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# Messenger

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May

**08**

Mother's Day

## Church is a love story: Pope Francis

**V**ATICAN RADIO - The Church is not merely "a human enterprise," but rather "a love story," said Pope Francis, and the faithful must remember that it is only in the path of love that the Church can grow.

The Church began "in the heart of the Father," said the Holy Father at an April 24 Holy Mass in the Chapel of the Casa Santa Marta.

"So this love story began, a story that has gone on for so long, and is not yet ended," he explained. "We, the women and men of the Church, we are in the middle of a love story: Each of us is a link in this chain of love. And if we do not understand this, we have understood nothing of what the Church is."

Pointing to the growth and persecution of the Early Church,

### The true Christian virtue!

**S**hame, is a true Christian virtue and the Confessional is not a 'dry cleaners' where our sins are automatically washed away and Jesus is not waiting there to 'beat us up,' but to forgive us with the tenderness of a father for our sins.

Moreover, being ashamed of our sins is not only natural, it is a virtue that helps prepare us for God's forgiveness,

Pope Francis' says.

Commenting on the First Letter of St. John, which states "God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all," the Pope pointed out that "we all have darkness in our lives, moments where everything, even our consciousness, is in the dark," but this he said, "does not mean we walk in darkness."

Pope Francis stressed that the faithful must not compromise to get "more partners in this enterprise," Vatican Radio reported.

He cautioned that "the Church does not grow by human strength" but through the path of love.

While some Christians have "taken the wrong path" and "waged wars of religion," he said, "that is not the story of love."

"Yet we learn, with our mistakes, how the story of love goes," he continued, explaining that it is the Holy Spirit rather than any military strength that allows the Church to grow.

The Pontiff asked the mothers in the congregation how they might feel if someone referred to them as "a domestic administrator." He suggested that they might respond, "No, I am the

mother!" Likewise, he said, "the Church is Mother."

"And we are in the middle of a love story that continues thanks to the power of the Holy Spirit. All of us together are a family in the Church, who is our Mother," he explained.

Pope Francis turned to Mary to ask for "the grace of the spiritual joy of participating in this love story" with her Son.



### NOTICE

A meeting of the Archdiocesan Biblical Commission will be held at the Cardinal Cooray Auditorium of Aquinas University College, Borella at 4.30 pm on Tuesday, May 7.

The meeting will be presided by His Eminence, Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, the Archbishop of Colombo.

All members are requested to attend this important meeting.

**Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi**  
Director - Archdiocesan Biblical Apostolate

## Fr. Perniola, a faithful disciple of Jesus the Lord

**-Bishop Vianney Fernando**



Bambalapitiya to celebrate the 100th Birthday of Rev. Fr. Vito Perniola SJ.

Describing the centenarian as a priest, scholar, linguist, teacher, spiritual guru, author, historian and formator all rolled into one, Bishop Vianney Fernando noted that above all, Fr Perniola is a faithful disciple of

Jesus the Lord, a fervent and holy priest, a humble servant of God marked by a life of simplicity and profound dedication.

What is the secret of such a wonderfully rich and fruitful life of our centenarian, His Lordship asked and pointed out that the answer is found in the Gospel passage read

out at the Thanksgiving Mass itself, where Jesus says: "I am the true vine and you are the branches....remain in me as I remain in you.... whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing

**(CONTD ON PG. 2)**

**"I**n the life span of a single person, chalking up 100 years is an exceptional milestone. It is even more significant when such a person has lived and continues to live an absolutely fruitful life fulfilling God's will and utilizing to the maximum the gifts and talents he has received".

This was the tribute paid by Rt. Rev. Dr. Vianney Fernando, Bishop of Kandy in his homily preached at the Thanksgiving Mass held at St Mary's Church,

### St. Vincent de Paul Flag Day



**T**he flag day organised by the Central Council of Colombo Archdiocese, St. Vincent de Paul Society to commemorate the bicentenary birthday of its founder Blessed Fedrick Osanam was held on April 28. At the launch, the first flag was pinned on His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith by Mrs. Visaka Weliwita, President of the Archdiocese St. Vincent de Paul Society. Archdiocese Director of SVP, Rev. Fr. Rohan de Alwis and Diocesan Treasurer, Basil Perera too were present on the occasion.

### A Cool Entrance!



**W**hat better way to keep your cool against the heat outside, than with a drink of King Coconut (Thambili).

This was exactly what the Youth Group of St. Sebastian's Church, Katunayake thought of for the feast of their Church to keep their cool in the heat, grime and dust of the day.

The picture shows, the unique pandal made of King Coconuts creating a cool entrance to the Church and erected with the blessings of the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Deshan Lasantha.

**Anton Jayasuriya**



## Seminar on Vatican II Post Conciliar Renewal

Vatican II brought changes in the Roman Catholic Church: More interest in the Bible, the use of local languages in the Mass, an increase in the role of women and lay ministry, ecumenism and an emphasis on social justice.

The Institute of Spiritual Formation of Asia (ISFA) has drawn together a panel of eminent scholars to conduct lectures every Monday from 4.00 to 6.15 p.m. from May 13, 2013 to July 29, 2013. They will help the participants to evaluate the progress we have made as Catholics along the road map provided by the Council. The following Vatican II teachings will be analysed: The Church, Divine Revelation, Relation of the Church to non-Christian religions, the People of God, Apostolate of the Laity, Church in the Modern World and Sacred Liturgy.

The lecturers include Rev. Fathers Emmanuel OMI, Justin Chawhan SSS, Claude Perera OMI, Gerard Rosairo OMI, Mervyn Fernando and Omi Andrias OMI.

Cost: Rs.500/= for all lectures.

For further information contact: Rev. Bro. Emmanuel, FSC Director: 0777 682989/ srenfsc@gamil.com or Ms. Vivienne Fernando, Programme Coordinator: 0112527136 / 0779984140 /isfabin@yahoo.com Venue: 130, De La Salle Street, Colombo 15

## Day of Atonement at Kurunegala Diocese



The Kurunegala Diocese held its Day of Atonement at the Thambakanda Calvary Shrine, under the patronage of His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Harold Anthony Perera, Bishop of Kurunegala.

The programme was conducted by Rev. Fr. Sunanda Pusphakumara TOR and Rev. Fr. Priyasantha TOR.

The occasion was graced by His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Raymond Pieris, Bishop Emeritus of the Kurunegala Diocese, the clergy, Rev. Sisters and Brothers from the Millawa Junior Seminary and a large gathering of devotees.

*G.B.H. Livera*

## Five Hundredth Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help



Ss. Peter and Paul Church, Basiyawatte, Pitipana celebrated its 500th Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help officiated by His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo.

Picture shows His Lordship blessing the statue and picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

*P.I.N. Fernando*

## Welivita 'Sanasa' celebrates 27 years



'Sanasa' Society of Welivita celebrated 27 years recently at St. Mary's School, Welivita.

Picture shows the Superior of Good Shepherd Convent, Welivita Rev. Sr. Mary Miriam lighting the oil lamp before the commencement of the programme.

Chairman of Sanasa, Wilbert Liyanage is also in the picture.

*Susil Harisson*

## Feast of St. Joseph in Pamunugama

The 145th Feast of St Joseph will be celebrated this week in Pamunugama. The Vespers Service on Saturday May 4, will be presided over by Rev Fr Titus Fonseka, Parish Priest of Haludumulla (Badulla Diocese) while Rev Fr Manjula Niroshan Fernando, Director of Catechetics (Gampaha Region) will be the Chief Celebrant at the Festive Mass on the following morning.

The present church in Pamunugama was built in 1868. Yet, there are historical records to show that a small church dedicated to St Joseph had existed as far back as 500 years ago during the time of Portuguese rule.

*A. Joseph*

## United Christian Easter Service



United Christian Easter Service was held recently at Ratnapura Salvation Army Church presided by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Cletus Chandrasiri Perera (OSB) Bishop of Ratnapura.

*Theobald Samaratunga*

## Fr. Perniola.....

Contd from Pg. 1

by this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples".

Bishop Vianney Fernando said that he had spoken to several persons who had studied under Fr Perniola and they had all testified to the fact that Fr Perniola lives the message which he proclaims and preaches.

In summing up his personal sentiments and that of many others, His Lordship addressed the 'Birthday Boy' with these moving words: "Dear Fr Perniola, God's love for you has been overwhelming. In our ancient literature, there is a saying - 'oba dakmen api pinkalabava danimu', which means 'seeing you, we know that we too have been blessed'. You have given back to God His gifts and charisms that you received and given your whole life to serve His people. All that has turned to gold in the eyes of God. We pray that you will continue to be blessed in the years ahead with good health to continue the wonderful ministries you are engaged in".

*Ainslie Joseph*

## 'Agony of Jesus'

### AT DELATHURA PARISH



The Delathura Parish commemorated the 'Agony of Jesus' with dramatic depictions of the dimension of His 7 last words, under the guidance of the Parish Priest Noel Sam-path.

*W.T.C. Perera*

### AT JA-ELA PARISH



The 'Way of the Cross' of Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Ja-ela conducted in the form of a street drama was held recently, under the guidance of the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Gregory Jayantha.

A large gathering of the faithful joined the procession which wound the streets of the Ja-ela town.

All the stations of the Cross were depicted in drama form and enacted by parishioners, which attracted a large crowd of people.

*D.H. Leslie Perera*

### AT THAMBAKANDA PARISH



A service of three hour 'Agony of Jesus' was held at the Thambakanda Calvary Shrine under the guidance of the Administrator of the Shrine, Rev. Fr. Stanley Pieris.

The service included the 7 last words of Jesus depicted in different dramatic dimensions by the Parishioners.

*G.B.H. Livera*

### VIGIL AT PAMUNUGAMA PARISH



Easter Vigil was celebrated in the Pamunugama Parish with the statue of the Risen Lord taken in procession along the streets after 12 midnight.

Picture shows the Parish Priest of Pamunugama Rev. Fr. Ananda Vithana blessing the faithful with the statue.

*Benjamin Kiriheiti*



# Oblate Prayer Centre at Maggona



An Oblate Prayer Centre 'Nimala Mariya Daham Piyasa' was blessed and declared open recently at St. Vincent's Home, at the National Shrine of Calvary at Maggona, by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Colombo.

The faithful are notified that prayer-sessions, praise and worship before the Blessed Sacrament and blessing of the sick will be conducted at the Centre every Poya Day with Holy Mass celebrated at 9 am.

The Centre is also open for family counseling, retreats, seminars, spiritual workshops for youth, children and families, meditations with religious songs and hymns and communal sessions.

Rev. Fr. Ajith Ruwan Perera OMI will conduct the programmes with his team using novel methods of prayer and worship in order to bring the people closer to God.

All are welcome and called to experience the healing and consolation of the Risen Lord and to share their experiences with each other.

**Rev. Fr. S. Randil Fernando OMI**

## CORRECTION

Further to the list of Appointments published in the papers last week, kindly note the following corrections.

- 1) Rev. Fr. Tharanga Sampath Perera  
- Parish Priest - Kala-Eliya
- 2) Rev. Fr. Priyanal Asantha Fernando  
- Katukurunda School/Asst. Parish Priest - Katukurunda

Regret the error in the publication.

**Rev. Fr. Jude Samantha Fernando**  
**Secretary - Administration**  
29/4/2013



## Church in the World

### Pope stresses workers' dignity

Pope Francis offered condolences and prayers, along with calls for worker safety, after a factory collapsed and killed more than 350 people in Bangladesh.

"I express my solidarity and deepest sympathy to the families mourning their loved ones," he said at Saint Peter's Square last week.

In his *Regina Caeli* address, the Holy Father offered prayers "for the many victims" of the tragedy.

On April 24, an eight-story building collapsed in the Rana Plaza complex in Savar, just north of Dhaka, killing at least 352 people.

### Worldliness poses danger to priestly identity, Pope says

The biggest threat to priests is the temptation to be more immersed in the world than the Gospel, says Pope Francis in his newly translated book.

"For then-Cardinal Bergoglio, narcissism and worldliness are completely self-defeating to the purpose of why a priest becomes a priest," the book's translator, Alejandro Bermudez, told EWTN News.

"It's a total rejection of the reason why he decided to become a priest, and therefore these are some of the most destructive and damaging problems in priestly formation."

The new book, "On Heaven and Earth," is a conversation between Pope Francis and Abraham Skorka, a rabbi and scholar from Buenos Aires. It was originally published in Spanish in 2010, when the Pope was still Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, archbishop of Buenos Aires.

The book covers numerous topics touching on priesthood in today's world, including vocation, celibacy and the sex abuse crisis.

### Church must evangelize humbly, Pope Francis reflects

Christians are called to do the great work of evangelizing to the ends of the world in a spirit of humility rather than an attitude of conquering, Pope Francis said.

"Today we ask the Lord to become missionaries in the Church, apostles in the Church but in this spirit: a great magnanimity and also a great humility," he said in his April 25 Homily at Mass for members of the Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops at Casa Santa Marta.

To travel the world preaching the Gospel is "the mission of the Church," Pope Francis said.

"But she does not go forth alone: She goes forth with Jesus...the Lord works with all those who preach the Gospel. This is the magnanimity that Christians should have."

A timid, or "pusillanimous" Christian, he added, "is incomprehensible: This magnanimity is part of the Christian vocation: always more and more, more and more, more and more, always onwards."

## New Principal of St. Patrick's High School

A chapter closed and a new one began as Bro. Lawrence Manuel was appointed Rector and Principal of St. Patrick's High School Karachi. His official duties began on March 1, 2013. Archbishop Joseph Coutts accompanied by the former Rector Rev. Fr. Joe Paul, Rev. Fr. Benny Travas the Vicar General, Rev. Fr. Mario Rodrigues (Chairman Standing Committee - C.B.E.), Rev. Fr. Saleh Deigo, Rev. Fr. Edward Joseph and Mr. Anthony D'Silva - Secretary Catholic Board of Education, were present at the School Assembly that same day to officially introduce Bro. Lawrence and thank Fr. Joe Paul and Fr.



**Bro. Lawrence Manuel**

Norbert for their services rendered to St. Patrick's.

The Archbishop announced the appointment of Bro. Lawrence Manuel as Rector and Principal of St. Patrick's High School and said that Bro. Lawrence had worked at La Salle High School and College, Faisalabad and

Multan. His latest work place and assignment was lecturing at Iqra University Karachi.

Later, Bro. Lawrence Manuel thanked the Archbishop and the Catholic Board of Education for placing their trust and confidence in him.

