Him, Simon failed to do. These examples may seem trifling, but if we are faithful in little things then we will be faithful in much greater.

Here are five areas in which we can improve our manners at Mass to express our gratitude and love for Jesus:

Our Dress:

We wouldn't wear T-shirts, jeans or shorts to a job interview. So how should we present ourselves to our Lord at the representation of His sacrifice on the cross? The reason our grandparents wore their "Sunday best" to Mass was not to show up their neighbours but to mark

(Contd. on Pg.14)



*Our grandparents
wore their
'Sunday best' to Mass...
to mark the
solemnity of the liturgy*

St. Peter's Chapel, National Hospital, Colombo

125th Jubilee Celebration

Vespers Service : 7th July at 6.30 p.m.

Presided over by Rt. Rev. Dr. Norbert Andradi OMI - The Bishop of Anuradhapura

Festive High Mass : 8th July at 8.00 a.m.

Presided over by His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith - The Archbishop of Colombo.

ALL ARE WELCOME.....

Organized by : Catholic Doctors, Nurses, Attendants, Staff,
St. Eugeenes' Volunteers Association, Oblate Hospital Chaplains

N.B: Please use the gate near the OPD / Neuro Trauma Building

(Q12N2015)

Weekday Masses : 12.15 p.m. at the Chapel

**Sunday Masses : 7.15 a.m. at the Chapel
11.15 a.m. at Wd. 31
12.05 p.m. at the Chapel**



HOLY CHILDHOOD SOCIETY

2012

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A YEAR PLAN TO GROW IN LOVE OF GOD AND OTHERS
இருவருள்ளும் பிரரன்பிலும் வளர் உதவும் ஆண்டு செயல் திட்டம்

A YEAR PLAN TO GROW IN LOVE OF GOD
AND OTHERS - 2012



July

1. Pray for vocations from among the Holy Childhood children.
2. Read a Bible passage daily before you go to bed.
3. Pray for the the conversion of Catholics who do not go to Church.
4. Write down five things you did to help your mother.

First Holy Communism at Dehigahapitiya Parish



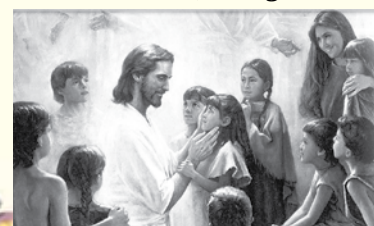
Seven children received their First Holy Communion at Dehigahapitiya Parish recently.

The children are seen here in the picture with Rev. Fr. Amila Gomes, Parish Priest and Bro. Nishantha.

Dear God, Father

Thank you for all the blessings you have showered upon us. Please take care of all the children at St. Peter's College, the teachers, our Principal, Fr. Rector and everyone else Amen

Mihimitha
St. Peter's, College



JESUS TEACHES AND HEALS CHANGE YOUR LIFE



Disanda Perera
Grade 2 S³
St. Peter's College,
Colombo 4.



MY MORNING PRAYER



Dear Jesus.... help me this day,
Watch me while I play.....
Bless my family and my friends,
Keep me safe and when....
I need you, help me to pray,
Thank you Jesus for this day.... Amen.



My Night Prayer

Thank you for the lovely day, you gave us....
Thank you for the food you gave us to eat....
Be with us this night, Bless our dreams....
Keep us safe and bless us with a another new day.. Amen.



Rohail Kenan
St. Peter's College, Colombo

God cares.....

(Contd. from Pg.13)

the solemnity of the liturgy. Maybe we too can express our veneration and love by dressing modestly in clean pressed clothes and polished shoes.

Our Posture: Would we ever meet an important client or head of state while chewing gum? Hopefully not! We offer them a firm hand shake, eye contact, and warm "hello." Our Lord deserves nothing less. We can greet him by acknowledging his sacramental presence by looking at the Tabernacle and genuflecting. The church asks us to fast from food and drink (other than water) for one

hour before receiving Holy Communion (provided no health issues are affected by fasting). Observing this request is another way of not taking our Lord for granted.