St. Patrick's is the largest Catholic Missionary Educational institute in Pakistan. Bro. Lawrence said that he was determined to raise the spirit and standards further, and inculcate moral values, where all would be happy and contented. He laid emphasis on honest hard work without shortcuts.

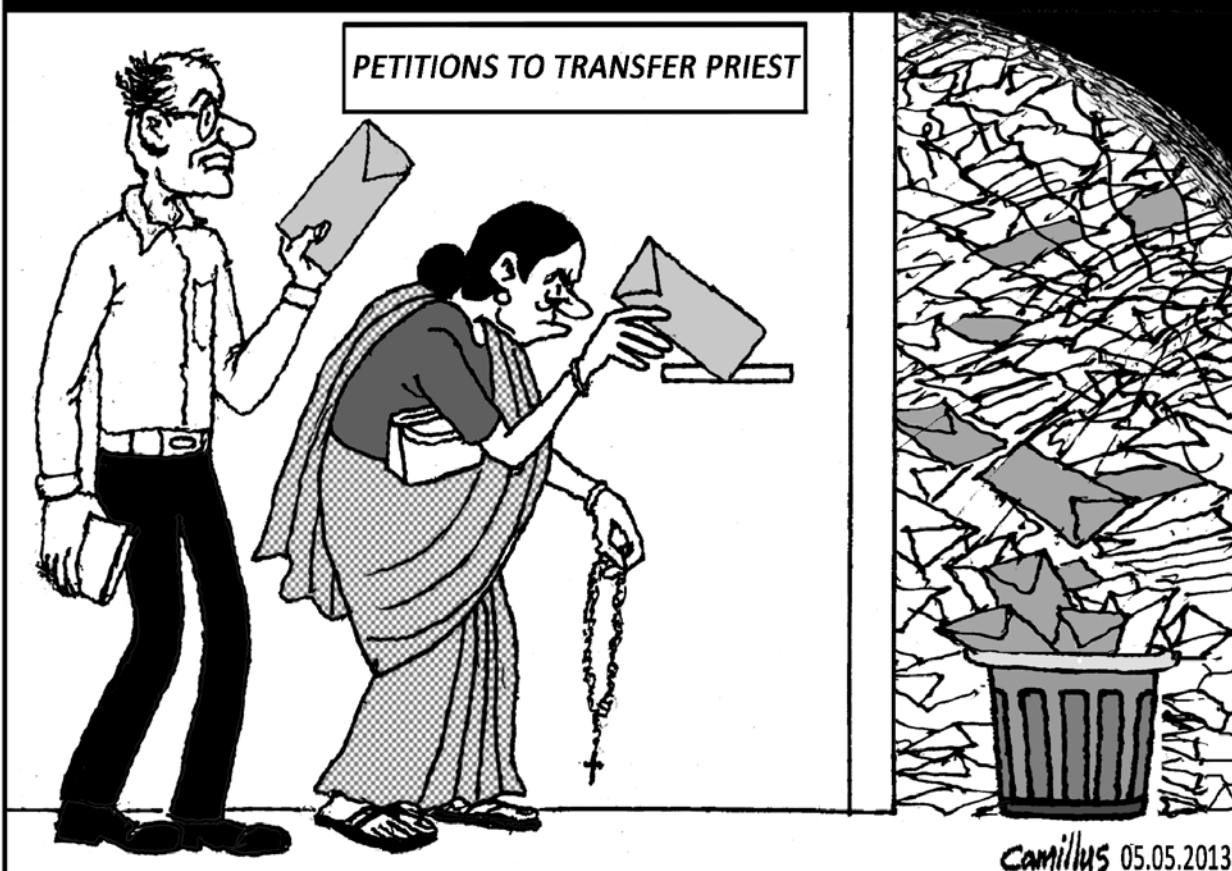
The Archbishop, Rev. Fr. Joe and Bro. Lawrence Manuel were honoured with garlands by various Section Heads followed by the Students, the Prefects, the Sports Department and the Office Staff. The presence of the Archbishop and priests showed the care and support for this prestigious institution.

Brother Lawrence was a La Salle Brother. He studied at St. Anthony's College, Wattala and at St. Benedict's College, Kotahena. He left for Pakistan as a missionary in 1963.

**Annette Rose**

## SUNDAY PUNCH

by Camillus





## Should the State decide on what is orthodox and what is not in religious teachings?

According to the Daily Mirror, the Sri Lankan Religious Affairs Ministry "intends to introduce a legislation that enables authorities concerned to take action against anyone distorting the original teachings of the four main religions- Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity."

In Luke 9:37-56 John the Apostle brought to the notice of Jesus that a man was driving out demons in his name and they (the apostles) had told him to stop because he did not belong to their group. But Jesus said "Do not try to stop him because whoever is not against you is for you."

During the time of Jesus when Israel was under the rule of the Roman Empire there were attempts by the State to dictate what should be taught as religion. Whenever the Romans tried to interfere with the teachings of the Old Testament preached by the Pharisees (the Torah) there were protests. The late Father Forbes in his booklet "Church and State Relations" refers to the Pharisees resorting to non-violent resistance like a Satyagraha when some Roman soldiers tried to introduce a symbol of Roman power into the temple. Another group the Zealots of the time were committed to overthrow the Roman occupation by violence. Once the Pharisees wanted to put Jesus into conflict with the State and sent to him some members of Herod's party to ask him whether it would be against the Law (the Torah) to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor or not. (Mt 22:15-22) Jesus was aware of their evil plan and said, "Why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin for paying the tax" Then he asked them "Whose face and name are these" (on the coin). When they said it was the Emperor's, Jesus told them, "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." So there is a clear case for separation of the State and religion at least in the Christian teachings and tradition.

It may not be so in our own local religious traditions. In fact some Buddhists wanted to make Buddhism the State religion when a new home grown Constitution was drawn up in 1972. The compromise was the provision in the Constitution giving Buddhism the foremost place among the religions. The Christians agreed with this Constitutional provision with the proviso that the other religions will be allowed State protection and equal rights of practice. So Buddhism was not made the State religion as in Islamic countries.

Since its inception Christianity has been sensitive to the cultural feelings and ethos of the new converts among the non-Jews (Acts 15). The Church has genuine concern for the preservation of the culture of its members in all parts of the world. For the first time the Church recently elected a non-European Pope from Argentina. However there are tensions and conflicts when the Gospel message encounters individual cultures. But in modern times strict closed cultural boundaries are no longer possible. Should the State then decide then what the orthodox teaching is and what is not? Will those who uphold different interpretations of the teachings of their Founder be willing to accept any prohibition of their religious creed on the ground that it is not orthodox? Such a law would only create more dissension. Today the Muslim world is witnessing armed conflict between the Sunni and Shiite forms of Islam. Sri Lanka too has adherents of both persuasions, as well as other groups like the Wahabis and the Ahmadyyas. How can the State decide between them as religions and brand others as cults and outlaw them?

However, a stable and democratic society is impossible without widespread acceptance of a core set of values. Generally religions have a core of common moral values. It is necessary to ensure such a common core of values for social stability.

# 'Pacem in Terris' is fifty years

It was in April 1963 that Pope John XXIII issued his second social encyclical known as "*Pacem in Terris*" (PT) which means Peace in the World. The first one was in 1961 called "*Mater et Magistra*" - Mother and Teacher, bringing in new changes to the Catholic Social Teachings (CST). The second one was also the first document of the Church that was addressed to the whole of mankind and to all people of goodwill. Prior to this all the Church documents were written for the Church men or her institutions.

In 1963 the issue of PT with the longer title *On Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity and Liberty*, was very current and also significant to the very subject of discussion on world peace. With waging of a world war being imminent, with the Cuban missile crisis and the US and USSR involvement in the issue. This encyclical came out regarding the world issue on Peace amidst this crisis. There was an added significance that this was issued between the first session and second session of the Vatican II. Further Pope John who made an epoch-making decision to convene this great event of the Council, thought that he might not survive the whole Council and he tried to intervene in this crisis to avoid a very dangerous confrontation. The two decision makers involved in this crisis were John F. Kennedy from the US and Nikita Khrushchev from Russia. The appeal to these world leaders was to negotiate instead of an arms conflict.

There was also a brief document that emerged from the floor of the Vatican II as a message to Humanity issued on October 20, 1962 by highlighting two important themes of Social Justice and Peace only nine days after the Council began. The entire first session of the Council dealt with the logistics and setting the pattern for the other sessions to follow. In this context no one could imagine that a document on a current, immediate problem, would be a possibility. So Pope John thought for himself to issue this greatest encyclical on World Peace - *Pacem in Terris* in April 1963.

The encyclical PT is divided into four sections. The first section of the encyclical PT establishes the relationship between individuals and humankind, encompassing the issues of human rights and moral duties. The second section addresses the relationship between man and state, dwelling on the collective authority of the latter. The third section establishes the need for equality amongst nations and the need for the state to be subject to the rights and duties that the individual must abide by. The final section presents the need for greater relations between nations, thus resulting in collective states assisting other states. The encyclical ends with the urging of Catholics to assist non-Christians and non-Catholics in political and social aspects.

Pope John also made use of this opportunity to teach the faithful on the need to respect Human Rights. The UDHR - Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the UN - was approved on December 10, 1948 and it took almost over 14 years to get an adequate response from the Church towards the UDHR. While appreciating this stance the Catholics were urged to follow these rights and duties in seeking peace and not by armed conflict. The entire thirty articles of the UDHR were summarized into eight sections.

In this brief article I am not going to go into details but only state the fact that the Church has taken a stand on Human Rights and concur-



**Pope John XXIII**

posed and discussed as PT has chalked up 50 years. Has PT remained a dead letter? It is often used in academic circles and study circles but regarding the implementation of rights, there is an unholy silence? The talk of human rights is not restricted to PT only, but there are other Church documents which underline the need to follow such teachings. Number of examples can be cited from the documents of Vatican II (1962-65). In the Post-Vatican II era, the Catholic Church had initiated a Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace (PCJP) as part and parcel of the Christian Faith.

As we recognize the importance of the PT document and subsequent ones, let us try to propagate their contents for the benefit of the whole of humanity. The PCJP from inception has had seminars on The Church and Human Rights (1974), The Ethical Approach to International Debt Question (1986), The Church and the Homelessness (1987), The Church and Racism (1988), The Right to Development (1991), Ethical Aspects of Economics (1992), The International Arms Trade- an Ethical Reflection (1994), Towards a Better Distribution of Land - Challenge of Agrarian Reform (1997), Care for Creation (2000). The fight Against Corruption - A Note (2006).

These seminars do indicate how Christians are to be involved in common social issues that affect humanity. This fact is hardly recognized even by the faithful followers, that the Church leadership is alert on social problems. It is in fact the Church leaders who should be congratulated for such attempts in the past 50 years after PT. Unfortunately the membership of the Church has not come to grips with such issues, unfortunately the people have no access to such documents.

My fervent request is that the CST and allied concepts do become part and parcel of the social mission of the Church by uplifting humanity all over the world. These elements must come into human education in order to help humans to become better. At the same time it must be stated that the lack of concern for the non-compliance of the Human Rights among the Christians and Catholics is observed in default. This fact cannot be limited only of Catholics but also of the whole of humanity, as the dignity of human person is at stake generally when there is war and civil conflict.

The encyclical PT and other social documents must create an enthusiasm among all peoples of good will, making urgent appeals to be involved in community organizations to downgrade anti-social movements and corruption in the state sector. This is the minimum of suggestions proposed to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the PT to be held on April 11, 2013.

**Rev. Fr. Reid Shelton Fernando**

rently to work for the corresponding duties as well, from 1963. These include the basic rights of Rights to Life, Right to Moral and Cultural values, Right to Worship, Right to Choose Freely their State of Life. Right to Economic Life, Right to Assembly, Right to Freedom of Movement, Right to Participate in Politics. These eight basic rights have been further detailed in the Declaration.

Has the Church taken the responsibility to advocate these rights within the Church membership? This is a question that can be



# The Splendour of Catholicism and poverty of Fundamentalism

**Prof. Anton Meemana**

## **"To be great is to be misunderstood"**

If many people harbour prejudices, biases, prejudgements and hatred against Catholicism, then Catholicism is the true religion. The reason for this is very clear and obvious. Truth is often controversial and misunderstood. Truth hurts and confuses before it liberates, frees and heals us. So is Catholicism. Great spiritual traditions are misinterpreted and misrepresented more often than not.

If the Catholic Church is a sinful church, as some Protestant fundamentalists claim, then Christ is present only in the Catholic Church because Jesus Christ came for the sinners the weak, the lost, the confused and the not-so-good people. "For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners". (Matthew 9:13; Mark. 2: 17; Luke. 5:32). Certainly Christ did not come for the self-righteous people like the Pharisee in one of the parables of Jesus (Luke 18:9-14). If Christ came only for the sinners, then no one can separate oneself from or split the Catholic Church and justify it. Justification is a manifestation of a guilty conscience (Actually there is no valid justification and sound reason for separation from the Catholic Church because whatsoever is best in Protestant Churches is also contained in the Catholic Church and they have borrowed all those valid teachings in their churches from the Catholic Church). The Catholic Church is the anchor of all the churches. Is there anything they have not borrowed from the Catholic Church?

## **Jesus and Fundamentalists**

If there is one thing absolutely clear in the Gospels, it is that Jesus was never a self-righteous, arrogant and proud fundamentalist. It was His opponents who were fundamentalists through and through: Some of the Pharisees and Sadducees were the fundamentalists in their religious outlook and therefore they became His staunchest opponents. The spirit of the contemporary fundamentalists is closer to the spirit of the Pharisees and Sadducees of Jesus' time. Fundamentalists are the modern day Pharisees. They go around the world condemning the rest of the world in a self-righteous manner. What they are saying is tantamount to this; "Look at us; we are the real Christians unlike those Catholics." They bask and bathe in self-glorification and self-adulation. Let God decide as to who is a real Christian and who is not. We do not need to play the role of God. Nobody could fully penetrate the complexity, ambiguity and intentionality of human heart but God.

Fundamentalism is religious imperialism in its attempt to condemn the rest of the world and impose its beliefs on people. Fundamentalism is anti-God, anti-Christ and anti-human. It is oppressive, enslaving and inhuman. It contradicts the liberating spirit of Jesus Christ and it goes against the freedom of Christ. (Both the Islamic and Christian Fundamentalism are enemies of true human progress. In fact, both Christian and Islamic Fundamentalism have many things in common).

## **Ongoing renewal and the glory of God**

By attacking the Catholic Church or hating Catholics, no one can

give glory to God. There is only one Church desired by Christ and we must work for the renewal and reform within that church while learning from her past. There is no perfect church in this world. Can we say that fundamentalist churches are holier, loftier and better than the Catholic Church? The Catholic Church is increasingly in the process of becoming holy and aware about the need for ongoing renewal and rejuvenation.

Catholicism offers myriad possibilities for human salvation, liberation and emancipation. Catholicism preserves and safeguards all truths against narrow ideologies and fanaticisms.

True Christians never act as if the Church of Christ began with them. If they do, that is the highest form of ignorance and arrogance. We need to learn humbly from the two thousand years of Christian history. There was a church even before the New Testament was rounded off. Christian faith is a fruit of infinite humility, historical patience and spiritual wisdom, but never a product of arrogance, ignorance, bias, prejudice, self-righteousness, self-glorification and pride. Past blunders are only one aspect of the Catholic Church. It is not the total reality of the Church. Some dark episodes of the Catholic history had been due to the dark side of the individual Catholics. It was never a problem with the teachings of the Catholic Church but a result of some personal defects of certain Catholics. Church is the place for sinners and therefore infinite humility is the true mark of Christian spirituality. A proud Christian is no real Christian. Pride can spread in us and operate in us in a very subtle manner even when we praise God and labour to bring about the Reign of God. Pride is the most difficult sin to detect, dissect and defeat and self-righteousness is the highest manifestation of human pride.

Fundamentalism hinders authentic human progress. It blocks the flourishing and blossoming of human creativity. God is not a fundamentalist. If he were, he would not have been able to create anything anew. In order to create, one has to be free totally and deeply. Fundamentalism hinders genuine creativity through rigidity, narrow-mindedness and self-righteousness: Spirit should blow where it wills, not according to the dictates of the fundamentalists. Fundamentalist attitude tends to restrict and control the movements of the Spirit. This attitude clearly manifests in their attempt to restrict the fullness of Christian Revelation and criticize the Catholic teachings. Catholicism contains the fullness of Divine Revelation. By attacking the Catholic church, one is also attacking the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Creation presupposes freedom. Both Divine and human creativity are a fruit of authentic freedom. Christians should become free as the Spirit is fully free. To keep people dominated, subjugated and in mental slavery stems from a deep-seated inferiority complex.

## **The shallowness of Fundamentalism**

Fundamentalism is shallow, glib, superficial and boring and lacks depth and substance and therefore does not do full justice to the richness of human potentials and spiritual cravings. Fundamentalism is a form of idolatry. It is the worship of rigidity, rules, regu-



lations, laws, the letter of a book and self-righteousness. It is self-glorification in the name of praising God. It is a manifestation of human pride, pretension and arrogance. Fundamentalism is a form of malnourished Christianity. Fundamentalists are spiritual anorexics.

It is the worship of a book without keeping the deepest spirit of the book, the Bibliotry. Without any doubt, The Holy Bible is the Word of God, but at the same time we must not forget the fact that God is infinitely greater, bigger, more complex and unfathomable than the Bible. Certainly the Bible contains the Word of God but the Bible is not God. God cannot be entirely put in a book or reduced to a book. A book cannot contain all the wisdom, mystery and subtlety of God.

The Bible is for human salvation and liberation. The Bible is at the service of humanity. It is for true emancipation and redemption of men and women. The Bible is the light unto our path and therefore it requires a Catholic interpretation in order to fully grasp its deepest meaning.

Here, Fundamentalism should not be confused with fundamentals or basics of Christian faith. As Christians, we believe in Jesus' incarnation, virginal conception and virginal birth, passion, death and resurrection, eternal Sonship, the second coming and the final judgment and so on. These are the basic tenets of Christian faith. Believing in them does not make us fundamentalists. We could believe in the fundamentals of Christian faith without becoming self-righteous fundamentalists.

On the other hand, fundamentalism is an attitude of the mind and a hardness of heart. It is the disease of the mind. A fundamentalist does not change his or her mind. A fundamentalist mind is a frozen mind, a fossilized mind. Fundamentalism means to come to grand conclusions without examining things carefully and thoroughly. Fundamentalist mind is a grandiose mind and an empty mind. It is to judge based on biases, prejudices, presumptions, ignorance and arrogance. Fundamentalism is glorification of little knowledge. A little knowledge about the Bible is put forward by them as the whole Christian revelation. Fundamentalism does not do justice to the depth, richness and profundity of Christian revelation and heritage. Historical Christianity is infinitely deeper, richer and profounder than fundamentalism. Catholicism is the profoundest religious tradition in the world.

Many fundamentalists tend to criticize Catholicism without understanding it properly and adequately. It is

absolutely indispensable to understand Catholicism from the perspective of the Catholics. That is to say, to understand it the way Catholics themselves understand it, simply because there is only one Catholicism and no other Catholicism apart from the beliefs of the practising Catholics. Since Catholics are the practitioners of Catholicism, they are the most qualified to be its authentic interpreters. Do you want to have some clarity about Catholicism? Then listen to a practicing and knowledgeable Catholic. That is the only way to fully understand Catholicism. You listen to a fundamentalist about Catholicism and you will get a very distorted view of Catholicism. The reason for this is very clear. There are no fundamentalists who had fully grasped the depth and richness of Catholicism. The less they understand Catholicism, the more they tend to talk. They should practise the Christian virtue of radical honesty and keep quiet about the things they do not properly understand.

## **Proper understanding of Catholicism**

The best interpreters of Catholicism are Catholics themselves not Christian fundamentalists. The Catholicism the fundamentalists claim to know, define and attack simply does not exist in the real world. Some of these criticisms are purely based on hearsay, fantasy and assumptions. In other words, they are pure biases, prejudices and black propaganda against the Catholic Church and exaggerations of her past blunders. Most of the times, these are disguised attempts to recruit new members to fundamentalist churches. In order to promote their sects and win converts they need to demonize the Catholic Church. By attacking the Catholic Church, are they really serving Christ? If they are really sincere about Christian faith and the Church of Christ, they must try to purify the Catholic Church from within.

Bias is the absence of truth and the absence of truth is the absence of God because God is truth. Anyone has a right to criticize the Catholic Church but only after carefully examining her teachings, doctrines, history, rituals and practices. Little knowledge is absolutely dangerous. Many fundamentalists pretend to know the teachings of the Catholic Church, but it is only a pretension, or a superficial comprehension. Understanding, learning about and mastering Catholic faith takes a life-long time.

*(To be continued next week)*





# Cosmic Secrets

The question stumped even Sigmund Freud. He once confessed to Marie Bonapart he was still not sure of the answer even after "my thirty years of research into the feminine soul" What does a woman want?

Pose the question on Facebook or Twitter. Chances are the teenage girls would come up with a long list qualities their ideal man should possess: But the list of older women is not as long as this. As women grow older, the numbers narrow down perhaps with the realisation that one could never find a real person who meets all these sterling qualities.

Thus another revised list is made at ages 32, 42, 52, 62 and by the age of 72 there is only one item on the list: The man should be breathing.

According to Dana Peach, author of "What do women really want?" What women want, have always wanted and will always be looking for in any man

with whom they become intimate, zeros down to one.

"What women want from men is confidence. The Trump is Personal Confidence. Confidence" explains Dana. "Not arrogance, not dominance, not useless bravado, not macho, heroics. Women just love truly confident men."

The kind of confidence women want is not the kind that frequently manifests as an "I-can-handle-it attitude" in a man, which denies feelings and implies an absence of doubt, fear, or vulnerability.

What they want is a statement like "I can deal with it... somehow... well at least I'll do my best."

The attitude of confidence does not even have to be constant, just generally present in the face of most life challenges.

Experts say for hundreds of thousands of years of human development, a confident attitude



was much easier for men to gain and display, than it is now because confidence was required for survival. There was hardly any choice.

This did not mean survival in extraordinary circumstances, however. It was as basic as steadfastness in getting the crops in before the rain.

In the smaller communities in which we used to live, everyone could see the skilled hunt-

er, the dedicated farmer, the courageous protector, the skilled artisan, the accomplished leader, the sage and teacher, the men who did not give up in the face of threatening setbacks.

Unfortunately, the signs indicative of genuine masculine confidence are confusing today and gender roles are a chaotic mess.

The external demonstrations of natural

confidence have become confused with the poor substitute of consumer status symbols. Yet, women still instinctively look for clues to a man's level of confidence and test it to the limit though not in the old-fashioned way.

In other words, women do not want a man who can expose himself to more risks: Jump out of airplanes, compete at martial arts, lift weights, climb sheer cliffs with only the strength of his fingertips for security, or spend days in the wilderness with only his canine for company.

What women want from a man in the modern world is his ability to show his confidence through competence in his work, education, sports, hobbies, child rearing, or doing home improvements. It is not the specific activity that matters, what matters is what goes on in the man's head that makes him feel some sense of Mastery.

Yet, according to Deborah Arthurs, in the

Daily Mail of April 6, 2012, the answer to the question: Women's idea of the perfect man? Is quite simple. In order to find out, all a man has to do is be able to tick every box on a check list of demands women have said contribute to the perfect man.

The perfect man drives an Audi and phones his mother twice a week, the poll of 2000 women carried out by clothing brand Austin Reed, in the UK revealed. He also earns a comfortable £48,000 a year.

The ideal male will also be 6 ft tall, have short dark hair and smart dress sense. Vegerarians were revealed to be a turn off, while being clean shaven and in possession of a smooth, hair-free chest were said to be a bonus.

The study also found the ideal man should also have a degree and hold down a decent job.

In spite of the research, however, when it comes to being with the man she wants the bottom line is simple. A woman wants a man with whom she can be totally herself.

(Courtesy: Daily News)

## Are the 'Family Bonds' drifting

Family bonds refers to the process of attachment that develops between the members of the family. The bond is mainly characterized by love and emotions such as care, affection and trust.

As a potter moulds clay to form a beautiful creation, so does the strong bond of family and good values. Family bonds are a link to our beginning and a guide to our future.

We all want to "belong" and feel accepted. A sense of belonging is derived from the strong bond of family. Family is where our roots take hold and from there we grow. We are moulded within a unit, which prepares us for what we will experience in the world and how we react to those experiences. Values are taught at an early age and are carried with us throughout our life.

A close family bond is like a safe harbour, where we find refuge from trusting that someone, will pick us up when we fall.

Rituals of bedtime stories, hugs, holidays and daily meals shared together, provide a sense of warmth and safety. These rituals and traditions not only create memories and leave a family legacy, but create our first path in life, one that is positive.

Why have the family bonds eroded? It is because of the nature of

today's fast-paced life. Everyone is too busy making money and trying to improve their position in life. It is a rat race to acquire better positions in life, better living conditions, adding more and more facilities to obtain the maximum comfort and satisfaction.

So, while both parents are hell-bent on bringing heaven to their doorstep in the guise of all the comforts, the inevitable victims are the children, who get neglected.

Since society is steeped in consumerism, going after more and more earthly goods, the values of life keep drifting away from the family. The most precious time for the family to sit together, eat together, discuss together is now non-existent. Although members of the same family live under the same roof, they hardly meet, they are in their own world, having heavily fortified themselves with their thick walls of non-interference, disregard and non-involvement.

The wonderful, cohesive ingredients that bind the family together such as love, caring, understanding, empathy, sacrifice and selflessness are rarely seen in today's family unit.

The reasons for such drastic erosion of the family bonds are mani-

fold. Today's television has to take the brunt of the blame. With a deluge of attention grabbing, time consuming teledramas running into three figure episodes, today's housewife has very little time to look into the psychological needs of the children, to sit and engage in heart-to-heart conversations with them to understand their needs and aspirations. How can she miss the latest teledrama episode and attend office the next morning, as it has to be discussed and critically analyzed with the office mates the next day? In today's context, even the preparation of the evening

Thoughts that haunt me

meal is hurriedly finalized with the sole purpose of making oneself free for the teledrama watching time. The children, therefore, have no opportunity for any conversation during this sacrosanct period of TV watching.

In this high-tech world, the children use their leisure time to bury themselves in computer games and the ever popular Facebook. So, each member of the family is in

their own world of preoccupation. How will family bonds be strengthened when everyone is blissfully unaware of what the other has in mind? It is a situation where they are alienated from each other because of their own vested interests.

In this scenario, it is a common feature that the elderly, the grandparents are treated like a disused item of furniture in many a home. They are non-entities, hardly spoken to, relegated to a corner or a room to mind their own affairs. Their only link of communication is the grandchild who will be an endless chatter to the grandparent. It is the grandparent whom the grandchild goes in search of, for communication, be-

cause grandparents will go to any extreme to make the little one happy and bursting with laughter. The grandparent derives the earnestness for living, and satisfies the hunger for recognition through the grandchild.

Alas! This kind of healthy relationship does not exist among the other members of the family. The feeling of recognition, acceptance, sharing of views and the sense of belonging is rarely seen among many of today's families.

So is it any wonder, that the family bonds are drifting apart? Today's family life is like a cart being driven by different horses pulling in different directions.

Ananda Perera



A CROSS  
The Way

By Sirohmi Gunsekera

## The Holy Spirit

"Do you know what Pentecost stands for?" asked Muriel.

"All I know is that after the Risen Christ ascended into Heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit, represented by Tongues of Fire, onto the twelve apostles who were gathered together in a room. The Spirit encouraged them to speak in strange languages and to carry the Good News of the Resurrection to the outside world. That is the Feast of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came and dwelt in the disciples," replied Lanil.

"So even though we have no news of Jesus after the Ascension, the Holy Spirit is ever present inside each one of us. It is the Holy Spirit that gives us the grace to overcome our problems. When we are tempted by Satan to commit sins, we can ask the Holy Spirit to give us the strength not to give in," commented Muriel.

"Yes, remember how fearful Peter was on the night of Christ's Passion and how he actually denied knowing Jesus? But after he saw the Risen Christ, he drew strength and was encouraged by the Holy Spirit to spread the Good News. Even though the high priests tried to get him to be silent, Peter spoke out about Jesus as the Son of God who rose from the dead," explained Lanil.

"So when we see timid people speak out about Jesus, we know that the Holy Spirit is working within them. You and I too can do wonders if we only believe in the power of the Holy Spirit," said Muriel, adding, "I think that we must all pray and ask God to give us the blessings of the Holy Spirit."





## Art & Architecture in Liturgy

Compiled by: Kishani S. Fernando

# Mary fills the World Month of May Devotion Part 1

Sanctuaries, cathedrals, churches, chapels, shrines and other places of Marian apparitions or devotion can be found all over the world. Each nation has its own Marian history! All peoples have their share of graces and miracles obtained by Our Lady!