Our punctuality: Being on time shows respect for others. At Mass the priest should be the last person into the sanctuary and the first to leave. The preparation and planning to arrive on time in winter weather, with young children, or tired teens often requires heroic effort that does not go unnoticed by God.

Our Unity : By uniting ourselves to the words of the liturgy, we are united to Je-

sus and enter into the life of the Trinity. Let's follow the Mass closely, respond to the prayers clearly, and

To arrive on time... with young children or tired teens, often requires heroic effort

try not to distract any of our neighbours from doing likewise: Avoid dressing provocatively, chatting or laughing loudly, and letting our phones ring.

Our gratitude : Let's not be like the other nine lep-

ers who failed to give thanks. Let's take a few minutes after Mass to remain in quiet adoration while Jesus remains sacramentally in us immediately after receiving Holy Communion.

Courtesy:
Canadian Messenger



What it says in the Readings

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

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR B 1st July - 8th July 2012

SUN: 13TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Wis 1:13-15; 2: 23-24;

2 Cor 8:7,9, 13-15; Mk. 5: 21-43

Mon: Am. 2: 6-10, 13-16; Mt. 8: 18-22

Tue: Feast of St. Thomas, Apostle
Eph. 2: 19-22; Jn. 20: 24-29

Wed: Memorial of St. Elizabeth of Portugal
Am. 5:14-15,21-24; Mt. 8:28-34

Thu: Memorial of St. Anthony Mary
Zaccaria, Priest
Am. 7: 10-17; Mt. 9:1-8

Fri: Memorial of St. Maria Goretti,
Virgin Martyr
Am. 8: 4-6, 9-12; Mt. 9: 9-13

Sat: Am. 9: 11-15; Mt. 9: 14-17

Sun: 14TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME NATIONAL COMMUNICATION DAY

Ez. 2: 2-5; 2 Cor. 12: 7-10;

Mk. 6: 1-6

Prayers of the Faithful

Response: Lord, increase our faith, that we may touch you.

For the Church that it may continue Christ's healing work by caring for all those who are sick in body, mind, or spirit.

Response: Lord, increase our faith, that we may touch you.

For doctors and nurses and all those who care for the sick that they may do so with patience, skill, and care. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, increase our faith, that we may touch you.

For those who have no one to care for them, no one to touch their wounds, no one to introduce them to Christ their Saviour. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, increase our faith, that we may touch you.

That we may be aware of the power of Jesus we have, to heal the wounds of others: A kind word can heal a wounded heart; a kind deed can repair the damage done by rejection. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, increase our faith, that we may touch you.

Baptism - In Brief

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH



CCCB

1275 Christian initiation is accomplished by three sacraments together: Baptism which is the beginning of new life; Confirmation which is the strengthening; and the Eucharist which nourishes the disciple with Christ's Body and Blood for his transformation in Christ.

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading

Wis. 1:13-15; 2:23-24

It enlightens us that God created man in His own image. Death was not His design for the living but death entered the world through the envy of the devil. Therefore those of the devil's party will experience it and those who are of the Lord will experience eternal life.

Second Reading

2 Cor. 8: 7; 9:13-15

Taking an example from Christ's offering of His life for the salvation of the sinful man, St. Paul requested the Corinthians to be charitable towards one another in order to help the poor and the suffering.

Gospel Mk. 5: 21-43

The Woman with hemorrhage gets cured by just touching the garment of Jesus. Jesus also raised the dead child of Jairus to life. These show us the loving kindness of God towards those who ask His help and consolation.

Reflection

This Sunday's teachings remove a possible misunderstanding that could have come into our minds of last Sunday's readings. It is a fact that we have to accept life as it is, as the will of God for us and live it with all its ups and downs. Therefore one may not bother to think of a better state of life and might tend to live a gloomy life. In the sense even God might be seen as a helpless person when it comes to the life and destiny of man.

Today's readings teach us that with faith and love we could win God's love and mercy in order to better our lives. But this transition would occur only if there was true faith and charitable hearts.