As we enter the month of May let us glean through some countries that have honoured the Blessed Mother through postal stamps. It is more a visual awakening to the fact that Mary fills our world. This week we have selected Marian stamps from 6 countries. The stamps focus on Mary and have been selected at random from huge collections that have been posted on websites of those countries.



**Poland.** Poland's most famous Shrine to the Virgin Mary and the country's greatest place of pilgrimage and for many its spiritual capital - the Jasna Góra Monastery was founded in 1382 by Pauline monks in Częstochowa. The image of Black Madonna of Częstochowa, to which miraculous powers are attributed, is Jasna Góra's most precious treasure. On April 1, 1656, Jan Kazimierz, the King of Poland, solemnly pronounced his vow to consecrate the country to the protection of the Mother of God and proclaimed Her the Patron and Queen of the lands in his kingdom. Pix from top: **Black Madonna of Częstochowa**; **The Madonna of Kurzłowa** - a famous Gothic-style carved and painted wooden sculpture created in the fifteenth century. It is now housed in the National Museum in Krakow; **Madonna and Child** fifteenth Century Sejny Basilica; **Our Lady of Laskawa Krzeszowa**; **Our Lady of Zielienicka**.



**Greece.** In Greece, the Mother of God is cherished, praised, and honoured. The language, the liturgy, the literature, the visual arts, everything was used to serve her. The Greek language formed the beautiful title of *Theotokos*, "the one who bears God," because she bore God incarnate in her womb. Among the most popular shrines we find the relatively recent Tinos (19th century) with its Virgin of the Annunciation, where many miracles have been recorded; Crissoscalitissa, with its pilgrimage on the feast of the Assumption; and Mandrachio, dear to sailors. Pix from left :



**Miraculous Icon of Our Lady of the Annunciation** found in Tinos 1873 Date: August 10, 1973; **Virgin and Child** sixteenth century Icon Stavronikita Monastery Artist Theodore Poulakis (1622-1692) Date: December 15, 1978



**Andorra.** Our Lady of Maritxell is declared the Patron of the tiny principality of Andorra, in the heart of the Pyrenees and her birth is celebrated on September 8th as a National Holiday. Pix from left : Sculpture of the **Virgin of Meritxell** - 8th century. Date: February 29, 1964; **Virgin of St. Coloma** Date: July 25, 1964; **Virgin of Canolich** Date: June 16, 1973; **Virgin of Sispory** Date: May 20, 1978; **Virgin and Child of St. Julia and St. Germa** Date: November 16, 1991.



**Austria.** Austria, a country of old Catholic tradition, has two main Marian shrines, among a constellation of attractive smaller and lesser known shrines. The Shrine of Our Lady of Mariazell, was referred to by the Emperor of Austria Ferdinand II as the *Magna Mater Austriae* (the Great Mother of Austria), the other is a more recent shrine called "Our Lady of Maria-Trost. Pix from left : **Madonna of the Domestics** honored in Vienna from 1325 Date: December 12, 1946; **Oldest seal of Vienna University** 1365 The Virgin is seated on the superior part of the stamp. Date: May 10, 1965; **Madonna with the Pomegranate** Sanzio Raphaël (1483-1520) Date: September 26, 1969; **Madone Michael Pacher** (1435-1498) Date: August 6, 1948; **The Large Blue Madonna** Anton Faistauer (1887-1970) Date: January 29, 1987.



**Belgium.** Belgium, a Christian land from the 1st centuries, have many shrines dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Among the best known of these spiritual Marian destinations are two places :The shrine of Our Lady of Beauraing, where Mary appeared in the winter of 1932-33, and the shrine of Our Lady of Banneux, where Mary appeared 1933 as the "Virgin of the Poor". Pix from left : **Virgo Jesse** Our Lady of Hasselt 16th-century Date : November 11, 1967; **Our Lady of Vivier** Marche-les-Dames with an Apple in the Right Hand Date: March 13, 1971; **Seat of Wisdom Seal of the University of Louvain** Belgium's oldest university dating back to 1425. Date: November 8, 1975; **Virgin and Child - Sedes Sapientiae (seat of wisdom)** 13th century Date: September 13, 1980; **Virgin and Child** Tongre-Notre-Dame Date: June 15, 1981.



**Hungary.** Hungary was Christianised in the 10th century, with the custom of calling Mary the "Great Lady of the Hungarians." The country was entrusted to the Mother of God by King Saint Stephen (968-1038). After the Ottoman domination, Marian congregations gave a new impetus to the Hungarian ideal of becoming a Marian kingdom. During the Second World War, entire populations and cities consecrated themselves to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. During the Soviet occupation, constant reference was made to the Great Lady of Hungary to sustain the faith and national sentiment. Top line Pix from left : Icons of the Virgin and Child; Bottom line Pix from the left: Images of the Virgin and Child from two of the most famous Marian shrines - Mariapocs and Mariaremete.



Above left, the Church in Genazzano, above right, the side altar with the image; below, the Church nave (the altar to Our Lady is to the left)



# St. Joseph and the Theology of Work

After the Most Blessed Mary, St Joseph comes next in closeness to God and holiness of life. What theologians teach about the unsurpassable sanctity of Our Lady could be applied to the Holy Patriarch as well.

Blessed Johannes Duns Scotus, O.F.M., most known for his beautiful defence of Mary's Immaculate Conception, quoted St. Anselm when he exclaimed "*Potuit, deuit, ergo fecit*" Which means that Mary was preserved from the stain of original sin because God "Could do it, it was appropriate, therefore He did it!"

While it is true that St. Joseph was not immaculately conceived, the Lord could nonetheless enrich him and fill his soul with an abundance of graces and gifts above and beyond those given to ordinary mortals. It was fitting since he was entrusted with the most singular task of caring for the Mother of God and of God Himself: Jesus Christ. What could prevent the Lord from doing so?

In the first Eucharistic Prayer, otherwise known as the "Roman Canon," we mention St. Joseph immediately after the Most Blessed Virgin. This indicates the excellence of his privileged calling as Foster Father of Jesus and Patron of the Universal Church.

But if we were to analyze the itinerary of his holiness of life, we will be amazed to see that he reached the heights of sanctity not by becoming a martyr, nor a pope, nor a monk. He became a saint by engaging in a manual work: An ordinary task, done extraordinarily well for the love of God. In St Joseph, therefore, we find a perfect model for sanctifying ordinary work, sanctifying ourselves through work and sanctifying others in the course of daily work.

## Work: Part and parcel of man's life

The Book of Psalms proclaims: "You shall eat the fruit of the labour of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you (128:2)." The Church, in presenting Saint Joseph to us today as a model, is not endorsing just one particular form of work, manual labour, but is testifying to the dignity and value of all honest human occupations. (F. Fernandez, *In Conversation with God*, Vol. 6)

In the account of the creation of man, the Book of Genesis says that God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth (1:26)..." The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it (2:15)."

Work is, therefore, a part and parcel of man's life on earth. From the beginning of man's existence, work is for him a command of nature, a feature of his condition as a created being, an expression of his dignity, and a means whereby he cooperates in the great overall task of Divine Providence. There could be nothing farther from the truth than to affirm that work was a penalty for sin. The mandate to keep from eating of the forbidden fruit and the consequent disobedience and fall of Adam and Eve came after God's revelation that man was made to work, not afterwards.

Just as the birds were made to fly and fish were made to swim: Man was made to work. By applying his powers to the created realities, man

humanizes himself and transforms the world. The present culture and outlook seem to reduce work into a mere factor of production. Man is cut down to his material and physical aspect, thereby losing sight of his dignity as an image of God.

Work involves effort, weariness, and exhaustion: Signs of the suffering and struggle which accompany human existence and which point to the reality of sin and the need for redemption. But, in itself, work is not a penalty or a curse or a punishment: Those who speak of it in that way have not understood Sacred Scripture properly.

All that original sin did was to change the form of this cooperation, as we also read in the Book of Genesis: Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life... In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread (Gen 3:17-19). What was originally intended as something pleasant and agreeable has since become difficult, and very often exhausting; but there has been no change in the relationship of man's work to his Creator and its role in the redemption of mankind.

The conditions attaching to work cause some people to look upon it as a punishment, or, alternatively because of the malice of the human heart estranged from God, as a mere form of merchandise or an 'instrument of oppression', to such an extent that on occasions it is difficult to appreciate its very real grandeur and dignity. Others see work exclusively in terms of a means for making money, or as an expression of selfish personal affirmation, and fail to realize the value of work in itself as something divine, whereby man collaborates with God and offers his Creator something in which all his natural and supernatural virtues come into play (cf. Fernandez, *op.cit.*).

## Dignity of work

With the passing of centuries, sad to say, manual work was reduced to a minimum level of importance. It came to be considered as no more than a way of earning a living. It was considered practically useless and to be something basically debasing or demeaning.

Man, created unto the image and likeness of God, collaborates in the creative power of God through work. He makes himself similar to his Maker when man engages his mind and will to the things of this world. Work may be manual or intellectual and in both cases the human being testifies to his semblance to God by transforming the realities of this world, perfecting himself and the world around him, thereby glorifying the Creator.

However, materialism has crept into the mentality of the present milieu reducing work in terms of material production and physical, quantifiable outputs. What seems more important to many is the salary or the financial benefits a person obtains from his work. This tends to unjustly classify people according to the type of work or profession they engage in, as if some are nobler than others. That is unfair.

"How much do you make?" is a common question people ask. But it is not quite right to group people into money makers and lesser money makers.

Once, St Josemaria was taking a leisure walk and meets a gardener. He asked the latter: "Which do you think is more important, your occupation or



that of a cabinet minister?" The poor gardener was completely at a loss what to answer. The saint quipped saying, "It all depends on how each one carries out his work." If the gardener works well and with rectitude of intention, then his work would be more pleasing to God than that of the minister. On the other hand, if the latter does his job well and the former works sloppily then the government minister's work would be nobler.

Thus, all work bears witness to the dignity of man, to his dominion over creation. It is an opportunity to develop one's personality. It is a bond of union with others, the way to support one's family, a means of contributing to the improvement of the society in which we live and to the progress of all humanity (St Josemaria, *Christ is passing by*, 47).

## Dignity based on love

Human work is an opportunity to develop one's personality. It is a bond of union with others, the way to support one's family, a means of aiding in the improvement of the society in which we live and in the progress of all humanity. For a Christian, these horizons extend and grow wider.

Work is a sharing in the creative work of God. When He created man and blessed him, He said: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth (Gen 1:28)."

And, moreover, since Christ took it into His hands, work has become for us a redeemed and redemptive reality. Not only is it the background of man's life, it is a means and a path of holiness. It is something to be sanctified and something which sanctifies.

It is well to remember that the dignity of work is based on Love. Man's great privilege is to be able to love and transcend what is fleeting and ephemeral. He can love other creatures, pronounce an 'I' and a 'you' which are full of meaning. And he can love God, who opens heaven's gates to us, makes us members of His family and allows us also to talk to Him in friendship, face to face.

Material production ought not to be the only measure to gauge the value of work. Work is born of love; it is a manifestation of love and is directed toward love. We see the Hand of God, not only in the wonders of nature, but also in our experience of work and effort. Work thus becomes prayer and

thanksgiving, because we know we are placed on earth by God, that we are loved by Him and made heirs to His promises. We have been rightly told, "In eating, in drinking, in all that you do, do everything for God's glory (1 Cor 10:31)."

St. Joseph was a tradesman who worked for his living and the Church proposes him to us as a model and patron (John Paul II, *Redemptoris custos*, 22, August 15, 1989). We should have frequent recourse to him to ensure that the work we do never loses its innate dignity or value, for it is not uncommon that, when God is forgotten, from the factory dead matter goes out improved, whereas the men there are corrupted and degraded (Pius XI, *Quadragesimo anno* 135, May 15, 1931). Our work, with St. Joseph's help, ought to leave our hands as a prayerful and pleasing offering to God.

## Jesus, the Worker

In the Gospel of St Mark, we see how Jesus is identified in Nazareth by His occupation: Is not this the carpenter, the Son of Mary? (Mark 6:3). When He returned to His native town, the neighbours remarked: "Is not this the carpenter's Son? Is not His mother called Mary? (Matt 13:54-58)."

In another place it says that Jesus practised the same profession as St. Joseph, the man who occupied the place of His father here on earth. Man's work by being taken up by the Son of God, has been sanctified, and can now be something redemptive, through being united to Christ the Redeemer of the world. Jesus achieved our redemption not only when He suffered and died on the Cross. He was redeeming us while He was working at Joseph's workshop. Let us not forget that the divine value of the things that we do does not depend only on what we do but how we do it. Since Jesus is a Divine person, whatever He touches becomes Divine.

Likewise, if you and I were to unite ourselves to God in grace, then everything we do and touch will have power of the legendary King Midas! We will transform what we do into something divine: *Saving work of God*.

Thus, all the negative qualities that accrue to work as a consequence of original sin, such as weariness, toil, hardship and difficulties, become, in Christ, something of immense value for every individual and for all of mankind. Man is now associated with the work of redemption wrought by Christ, whose labour with his hands at Nazareth greatly ennobled the dignity of work (Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et spes*, 67).

Moreover, through the communion that exists among all the members of Christ's Mystical Body, the Church, man's work, in all its incidental detail, can become a means of helping others. But for this to be so, it is essential for us not to lose sight of the fact that every human enterprise, even the most arduous and difficult of achievement, has to have a supernatural as well as a human purpose. The galley slave is well aware that he rows in order to make the ship move; but for this to give meaning to his life, he needs to appreciate the meaning that suffering and punishment have for a Christian. That is, he has to see his situation as a means of identifying himself with Christ. If through ignorance or rejection he doesn't manage to see this, he will end up hating his 'work'.



# A pictorial representation of the Study Tour of the North by Catholic Bishops of Sri Lanka



*Bishops with the Priests and Religious of the Jaffna Diocese*



*His Eminence meeting the people of Mullaitivu*



*Bishop Savundranayagam addressing the people of Kerpappulavu*



*Children listening to Bishop Thomas Savundranayagam*



*People at Puthukkudiyiruppu*

## FABC Plenary Assembly

The Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference (FABC) held its 10th Plenary Assembly with the theme "FABC at Forty Years. Responding to the Challenges of Asia", on December 10 -16, 2012 in Xuan Loc and Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam. These gatherings are held every four years in different countries of Asia. Altogether 111 delegates (7 Cardinals, 69 Bishops, 35 priests, religious and laity) participated in the Assembly. Gaudencia Cardinal Rosales, the Holy Father's Special Envoy; Archbishop Savio Han Tai Fai SDB, the Secretary for the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples; Archbishop Leopold Girelli, the non-resident Pontifical representative of Vietnam; fraternal delegates of the Continental Federation of Episcopal Conferences of Oceania; Latin

America and Europe; representatives of a new funding and donor partners; the Bishops and Secretaries of the FABC Offices; and the Sri Lanka delegation was represented by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph Bishop of Manner, His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Valence Mendis, Bishop of Chilaw and the ex-officio members were His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, President CBCSL His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Vianney Fernando. FABC - Chairman for the Office of Clergy (OC) His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. J. Wiston S. Fernando SSS FABC - Chairman for the Office of Consecrated Life (OCL).

The historic approval of the Statutes of the FABC came into being 40 years ago. Four important events converge with the Ruby Anniversary: the 'Year of Faith', the 50th Anniversary

of the Second Vatican Council, the 20th Anniversary of the publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and the concluded XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith.

The same Spirit animated Vatican II now summon us to become renewed evangelizers for a New Evangelization. It is the Spirit who can fashion the newness in our Church and in each one of us. It is the Spirit who enables to respond credibly and effectively to the social mega-trends and ecclesial realities that Assembly discerned.

To be renewed as evangelizers it is need to respond to the Spirit active in the world, in the depths of our being, in the signs of the times and in all that is

authentically human. We need to live a spirituality of New Evangelization.

For such spirituality, some fundamental dimensions were offered:

1. Personal encounter with Jesus
2. Passion for mission
3. Focus on the Kingdom of God
4. Commitment to communion
5. Dialogue, a mode of life and mission
6. Humble presence
7. Prophetic evangelizer
8. Solidarity with victims
9. Care of creation
10. Boldness of faith and martyrdom.

*(Courtesy: Newsletter - Catholic Bishops' Conference of Sri Lanka)*

## St. Joseph and.....

**Contd. from Pg. 8**

A similar effect can be seen when the fruit of one's labours (not the financial reward, but the actual product, the thing that has been 'produced' or 'made') is so alienated from its maker that it scarcely impinges on his consciousness (P. Berglar, *Opus Dei*, Salzburg, 1983).

Many people go to 'work' every morning as if they were going to the galleys, to row a ship to a destination they are neither aware of, nor care about; all they look forward to is the weekend and the pay-packet. This sort of work, evidently, can do nothing to ennoble or sanctify man, and only with difficulty can it develop his personality and be of real benefit to society (cf. Fernandez, *op.cit.*).

### St. Joseph, the Worker

St. Joseph attained the heights of holiness by doing the will of God,

carrying out his daily duties as father, provider and protector of Jesus and Mary. He teaches us to love the occupation in which we spend so much of our life. Any honest task can be a path to sanctity. There is no such thing as a lower or higher category of work. It all depends on the degree of human effort and perfection we put into what we do.

In this sense, St Joseph's life is a model of how an ordinary Christian can achieve sanctity in the middle of the world. Any occupation can be an occasion for loving God and neighbour. Since holiness consists in loving God, then it follows that everybody has an equal opportunity of becoming saintly by keeping the home, working in the laboratory, ploughing the fields or working at a computer, delivering parcels or being a receptionist, etc. The status of a job depends on its capacity to perfect us in a human way and supernaturally as well, on the opportunities it offers to provide for our family and collaborate in good

works on behalf of mankind, and on the social contribution we can make in the world through its means.

If any task can be offered to God and for souls, then any honest human endeavour can be converted into a means for serving God. And in the service of God there are no tasks of a menial nature. All are important. The supernatural value of a position depends on the spiritual dispositions of the person carrying it out and on the moral rectitude and love of God with which it is done. This is so because Christian Faith and calling affect our whole existence, not just a part of it. Our relations with God necessarily demand giving ourselves, giving ourselves completely. The man of faith sees life, in all its dimensions, from a new perspective: That which is given to us by God (cf. *Ibid.*).

Let us imitate, therefore, the examples of the Blessed Virgin and St Joseph: Lives of work well done, not

brilliant humanly speaking, but full of redemptive effectiveness. At the same time, we could check on those aspects of the way we work, where we could improve on.

For instance, we could ask ourselves the following questions. Do we strive for excellence and human perfection? Do we fulfil our duties punctually? Do we have a methodical approach to things? Do we have a sense of urgency about them, finishing our work on or before the set deadline? Do we always carry out every little detail of our work as carefully and considerately as we can? If we carry out our duties as conscientiously as is humanly possible, we can say with the Liturgy of the Mass of St Joseph, the Worker: "Lord God, fountain of all mercy, look upon our gifts... Let our sacrifice become the protection of all who call on you (*Roman Missal*, 1st May, *Prayer over the gifts*).

**Rev. Fr. Daniel Icatlo**



# Rani Rasiah - She can never be forgotten ....

On Saturday March 30, 2013, we bade farewell to Rani Rasiah, former Staff Member of St. Peter's College, Bambalapitiya. She passed away on Monday March 25, 2013. All her dear ones, including the members of the Peterite Family were there to say goodbye to a caring and loving mother, friend, teacher and guide.

She served on the staff of St. Peter's College, Colombo 4 for 36 long year 22 of which were in the capacity as Head of the Tamil Stream. Countless number of Peterites will remember her as a gracious elegantly dressed personality, faithful to duty and loyal to her workplace. She had worked under many Rectors and won their love and admiration for her dedicated services. The tribute paid to her by

the present Rector Rev. Fr. Travis Gabriel when her body was brought to the College Chapel was a genuine summary of her 36 year reign of love and loyalty.

Her sudden demise triggered shock waves among her students both here and abroad. She taught them not only English and Mathematics but also, scores of lessons for life, they related many stories through their tears as they paid their last respects to their beloved teacher. Even though she retired in 2008, I would say she left her heart behind at St. Peter's. She used to always inquire about College whenever we spoke on the telephone or met. Her last visit to St. Peter's College was in December 2012 for the "Back to School" event



organized by the OBU. I asked her about it and she said she had felt tired but enjoyed it thoroughly. She was also a very loyal member of the Parent Teacher Association for many long years.

She was a devoted wife to her late husband Edgar and a loving mother to her "children" - I say children because she was a mother not only to her only son Ranjan, but also to her sister's children

Ranjini, Kumar, Shamala and Suresh whose mother passed away when they were all in their growing up years. Since July 2012, Ruby, Ranjan's wife also came under her maternal care.

To us Teachers, especially to a "band" of us, she was a mother, mentor, friend and guide. She was well known to our families too. We turned to her at all times for advice and guidance and she has never let us down, always patient, always kind. She enhanced our teaching career with many lessons taught more by example than by words.

Teacher, you were indeed a precious gift from God to all of us. There will never be another you. Thank you for your love, care, concern and friendship.

Imojen Mel

## UNFADING LOVE

In this crazy world, you're my only peace of mind,  
When lightning crosses the sky, you're the one I  
hide behind,  
You're more precious to me than all things combined,  
Never alone am I with you walking right behind.

Unpredictable is this world, any day it may fall  
apart,

Yet I'm at perfect ease, for I know deep in my heart,  
I've had all and everything from the very start,  
For in this life I was the queen of your heart.

Many trials I know I've caused you, along with  
floods of tears,  
I kneel before you my precious one, begging for-  
giveness for all those tears.  
For the sleepless nights I owe you, would I sing a  
lullaby to you each night,  
For the discomfort and the unease, I wish I could  
always hold you tight.

Every year you grow older and the wrinkles start to  
show,  
Little do you know that with every year I get older  
the more you seem to glow.  
The months go by and the new year begins to fade,  
My love for you is everlasting, unlike a flower it  
will never fade.

Stephanie Nugara

## Very Rev. Fr. Leonard Ranasinghe OSB

The tragic passing away of Very Rev. Fr. Leonard Ranasinghe has shocked and saddened persons who knew him.

He was the Parish Priest of Sacred Heart Church Rajagiriya for seven years. He was loved by his parishioners. He was always with a smile and ready to listen and talk to anybody.

The Rajagiriya Parish Doctors' Community Service Group owe a heavy debt of gratitude to him. This Group exists because of Fr Leonard. When a few of us met him with the idea of conducting a free medical clinic, he immediately endorsed it and provided us space in the crowded Misslon House and all other facilities needed. That was in November 1999.

Since then the



free medical clinic has been conducted every Sunday with about 10 doctors working in a roster. A similar number of volunteers dispense the drugs. Regular donors help in purchasing the drugs. Rev Fr Leonard was a tower of strength to keep the clinic functioning. Even after he left the Parish to be the Superior of his Order he kept an abiding interest in the clinic.

The Golden Jubilee Building at Sacred Heart Church Rajagiriya became a reality because of him. He started the

project with little money. When he was asked on how he was going to complete the project with so little funds his reply was "God will provide." True enough God provided. The monthly collection of tithes for the building had a very good response. Fr Leonard provided space for our clinic in the new building.

Our Group has lost a great supporter. He has been very helpful to me.

We have lost a friend and counsellor and a holy, happy, genial and humble priest of God.

May he rest in peace.

**Dr Lucian Jayasuriya**  
**Hony. Secretary,**  
**Rajagiriya Parish Doctors**  
**Community Service**  
**Group**

## Mary's Pondering Gaze



In icons of Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary, faces and hands direct us to uncover messages in the icons. In Our Mother of Perpetual Help, the pondering look on Mary's face and the position of her hands tell us she is the one who points the way to the Mystery of Christ.

In Greek iconography, this grouping of icons is called *Hodegitria* (ho-duh-guh-TREE-ah), which means "the way shower." Mary, the star who announces the Incarnation, points the way to the heart of the Gospel.

Her image

is placed in a frame, which gives us the impression that we are looking at her through a window. This is what an icon is: A window into eternity. As we look through this window into the image of Mary, we encounter the divine mystery of redeeming love. Mary's penetrating gaze draws us into the vibrant energy of the icon, encouraging us to reflect on Christ's presence and teaching us to focus on Jesus in our daily life.

DAN KORN, CSSR

(Courtesy: Liguorian)

## Our adorable 'archchi' Rita Perera

Proverbs 31:28 "Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her."

Devoted wife, loving mother, caring sister, inspiring grandmother, loyal friend and above all a wonderful human being. These are the things that come to mind when I think about Rita Perera, my archchi.

Born to this world on February 22, 1930 being the eldest among five other siblings, archchi was not only a sister but also a mother figure to them all. Archchi and Seeya were joined in holy matrimony on September 25, 1952.

In a world where marriage is taken lightly and divorce rates are on the rise, archchi was a shining example to all women on the sanctity of marriage. She endured 60 years of marriage, a milestone which many dream of, but only few could achieve. In all its ups and downs, success and failure, sickness and health, joy and sorrow, she stood by seeya. She surely was the woman behind the success of the renowned gynaecologist, Dr. Wilfred Perera.

Archchi was always duty conscious. Even in her old age and time of illness she never forgot to carry out her duties as a mother and a grandmother. She would always be the first to wish us all for our birthdays, as she made it a point to call early in the morning.

Archchi was a devout Catholic. She was close to Mother Mary and always held the Rosary close to her. Her God fearing nature and unshakable faith were a good

example to us all.

Another beautiful quality of archchi was her humorous nature. Old age could not slow her down or take away her funny and cheerful self. Even when she was in hospital, she was still able to wear a beautiful smile amidst the worried faces that surrounded her. Her smiles and laughter illuminated the house and kept all around her cheerful. Archchi had a sweet tooth and could never walk past a chocolate without having a taste of it. She believed that while you are living, you need to live to the fullest.

Many would agree when I say that her greatest quality was her generosity. Matthew 6:3 says, "Don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing." Not even her husband knew the extent to which she went in order to help others in need. It was in her death with the testimonies of several people that we came to know the true extent of her generosity.

All in all archchi lived a virtuous life with great integrity. Abraham Lincoln once said, "In the end it's not the years in your life that count but the life in those years." You may no longer be with us archchi but the exemplary life you led and the lessons you taught us will always remain in our hearts. We can only promise you that we will do our best to fulfil the dreams you had for us.

Sahan Perera



# The Greening of Catholicism

In the not too distant past, piety and spirituality were communal affairs. We learned who we were from what we did in common. Catholics abstained from meat on Friday and attended mass on Sunday. Once a week we attended the Novena to the Sacred Heart and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. We memorised Latin phrases so that we could worship together and encouraged others to learn the Latin responses by heart in exchange for the privilege of assisting at Mass. These behaviours were our piety and our spirituality. We learned what it meant to be Catholic simply by being Catholic. There are calls in some quarters for the greening of the church or the greening of Catholicism as we would like to call it now. Some do not think that the Catholic Church can go green because green as the ideology runs counter to the churches teaching.

Australians Cardinal Pell once warned about radical environmentalists moralising their own agenda and inposing it on people through fear. Pell also criticised what he called a herd like mentality in accepting the wilder claims about man made climate change as if they constituted a new religion. Political scientists have

described ideologies as pseudo religions; so to the extent that deep environmentalism is an ideology, it obviously conflicts with the teachings of the Church.

There is a traditional main stream approach towards the church's teaching on environmental issues. Standard apologetics are quite sufficient to build a Catholic case for responsible stewardship towards the natural world. Some theologians argue that this approach is inadequate to meet the ecological challenges of our time. In the Catholic Church writers like Teilhard de Chardin and Thomas Berry have stressed the importance of looking at the natural world to understand divine revelation. In Berhys words; The universe, the solar system and planet earth in themselves and in their evolutionary emergence constitute for the human community the primary revelation of that ultimate mystery whence all things merge in to being.

There has been a shift in the way we teach Catholicism with the aim of developing a firm and lasting relationship with Christ. Indeed the General Directory for Catechesis tells us that the definitive aim of Catechesis is to put people not only in touch but also in communion and intimacy with Christ. Giv-

ing impetus to individual judgement is the pastoral churches response to the Magisterium's position on natural law theology in other words, that there is a moral code to which human beings are naturally inclined. Catholic formation continues through life when as adults we are encouraged to use our own conscience in deciding moral issues. This has some times resulted in some people deciding against church teaching in favour of conscience and has encouraged individualism.

The commitment of Catholicism to a healthy environment for everyone stems directly from their belief in God the Creator, from their recognition of the effects of original and personal sin and from the certainty of having been redeemed by Christ. In 1979 it was proclaimed that St. Francis of Assisi was the heavenly patron of those who promote ecology. He offers Catholics an example of genuine and deep respect for the integrity of creation.