In the Gospel we see the scene in which Jesus was called to cure the daughter of Jairus. On His way a woman who had been suffering for twelve years touches His garment and gets cured. This is a reward for the deep faith of the woman. First of all this woman had been suffering for twelve long years but she never lost her faith. Secondly this woman had faith in Jesus and she had so much of faith that she believes that even if she could touch merely the garment of Jesus she would get cured. As a result she got cured and Jesus said to her. "Your faith has made you well go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

On their way they were informed about the death of the daughter of Jairus. But Jesus said "Do not fear, only believe." The people laughed at Jesus but the family believed and Jesus raised the child back to life. Hence we see that even life was given back as a reward for faith.

The First Reading tells us that death and suffering are the result of sin but still if man lived on the side of God he will experience eternal life. It shows that God's hand is working on those who are faithful to Him. However it reminds us of the importance of remaining faithful to God who created us. For he created us in His own image and likeness.

The Second Reading is a clear proof that God's mercy and love is at work to save us. It is this mercy and love that sent his own Son in order to save mankind. And Jesus, too, out of mercy and love offered His life for the salvation of man. Taking it as an example we too are called to be charitable towards one another in order to help the poor and the sufferings and pains of the people. And that could be a turning point in their lives.

This change would bring more faith into their lives and as a result there would be more action from the side of God.

Aid Story

An old man is sitting on his porch, when suddenly someone drives up in a jeep, yelling. "Quick! Get into my jeep! The dam just burst, and this whole place is going to be flooded!"

The old man says. "Now, you just go on ahead, the good Lord will take care of me!"

Now someone paddles by his window in a canoe and says. "Quick! Get into my canoe! The water is going to keep rising!" "The old man says. "Now, you just go on ahead. The good Lord will take care of me!"

The water keeps rising. The old man drowns. The old man finds himself before the Lord in heaven. The old man says. "How could you let me drown? I trusted you."

The Lord says, "Hey, I tried. I sent a jeep and a canoe for you."

Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos

St. Maria Goretti - July 6

Called the St. Agnes of the 20th century, this modern Martyr of purity was born the third of seven children of a farm labourer at Corinaldo in the Italian province of Marche. Never able to attend school, she did, however, receive a thorough grounding in Christian virtue from her devout though illiterate 'mother. Assunta, who, among other things, taught her the catechism of the Catholic Church from memory. When Maria was nine her family moved to Nettuno near Rome for reasons of employment; the year following, her father Luigi died. Maria then took complete charge of the household, including the smaller children, while her mother went out to labour in the employer's farm.

When she was eleven, Maria made her long-desired First Communion after having attended special spiritual exercises in preparation, which left a profound impression on her. She had always been a model of obedience, of modesty and of purity, and had an innate horror of offending Jesus by any sin. But now she redoubled



her efforts to please her Lord and to be helpful to everyone. Going to confession involved a 7-mile walk each way, but Maria counted that as nothing when it concerned fulfilling a spiritual obligation.

An evil-minded young farm-hand, whose family was quartered in the same building, thrice attempted to seduce the young Maria, and when she resolutely rejected all his advances, stabbed her innumerable times in a desperate fury. Maria died a resigned and holy death the following day 6 July 1902 having, at her Confessor's urging, pardoned her assailant and prayed for his conversion. The latter barely escaped being lynched by the townsfolk but had to spend 29 years in prison, during which time he experienced a complete *metanoia* through a vision he had of the little martyr.

Maria's aged and partly paralysed mother, as well as the assailant himself, had the unique privilege of being present at her canonization on 25 June 1950, an event which attracted such enormous Holy Year crowds, that even St Peter's basilica, huge as it was, could not contain them and the ceremony had, for the first time in history, to be held in the open square in front of the Basilica.

1277 Baptism is birth into the new life in Christ. In accordance with the Lord's will, it is necessary for salvation, as is the Church herself, which we enter by Baptism.

1279 The fruit of Baptism, or baptismal grace, is a rich reality that includes forgiveness of original sin and all personal sins, birth into the new life by which man becomes an adoptive son of the Father, a member of Christ and a temple of the Holy Spirit. By this very fact, the person baptized is incorporated into the Church, the Body of Christ, and made a sharer in the priesthood of Christ.

(Catechism of the Catholic Church)