In 'Cemesimu Annus' Pope John Paul II coined the term 'Human Ecology' to refer to the close links between the economic development of developing countries and any genuine attempt to solve ecological problems. This theme was taken up by Pope Benedict XVI in his address for the World Day

of Peace in 2007. Alongside the ecology of nature there exists what can be called a human ecology which in turn demands a social ecology. All this means that humanity if it truly desires peace must be increasingly conscious of the links between natural ecology or respect for nature and human ecology. Experience shows that disregard for the environment always harms human co-existence and vice versa.

One outcome of Catholicism with its emphasis on the individual and at times on the environment is that spirituality and environment has become a personal affair rather than a communal one. In effect in Catholicism it is taught that the purpose of spirituality is to show what one can become and in the purpose of protecting the environment what one can do as a dutiful member of the community at large. It also means that we are teaching that moral decisions should be made according to an individual's understanding of the teachings of Jesus, rather than according to the tenets Jesus taught. We ought not to be surprised then that there are as many responses to moral issues as there are individual Catholics, nor should we be surprised by the nature of these responses.

Experience shows that disregard for

the environment always harms human co-existence and vice versa. It becomes more and more evident that there is an inseparable link between peace with creation and peace among men. These presuppose peace with God. The poem prayer of Saint Francis known as the 'Canticle of Brother Sun' is a wonderful example of this multifaceted ecology of Peace.'

Part of the blame for environmental damage goes to the consumerish life styles which have become so prevalent in recent years! Peace with all of creation' by Pope John Paul II argued for a more internationally coordinated solution to the global ecological crisis. It also highlights what it calls (The urgent moral need for a new solidarity' between the rich developed west and poorer developing

countries from imposing tougher environmental standards on developing countries than those they adopt themselves. Pope John Paul II called for a new campaign for teaching humanity about its environmental responsibility but he stressed that this cannot be based upon sentiment or rapid slogans. A new piety arising from the Body of Christ in the 21st century world and reflecting the efforts of the people of God to be the light for the world suggest a unique approach to spirituality and the environment. When this new sense of spirituality is developed the church can once again foster spiritual exercises arising from them so that we can again understand what it means to be Catholic and the presence of greening Catholicism.

## Time is SO Precious!

How many of us have stopped to reflect on the value of time. How many of us have squandered that special gift God has given us. Time is a treasure which is found only in this life. It is not found in the next either in Hell or Heaven. How do we spend our time? Why do we often defer till tomorrow what we can do today? Remember the time which is past is no longer ours. The future is not under our control. We have only the present to think and do good. St. Augustine asks "How can you who are not sure of an hour promise yourself tomorrow?"

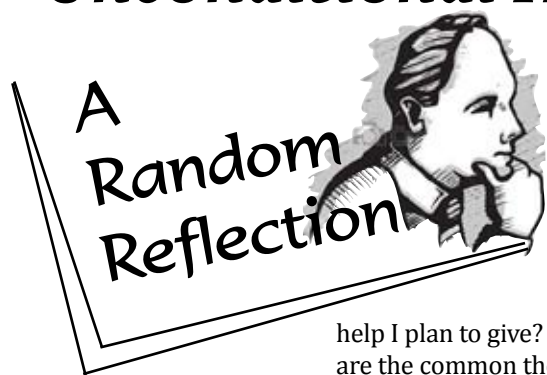
According to St. Bernard, "There is nothing more precious than time but there is nothing less esteemed and more despised by men of the world and nothing regarded more cheaply. The days of salvation pass away and no one reflects that the day which has passed away from him can never return. It is an evil to lose time indulging in useless conversation which are unprofitable to the soul.

St. Bernard goes on to explain that all the time that is not spent for God is lost time. "If God calls you today to do good do it for He will call you no more." "God spares your life that you may repair the time you have lost. You will redeem the time if you do what you have neglected to do," says St. Anselm.

Therefore we should repent for the time we have spent in offending God. Endeavour to do everything pleasing to him and thank him for preserving our lives.

**Maurice Nanayakkara**

## Unconditional Help is more Meaningful and more Meritorious



Helping the poor, helping the sick, helping the needy, etc are various forms of help people practice today. Help in any form can be considered an act of mercy or a good act.

It is a common thing that in most help given today the helper may expect something in return from the receiver or it may be to thank the receiver for some good done to the helper This means that the help has strings attached or is not unconditional. The helper is inclined to think 'Will I get anything in return? Will the receiver be grateful for my help? What will be the benefits which I will receive for the

help I plan to give? These are the common thoughts of the person planning to help another. It is seldom that people giving unconditional help. Today politicians help to get the vote. Some business people give charity to get the fame, or as an advertisement, or to become popular.

We are aware about the biblical story of the Good Samaritan which Jesus intended to enlighten the lawyer who questioned Him, 'Who is my neighbour?'

*The Parable of the Good Samaritan*

A man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho fell into the hands of a robber who stripped him, beat him, and went away leaving him half

dead.

A priest going down that road saw the injured man fallen on the wayside, passed him by on the other side. A Levite also passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan saw the fallen man, went near him and was moved with pity. He bandaged the wounds, poured oil and wine on them, put him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day the Samaritan gave money to the innkeeper and said "Take care of this man, I will repay any extra expenses when I come back"

The example of the Good Samaritan who had no ulterior motive and who expected nothing in return for his help and therefore his help was unconditional. This act of mercy earned him the name "The GOOD Samari-

tan'. It is seen that unconditional help given by individuals is more meaningful and more rewarding.

However today in our society unconditional help given by individuals is rare. Large scale help given by organizations e.g. Lions Club or Charitable Societies etc., usually are given without expecting anything in return. When people give some money to a beggar seldom do they expect anything in return, at least in this world.

The above write up is intended for individuals who always expect something in return for the help and assistance they provide to a member of his own family, or to a friend or any individual.

Lesson: Help the needy with a Good Heart. Your help is more rewarding if it is unconditional.  
**Damascene Abeysekera**

## St. John Baptist De La Salle

The patron of the teachers and students.

Though you were born and bred in a noble and rich family, through prayers and meditation you were able to overcome the challenges of your family and society to respond to the calling of God.

Almighty and as an intellectual was able to see the needs of thousands of children who were stranded.

Your mission to enlighten the under privileged children and thereby to bring glory to God is a brave and courageous decision.

In taking the above decision you gave up all the honours and high positions you held and distributed the money and wealth you had and became an extremely poor person with an entire trust in God.

You touched the hearts of students with Christian love, taught them the truth towards God made the children strengthened with Education and their mission is now spread to 82 countries.

St. De La Salle help us also to overcome all the challenges to place our entire trust in God to bear witness only to God and enlighten our hearts and minds to live as true La Salleons.

**G.A. Himali Fernando**  
Secretary of *Signum Fidei*  
De Mazenod College  
Kandana



*At St. Paul Outside-the-Walls Pope Francis asks us to abandon false idols and adore the Lord*

# Consistency between Word and Life

*We are called to be the hidden saints, the saints of every day life*

*In order to be credible the Church must show consistency "between word and manner of life," by abandoning the "idols" of ambition, careerism, success "on which we often seek to base our security." This was Pope Francis's counsel to the faithful in his Homily on Sunday afternoon, April 14, his first Holy Mass in the Roman Basilica of St. Paul Outside-the-Walls. The following is the English text of the Pope's Homily, which was given in Italian.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is a joy for me to celebrate Holy Mass with you in this Basilica. I greet the Archbishop, Cardinal James Harvey, and I thank him for the words that he has addressed to me. Along with him, I greet and thank the various institutions that form part of this Basilica, and all of you. We are at the tomb of Saint Paul, a great yet humble Apostle of the Lord, who proclaimed Him by word, bore witness to Him by martyrdom and worshipped Him with all his heart. These are the three key ideas on which I would like to reflect in the light of the Word of God that we have heard; proclamation, witness and worship.

In the First Reading, what strikes us is the strength of Peter and the other Apostles. In response to the order to be silent, no longer to teach in the name of Jesus, no longer to proclaim His message, they respond clearly: "We must obey God, rather than men". And they remain undeterred even when flogged, ill-treated and imprisoned. Peter and the Apostles proclaim courageously, fearlessly, what they have received: The Gospel of Jesus. And we? Are we capable of bringing the Word of God into the environment in which we live? Do we know how to speak of Christ, of what He represents for us, in our families, among the people who form part of

our daily lives? Faith is born from listening, and is strengthened by proclamation.

But let us take a further step: The proclamation made by Peter and the Apostles does not merely consist of words: Fidelity to Christ affects their whole lives, which are changed, given a new direction, and it is through their lives that they bear witness to the faith and to the proclamation of Christ. In today's Gospel, Jesus asks Peter three times to feed His flock, to feed it with his love, and He prophesies to him: "When you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go" (Jn 21:18). These words are addressed first and foremost to those of us who are pastors: We cannot feed God's flock unless we let ourselves be carried by God's will even where we would rather not go, unless we are prepared to bear witness to

yet they are all important, even those which do not stand out. In God's great plan, every detail is important, even yours, even my humble little witness, even the hidden witness of those who live their faith with simplicity in everyday family relationships, work relationships, friendships. There are the saints of every day, the "hidden" saints, a sort of "middle class of holiness", as a French author said, that "middle class of holiness" to which we can all belong. But in different parts of the world, there are also those who suffer, like Peter and the Apostles, on account of the Gospel; there are those who give their lives in order to remain faithful to Christ by means of a witness marked by the shedding of their blood. Let us all remember this: One cannot proclaim the Gospel of Jesus without the tangible witness of one's life. Those who listen to us and observe us must be able to see in our actions what

called us, He who has invited us to travel his path, He who has chosen us. Proclamation and witness are only possible if we are close to Him, just as Peter, John and the other disciples in today's Gospel passage were gathered around the Risen Jesus; there is a daily closeness to Him; they know very well who He is, they know Him. The

sciously, have a very clear order of priority concerning the things we consider important. Worshipping the Lord means giving Him the place that He must have: Worshipping the Lord means stating, believing - not only by our words - that He alone truly guides our lives; worshipping the Lord means that we are convinced before

***"Worshipping God means learning to be with Him, stripping away our hidden idols and placing Him at the centre of our lives"***

Evangelist stresses the fact that "no one dared ask Him: 'Who are you?' — they knew it was the Lord" (Jn 21:12). And this is important for us: Living an intense relationship with Jesus, an intimacy of dialogue and of life, in such a way as to recognize him as "the Lord". Worshipping Him! The passage that we heard from the Book of Revelation speaks to us of worship: The myriads of angels, all creatures, the living beings, the elders, prostrate themselves before the Throne of God and of the Lamb that was slain, namely Christ, to whom be praise, honour and glory (cf. Rev 5:11-14). I would like all of us to ask ourselves this question: You, I, do we worship the Lord? Do we turn to God only to ask Him for things, to thank Him, or do we also turn to Him to worship Him? What does it mean, then, to worship God? It means learning to be with Him, it means that we stop trying to dialogue with Him, and it means sensing that His presence is the most true, the most good, the most important thing of all. All of us, in our own lives, consciously and perhaps sometimes uncon-

Him that He is the only God, the God of our lives, the God of our history.

This has a consequence in our lives: We have to empty ourselves of the many small or great idols that we have and in which we take refuge, on which we often seek to base our security. They are idols that we sometimes keep well hidden: They can be ambition, careerism, a taste for success, placing ourselves at the centre, the tendency to dominate others, the claim to be the sole masters of our lives, some sins to which we are bound, and many others. This evening I would like a question to resound in the heart of each one of you, and I would like you to answer it honestly: Have I considered which idol lies hidden in my life that prevents me from worshipping the Lord? Worshipping is stripping ourselves of our idols, even the most hidden ones, and choosing the Lord as the centre, as the highway of our lives.

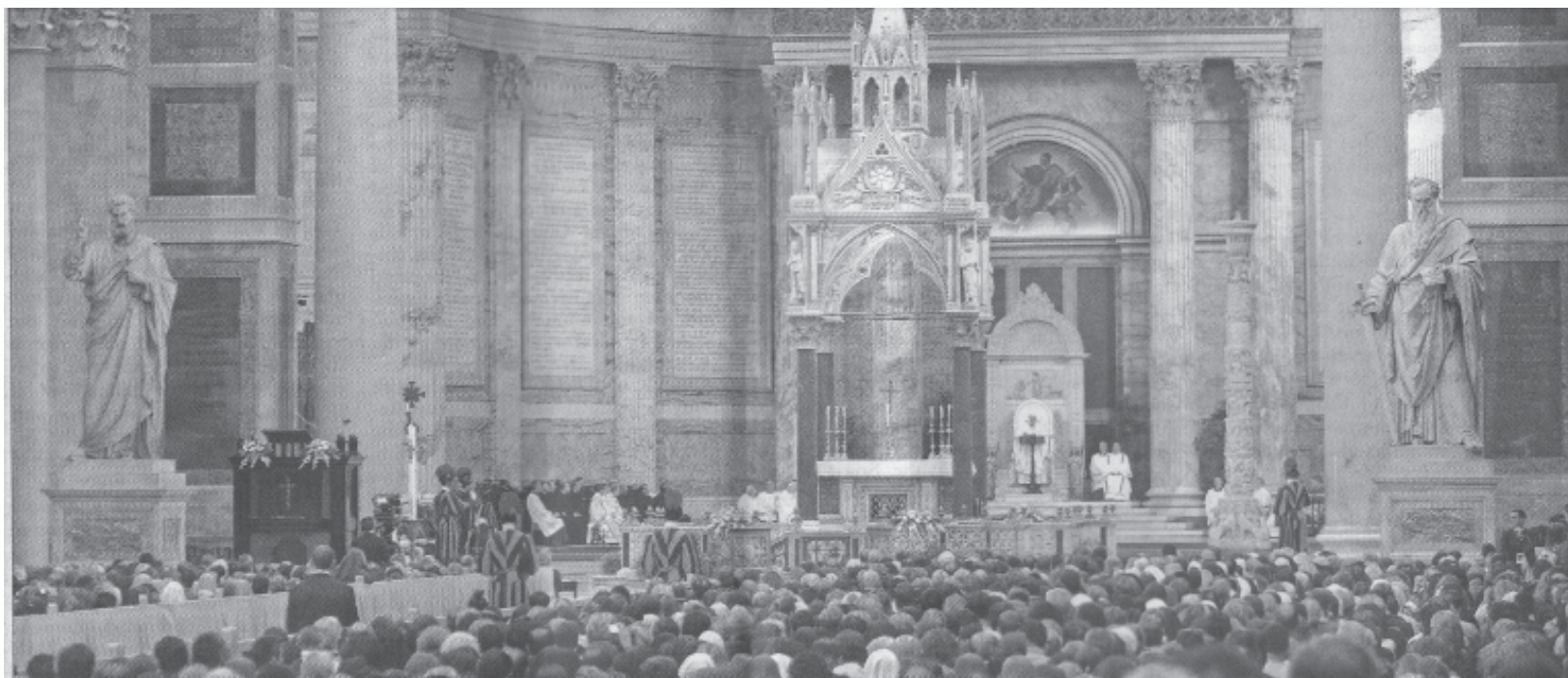
Dear brothers and sisters, each day the Lord calls us to follow him with courage and fidelity; He has made us the great gift of choosing us as His disciples; He invites us to proclaim Him with joy as the Risen one, but He asks us to do so by word and by the witness of our lives, in daily life. The Lord is the only God of our lives, and he invites us to strip ourselves of our many idols and to worship Him alone. To proclaim, to witness, to adore. May the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Paul help us on this journey and intercede for us. Amen.

***"Let us not forget: If we are to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus, our lives must bear witness to what we preach"***

Christ with the gift of ourselves, unreservedly, not in a calculating way, sometimes even at the cost of our lives. But this also applies to everyone: We all have to proclaim and bear witness to the Gospel. We should all ask ourselves: How do I bear witness to Christ through my faith? Do I have the courage of Peter and the other Apostles, to think, to choose and to live as a Christian, obedient to God? To be sure, the testimony of faith comes in very many forms, just as in a great fresco, there is a variety of colours and shades;

they hear from our lips, and so give glory to God! I am thinking now of some advice that Saint Francis of Assisi gave his brothers: Preach the Gospel and, if necessary, use words. Preaching with your life, with your witness. Inconsistency on the part of pastors and the faithful between what they say and what they do, between word and manner of life, is undermining the Church's credibility.

But all this is possible only if we recognize Jesus Christ, because it is He who has



(Courtesy:  
L'Osservatore  
Romano)



### What it says ..... in the Readings

Jesus said: 'If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him.'

(Jn. 14:23)

### LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR C 5th May - 12th May 2013

#### Sun: Sixth Sunday of Easter

Ac.15:1,2,22-29; Rev. 21:10-14, 22,23;

Jn. 14: 23-29

**Mon:** Ac 16:11-15; Jn. 15:26-16:4a

**Tue:** Ac. 16:22-24; Jn. 16: 5-11

**Wed:** Ac. 17:15,22-18:1; Jn. 16: 12-15

**Thu:** Ac 18: 1-8; Jn. 16:16-20

**Fri:** Ac. 18:9-18; Jn. 16:20-23a

**Sat:** Ac 18:23-28; Jn. 16:23b-28

#### Sun: The Ascension of the Lord

Ac 1: 1-11; Eph 1:17-23 or

Heb. 9:24-28,10:19-23; Lk. 24:46-53

### PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

**Response:** Lord, make your home with us

For the Church: That all its members may have the gift of inner peace through their efforts to live the Gospel in their lives. Let us pray to the Lord.

**Response:** Lord, make your home with us

For all political leaders: That they may take the path of peace and good will in a world which is dominated by wars and rumours of wars. Let us pray to the Lord.

**Response:** Lord, make your home with us

For all the homes of our Parish: That they may be blessed with joy and peace. Let us pray to the Lord.

**Response:** Lord, make your home with us

That we may have peace with our neighbours, and for the courage to seek to be reconciled with anyone we have fallen out with. Let us pray to the Lord.

**Response:** Lord, make your home with us

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## SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

### First Reading. Acts. 15: 1-2, 22- 29.

The statement about the circumcision gives rise to a problem in the community of Paul and Barnabas. They go to the Apostles and the Apostles send their men to give them the right teaching about salvation.

### Second Reading. Rev. 21: 10-14, 22-23.

In the vision the Angels show them the coming down of the New Jerusalem. It is strongly founded and built on the Apostles. In it God is honoured and glorified constantly.

### Gospel. Jn. 14: 23-29.

Preparing the Apostles for His death Jesus instructs them about the farewell and sending of the Holy Spirit to guide them. He promises peace. And He wants them to rejoice for He is returning to the Father.

### Reflection.

This being the Season of Easter and as we have just celebrated the feast of the Lord's Resurrection the Readings prepare us to take up the mission of Our Lord. In other words it is encouraging us to go out and preach the Good News to the people. For the people need to be like us, enlightened about the salvific Resurrection of Our Lord.

They in their manner need to be guided according to the teachings of the Lord. As we possess the Good News and as we have true access to it; it is our duty to share and give it to others that they too would be saved and present when the New Jerusalem appears with the Lord on the throne. If we do not do this we would have really neglected our duties as Baptized Catholics. If we do, then we will be called to share the kingdom with the Lord on the throne. Therefore let us take up the mission and take the Good News to the people, so that there would be peace and harmony on this earth and salvation with all its glory in the life after. In order to put this into action the Lord promises His Spirit upon us.

In the Gospel in His farewell advice the Lord calls for love; for those who love Him is sure to keep His words and in return they will receive the Father's love. Then the Lord promises the Spirit so that the Spirit will guide and remind them what he taught, He also promises peace, the kind of peace found in heaven. Not just warlessness but perfect peace. Not the kind that the world could give but the kind that God has in His kingdom. The peace that is spoken in the Bible; where the Lion Cub will play with the Lamb; the Child puts his hand into the serpent's hole but is unharmed. A sinless state.

In the First Reading the Apostles have taken up their mission and are all out to spread the Good News to the nations. They send missionaries to all types of places. They go about discussing things relating to faith. This time it is Paul and Barnabas discussing matters with the Apostles. Then they set out again to preach the Good News. That is the type of dedication they had. We should be dedicated in the same manner and with the same enthusiasm.

In the Second Reading the vision is about the reward that the Apostles or for that matter anyone who is dedicated to the mission will get. As for the Apostles

they are the foundation of the New Jerusalem. The others will have the reward of being in the presence of the Lord on the throne. Therefore let us work hard for this reward.

### Aid Story.

Years ago the 'Allantic Journal' put the following question to a group of newspaper editors. "If you were given the ultimate choice, what news story would you like to see in tomorrow's newspaper?" Most of the editors replied that they would like most of all to report the news that Stalin and his atheistic community had come to a course of cooperation with the other nations of the world. They would like to head line the news that the Soviet Union had called off the Cold War, had begun to disarm and had set free those behind the Iron Curtain.

No doubt such news would make millions happy, but it would not end war, it would not bring about world peace. Other dictators, other tyrant, other trouble-makers would arise. The most encouraging news story would be one with a heading something like this. "United Nations and all other nations and organizations unanimously accepts, Christ as King and His teaching"

If the whole world, if every nation would accept Christ as king would honour and follow His leadership and teaching, there would be no war and there would be much less misery in the world.

Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos

### Sunday Rhythm - Sixth Sunday of Easter

**Jesus:** "If anyone loves me he will keep my words..."

**Jesus:** "Those who do not love me do not keep my words."

**Jesus:** "...the Holy Spirit...will teach you everything"

**Jesus:** "...my own peace I give you..."

**Jesus:** "Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid."

**Richest Blessing:** Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you, a peace the world cannot give...

**Richest Result:** This is my gift to you.

**TO THINK:** Do you need Peace rather Peace of God...? Jesus wants our hearts not to be troubled and disturbed with worldly influences.

**TO PRAY:** Dear God of Peace, make me a bearer of your Peace and bless me to share your Peace with everybody while healing others by your Peace. Amen.

**TO ACT:** Let us love God and keep His words as our foundation of life. And also let us open our eyes and ears to learn everything from the Holy Spirit in order to cultivate a peaceful kingdom of God here on earth.

Rev. Fr. S. Randil Fernando OMI

## 59th ANNUAL FEAST OF THE LILY OF THE VALLEY



### The Marian Shrine of the Diocese of Kandy Our Lady of Fatima, Padiwatte - Kandasale

May 11th - Vespers followed by the Eucharistic Procession  
At. 6.00 p.m.

May 12th Concelebrated Festive Mass at 8.30 a.m.  
Presided over by : Rt. Rev. Dr. Vianney Fernando (Bishop of Kandy)  
**All are invited.**

For your Generous Contributions Towards the Jubilee Hall

Contact: Parish Priest  
081-2420411 / 077-3725181



# What does 'obedience' say?

In the Readings (Acts 5:34-42), Pope Francis said, "the word 'obey' appears three times. What does 'obeying God mean?" the Pontiff asked. "Does it mean that we must behave like slaves? No, whoever obeys God is free, he is not a slave! And how can this be? It seems like a contradiction, "But it is not. In fact, the word 'obey' comes from Latin, and means to listen, to hear others. Obeying God is listening to God, having an open heart to follow the path that God points out to us. Obedience to God is listening to God and it sets us free."

Peter, he went on, was called "to make a decision." Peter "heard what the Pharisees and priests said but he listened

to what Jesus was saying in his heart." In our life, Pope Francis said, "we are often proposed things that do not come from Jesus, that do not come from God. At times our weaknesses take us down the wrong road. We make a deal-we go forward with a double life." Jesus tells us a little bit about life and the world tells us a little more. This, the Holy Father said, "is no good." In the Book of Revelation, the Lord says: "This is not good because you are neither good nor evil. You are lukewarm I condemn you."

The Pope warned against this temptation. If Peter had chosen to "find a *status vivendi*, perhaps everything would have worked out." But it would not have been a decision "of love, which comes when we listen to Jesus," and the decision to love has consequences." The Holy Father continued: "What happens when we hear Jesus?" At times we are persecuted, he said, remembering all those "who have placed

themselves in the fire and tell us with their lives: 'I want to obey and to follow the path of Jesus'."

In choosing to obey God and not the world, in no way giving in to compromise, the Christian is not alone. "Where can we find help in finding the way to

listen to Jesus," the Pope asked. "In the Holy Spirit. We ourselves are witnesses to this. God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey him. Thus he said: "It is the Holy Spirit inside of us who gives us the strength to go forward."

*Courtesy- L'Osservatore Romano*



## Ten Characteristics of Great Men

1. Great men have their priorities in line. They know what is truly important in life, and live accordingly.
2. Great men are tender with those in need of tenderness. They are kind to the elderly, children and those with disabilities.
3. Great men respect and honour women. They do not objectify, degrade, or demean them.
4. Great men participate in the community. They may spend time volunteering, working for a cause, or being invalid with charity.
5. Great men are honest, and have a sense of morality, integrity, and decency. They have an internal awareness of what is or is not appropriate, good right, or decent.
6. Great men have a sense of purpose. They do not waste inordinate amounts of time in the form of the TV or playing video games. They can balance fun and relaxation with work and productivity.
7. Great men are continually expanding their minds. They do not think they know it all and are open to new ideas and insights.
8. Great men have a healthy sense of self. They are confident and secure while maintaining a sense of humility.
9. Great men help and assist others. Whether in their place of employment, in their daily lives, or in the greater world at large, they have a sense of giving back.
10. Great men are in touch with their feelings, emotions, concerns, and even shortcomings. They do not feel a need for pretense of power. They can cry, have compassion, and acknowledge mistakes. They can love and be loved.

Note, a great man is not measured by the amount of money he has, the kind of car he drives, the size of his biceps, or outward appearance.

A great man reflects his greatness in his everyday line.

*Courtesy- Daily News Magazine*

## Pope calls young people, to be 'steadfast'

(CNA/EWTN News).- At a Mass where he confirmed 44 young people, Pope Francis encouraged the youth of the world to persist in their faith even in the midst of obstacles.

"Remaining steadfast in the journey of faith, with firm hope in the Lord, is the secret of our journey," he told over 70,000 young people gathered in St. Peter's Square.

"There are no difficulties, trials or misunderstandings to fear, provided we remain united to God as branches to the vine, provided we do not lose our friendship with him, provided we make ever more room for him in our lives," he said during the Mass on April 28.

The Holy Mass marked the ending of a two-day celebration as part of the 'Year of Faith', which gathered thousands of youths from around the world.

The day before, the young people had met with teachers of faith, or catechists, at Saint Peter's Square for a pilgrimage to the

tombs of Saint Peter and Blessed John Paul II.

The Eucharistic celebration was dedicated to the 44 young people from around the world to whom the Pope imparted the Sacrament of Confirmation, and to those who had already received the Sacrament earlier this year.

"To go against the current, this is good for the heart, but we need courage to swim against the tide," Pope Francis noted.

"Jesus gives us this courage," he stressed. Examining the day's Gospel reading, the Pontiff observed that the Holy Spirit "makes all things new" and "changes us."

"The Holy Spirit is truly transforming us, and through us he also wants to transform the world in which we live," explained the Pope.

"How beautiful it would be," he said, "if each of you, every evening, could say: Today at school, at home, at work, guided by God, I showed a sign of love towards one of my friends, my parents, an older

person!"

He noted that when God makes all things "new," they are not like "the novelties of this world, all of which are temporary," but are "lasting, not only in the future but today as well."

Pope Francis also explained that "we must undergo many trials if we are to enter the Kingdom of God."

"To follow the Lord, to let his Spirit transform the shadowy parts of our lives, our ungodly ways of acting, and cleanse us of our sins, is to set out on a path with many obstacles, both in the world around us but also within us, in the heart," he said.

He explained that trials are "part of the path that leads to God's glory" and told the pilgrims that they will always encounter difficulties in life.

"Do not be discouraged," the Pope emphasised. "We have the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome these trials!"



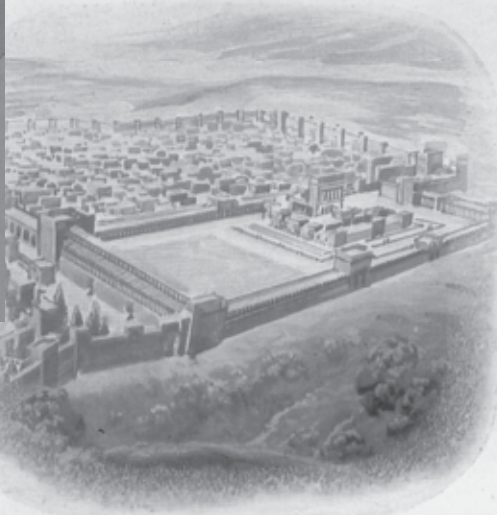


Saul was a Jew who lived in the first century A. D. during the time of the Roman Empire. He was born in Taurus, in the province of Cilicia. When he was a boy, he was sent to Jerusalem to study under the great Jewish teacher Gamaliel. He was an outstanding student and learned all about the Jewish laws and the Jewish scripture.

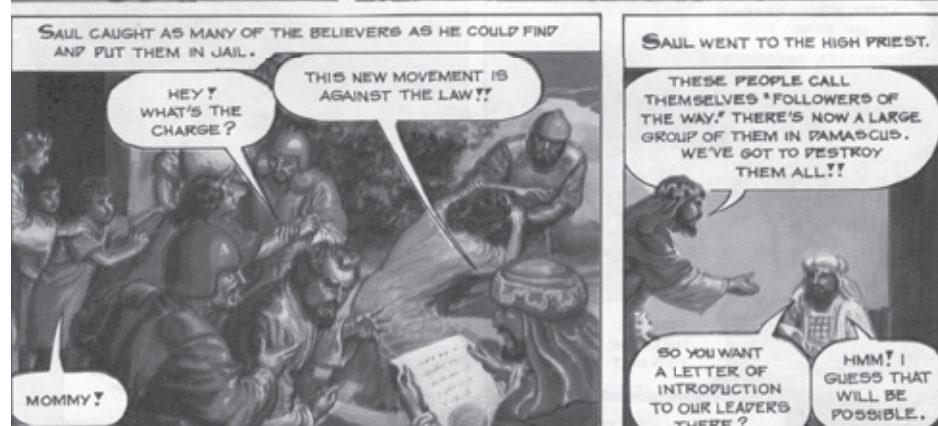
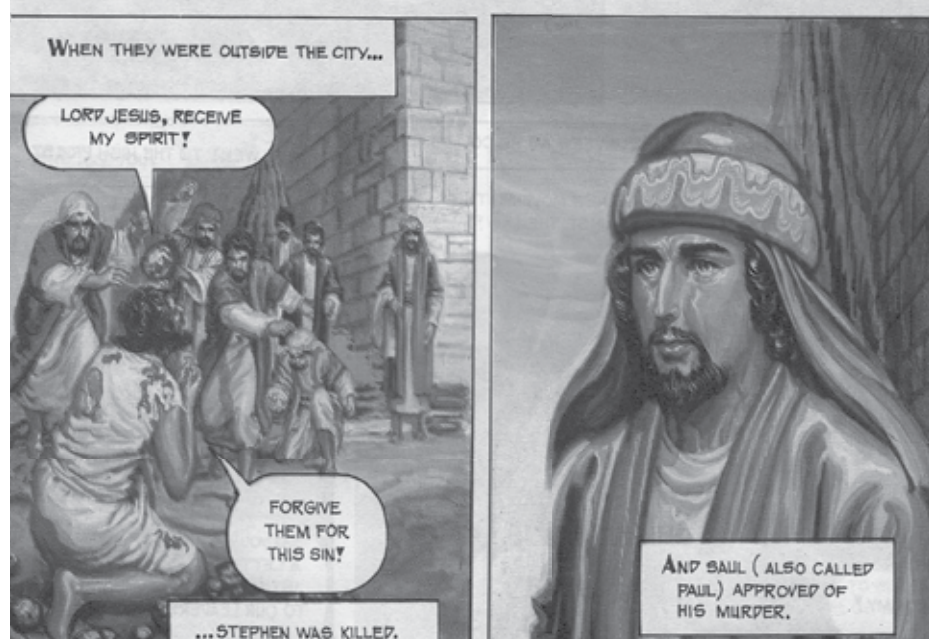
As a young man, Saul became a member of the Jewish religious party known as the Pharisees. Like the other Pharisees, he was very strict in obeying the Law of Moses and other regulations which had been added through the centuries. After his studies he returned to his home town.



Since Jerusalem was the center of the Jewish religion, Saul often went there for religious festivals. During one of these visits he met a group of Jews who were proclaiming that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah sent by God to save people from their sins. Jesus changed Saul's life.



The story in this book is based on the book in the Bible called *The Acts of the Apostles*. Saul was also known as Paul. His new life and his mission changed the world of his day.



(Contd on next week)



# HOW TO PRAY THE ROSARY

## Simple Guide on how to pray the Rosary

### The Month of May is the Month of Mary

Throughout this whole month in many parishes and at homes people gather in front of the grotto of Mary to recite the Rosary together. This is usually followed by the Litany of Mary.

### Praying through the week

Those who pray five decades each day generally use the Joyful Mysteries on Monday and Thursday, the Sorrowful Mysteries on Tuesday and Friday, and the Glorious Mysteries on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. Pope John Paul suggested that anyone wishing to include the Mysteries of Light into this pattern should say them on Thursday and then say the joyful Mysteries on Saturday.



### Joyful Mysteries

1. The Annunciation to Mary by the Angel Gabriel  
*Be it done unto me according to your word. (Luke 1:38)*
2. The Visitation of Elizabeth by Mary  
*My soul magnifies the Lord (Luke 1:46)*
3. The Birth of Jesus at Bethlehem  
*Peace on earth to those in God's favour. (Luke 2:14)*
4. The Presentation of the Baby Jesus in the Temple  
*(My eyes have seen your salvation (Luke 2 :30)*
5. Jesus at the age of twelve is found in the Temple  
*(I must be busy with my Father's affairs. (Luke 2:46)*



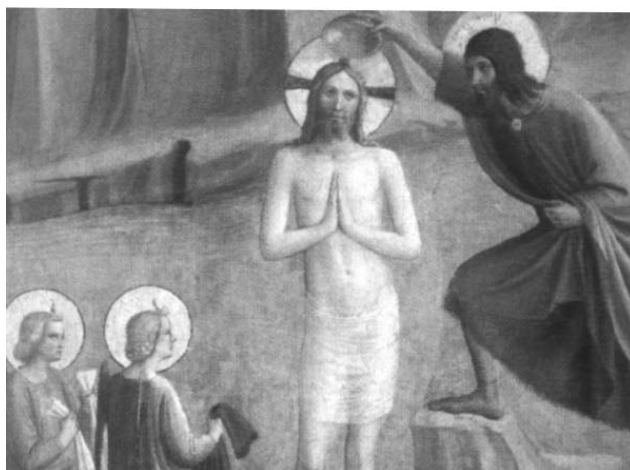
### Sorrowful Mysteries

1. The Agony in the Garden  
*Not My will, but Yours, be done. (Matthew 26:39)*
2. The Scourging at the Pillar  
*First scourged, then annded over to be crucified. (Matthew 27:26)*
3. The Crowning with Thorns  
*Pilate said: Here is the man! (John 19:5)*
4. Jesus carries his cross through Jerusalem  
*Do not weep for Me; weep rather for yourselves. (Luke 23:28)*
5. Jesus dies on the Cross  
*Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. (Luke 23:46)*

### Some additional customs - though not essential

\*Pope Paul VI in his teaching on the Rosary (*Marialis Cultus* 1974) mentions the insertion of Bible readings, which may be particularly useful when a group of people recites the rosary prayers together.

\* Some Catholics like to add after each decade a prayer that the children of Fatima reported that our Lady had taught them for their personal use:



### Mysteries of Light

1. The Baptism of Christ  
*You are my Son, the Beloved (Mark 1:11)*
2. The Wedding at Cana  
*His disciples believed in Him. (John 2:11)*
3. The Preaching of the Kingdom of God  
*Repent and believe. (Mark 1:15)*
4. The Transfiguration  
*It is wonderful for us to be here. (Luke 9:33)*
5. The institution of the Eucharist  
*This is My Body. (Matthew 26:26)*



### Glorious Mysteries

1. Jesus rises from the dead - the Resurrection  
*You shall see him, as he told you. (Mark 16:8)*
2. Jesus is taken up into heaven - the Ascension  
*This same Jesus will come back (Acts 1:11)*
3. The Holy Spirit comes on the Apostles at Pentecost  
*Each of us hears them preaching in our own language (Acts 2:8)*
4. The Assumption of Mary into Heaven  
*A great sign appeared in heaven. ( Revelation 12:1)*
5. The Coronation of our Lady and the Glory of all the Saints  
*I saw a new heaven and a new earth. (Revelation 21:1)*

Oh, my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the first of hell and lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of your mercy.'

\* The much loved antiphon 'Hail Holy Queen' and other prayers are often added at the close of saying the Rosary in public or groups.

### What is the Rosary?

The Holy Rosary is the Catholic's most distinctive form of private prayer. It is used in every nation of the world, and suitable for any time or occasion, any day, any place and any mood, from happiness to distress. It is one of the deepest and simplest of prayers, firmly rooted in the Gospel of Jesus. It is often eagerly picked up again when Catholics who have fallen away from the practice of their faith return.

**The Rosary in your hands** is a circlet of beads, with a pendant tail to the cord or chain. There are 50 small beads on the **circlet**, with a (distinct) bead spaced before every ten (or '**decade**') of the small beads - you will easily feel the difference. A distinct bead or small medal joins the circlet to the **tail**, which itself has three smaller beads set between two others. A crucifix or cross is usually fastened to the end of the tail. Rosary 'rings', made to slip on the finger and marked with ten 'beads' and a cross, are also common, less obtrusive and easy to use. Carrying your rosary at all times and having it in your pocket will constantly recall you to peace and prayerfulness. The word 'bead' originally meant 'a prayer'.



**The Rosary you can say** is formed of the two prayers that every Catholic knows: *Our Father* and *Hail Mary*, to which *Glory be* has been added for the last three or four hundred years. These are said as the beads are passed through the fingers, *Our Father* on each big (distinct) bead and *Hail Mary* on each of the small ones. *Glory be* is usually said after every tenth *Hail Mary*. You can pray the rosary without the beads, because you can count on your ten fingers, but the beads are a great help. Working with hands and heart helps to reduce distractions.

**The spiritual core of the Rosary**, however, lies in looking at God as he appears in Jesus. It is essentially a contemplative prayer. This quiet meditation may fill the soul with praise and love of God, or lead you to important decisions, deepen your sorrow for your sins, or encourage you to pray for others. As in all good prayer, when you use the Rosary you are putting yourself in God's hands. You will be praying 'with Mary', which means praying 'with the Church', for even though this is usually a private prayer, because of its Marian dimension we are never alone when we pray the Rosary.

### Rosary Meditation

Rosary meditation for each decade is based on a 'chosen subject' - called '**mysteries**' - a word taken from St Paul to describe incidents in the Gospel story which are mysterious because we can never fully comprehend them. These **twenty mysteries** are arranged in four groups that form a balanced pattern, summarising the Gospel and easy to remember. This is the essence of the Rosary. (Pope John Paul II realised that some of the most important elements in the Gospel were missing from the traditional fifteen mysteries, and proposed five more mysteries, which he called the Mysteries of Light. They have proved very welcome.)



## Hail Queen of May

Month of May, the Month of Our Lady  
Dawned to awaken the hearts of many  
Who constantly express their filial love  
And experience her profound maternal love.

The buds of May have bloomed already  
To adorn her feet with flowers so many.  
So, devote a few minutes to pray the Rosary  
Invoking her graces to overcome every peril daily.

We hail you, Virgin Mother of grace  
With songs of unending praise  
To hear your fondest words of endearment  
Cherishing your requests made  
For our spiritual nourishment.

Many the Mediatrix of all graces  
Is all out to embrace all of us  
Who humbly recite the Rosary  
Meditating on the twenty mysteries.

*Leonard Wijesiri*

## Past Students' Association of St. Thomas' College, Kotte celebrates its 72nd Annual General Meeting



The 72nd Annual General Meeting of the Past Students' Association of St. Thomas' College Kotte was held on March 10, 2013 at the College premises.

The distinguished guests who graced the occasion were, Hon.

Ravi Karunanayake (Chief Guest), Rev. Fr. Bertram Dabrera, (nephew of the founder of the College,) Rev. Fr. Stanley Abeysekera (Former Rector of the College) and Rev. Fr. Jude Nixon (Present Rector of the College)

It must be recalled that the past students Association of St. Thomas' College Kotte continues to be a vibrant force, taking leadership in numerous activities associated with the development of the College.

## "Say Cheeeese"



After enjoying their 'Aluth Aurudhu' celebrations, the young ones of Ragama, Peralanda Nursery School posed for a group photograph with their friends which they would cherish as a souvenir in later years.

*C.R Dickson Antony*

## QUIZ On Catholic Themes

### QUESTIONS

#### 1. THE CHURCH AND CHURCH TEACHINGS

##### History of the Church

- Who is the founder of the Church?
- When is the birthday of the Church?
- On what day did the Holy Spirit descend upon the apostles in the form of tongues of fire?
- What is the origin of the feast of Pentecost?
- What is the meaning of the word "Pentecost"?
- On the first Pentecost how many were added to the group of believers?
- Who was the main speaker at the first Pentecost?
- What is the gift that believers received at Pentecost?
- What is the Edict of Milan?
- Who issued the Edict of Milan? In which year was it issued?
- What did the Edict of Milan guarantee to the Church?

- What is a Schism?
- What is the Western or Papal Schism?
- Which council ended the Papal Schism?
- What is known as Avignon Papacy?

1. Religious Freedom
2. The word schism, from the Greek schisma (to split) is a division or a split in an organizational church.
3. It was a split within the Catholic Church from 1378 to 1417. Two men simultaneously claimed to be the true pope, one in Rome and another in Avignon, France.
4. The Council of Constance held from 1414 to 1418
5. The Avignon Papacy was the period in the 14th century when the popes lived in and operated out of Avignon, France, instead of their traditional home in Rome.
6. About 3000
7. St Peter the Apostle
8. The Holy Spirit
9. A proclamation that permanently established religious toleration for Christianity within the Roman Empire, an outcome of a political agreement concluded in Milan between the Roman Emperors Constantine I and Licinius.
10. Emperor Constantine in 313AD
11. Religious Freedom
12. The word schism, from the Greek schisma (to split) is a division or a split in an organizational church.
13. It was a split within the Catholic Church from 1378 to 1417. Two men simultaneously claimed to be the true pope, one in Rome and another in Avignon, France.
14. The Council of Constance held from 1414 to 1418
15. The Avignon Papacy was the period in the 14th century when the popes lived in and operated out of Avignon, France, instead of their traditional home in Rome.

### ANSWERS

#### 1. THE CHURCH AND CHURCH TEACHINGS

##### History of the Church

(Contd on next week)